

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

**1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.**

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1942

No. 1

HERE AND THERE

SAYS THE DECEMBER 23 ISSUE of The Film Daily:

"Circuits whose theatres have had their clearances cut over competing houses by arbitration awards have not suffered any loss in grosses, according to a checkup. By the same token, distributors apparently have felt little or no ill effects by the cutting down of clearance schedules. . . ."

Not long ago this paper gave a case, for whose authenticity it vouches, in which the clearance of the downtown theatres of a certain circuit in a big mid-western city was increased to twenty-one days over the neighborhood houses of the same circuit, and the receipts of the neighborhood houses fell thirty per cent, whereas the receipts of the downtown theatres did not increase at all. After much arguing and pleading, the head of the circuit heeded the pleas of the manager of the neighborhood houses and cut down the clearance to sixteen days. Immediately the receipts of the neighborhood houses went back to the old level, but the receipts of the downtown theatres did not diminish at all.

This incident, HARRISON'S REPORTS said, proved conclusively that in many cases clearance is too long; it should be shortened so as to make a quicker turnover possible.

The effect of the arbitration decisions in clearance cases, where clearances are reduced, is, not only to give justice to the subsequent run exhibitors, but also to expedite this turnover. Every time an arbitrator reduces clearance and makes it possible for the subsequent run to play the pictures sooner, he helps the subsequent-run theatre take in more money without hurting the prior-run theatre.

This paper has noticed that the National Appeal Board has had the tendency of reducing clearances even against the judgment of local arbitrators, in many cases allowing only one day between the prior and the subsequent run.

* * *

THE TRADE SCREENING SCHEDULE for next week will be so loaded that no exhibitor can attend all the pictures shown.

On Monday the following trade screenings are scheduled:

At 10:30: "Young America," 20th Century-Fox; "Call Out the Marines," to be followed immediately by "Mexican Spitfire at Sea," RKO. (The two RKO pictures will be shown also at 2:30, for the benefit of those who will not be able to attend the morning showing.)

At 2:30: "Son of Fury," 20th Century-Fox. (Also the two RKO pictures shown in the morning.)

On Tuesday the schedule is even worse:

At 9:30: "Woman of the Year," to be followed immediately by "Joe Smith, American," MGM. (These pictures will be shown also at 1:30, for the benefit of those who will not be able to attend the morning showing.)

At 10:30: "You Can't Always Tell," 20th Century-Fox; "Joan of Paris," to be followed immediately by "Sing Your Worries Away," RKO. (These two RKO pictures will be shown also at 2:30, for the benefit of those who will not be able to attend the morning showing.)

At 2:30: "Gentleman at Heart," 20th Century-Fox. (Also the two RKO pictures shown in the morning.)

What is true of the screenings in this city is true of the screenings in other cities.

The schedule of these screenings indicates plainly that there is no system whereby screenings may be arranged without conflict. This entire week has gone to waste; no pictures were screened. In spite of the fact that it is a New Year week, pictures could have certainly been shown on two days, Tuesday and Friday, to avoid conflict next week.

* * *

THE OFFICERS OF OPERATORS UNION, Local 306, must have lost their senses; they have sent to Loew's, Inc., a letter stating that, before negotiations for a new contract are undertaken, Loew's must agree to three of their demands: That it supply MGM films only to theatres that employ Local 306 men; that Local 306 men should not be required to handle films that are transported by other than IATSE carriers, and that films be delivered only by members of IATSE.

Loew's naturally refused to comply with their demands and, in order to prevent a strike, it has applied to the Federal Court for an injunction and a declaratory judgment.

If Loew's were to comply with their demand, the Government would no doubt prosecute it for violating the antitrust laws, and the exhibitors affected would without any question bring damage suits that would cost it hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In the opinion of competent legal counsel, the court cannot help granting the Loew's petition on the ground that no person or group of persons can compel either an individual or a company to violate the law.

(Continued on last page)

**"Fiesta" with Anne Ayars
and George Negrete**

(United Artists, November 28; time, 44 min.)

Another in Hal Roach's streamlined series, "Fiesta," is tiresome, despite its shortness—only forty-four minutes of running time. In its favor are the gay costumes, technicolor photography, and one or two pleasant song-and-dance numbers. What there is of a story serves merely as a means of introducing the musical numbers; and, since all the action takes place on one set, typical of a stage presentation, the action is slow-moving. As a matter of fact, this lacks strength even as a "filler" on a double-feature program:—

Antonio Moreno declares a three day fiesta at his Mexican rancho in honor of his niece's homecoming. He hoped that she (Anne Ayars) would marry her childhood sweetheart (George Negrete). But to everyone's surprise, Miss Ayars returns with George Givot, a radio performer, and announces that she had become engaged to him. Moreno and Negrete, knowing that Givot feared bandits, plan to frighten him by posing as bandits. Although Miss Ayars sees through the scheme and is annoyed at first, she is happy when Givot leaves, for she realized she loved Negrete and wanted to remain at the rancho.

Cortland Fitzsimmons wrote the screen play and LeRoy Prinz directed and produced it. In the cast are Armida, Nick Moro, Frank Yaconelli, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Lady for a Night" with Joan Blondell,
John Wayne and Ray Middleton**

(Republic, January 5; time, 86 min.)

As may be judged by the cast, "Lady for a Night" is one of the ambitious Republic productions. It is a tragedy, and although it has been produced well it is just a fairly good entertainment. The reason for it is the fact that Joan Blondell, although a fine actress, is hardly suited for tragedies—she can be most effective in light parts. It is hard for her to express grief; and that is what was required in a story of this kind. For instance, though she is on trial for her life, the expression on her face is such as to lead one to believe that she was out on a picnic. It is manifest that the producer sacrificed proper casting for the box office, for Blondell has a following and, since Republic cannot obtain stars from bigger companies, it would have been necessary for the casting director to choose some actress whose name would not mean much to the box office even though she might have given a performance that would make the tragedy real. The first half of the picture is of the light kind, and it is pleasing. The tragedy occurs in the second half. There is a romance between Blondell and Wayne. The action unfolds in the days of the old romantic South. A few pleasing musical numbers are sung:—

Memphis society rebels when, upon unmasking the elected Queen of the annual Carnival Ball, it finds that it is none other than Joan Blondell, the beautiful proprietress of a gambling ship on the Mississippi; her election had been engineered by John Wayne, her gambling associate, who loved her. He had used his

influence upon Memphis aristocrats, who owed him gambling debts. When Joan finds out about the resentment of the women, she is hurt, and determines to get a place among them in some way. Ray Middleton, a young ne'er-do-well gambling and drinking aristocrat, runs heavily into debt to Joan. As a matter of fact she encourages his borrowing and gambling. When he is unable to pay his debts, she proposes marriage to him, pointing out to him that she had what he lacked, and he what she wanted, money and social position, respectively. Ray accepts the proposal but he warns her that nothing but grief awaited her entry into his family. Nevertheless she is willing to go through with the marriage. After the wedding, he takes her home, but his father (Philip Merivale) and his aunt (Blanche Yurka) resent it. His father decides upon annulment of the marriage, but Ray will not stand for it—he had made a bargain and he would stick to it. As a member of the household, Joan finds that nothing but morbidity resided in "The Shadows," as the mansion was called. The only ray of cheer is another aunt (Edith Barrett); she takes a liking to Joan. But Blanche is determined not to allow any friendly relationship between her sister and Joan. Every evening Edith would bring to Joan a mint toddy, just to have a chance to talk to her. Joan gives a ball, but Blanche sends word secretly to every one not to attend. When John Wayne hears of it he uses pressure on every one to attend. When Joan learns why her ball had been a success, she decides to leave the "Shadows." That evening Blanche puts poison into the toddy mint. Ray enters her room as she was packing; he drinks the toddy mint and dies. Joan is accused of murder; she is tried, convicted, and sentenced on first degree murder. Immediately after the judge pronounces the death sentence, Edith rises and confesses that it was her sister who had put poison in the drink, just as she had poisoned the man she was about to marry years previously. Thus Joan is saved. She marries John Wayne.

Garrett Fort wrote the story, and Isabel Dawn and Boyce DeGaw the screen play. Leigh Jason directed it. Not for children.

HERE AND THERE

ALTHOUGH AN EXTENSIVE REVIEW of "Lady for a Night" appears on this page, a few editorial remarks about it would not be amiss.

The picture is worth booking by exhibitors, not only because it is a meritorious effort on the part of Republic, but also because James R. Grainger, Republic's general sales manager; Moe Siegel, production head at the studio, and Herbert Yates, Sr., that courageous personality who has set out to make Republic an important national producing-distributing organization and has succeeded, have been making an excellent job of it. Unable to command the services of first-rate stars, they have concentrated on stories and on selling their pictures at a price that would enable their customers to make a living.

In the case of "Lady for a Night," it may be said that the story is considerably out of the beaten path. For example, the poisoning of the husband is such.

Ordinarily, one would not expect the husband, impersonated by Ray Middleton, to drink the poison; he is so endeared to the spectator, and his personality is so sympathetic, that a producer, or an author, would hesitate to kill him out of a regard for the reaction his death might have had upon the spectators. But his death is the natural outcome of what precedes, and helps what follows. But the novelty ends right there; the end unfolds in a routine manner—the heroine is saved. But the manner by which her innocence is proved is hackneyed—the sister of the poisoner, although browbeaten by her poisoner sister, gathers enough courage to stand up and inform the court, almost after the passing of sentence, that it was her sister who had put the poison in the drink.

A better way to have treated this situation would have been to have the weakling sister stand up with the intention of informing the court of what she knew of the poisoning and then have her drop dead. To avoid making this part laughable to the audience, it could have been shown that all along she was suffering from a heart ailment, and her end had been accelerated by the grief she had been feeling by the death, not only of her sweetheart, whom, as said in the review, her sister had poisoned, but also of her brother. You may imagine, then, how much the suspense would have been enhanced, for the heroine would then be in a real predicament.

As a further development, so as to avoid a hackneyed ending, it could have been shown that the guilty sister, after admitting that it was she who had poisoned her brother, had gone raving mad. To avoid making this situation laughable, traces of insanity in her could have been shown all along. In such a case, her insanity would have been acceptable to the audience as a natural consequence, and not as an arbitrary act of the author's.

The judge then could have dismissed the case on the ground that, what had taken place in the courtroom, had almost proved the heroine's innocence, or at least had raised a great doubt, as to her guilt.

Such a treatment would, in the opinion of this reviewer, have made the picture more gripping.

Even then, the picture could not have been considered as containing all the elements that go to make a picture a great box-office attraction unless care were taken to have some of the action appeal deeply to the emotions of sympathy. In plain words, there should have been also some gulps in the throat.

These are, of course, off-hand views just to show that there were greater possibilities in the story; a trained writer could, perhaps, have taken these views and elaborated on them with much greater results.

Despite these criticisms, however, you will do well to book this picture, not only because the picture is, as said, meritorious, despite these comments, but also as an encouragement to the heads of a company that have been trying their best to serve you with entertaining pictures.

* * *

METRO - GOLDWYN - MAYER has made changes in "Two-Faced Woman" and now the Legion of Decency has removed the picture from the "C"

classification and placed it on the "B" list—"objectionable in parts."

The Legion has been criticized for not voicing its objections to MGM before announcing its condemnation of the picture. Since the removal of the objectionable parts have now removed the reason for placing the picture on the "C" list, the removal of these parts could have been done just as well before the condemnation.

MPICC SUBCOMMITTEES

(Appointed to carry out the outlined industry unity program)

Sub-Committee on Point (1) CO-ORDINATION OF POLICY AND ACTION IN REFERENCE TO TAXATION: Spyros Skouras, National Theatres, Chairman; H. A. Cole, Allied States Association; E. L. Kuykendall, M.P.T.O.A.; Harry Brandt, Unaffiliated Organizations; Leonard Goldenson, Paramount; Joseph Vogel, Loew's, Inc.; Harry Kalmine, Warner Bros.; George J. Schaefer, RKO.

Sub-Committee on Point (2) CO-ORDINATION OF POLICY AND ACTION IN PROTECTING THE GOOD NAME AND INTEGRITY OF THE INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE: George J. Schaefer, RKO, Chairman; Sidney R. Kent, 20th Century-Fox Film; Barney Balaban, Paramount; H. A. Cole, Allied States Association; E. L. Kuykendall, M.P.T.O.A.; Harry Brandt, I.T.O.A.; Robert Poole, Pacific Coast Conference.

Sub-Committee on Point (3) FORMULATION OF PLANS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVERTISING AND OTHER GOODWILL ACTIVITIES: Howard Dietz, Loew's, Inc., Chairman; the Advertising and Publicity heads of all National Distributing Organizations. (Representing Allied States Association) P. J. Wood, Ohio; Don Rossiter, Indiana; M. A. Rosenberg, Western Pennsylvania. (Representing M.P.T.O.A.) Fred Wherenberg, Missouri; Lewen Pizor, E. Penna., So. New Jersey & Delaware; Leonard Goldenson, Paramount, representing affiliated theatres. (Representing Unaffiliated Organizations) Bob White, Oregon; Leo Brecher, New York; Lionel Wasson, Iowa.

Sub-Committee on Point (4) PROTECTING THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES OF THE INDUSTRY BY SECURING PROPER PRIORITY RATINGS: Joseph Bernhard, Warner Brothers, Chairman, and Present committee selected by Motion Picture Committee Cooperating for National Defense: George J. Schaefer, RKO; Sidney E. Samuelson, Allied States Association; Carter Baron, M.P.T.O.A.; Wm. Crocket, Unaffiliated Organizations.

Sub-Committee on Point (5) FORMULATION OF A PROGRAM PROVIDING, IF POSSIBLE, FOR THE ADJUSTMENT, OR MODIFICATION OF THE POLICIES OR PRACTICES OF ONE BRANCH OR MEMBER THEREOF WHICH ARE OPPOSED BY ANY OTHER BRANCH OR A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION THEREOF: The Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee as a whole.

The action of Loew's, Inc., will help also every other company, for one of the Union executives admitted that Loew's is a test case—a similar demand is prepared for all the other film companies.

* * *

THE UNITY PROGRAM IS PROCEEDING smoothly. Several high executives have agreed to act as temporary chairmen of MPICC subcommittees—George Schaefer, Spyros Skouras, Leonard Golden-son and Harry M. Kalmine.

It is the opinion of this journal that not even Abram F. Myers, when he first proposed the unity idea, believed that it would work out so well. The industry leaders have taken it up with sincerity and enthusiasm, and one cannot help feeling that many causes of friction will be removed in due time. The industry is so big, and the chances for profits for every one engaged in it so bright, that there is no reason why a more equitable distribution of them should not be made so that a greater number should be made comfortable and happy.

* * *

THERE HAVE BEEN COMPLAINTS about high salaries of executives and of stars as well as directors.

The complaints about the salaries of executives is justified, for in most instances these salaries are more than the executives are entitled to.

There is justification for complaints about the salaries of stars, but only in some instances. As a rule the stars are entitled to what they receive. If a star can pack people into the theatres, he is entitled to receive a substantial amount of the wealth he creates. The same is true of directors. Since a good director can make a picture even out of a fair story, and a poor director can ruin a picture even if he is given the best story, the good directors are entitled to a remuneration commensurate with their ability.

The more popular stars and capable directors we have, the better for the industry. By the same token, the more incompetent executives we have, the worse for it.

* * *

A SHORT TIME AGO Allied Theatre Owners of Illinois announced that it would go on the air to increase patronage in Allied theatres. But the Chicago industry conference interrupted those plans.

The idea of going on the air on behalf of the theatres is a good one and it should be promoted by exhibitor organizations nationally, with the broadcast given at a time when the theatre business would suffer the least.

* * *

THE WAR HAS SO CHANGED conditions that publicity men have to be more careful when it comes to their dealing with matters that are not supposed to be talked about. Recently a story appeared in the newspapers giving the date that Deanna Durbin was to fly with her husband to England aboard the Clipper, and the Pan-American Lines informed Universal that, in addition to the fact that no Clipper was leaving for England on the date given in the press release, the Government does not permit the revelation of Clipper flight trips on the ground that the information might prove valuable to the enemy.

It may take some time, but we shall eventually become fully conscious of the fact that we are at war,

and that certain responsibilities have fallen upon the shoulders of every one of us.

* * *

AT THE RECENT CONVENTION of The Independent Theatre Owners of America, in Columbus, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer started the MGM Exhibitors' Forum, in which exhibitors gather with MGM executives to discuss means and ways by which the pictures may be made to draw bigger crowds at the box office.

The interest this idea has aroused among exhibitors is proved by the fact that, at the first gathering, approximately two hundred exhibitors sat for nearly five hours discussing their problems with H. M. Richey representing MGM.

Mr. Richey said that the distributors have frequently criticized the small-town exhibitors as not trying hard enough to merchandise their pictures, but he did not feel that the criticism was just. On the contrary, he believes that this exhibitor did not get enough aid from the distributors. And that is why the exhibitors' forum has been founded—to give the small-town exhibitor the aid he must have to put his pictures over.

The MGM idea for a Forum is excellent. But why should it be only an MGM-Exhibitor Forum? Why should it not be a general forum, in which all the other companies should join? The exhibitor needs as much aid from them as he needs from MGM.

* * *

ON DECEMBER 20, JACK KIRSCH, temporary chairman of the Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee, and president of Allied Theatre Owners of Illinois, sent the following circular to the members of the Sub-Committee on Point (3), dealing with formulation of plans for institutional advertising and other good-will activities:

"The trade papers reflect the devastating effect on theatre attendance of the entry of this country into the war. Maybe this is a temporary condition and will right itself. But, coming on top of the pre-holiday slump, it is particularly severe. It is not a good thing for the national morale for the people to neglect amusement and recreational pursuits and spend too much time at the radio listening to sombre accounts of the war.

"It seems to me that the Committee as a preliminary step might enlist the aid of public officials and prominent personages in urging the people to continue their usual pastimes and diversions. All thoughtful persons recognize the need for respite from the strain and anxiety of war. Why not solicit statements along this line from the President, the governors of the states, the mayors of the cities, famous athletes and others in the public eye.

"Think of the effect it would have if some doctor with a national reputation should say, 'I prescribe frequent trips to the movies as a remedy for wartime jitters' or if someone in authority should say 'I wish I had the power to order the people to go to the movies at least once a week for the sake of their morale and the good of their health!'

"The chairman of the sub-committee can apportion the work among the Committee members and see that the results are duly publicized. Let's not wait for the next meeting, let's get in our licks while they are most needed."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1942

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 Raiders of the Desert—Universal (60 min.)131
 Remember the Day—20th Century-Fox (85 min.)206
 Riders of the Purple Sage—20th Century-Fox (56 m.)146
 Riders of the Timberline—Paramount (58 min.)155
 Ringside Maisie—MGM (96 min.)124D
 Riot Squad—Monogram (57 min.)203
 Rise and Shine—20th Century-Fox (92 min.)187
 Road Agent—Universal (60 min.)200
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 San Antonio Rose—Universal (63 min.)107
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 Sealed Lips—Universal (62 min.)200
 Secret of the Wastelands—Paramount (65 min.)155
 Secrets of the Lone Wolf—Columbia (66 min.)187
 Sergeant York—Warner-1st Natl. (133 min.)111
 Shadow of the Thin Man—MGM (96 min.)170
 Shanghai Gesture, The—United Artists (104 min.)207
 Shepherd of the Hills, The—Paramount (98 min.)107
 Sing Another Chorus—Universal (63 min.)151
 Sing For Your Supper—Columbia (65 min.)196
 Skylark—Paramount (94 min.)143
 Small Town Deb—20th Century-Fox (72 min.)170
 Smiling Ghost, The—Warner (71 min.)131
 Smilin' Through—MGM (100 min.)146
 Sons of the Sea—Warner-1st Natl. (91 min.)207
 South of Tahiti—Universal (75 min.)179
 Stars Look Down, The—MGM (98 min.)116
 Steel Against the Sky—Warner-1st Natl. (67 min.)194
 Stick to Your Guns—Paramount (62 min.)155
 Stork Pays Off, The—Columbia (68 min.)183
 Sullivan's Travels—Paramount (91 min.)198
 Sundown—United Artists (91 min.)171
 Sunset in Wyoming—Republic (65 min.)124B
 Sun Valley Serenade—20th Century-Fox (86 min.)122
 Suspicion—RKO (98 min.)154
 Swamp Water—20th Century-Fox (90 min.)171
 Sweetheart of the Campus—Columbia (69 min.)106
 Swing It Soldier—Universal (66 min.)178
 Tanks a Million—United Artists (51 min.)134
 Target For Tonight—Warner Bros. (49 min.)172
 Tarzan's Secret Treasure—MGM (80 min.)183
 Texas—Columbia (94 min.)163
 They Died With Their Boots On—Warner-1st National (140 min.)186
 They Meet Again—RKO (67 min.)126
 They Met in Bombay—MGM (91 min.)106
 This England—World Pictures (83 min.)190
 This Woman is Mine—Universal (90 min.)139
 Three Girls About Town—Columbia (72 min.)174
 Three Sons O' Guns—First National (64 min.)124A
 Tillie The Toiler—Columbia (67 min.)135
 Tom, Dick and Harry—RKO (86 min.)114
 Top Sergeant Mulligan—Monogram (70 min.)182
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 Twilight on the Trail—Paramount (57 min.)155
 Twins, The—MGM (See "Two-Faced Woman")171

Two-Faced Woman—MGM (93 min.)171
 Two In A Taxi—Columbia (63 min.)116
 Two Latins From Manhattan—Columbia (66 min.)158
 Unexpected Uncle—RKO (66 min.)150
 Unfinished Business—Universal (95 min.)144
 Unholy Partners—MGM (94 min.)166
 Vanishing Virginian, The—MGM (96½ min.)195
 Weekend for Three—RKO (65 min.)175
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 We Go Fast—20th Century-Fox (64 min.)148
 When Ladies Meet—MGM (104 min.)144
 Whistling in the Dark—MGM (77 min.)126
 Wild Bill Hickok Rides—Warner-1st Natl. (81 min.)207
 Wild Geese Calling—20th Century-Fox (78 min.)122
 Wolf Man, The—Universal (70 min.)202
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 Yank in the R.A.F., A—20th Century-Fox (97 min.)147
 You Belong to Me—Columbia (95 min.)175
 You'll Never Get Rich—Columbia (89 min.)159
 You're in the Army Now—Warner-1st Natl. (78 min.)195
 Zis Boom Bah—Monogram (61 min.)186

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3201 The Royal Mounted Patrol—Starrett (59m.) Nov. 13
 3026 Secrets of the Lone Wolf—William-Blore... Nov. 13
 3030 Ellery Queen and the Murder Ring—Bellamy-Lindsay Nov. 18
 3005 The Men in Her Life—Young-Veidt Nov. 20
 3015 Go West, Young Lady—Singleton-Ford Nov. 27
 3022 Sing For Your Supper—Falkenburg-Rogers... Dec. 4
 Honolulu Lu—Velez-Bennett-Carrillo Dec. 11
 Harvard Here I Come—Rosenbloom-Judge (reset) Dec. 18
 3202 Riders of the Badlands—Starrett (57m.) Dec. 18
 Bedtime Story—Young-March-Benchley (re) Dec. 25
 3211 The Lone Star Vigilantes—Bill Elliott (57m.) Jan. 1
 Confessions of Boston Blackie—Morris-Hilliard-Woodbury Jan. 8
 Blondie Goes to College—Singleton-Lake Jan. 15
 3203 West of Tombstone—Starrett (59 min.) Jan. 15
 Cadets on Parade—Bartholomew-Lydon Jan. 22
 A Close Call for Ellery Queen—Gargan-Lindsay-Grapewin Jan. 29
 The Man Who Returned to Life—Howard... Feb. 5
 The Lady Is Willing—Dietrich-MacMurray... Feb. 12
 3212 Bullets for Bandits—Bill Elliott (55 min.)... Feb. 12

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

211 Two-Faced Woman—Garbo-Douglas Nov.
 212 H. M. Pulham, Esq.—Lamarr-Young-Hussey... Dec.
 213 Design for Scandal—Russell-Pidgeon Dec.
 214 Tarzan's Secret Treasure—Weissmuller-O'Sullivan Dec.
 215 Kathleen—Temple-Marshall-Day-Patrick Dec.
 216 Babes on Broadway—Rooney-Garland Jan.
 217 Dr. Kildare's Victory—Ayres-L. Barrymore... Jan.
 218 Johnny Eager—Taylor-Turner-Arnold Jan.
 219 Mr. and Mrs. North—Allen-Post-Kelly Jan.
 220 The Bugle Sounds—Beery-Main-Stone Jan.

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

4107 Top Sergeant Mulligan—Pendleton Oct. 24
 4106 Spooks Run Wild—Lugosi-East Side Kids... Oct. 24
 4124 Stolen Paradise—Janney-Hunt Oct. 31
 4112 Zis Boom Bah—Peter Hayes-Mary Healy... Nov. 7
 4161 Underground Rustlers—Range Busters (57 min.) Nov. 21
 4120 Double Trouble—Langdon (62 min.) Nov. 21
 4118 I Killed That Man—Cortez (reset) Nov. 28
 4121 Borrowed Hero—Baxter-Rice Dec. 5
 4140 Lone Star Law Men—Keene (61 min.) Dec. 5
 4128 Riot Squad—Cromwell-Quigley-Miljan Dec. 12
 4101 Road to Happiness—Boles-Barrie (83 min.)... Dec. 19
 4153 Forbidden Trails—Buck Jones (reset) Dec. 26

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4109 Birth of the Blues—Crosby-Martin.....Nov. 7
- 4107 Skylark—Colbert-Milland-Aherne.....Nov. 21
- 4106 Night of January 16—Preston-Drew.....Nov. 28
- 4110 Glamour Boy—Cooper-Foster-Abel (reset)...Dec. 5
- 4108 Among the Living—Dekker-Hayward (reset)..Dec. 19
- 4136 Louisiana Purchase—Hope-Moore-Zorina...Dec. 25
- 4150 Secret of the Wasteland—Boyd) No dates have
- 4151 Outlaws of the Desert—Boyd) been set on
- 4152 Riders of the Timberline—Boyd) these Westerns
- 4153 Stick to Your Guns—Boyd) but they are
- 4154 Twilight on the Trail—Boyd) all available.
- 4111 Bahama Passage—Carroll-Hayden.....Jan. 23
- 4112 Sullivan's Travels—McCrea-Lake.....Feb. 6
- 4115 Pacific Blackout—Preston-Merivale.....Mar. 16
- 4113 No Hands on the Clock—Morris.....Not yet set
- 4114 Mr. Bug Goes to Town—Cartoon.....Not yet set

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 143 Sierra Sue—Gene Autry (64 min.).....Nov. 12
- 173 A Missouri Outlaw—Red Barry (58 m.) (re)..Nov. 25
- 113 Tuxedo Junction—Weaver Bros. (reset)....Dec. 4
- 152 Red River Valley—Rogers (62 min.).....Dec. 12
- 163 West of Cimarron—Three Mesq. (58 min.)...Dec. 15
- 112 Mr. District Attorney in the Carter Case—
Ellison-Gilmore (reset).....Dec. 18
- 101 Lady for a Night—Blondell-Wayne.....Jan. 5
- 174 Arizona Terrors—Red Barry.....Jan. 6
- 153 Man From Cheyenne—Roy Rogers.....Jan. 16
- Pardon My Stripes—Henry-Ryan.....Jan. 19
- Cowboy Serenade—Gene Autry.....Jan. 23

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 212 Playmates—Kyser-J. Barrymore-Velez.....Dec. 26
- 252 Ball of Fire—Cooper-Stanwyck.....Jan. 9
- 213 A Date with the Falcon—George Sanders....Jan. 16
- 214 Four Jacks and a Jill—Shirley-Bolger.....Jan. 23
- 215 Obliging Young Lady—Carroll-O'Brien.....Jan. 30
- 216 Valley of the Sun—Ball-Craig (84 min.)....Feb. 6
- 217 Call Out the Marines—McLaglen-Lowe (67m)..Feb. 13
- 218 Joan of Paris—Morgan-Henreid (95 min.)...Feb. 20
- 219 Sing Your Worries Away—Lahr-Ebsen (80m)..Feb. 27
- 220 Mexican Spitfire at Sea—Velez-Errol (73m)..Mar. 6

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 214 Week-End in Havana—Faye-Romero-Payne...Oct. 17
- 215 Moon Over Her Shoulder—Bari-Sutton.....Oct. 24
- No release set for.....Oct. 31
- 217 Small Town Deb—Withers-Darwell-Wright..Nov. 7
- 216 I Wake Up Screaming (Hor Spot)—
Grable-Mature-Landis-Cregar.....Nov. 14
- 219 Rise and Shine—Oakie-Berle-Darnell.....Nov. 21
- 220 Cadet Girl—Landis-Montgomery.....Nov. 28
- 221 Marry the Boss' Daughter—Joyce-Edwards...Nov. 28
- 218 Swamp Water—Brennan-Huston-Baxter.....Dec. 5
- 222 Confirm or Deny—Ameche-J. Bennett.....Dec. 12
- 223 Perfect Snob—Bari-Wilde.....Dec. 19
- 224 How Green Was My Valley—Pidgeon-O'Hara..Dec. 26
- 226 Remember the Day—Colbert-Payne.....Jan. 2
- 227 Blue, White and Perfect—Nolan-Hughes....Jan. 9
- 228 A Gentleman at Heart—Romero-Landis.....Jan. 16
- 229 A Right to the Heart—Joyce-Wilde.....Jan. 23
- 230 Son of Fury—Tyronne Power-Gene Tierney...Jan. 30
- 231 Young America—Withers-Darwell.....Feb. 6

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- All American Co-Ed—Downs-Langford.....Oct. 31
- Miss Polly—Pitts-Summerville.....Nov. 14
- The Corsican Brothers—Fairbanks-Warrick (re)..Nov. 28
- Fiesta—Anne Ayars-George Negrete.....Nov. 28
- Love on the Dole—Kerr (English picture).....Dec. 12
- Hay Foot—Tracy-Gleason.....Dec. 12
- The Gold Rush—Charles Chaplin reissue with words
and music.....Dec. 25
- Dudes Are Pretty People—Woodworth-Rogers...Dec. 25

- Twin Beds—J. Bennett-G. Brent (reset).....Jan. 1
- The Shanghai Gesture—Tierney-Mature-Huston...Jan. 15
- The Jungle Book—Sabu-Calleia.....Jan. 30
- To Be Or Not To Be—Lombard-J. Benny.....Feb. 15
- ("A Letter From Home," a short subject running 17 minutes,
has a November 28 release date)

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6051 The Kid From Kansas—Foran-Carrillo.....Sept. 19
- 6005 It Started with Eve—Durbin-Laughton.....Sept. 26
- 6021 Mob Town—Dead End Kids-Foran.....Oct. 3
- 6016 Never Give a Sucker an Even Break—
Fields-Jean.....Oct. 10
- 6020 South of Tahiti—Donlevy-Devine.....Oct. 17
- 6035 Burma Convoy—Bickford-Ankers.....Oct. 17
- 6062 The Masked Rider—J. M. Brown (58m.)...Oct. 24
- 6028 Flying Cadets—Gargan-Lowe.....Oct. 24
- 6007 Appointment For Love—Boyer-Sullivan...Oct. 31
- 6033 Swing It Soldier—Murray-Langford.....Nov. 7
- 6063 Arizona Cyclone—J. M. Brown (57m.)...Nov. 14
- 6025 Moonlight in Hawaii—Downs-Frazer.....Nov. 21
- 6044 Quiet Wedding—Lockwood.....Nov. 21
- 6001 Keep 'Em Flying—Abbott-Costello-Raye...Nov. 28
- 6038 Sealed Lips—Litel-Gargan-Clyde.....Dec. 5
- The Wolf Man (Destiny)—Rains-Chaney...Dec. 12
- Melody Lane—Sandy-Paige-Gwynne.....Dec. 19
- Road Agent—Foran-Carrillo-Devine.....Dec. 19
- Hellzapoppin'—Olsen-Johnson-Raye.....Dec. 26
- Don't Get Personal—Herbert-Auer (re)....Jan. 2
- Jail House Blues—Paige-Gwynne (62m.)...Jan. 9
- Paris Calling—Bergner-Scott (reset).....Jan. 16
- North to the Klondike—Crawford-Chaney...Jan. 23
- Treat 'Em Rough—Albert-Moran.....Jan. 30
- Bombay Clipper—Hervey-Gargan.....Feb. 6
- 6064 Stagecoach Buckaroo—J. M. Brown
(59 min.) (reset).....Feb. 13

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 110 Blues in the Night—P. Lane-Whorf.....Nov. 15
- No release set for.....Nov. 22
- No release set for.....Nov. 29
- 111 The Body Disappears—Lynn-Wyman-Horton..Dec. 6
- 112 Steel Against the Sky—Smith-Nolan.....Dec. 13
- No release set for.....Dec. 20
- 113 You're in the Army Now—Durante-Wyman...Dec. 25
- 114 They Died With Their Boots On—
Flynn-deHavilland.....Jan. 1
- 116 All Through the Night—Bogart-Veidt.....Jan. 10
- No release set for.....Jan. 17
- 117 The Man Who Came to Dinner—Davis-
Sheridan-Woolley.....Jan. 24
- 118 Wild Bill Hickok Rides—Bennett-Cabot....Jan. 31

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 3552 Buenos Aires Today—Tours (8 min.).....Oct. 10
- 3803 Jungle Fishing—Sport Reels (11 min.).....Oct. 10
- 3902 The Gallup Poll—Panoramics (10 min.)...Oct. 17
- 3751 The Great Cheese Mystery—Cartoon (8m.)..Nov. 1
- 3853 Screen Snapshots No. 3—(10 min.).....Nov. 7
- 3974 Women in Photography—Cine. (10m.)...Nov. 7
- 3553 Alaska Tour—Col. Tours (10½m.).....Nov. 7
- 3982 How War Came—Ray. G. Swing (8½m.)...Nov. 7
- 3804 Polo Champions—Sport Reels (9½m.)...Nov. 11
- 3501 Who's Zoo in Hollywood—Color Rhap.
(7½ min.).....Nov. 15
- 3654 Community Sing No. 4—(10½m.) (re)....Dec. 5
- 3502 The Fox and the Grapes—Color Rhap.
(7½ min.).....Dec. 5
- 3854 Screen Snapshots No. 4—(9½m.).....Dec. 5
- 3975 Strange Facts—Cinescopes.....Dec. 6
- 3903 New York's Finest—Panoramics (re)....Dec. 11
- 3603 Kitchen Quiz No. 2—(reset).....Dec. 12
- 3805 Rack 'Em Up (Pocket Billiards)—Sport
Reels (reset).....Dec. 19
- 3503 Red Riding Hood Rides Again—Color
Rhapsody.....Dec. 25
- 3655 Community Sing No. 5—(reset).....Dec. 26
- 3752 The Tangled Angler—Cartoons (reset)....Jan. 2
- 3855 Screen Snapshots No. 5.....Jan. 2
- 3504 A Hollywood Detour—Color Rhapsody...Jan. 23
- 3806 Not Yet Titled—Sport Reels.....Jan. 23
- 3656 Goodfellowship Songs—Com. Sing No. 6...Jan. 23

Columbia—Two Reels

1940-41 Season

- 2151 The Doctor's Bargain—Claw No. 11 (18m.) .Oct. 24
- 2152 Vapors of Evil—Claw No. 12 (17m.)Oct. 31
- 2153 The Secret Door—Claw No. 13 (18m.)Nov. 7
- 2154 The Evil Eye—Claw No. 14 (18m.)Nov. 14
- 2155 The Claw's Collapse—Claw No. 15 (17m.)Nov. 21

(End of 1940-41 Season)

1941-42 Season

- 3453 International Forum No. 3—(19m.)Oct. 17
- 3425 Lovable Trouble—Andy Clyde (16m.)Oct. 23
- 3409 Mitt Me Tonight—Gloveslingers (16m.)Nov. 6
- 3426 She's Oil Mine—Keaton (17m.)Nov. 20
- 3121 Chaotic Creek—Holt of the Secret Service
No. 1 (28 min.)Nov. 21
- 3122 Ramparts of Revenge—Holt No. 2 (20m.)Nov. 28
- 3410 Some More of Samoa—Stooges (17m.)Dec. 4
- 3123 Illicit Wealth—Holt No. 3 (19m.)Dec. 5
- 3427 Sweet Spirits of Nighter—BrendelDec. 11
- 3124 Menaced by Fate—Holt No. 4 (19m.)Dec. 12
- 3125 Exits to Terror—Holt No. 5 (18m.)Dec. 19
- 3410 The Kink of the Campus—Gloveslingers
(17 min.)Dec. 25
- 3126 Deadly Doom—Holt No. 6 (18m.)Dec. 26
- 3127 Out of the Past—Holt No. 7Jan. 2
- 3404 Loco Boys Make Good—Stooges (17m.)Jan. 8
- 3128 Escape to Peril—Holt No. 8Jan. 9
- 3129 Sealed in Silence—Holt No. 9Jan. 16
- 3130 Named to Die—Holt No. 10Jan. 23
- 3131 Ominous Warnings—Holt No. 11Jan. 30
- 3132 The Stolen Signal—Holt No. 12Feb. 6
- 3133 Prison of Jeopardy—Holt No. 13Feb. 13

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- S-362 Fancy Answers—Pete Smith (10m.)Nov. 1
- M-331 Changed Identity—Miniatures (11m.)Nov. 8
- T-313 Georgetown, Pride of Penang—Traveltalks
(9 min.)Nov. 15
- K-381 Strange Testament—Pass. Parade (11m.)Nov. 15
- W-341 The Night Before Christmas—Cart. (9m.)Dec. 6
- C-393 Wedding Worries—Our GangDec. 13
- T-314 Scenic Grandeur—Traveltalks (8m.)Dec. 13
- S-363 How To Hold Your Husband Back—SmithDec. 13
- T-315 Historic Maryland—TraveltalksDec. 27
- W-342 The Field Mouse—CartoonsDec. 27
- T-316 West Point on the Hudson—TraveltalksJan. 10

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

Beginning of 1941-42 Season

- A-301 The Tell Tale Heart—Special (20m.)Oct. 25
- X-310 War Clouds in the Pacific—SpecialDec. 24

Paramount—One Reel

- J1-2 Popular Science No. 2—(10m.)Nov. 7
- E1-2 The Mighty Navy—Popeye cartoon (7m.)Nov. 14
- W1-2 Superman in the Mechanical Monsters—
cartoon (10 min.)Nov. 21
- A1-2 The Copacabana Revue—Head. (9½m.)Nov. 21
- R1-4 Quick Returns—Sportlight (9m.)Nov. 28
- Z1-2 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 2—
(9 min.) (reset)Dec. 5
- Q1-2 The Quiz Kids No. 2Dec. 5
- L1-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2Dec. 12
- E1-3 Nix on Hypnotricks—Popeye cartoonDec. 19
- U1-1 Rhythm in the Ranks—Madcap ModelsDec. 26
- R1-5 How to Buy a Dog—SportlightDec. 26
- S1-2 Nothing But Nerves—BenchleyJan. 2
- Y1-3 At the County Fair—AnimalsJan. 2
- W1-3 Superman in the Billion Dollar Limited—
cartoonJan. 9
- E1-4 Kickin' The Conga Round—PopeyeJan. 16
- R1-6 Better Bowling—SportlightJan. 23

RKO—One Reel

1940-41 Season

- 14115 The Art of Self Defense—Disney (8m.)Dec. 26
- 14116 Village Smithy—Disney (7m.)Jan. 16
- 14117 Mickey's Birthday Party—Disney (8m.)Feb. 7
- 14118 Pluto, Jr.—Disney (7m.)Feb. 28

(End of 1940-41 Season)

1941-42 Season

- 24202 Information Please No. 2—(11m.)Oct. 17
- 24303 Gaucho Sports—Sportscope (9m.)Oct. 31
- 24403 Picture People No. 3—(9m.)Nov. 7
- 24304 Crystal Flyers—Sportscope (8m.)Nov. 28
- 24404 Picture People No. 4—(8m.)Dec. 5
- 24203 Information Please No. 3—(11m.)Dec. 12

RKO—Two Reels

- 23501 California Or Bust—Whitley (18m.)Nov. 7
- 23104 March of Time No. 4—(18m.)Nov. 21
- 23702 Who's a Dummy—Leon Errol (17m.)Nov. 28
- 23403 A Quiet Fourth—Kennedy (15m.)Dec. 19
- 23105 March of Time No. 5—(17m.)Dec. 19
- 23703 Home Work—Errol (19m.)Jan. 9
- 23502. Keep Shooting—Whitley (17m.)Jan. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 2102 Glacier Trails—L. Thomas (10m.)Sept. 26
- 2553 Welcome Little Stranger—T. Toon (7m.)Oct. 3
- 2402 Uncle Sam's Iron Warriors—L. Thomas
(10 min.)Oct. 10
- 2503 The Frozen North—Terry-Toon (7m.)Oct. 17
- 2202 Highway of Friendship—Adv. News
Cameraman (10 min.)Oct. 24
- 2554 Slap Happy Hunters—Terry-Toon (7m.)Oct. 31
- 2302 Life of a Thoroughbred—Sports (10½m.)Nov. 7
- 2504 Back to the Soil—Terry-Toon (7m.)Nov. 14
- 2203 Wonders of the Sea—Adv. News
Cameraman (9 min.)Nov. 21
- 2555 The Bird Tower—Terry-Toon (7 min.)Nov. 28
- 2103 The Call of Canada—L. Thomas (10m.)Dec. 5
- 2505 A Yarn About Yarn—Terry-Toon (7m.)Dec. 12
- 2303 Playtime in Hawaii—Sports (10m.)Dec. 19
- 2506 Flying Fever—Terry-Toon (7m.)Dec. 26
- 2403 Dutch Guiana—Lowell ThomasJan. 2
- 2556 A Torrid Toreador—Terry-ToonJan. 9
- 2204 Men For the Fleet—Paul DouglasJan. 16
- 2557 Happy Circus Days—Terry-ToonJan. 23
- 2304 Evergreen Playland—SportsJan. 30

Universal—One Reel

- 6374 Junior Battle Fleet—Stranger Than
Fiction (9 min.)Nov. 17
- 6243 What's Cookin'?—cartoon (7m.)Nov. 24
- 6244 \$21 A Day Once A Month—cartoon (7m.)Dec. 1
- 6355 Annapolis Salutes the Navy—Scenic (9m.)Dec. 8
- 6375 Blacksmith Dentist—Stranger Than
Fiction (9 min.)Dec. 15
- 6356 Peaceful Quebec at War—Scenic (9m.)Jan. 5
- 6245 Under the Spreading Blacksmith's Shop—
cartoonJan. 12
- 6376 Barnyard Steam Buggy—Stranger Than
Fiction (9 min.)Jan. 19
- 6354 Trail of the Buccaneers—Scenic (9m.)Jan. 26

Universal—Two Reels

- 6889 Battling the Sea Beast—Raiders No. 9 (17m.)Dec. 9
- 6890 Periled by a Panther—Raiders No. 10
(18 min.)Dec. 16
- 6110 Cavalcade of Aviation—Special (20m.)Dec. 17
- 6891 Entombed in the Tunnel—Raiders No. 11
(18 min.)Dec. 23
- 6225 Jingle Belles—musical (13m.)Dec. 24
- 6892 Paying the Penalty—Raiders No. 12 (17m.)Dec. 30
- 6681 The Human Torpedo—Don Winslow of the
Navy No. 1—(25 min.)Jan. 6
- 6226 Campus Capers—musical (18m.)Jan. 7
- 6682 Flaming Death—Winslow No. 2 (21m.)Jan. 13
- 6683 Weapons of Horror—Winslow No. 3 (20m.)Jan. 20
- 6684 Towering Doom—Winslow No. 4 (18m.)Jan. 27

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 7705 Saddle Silly—Merrie Melodies (7½m.)Nov. 8
- 7604 Porky's Midnight Matinee—L. Tunes
(7½ min.)Nov. 15
- 7706 The Coney Canary—Merrie Melodies (8m.)Nov. 22
- 7707 Rhapsody in Rivets—Merrie Melodies (8m.)Dec. 6
- 7503 40 Boys and a Song—Mel. Masters (10m.)Dec. 6
- 7603 Porky's Pooch—Looney Tunes (7m.)Dec. 6
- 7708 Wabbit Twouble—Merrie Melodies (8m.)Dec. 20
- 7402 King Salmon—Sports Parade (8m.)Dec. 20
- 7303 Points on Arrows—Novelties (10m.)Dec. 27

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 7105 West of the Rockies—Bway. Brev. (19m.)Dec. 13

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES
Pathe News**

- 25137 Sat. (O.)Jan. 7
- 25238 Wed. (E.)Jan. 7
- 25139 Sat. (O.)Jan. 10
- 25240 Wed. (E.)Jan. 14
- 25141 Sat. (O.)Jan. 17
- 25242 Wed. (E.)Jan. 21
- 25143 Sat. (O.)Jan. 24
- 25244 Wed. (E.)Jan. 28
- 25145 Sat. (O.)Jan. 31
- 25246 Wed. (E.)Feb. 4
- 25147 Sat. (O.)Feb. 7
- 25248 Wed. (E.)Feb. 11

Universal

- 46 FridayJan. 2
- 47 WednesdayJan. 7
- 48 FridayJan. 9
- 49 WednesdayJan. 14
- 50 FridayJan. 16
- 51 WednesdayJan. 21
- 52 FridayJan. 23
- 53 WednesdayJan. 28
- 54 FridayJan. 30
- 55 WednesdayFeb. 4
- 56 FridayFeb. 6
- 57 WednesdayFeb. 11

Paramount News

- 37 SaturdayJan. 3
- 38 WednesdayJan. 7
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- 41 SaturdayJan. 17
- 42 WednesdayJan. 21
- 43 SaturdayJan. 24
- 44 WednesdayJan. 28
- 45 SaturdayJan. 31
- 46 WednesdayFeb. 4
- 47 SaturdayFeb. 7
- 48 WednesdayFeb. 11

Metrotone News

- 232 ThursdayJan. 1
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- 234 ThursdayJan. 8
- 235 TuesdayJan. 13
- 236 ThursdayJan. 15
- 237 TuesdayJan. 20
- 238 ThursdayJan. 22
- 239 TuesdayJan. 27
- 240 ThursdayJan. 29
- 241 TuesdayFeb. 3
- 242 ThursdayFeb. 5
- 243 TuesdayFeb. 10

Fox Movietone

- 34 SaturdayJan. 3
- 35 WednesdayJan. 7
- 36 SaturdayJan. 10
- 37 WednesdayJan. 14
- 38 SaturdayJan. 17
- 39 WednesdayJan. 21
- 40 SaturdayJan. 24
- 41 WednesdayJan. 28
- 42 SaturdayJan. 31
- 43 WednesdayFeb. 4
- 44 SaturdayFeb. 7
- 45 WednesdayFeb. 11

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New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 1942

No. 2

HERE AND THERE

IN AN IMAGINARY LETTER, supposedly addressed by every exhibitor to Santa Claus on December 22, Abram F. Myers, generalissimo of the Allied exhibitor forces, expressed whatever wishes the exhibitors have in mind. These are as follows:

VICTORY: Victory of the United States over its enemies.

UNITY: Brought about through the MPICC.

CONSENT DECREE: "Please, Santa, place in my stocking an acceptable substitute for the block-of-five method of selling pictures, to go into effect June 1. Every dire prediction concerning this 'noble experiment' has come to pass and I do not believe I could survive another year under this unworkable and now discredited system."

APPEAL BOARD: In this question, Mr. Myers has the exhibitor petition Santa to abolish the Appeal Board, or at least change its personnel completely, so that whatever is good in the arbitration system might be salvaged. The reason for this plea is the fact that, in his opinion, the Board's decisions, instead of interpreting the Decree's spirit, interprets it in a way that tends to perpetuate the monopoly by which the wrongs the exhibitors have suffered up to this time are perpetuated. "It has emasculated," Mr. Myers's imaginary letter says, "virtually every award in favor of an independent exhibitor and has offered gratuitous advice to the circuits and distributors as to how to evade the decree."

CEILING OF RENTALS: The letter expresses a fright at the constantly increasing film rentals and petitions Santa to bring them down to reason. "So Santa," Mr. Myers says, "please give us a ceiling on film rentals that will assure us a fair profit. We hope this can be accomplished without governmental action. . . ."

FAIR DEALING: The petition expresses the hope that Santa Claus will bring to the exhibitors a distributor resolve not to resort to practices that they cannot justify in equity and good conscience.

The closing paragraph hits at the practice of withholding pictures in cases where the exhibitors refuse to increase their admission prices, as demanded by the distributors on special pictures. "I have taken pains to explain to my patrons," the letter states, "how patriotic the motion picture industry is. I am anxious that they see that inspiring picture 'Sergeant York.' But if I require my customers to pay double the usual admission price in order to see this epic of American heroism, I am going to have to make some embarrassing explanation."

Mr. Myers should have added in the closing paragraph something about the pictures that are promised one season and then held back from release, to enable them to ask the exhibitors the following season to pay more money for that picture.

In reference to the "crack" on the Appeal Board, the Board has issued a statement in the trade papers to the effect that its decisions are based on the provisions of the Consent Decree, and feels that it has no right to do otherwise.

* * *

IN A RECENT DISPATCH from Hollywood it was stated that the producers have embarked upon the production of war pictures on a large scale.

HARRISON'S REPORTS predicts that the producers will have regrets when all the pictures of this type they have announced are produced and shown.

The sad part about it is the fact that the producers will not be the only ones who will suffer as a result of this bad judgment; the exhibitors will suffer as much, and even more, in proportion.

It is not war pictures that are needed just now: people have war for breakfast, luncheon and dinner; they read about war in the newspapers, they hear about war morning, noon and night over the radio, and they talk about war almost every minute of the day. Don't you think, then, that, when it comes to their taking a trip into an illusory world, they should have some respite?

There is enough suffering, both physical and spiritual, in life; why give such suffering to the people also in their entertainment?

* * *

PRESIDENT OF 20TH CENTURY-FOX, Sidney Kent, suggests that the Big Five should not invoke their rights in the escape clause of the Consent Decree next June, because he believes that the Consent Decree selling has not been given a chance to demonstrate itself whether it is a failure or a success.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has fought as much as any other factor for a fair test of the selling system that has been established by the Consent Decree, but there has been so much outcry against it by ninety per cent of the exhibitors that it feels that it is useless to try to shove it down their throats any longer.

Perhaps the Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee will be able to find some system that will be acceptable to the distributors as well as to the exhibitors.

Incidentally, Jack Kirsch, Chairman of the MPICC, has called a meeting at the Warwick Hotel, in this City, for January 21. He announced that another meeting will be held immediately thereafter in Los Angeles.

* * *

THE PROFITS OF LOEW'S INC., for the year 1941 have been \$11,134,593. The profits of all other companies, with the exception of Twentieth Century-Fox, for the same year, have been correspondingly high (Twentieth Century-Fox should show high profits this year).

When one bears in mind the wails of the producing-distributing companies when they began to lose their fat income from the foreign market one cannot help feeling that the film companies have done well without that market.

It has often been said that the moving picture business is like a cat—it has nine lives; it can stand more abuse and more waste than any other big business in the world.

* * *

THE NEW YORK THEATRES WERE PACKED to the rafters during the holidays; they did the biggest business in their histories. It made no difference what the quality of the picture was; people went to the mediocre pictures in as great numbers as they went to the good pictures.

The unprecedented business is attributed as much to the easing up of the strain as a result of the declaration of the war by the Axis powers against us as to the plentiful money in circulation as a result of the fact that everybody is working, and at high wages.

The opinion expressed in these columns recently was to the effect that, after the first excitement, people will settle down to normal behavior, and picture theatres will be doing normal, and even more than normal, business.

"Valley of the Sun" with Lucille Ball and James Craig

(RKO, Feb. 6; time, 78 min.)

This western should entertain the action fans. The production values are above the average picture of this type, and the players have a fairly good box-office rating. Although the story is flimsy, the fans will probably overlook that fact, for the action has many of the ingredients they enjoy—hard fist fights, fast horseback riding, and excitement provoked by an Indian raid. In addition, it has plentiful comedy and a good romance:—

Because he had helped three Apache Indian friends to escape from an unjust trial, James Craig, an Indian scout attached to the Army, is sentenced to five years' imprisonment. But his soldier friends help him to escape. He attempts to ride to Desert Center in a stagecoach, but Dean Jagger, the unscrupulous Indian agent, throws him off. A friendly Indian riding through the desert helps him to his destination. Craig arrives at Desert Center in the midst of a celebration; Jagger was to marry the town's prettiest girl (Lucille Ball). Craig finds and beats up Jagger, thereby causing a postponement of the marriage. Jagger's friends try to kill him, but the friendly help of Sir Cedric Hardwicke and of Peter Whitney, a simple-minded strong man who worshipped Miss Ball, saves his life. The three decide that Miss Ball must not marry Jagger. In the meantime, Jagger sets out with Miss Ball for Tucson, to be married there. The Judge (Billy Gilbert), who was to have performed the ceremony but who had been kidnapped by Whitney, and Craig enter the stagecoach, to the surprise of Jagger. They are set upon by Indians, who were angry because Jagger had been consistently defrauding them of their cattle. They take them to their village. Heeding the pleas of Craig, whom they trusted as one of their own, they permit Jagger to go free on his promise to send them the cattle. But Jagger goes back on his word and makes a prisoner of the Indian chief (Antonio Moreno), who had called on him with reference to his promise. This brings out the Indian tribes in great numbers and they attack the village. By this time Miss Ball knows the sort of man Jagger was and refuses to marry him; anyway she had fallen in love with Craig. Fast thinking on Craig's part puts an end to the warfare; the cattle is given to the Indians as promised, and Jagger is forced to leave the state. Craig and Miss Ball marry.

Horace McCoy wrote the screen play from the Clarence Budington Kelland story; George Marshall directed it, and Graham Baker produced it. In the cast are Tom Tyler, George Cleveland, Hank Bell, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Joan of Paris" with Michele Morgan and Paul Henreid

(RKO, Feb. 20; running time, 91 min.)

A strong but somewhat harrowing melodrama revolving around the efforts of five British fliers to escape from the German Gestapo. Naturally it holds one in suspense because of the constant danger to the fliers and also to those who help them; some of the situations are exciting. Yet it is this constant danger that sets one's nerves on edge and tends to depress one. Even the happiness one feels at the end when the fliers finally escape is dampened by the fact that the heroine sacrifices her life to make this possible. The background sets are good—they have an authentic air:—

Paul Henreid, member of the Free French Army fighting with England, and commander of a crack RAF squadron, is shot down with his four men (Alan Ladd, Jack Briggs, James Monks, and Richard Fraser) during a raid over France. They manage to escape and change their clothes; following Henreid's instructions they go their separate ways, planning to meet in Paris, there to contact the British Intelligence to obtain means for passage back to England. Once in Paris, they are spotted by the Gestapo agents who follow them constantly. Henreid appeals to Thomas Mitchell, a priest known to him since childhood, for help. He hides Henreid's four pals in the ancient sewers, there to wait for word from Henreid. In an effort to evade the Gestapo agent following him, Henreid hides in the garret room of Michele Morgan, barmaid at the cafe he had entered. She is frightened when she finds him there; but he pretends he had been sent there by Mitchell to give her money to buy a new dress. He innocently gives her a bill he had taken from a German soldier which the Gestapo had identified. Once she spends the money, she is marked by them. Miss Morgan, without knowing what it was all about, helps

get messages through. Henreid finally contacts the British agent (May Robson) and receives instructions where he and his men were to go; there they would find a boat to take them to England. By this time Miss Morgan and Henreid are in love and he tells her the truth. Henreid is forced to kill the Gestapo agent following him, so as to get to his men. Miss Morgan, by pretending to take the Gestapo leader (Laird Cregar) to the hideout, gives Henreid and his men their chance to escape. For this she is executed.

Charles Bennett and Ellis St. Joseph wrote the screen play, Robert Stevenson directed it, and David Hempstead produced it. In the cast are Alexander Granach, Paul Weigel, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Son of Fury" with Tyrone Power and Gene Tierney

(20th Century-Fox, Jan. 30; time, 100 min.)

This is the kind of entertainment the masses should enjoy pretty well. It is a costume adventure melodrama, with just enough of everything to appeal to most types of audiences. For women, there are strong romantic scenes; for men, there are several brutal fist fights that should excite them. And the tropical island scenes, showing Power diving for pearls, will appeal to the youngsters. Although parts of the story may seem illogical to intelligent audiences, it should hold the interest of the average movie-goer, first, because of the sympathy one feels for the hero, and, secondly, because of the adventurous career followed by him:—

When George Sanders, a British nobleman, discovers that his older brother, who had died, had been married and had left a son, who was rightfully entitled to the title and estates that he was enjoying, he takes steps to get the boy under his control. By means of a court order, he takes the boy (Roddy McDowall) from his grandfather (Harry Davenport), and puts him to work in the stables. He treats the boy brutally and humiliates him; but he cannot break his spirit or his determination to some day claim what rightfully belonged to him. The boy grows into a strong man (Tyrone Power), as rebellious as ever. Sanders' daughter (Frances Farmer) and Power fall in love. When Sanders finds them in each other's arms, he beats Power. Although Power was Sanders' bonded servant for life, he decides to escape. He becomes a stowaway on a ship sailing for India. Through a plan on the part of John Carradine, one of the crew, they both manage to escape when they near an island. Carradine knew that there was a fortune in pearls to be had there. The natives are at first antagonistic, for they had once suffered at the hands of Spaniards, whom they had finally driven off the island. Power convinces them of their good intentions and they are accepted. Power dives for pearls and they soon acquire a fortune. Power falls in love with Gene Tierney, a native girl, and they live an idyllic life. But one day a ship arrives and Power decides to leave for England; Carradine gives him his share of the pearls, for he had decided to remain on the island. Power uses his fortune to establish his name and his rights. Finding Miss Farmer to be treacherous, he turns everything over to his poor friends, and goes back to the island.

Philip Dunne wrote the screen play from the novel by Edison Marshall; John Cromwell directed it, and William Perlberg produced it. In the cast are Elsa Lanchester, Kay Johnson, Dudley Digges, Halliwell Hobbes, Arthur Hohl.

Morally suitable for all.

"Young America" with Jane Withers

(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 6; time, 72 min.)

This latest Jane Withers picture should find its most responsive audience amongst juveniles. It is doubtful if it will appeal to adults. For one thing, the plot is neither novel nor exciting; for another, the action is concerned mainly with the juvenile characters and the proceedings are hardly of the type to interest adults. One or two spots are amusing; but these are not enough to sustain one's interest throughout. The story makes little use of Miss Withers' talents, for she neither sings nor dances. There is a mild romance:—

Jane arrives at the farm of her grandmother (Jane Darwell) in company with her chauffeur (Ben Carter). Her wealthy father, feeling that he could not manage her, wanted her to live there and go to the public high school for a time. Jane finds everything unappealing and makes a nuisance of herself at school. But, under the influence of proper companions, she changes and becomes a member of the local 4H Club, a nationally-known organization formed by boys

and girls of rural communities who dedicated themselves to good living. Jane even goes so far as to raise thoroughbred animals for the county fair. Lynne Roberts, the 4H member who had been chosen to represent their district at the national meeting in Washington, enters in the fair what she believed to be a pure-bred cow. She is disqualified and disgraced when, through a telegram supposedly sent by Jane, it is learned that the pedigree papers had been forged; she had been unaware of this. She refuses to permit an investigation when she realizes that her father was mixed up in the scandal with William Tracy, who had involved him in a gambling debt. No one talks to Jane. She is unhappy and plans to go back home. But through an accident she learns the truth, and forces Tracy to sign a confession, thus clearing herself and Miss Roberts. She is cheered by her club members.

Sam G. Engel wrote the screen play, Louis King directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it. In the cast are Glen Roberts, Darryl Hickman, Roman Bohnen, Arthur Loft, Louise Beavers.

Morally suitable for all.

"Right to the Heart" with Brenda Joyce and Joseph Allen, Jr.

(20th Century-Fox, Jan. 23; time, 73 min.)

A nice program picture, with considerable heart appeal. The first part should appeal mostly to men; it deals with the making of a pugilist—his training at camp from the very first day until the time when he can handle his fists like an expert. The second part concerns itself with the romance, and it should appeal to women in addition to men. Perhaps the picture would have been much more interesting if the producer had not made young Stanley Clements talk so much, and to be so precocious; he would then have been less annoying. There is considerable comedy in it, contributed mostly by Ethel Griffies, who takes the part of the hero's aunt. Brenda Joyce takes a sympathetic part. Mr. Allen's part, too, is sympathetic:—

To Jim Killian's (Charles D. Brown's) training camp for pugilists comes John T. Bromley, III (Joseph Allen, Jr.) to receive the necessary training until he felt capable of challenging Morgan (William Haade), who had floored him at a night club over Barbara Paxton (Cobina Wright, Jr.) disgracing him. Before accepting him, Jim warns John that his training would require hard work; but John is willing to go through with it. Young Stash (Stanley Clements) takes a dislike to him and, in conspiracy with other trainees, he tries to drive him out of the camp. But Jenny (Brenda Joyce), Jim's daughter, seeing through the scheme, tries to protect John. In a few days, John is in love with Jenny and Jenny with him, but neither admits it. Sensing this, Stash sends to Barbara Paxton a telegram leading her to believe that John was seriously ill. Barbara informs John's aunt Minerva, who had disowned John, but she pretends that she would have nothing to do with him. As soon as Barbara leaves the house, however, Minerva orders her car to take her to camp. There she finds John, not only not ill, but in perfect health. John sends Minerva back to town. In six weeks, John is ready for the fray with Morgan and leaves camp. Jenny is heart-broken. Stash, feeling sorry for Jenny, and having learned to like John by this time, goes to town, calls on Minerva and informs her of Jenny's feelings toward John. Minerva is pleased about it, for she, too, liked Jenny. John meets Morgan at the same cabaret and, in the presence of Barbara, his aunt, and many of his friends, knocks out Morgan with one punch. His pride having been satisfied, he returns to his aunt. Minerva takes him back to camp, and there he and Jenny confess to each other their love.

It is a Harold McGrath story. Walter Bullock wrote the screen play, Sol Wurtzel produced it, and Eugene Forde directed it.

There are no objectionable situations in it.

"A Gentleman At Heart" with Cesar Romero, Carole Landis and Milton Berle

(20th Century-Fox, Jan. 16; time, 67 min.)

This will have to depend on the popularity of the three leading players for its box-office appeal because the story is weak. Milton Berle knows how to deliver comedy lines, and manages to provoke laughter on several occasions. But the action is somewhat tedious, and not particularly edifying, since it shows the hero involved in a scheme to dupe some

victims out of a large sum of money. The fact that in the end he does not benefit by it is merely an accident. It should appeal mostly to those who know something about the art of painting. The romance is routine:—

Cesar Romero, a racetrack bookmaker, is enraged when he learns that Berle, one of his henchmen, had placed bets under an assumed name and was now indebted to him for \$5,000. He orders Berle to pay up within twenty-four hours. Berle, learning that he had inherited an art gallery, gladly turns it over to Romero. He and Romero go to look over their new property to see what they could get out of it; but they learn from Carole Landis, the manager, that instead of assets Berle had inherited liabilities. Romero, having become attracted to Miss Landis, decides to make the gallery pay. Knowing nothing about art, he puts himself in Miss Landis' hands for instructions. In a short time they are in love with each other. When Romero reads about a famous Velasquez painting that had been missing for many years, he hits upon an idea. He had become acquainted with a man (J. Carrol Naish), who had once tried to swindle him by selling him a picture of a supposed master that he had painted himself. Why not have Naish make a copy of the famous painting which they could sell as the original? Romero becomes frightened when a U. S. government agent buys it for the government art galleries. At the same time he is confronted by one of his employees, who insists that he had found the man who owned the original. Romero buys the supposed original for \$100,000 and replaces the copy with the new canvas. To his sorrow he learns that the supposed original was a phony. Naish fixes everything by putting his painting back in the frame; this is accepted by the government experts as the original. Romero refuses to accept money for it. Berle makes him happy when he tells him that the \$100,000 he had paid out was counterfeit money. Romero and Miss Landis plan to marry.

Lee Loeb and Harold Buchman wrote the screen play from a story by Paul H. Fox; Ray McCarey directed it and Walter Morosco produced it. In the cast are Richard Derr, Rose Hobart, Jerome Cowan, Elisha Cook, Jr. and others.

Not suitable for other than adult trade.

"Joe Smith, American" with Robert Young and Marsha Hunt

(MGM, February; time, 62 min.)

This picture should appeal to the masses, not only because of its timeliness but also because it glorifies the average man. It puts over its message of patriotism not by preachment, but by means of a strongly appealing human-interest story. The scenes that show the hero suffering physical torture at the hands of enemy agents rather than divulge a government secret to them touch one's emotions deeply, not only because of the pity one feels for him, but because of one's admiration for his strength of character. The closing scenes, in which he leads the F.B.I. men to the enemy's hideout, hold one in suspense. The hero's family life is depicted in a charming way:—

Robert Young, crew foreman in an aeroplane factory, is chosen by the head of the factory, after close questioning by two members of the F.B.I., for the highly important job of installing new bomb devices in the planes. He is instructed to tell no one about his work, not even his wife (Marsha Hunt). After his first day's work, Young leaves in his car for home. He is followed by a group of men, who force his car off the road and kidnap him. Enemy agents, they take him to their hideout, where they try to beat him into telling them about his work. Although they torture him, Young refuses to speak. He keeps up his courage by trying to think of other things—his happy home life, the charm of his wife, his love for his son (Darryl Hickman), what his work meant to his fellow-countrymen and so forth. Since he was blindfolded, he tries to remember things about his abductors to aid him in tracking them down later. Finally they take him out in the car and start driving away; he manages to jump out. With a stone, he marks out things to remember about getting back to the hideout, and then faints. The police find him and take him to a hospital. He insists on starting out with the F.B.I. men to find the hideout. They finally do and arrest the three men there; but the leader had escaped. Young, who had managed to notice the ring the leader had worn, identifies him, too; he turns out to be the general manager of the factory. Young is acclaimed as a hero.

Allen Rivkin wrote the screen play from the story by Paul Gallico. Richard Thorpe directed it, and Jack Chertok produced it. In the cast are Harvey Stephens, Jonathan Hale, Noel Madison, Don Costello, and others.

Suitable for all.

**"The Mad Doctor of Market Street" with
Lionel Atwill, Una Merkel and Claire Dodd**

(*Universal, February 27; time, 60 min.*)

Although this is supposed to be in the thriller class, it is doubtful if it will have a frightening effect on anyone. So ridiculous is the story, and so slow-moving the action, that patrons will be bored instead of excited. There is nothing that the players can do to enliven the proceedings, for they are up against trite material and stilted dialogue. The romance is routine:—

Lionel Atwill, a pseudo-scientist, who believed he could restore dead people to life, commits a murder during his experiments. He flees the country, sailing for Australia. The ship sinks as a result of a fire. He escapes in a lifeboat; in the same boat are Una Merkel, who was on her way to Australia to be married, her niece (Claire Dodd), Nat Pendleton, a dumb prizefighter, John Eldredge, a ship's officer, and Richard Davies, one of the stewards. They land on an island just as the island princess (Rosina Galli) dies. Thinking that the white people had brought the evil spirit, the natives plan to burn them. But Atwill, realizing that Miss Galli was not dead but had suffered a heart attack, offers to bring her back to life. When he accomplishes this, they call him the "God of Life" and offer him anything he wants. Atwill decides to marry Miss Dodd. When he learns that she loved Davies, he orders the natives to bring Davies to him. He chloroforms him and orders the natives to bury him. Miss Dodd offers to marry Atwill immediately if he would bring Davies back to consciousness; he does this at the insistence of the natives, who feared having a dead man in the ground. Davies realizes that Atwill must be exposed. When he finds the body of one of the natives who had drowned, he brings the body to Atwill. The natives naturally insist he bring him back to life, which he cannot do. They kill him. A plane lands in time to rescue the other members of the party.

Al Martin wrote the screen play, Joseph Lewis directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it. Mala, Noble Johnson are in the cast.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Mexican Spitfire At Sea" with Lupe Velez,
Leon Errol and Charles Rogers**

(*RKO, March 6; time, 72 min.*)

Since the same idea has been used for the basis of the stories in all the "Mexican Spitfire" pictures, it is beginning to wear a bit thin. As a matter of fact, this one is the silliest of the lot. It contains such a hodge-podge of foolishness, that it tires instead of amusing one. Its comedy should prove more entertaining to children than to adults:—

Lupe Velez and her husband (Charles Rogers) sail for Honolulu. She is under the impression that it was to be a pleasure trip. But when she learns that her husband's aunt (Elisabeth Risdon) and uncle (Leon Errol) also were on the boat in an effort to help Rogers sign a large advertising contract with Harry Holman, one of their shipmates, she is furious and makes a scene. Aboard the ship is their friend "Lord Epping" (also played by Errol), through whom Rogers hoped to land Holman, for he knew that Holman's wife (Florence Bates) would urge Holman to do anything for a chance to meet the titled Englishman. But Miss Velez and Errol, unaware that "Lord Epping" was on the boat, plan to have Errol pose as the "Lord" so as to teach Rogers a lesson. Then the confusion starts for Errol says one thing and "Lord Epping" another, thus driving everyone wild. When Miss Velez hears that Rogers was to appear at a party given by Holman with another woman (Marion Martin) posing as his wife, she does not know that he was compelled to do this because of a misunderstanding on Holman's part. She, therefore, appears with Rogers' business rival, posing as his fiancée. Then it is Rogers' turn to be furious. Everything is finally adjusted; Rogers gets the contract, and he and Miss Velez patch up their quarrel.

Jerry Cady and Charles Roberts wrote the screen play, Leslie Goodwins directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Zasu Pitts, Lydia Bilbrook and Marten Lamont.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Sing Your Worries Away" with Bert Lahr,
Buddy Ebsen and June Havoc**

(*RKO, February 27; time, 71 min.*)

This slapstick comedy with music is fairly good program entertainment. Credit for this is owed mostly to the capable performers, who manage to provoke laughter on occasion even though they are up against some pretty trite material. The trouble is that the story has been handled poorly, with the result that at times it is tiresome. A few situations are fairly comical; the one in which Lahr, dressed in a jacket which, unknown to him, belonged to a magician and was filled with props, becomes frightened when animals and flowers fall out of the pockets, should amuse patrons. And the musical numbers, of the popular variety, will satisfy the young crowd. The romance is unimportant:—

Sam Levene, gangster-owner of a cafe, his crooked lawyer (Morgan Conway), and Conway's girl friend (June Havoc), an entertainer at the cafe, learn that the cigarette girl (Dorothy Lovett) at the cafe and her cousin (Bert Lahr), a down-and-out song writer, had inherited \$3,000,000, of which both Lahr and Miss Lovett were unaware. Their scheme was to get rid of Lahr; then Levene could marry Miss Lovett, take the fortune from her, and share it with his pals. Conway advises Levene not to kill Lahr, but to worry him to death. But Lahr's pal (Buddy Ebsen) watches over him and helps him forget his troubles. Miss Havoc convinces Lahr that only when he died would his songs become famous. Lahr decides to jump into the lake. Levene, thinking that he had drowned, informs Lahr's girl friend (Patsy Kelly) that Ebsen had pushed Lahr to his death. But Lahr reappears, the crooks are uncovered and arrested, and Miss Lovett and Lahr share the fortune. Miss Lovett marries Ebsen, and Lahr marries Miss Kelly.

Monte Brice wrote the screen play, A. Edward Sutherland directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it. In the cast are Margaret Dumont, Don Barclay, Alvino Rey and his orchestra and the King Sisters. Morally suitable for all.

**"Call Out the Marines" with Victor
McLaglen, Edmund Lowe and Binnie Barnes**

(*RKO, February 13; time, 67 min.*)

Although the names "Quirt" and "Flagg" are not mentioned, the characters played by McLaglen and Lowe are somewhat similar to the old combination, portrayed successfully by them in a few pictures. But that is where the similarity ends, for this latest picture is in no way as entertaining as their former efforts. For one thing, their bickering has lost its comic value; for another, the story is extremely silly, and the comedy is forced. There is no doubt that the melodramatic angle revolving around spies was not meant to be taken seriously. Some patrons might find the roles enacted by Lowe and McLaglen in bad taste, for, as U. S. Marines, they certainly do not bring credit to that body. The musical renditions are helpful; so is the wild ride that Lowe and McLaglen are supposed to take in jeeps, and later on a motorcycle, for the stunt performers who take their parts in these scenes do excellent and exciting driving:—

After many years of separation, Lowe and McLaglen, former buddies in the Marines, meet at a race track and are joyfully united. No sooner are they together when they start squabbling about money and women. They both try to win the affections of Binnie Barnes, hostess at a cafe owned by Paul Kelly, their former officer in the Marines. They get into many fights, in which spectators and patrons become involved. Finally they are both called back to active service as Sergeants in the Marines. Unknown to the two sergeants, Kelly was still in the service, working secretly to trap a gang of spies. Nor do they know that Miss Barnes was part of the spy ring. When they do find out about the espionage plans, they think that Kelly was one of the enemy agents and knock him out, thus disrupting his work. They finally learn the truth and help capture the spies. They are disappointed to learn that their mutual girl friend was a spy.

Frank Ryan and William Hamilton wrote the screen play, and directed the picture; Howard Benedict produced it. In the cast are Robert Smith, Dorothy Lovett, Franklin Pangborn, and George Cleveland.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 1942

No. 3

HERE AND THERE

A FEW WEEKS AGO, Franc Arnold published in *Showmen's Trade Review* an able article about the discriminatory rates charged by the newspapers to the theatres.

"The theatrical rate," Mr. Arnold states partly, "is not found in every location, but it obtains in the majority of them."

Why does this "theatrical rate" exist at all, asks Mr. Arnold, and he answers just as most exhibitors would have answered it—for the supposed free publicity the theatre gets. He then proceeds to demolish this theory.

This paper believes, like Mr. Arnold, that the so-called "theatrical rate" is discriminatory and unfair, for the reason that, unlike the advertisements of any of the commodities, the picture-theatre advertisement has public interest. Who has ever heard of newspaper readers' looking into the advertising columns to find a story about the soap he had in mind to buy, or about any of the other commodities offered for sale by the merchants that day? But they do look to see something about the pictures that are advertised, about the stars that appear in it, or about the director that produced it. And they find it in the "reader" that is furnished to the newspaper by the exhibitor at no cost—facts that would have cost the newspapers considerable money to obtain, and for which the exhibitor is penalized. In other words, the exhibitor furnishes the editor something that adds value to the newspaper and is penalized for it.

Baseball and football games do very little advertising in the newspapers, and yet they are charged a smaller rate than the picture theatres, even though they are given column upon column of free write-ups. As a matter of fact, they are charged higher rates, as I understand it, only when they take an ad in the amusement page; when they put their ad in the sports page, they pay regular commercial rate. Why should, then, the picture theatres be penalized when their advertisements are sought by the readers just as eagerly as are those of other amusements?

You should insist upon an equal treatment with the other advertisers.

You may not be able to convince the newspaper editor that your demand is just, but if you keep it up long enough you may be able to make him realize that you are right, particularly if you should point out to him that, since advertising brings in more business, you intend to utilize the saving into buying more advertising space. You may also tell him that, the more people you bring out of their homes, the greater will

be the business you will create in your community. When people come out of their homes, they cannot help indulging in window-shopping. This helps the merchant to make a greater number of sales.

* * *

WHILE TALKING about the unfair rates that are charged to the theatres for advertising space, we might just as well take up another evil which, though it concerns mainly the distributors, it affects the exhibitors indirectly to a considerable extent. I refer to the practice of some large city exhibitors who make a low-rate agreement with the local newspaper and insist upon the producer-distributors' paying the high rate unless they place their advertisements in the newspapers through them. Very often the picture a distributor wishes to advertise may not play that exhibitor's theatre at all. But the evil lies in the fact frequently a distributor may decide to take small ads in the newspaper months before the picture's release to follow it up with a big campaign around the time the picture is to play at a local theatre. But because that distributor cannot obtain the low rate from the newspaper, on account of its agreement with the local exhibitor, he is discouraged from going on with the pre-release advertising campaign. A policy such as this hurts, not only the distributor concerned, but also every exhibitor in that zone who is to play the picture. An advance advertising campaign always helps the picture. This help is prevented by the arbitrary action of the big exhibitors who have such contracts.

* * *

WHERE DOES SIDNEY KENT STAND on the Consent Decree selling? In his letter to Mr. Abram F. Myers, sent to him a few days before the Motion Picture Industry Joint Conference assembly met in Chicago, he implied that the abolition of the new selling system would benefit the exhibitors just as much as it would the producers. Two weeks ago he pleaded with the Big Five not to invoke the "escape clause" next June but to give the system a better chance.

Members of the Allied organization have been bewildered by Mr. Kent's conflicting views. What has happened from the time he wrote his famous letter to Mr. Myers and the time he issued his plea against invoking the "escape clause" to make him change his mind?

As said in last week's issue, no other paper has fought as hard as has HARRISON'S REPORTS for giving the Consent Decree selling a fair test. The test has been given, but instead of proving beneficial for those for whom it has been established by the Government

(Continued on last page)

"Woman of the Year" with Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy

(MGM, February; running time, 112 min.)

Good mass entertainment, suitable particularly for women. If one were to judge the picture solely by its story values it would get just fair rating, for the plot is routine and develops in an obvious manner. What brings it up to "good" is the customary lavish production MGM gives its "A" pictures, and the box-office drawing power of the two stars. Katharine Hepburn gives a fine performance and wins one's sympathy; but Tracy, although he portrays a sympathetic character, gives a rather uninspired performance. Several situations are highly amusing; and the love scenes should please the romantic-minded:—

Tracy, well-known sports writer for a New York newspaper, is annoyed at the remarks made on a quiz radio program by Miss Hepburn, internationally known newspaper columnist; she had expressed contempt for sports, particularly for baseball. She and Tracy carry on a battle against each other in their respective columns, until they meet. It is love at first sight. Tracy takes Miss Hepburn to baseball games and has her meet ordinary people; her reactions please him, but her parties, at which she entertains notables, bore him. Finally they marry, on the understanding that Miss Hepburn was to continue with her work. Tracy even moves into her apartment. A sample of what their life might be like is given Tracy on the wedding night, for even then Miss Hepburn cannot be left alone. Although he is deeply in love with his wife, Tracy does not care for the life they were leading. He is annoyed when she announces that she had adopted a young Greek boy refugee, giving as an excuse the fact that she had no time to have children of her own. Miss Hepburn is overjoyed when she is voted the outstanding woman of the year. On the night of the banquet in her honor, Tracy decides to take matters into his own hands; first, realizing that the refugee boy was lonesome, he takes him back to the orphanage; then he moves out of the apartment. Miss Hepburn is shocked when she returns home to learn what had happened; she rushes to the orphanage to get the boy back, but the child refuses to go with her. She tries to make up with Tracy at the office next day, but he spurns her. She is brought to her senses when she attends the wedding of her father to an aunt whom she adored and listens to the marriage vow. She rushes to Tracy's apartment, filled with a desire to be a good wife and cook his breakfast. She makes a mess of things, and Tracy chides her for being foolish and going to extremes. But they are reconciled.

Ring Lardner, Jr., and Michael Kanin wrote the screen play, George Stevens directed it, and Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it. In the cast are Fay Bainter, Reginald Owen, Minor Watson, William Bendix, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Don't Get Personal" with Hugh Herbert, Mischa Auer and Jane Frazee

(Universal, Jan. 2; time, 60 min.)

A minor program entertainment. The plot is extremely silly, the action uninteresting, and the performances only fair. About the only thing in the picture's favor is the music, which is of the popular variety and is sung pleasantly by Jane Frazee and Robert Paige. The best that can be said for this is that it may serve as the second feature in neighborhood theatres:—

Hugh Herbert, an eccentric small-town dweller, learns that he had inherited his uncle's pickle business and the fortune that went with it. The thing that pleases him more than the wealth is the fact that now he could meet the two young performers on the radio program sponsored by his pickle firm. He thinks that the serial in which they performed was actually the true story of their lives and he is deter-

mined to set things straight for them. Andrew Tombes and Ernest Truex, associated with the firm in executive capacities, plan to buy out Herbert for a ridiculously small sum. At the same time they are worried that he might not like the two stars (Jane Frazee and Richard Davies) in the radio program; so they plan to introduce others to him and see to it that he does not go to any of the broadcasts. In the end, everything adjusts itself—Tombes and Truex are unmasked as connivers, and the affairs of the young people, which involved two couples, are adjusted to everyone's satisfaction.

Bernard Feins wrote the story, and Hugh Wedlock, Jr. and Howard Snyder, the screen play; Charles Lamont directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Robert Paige, Anne Gwynne, Sterling Holloway, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"We Were Dancing" with Norma Shearer and Melvyn Douglas

(MGM, release date not yet set; 93 min.)

From the entertainment point of view, it is fair, for the story is simple and weak. So far as the box office is concerned, the exhibitor will have to depend on the popularity of the stars, on the near-sex situations, (which revolve around husband and wife), the lavish background and the sharp photography. There is hardly any human interest in it, but there is some comedy:—

At a house party somewhere in a South Carolina town, where her engagement to Lee Bowman, a wealthy American lawyer is being celebrated, Norama Shearer, an impoverished Polish princess and professional house guest, meets fascinating Melvyn Douglas, also a professional house guest, and it is love at first sight. They decide to elope. Before eloping, however, Melvyn explains to Norma that he was taking advantage of his foreign birth and culture to make a living with, by accepting invitations from title-struck wealthy American women, and that her life with him would be a hard one. But Norma is willing to accept his lot as her lot. For a while they conceal their marriage, but Gail Patrick, a decorator of society people's homes, who had had an affair with Melvyn and still loved him, suspects the secret and, at a house party where she was present, she reveals their marriage. Soon Norma loathes the life they were living and begs Melvyn to get a job and establish a home of their own; she would be willing to cook. But Melvyn, hoping that he would win at bridge enough to enable him to pay their debts, keeps putting off accepting her suggestion. But she feels her humiliation deeply when their last hostess tries to get rid of them. To make matters worse, Melvyn loses at bridge to Bowman and is compelled to give him a check even though he had no funds to cover the amount. Thus Norma is compelled to call on Bowman to plead with him not to present the check for payment. At last Melvyn decides to accept her suggestion, but on their way to New York they come upon acquaintances and Melvyn pleads with her for one more try. Norma leaves him and applies for a divorce. But Melvyn, trying his own case as a defendant, tries to convince Norma that her marriage to Bowman would be a mistake since she still loved him, and that, since he had reformed, there was no reason why she should not become reconciled with him. The judge grants the divorce, but soon Douglas wins her again.

The plot has been based partly on the Noel Coward play, "Tonight at 8:30." The screen play was written by Claudine West, Hans Rameau and George Froeschel. It was directed by Robert Z. Leonard. Mr. Leonard and Orville O. Dull produced it. Some of those in the supporting cast are Reginald Owen and Alan Mowbray.

There are no objectionable sex situations in it other than the intimation that Gail and Melville had had many affairs.

"Road to Happiness" with John Boles, Mona Barrie and Billy Lee

(*Monogram, December 19; time, 83 min.*)

Pretty good program entertainment, with plentiful human interest. It is a typical tear-jerker; and several situations are "thick" with sentiment. Yet it should appeal strongly to women because of the sympathy they will feel for the hero and his young son. A few scenes touch one's emotions deeply. No doubt it will be received more favorably in small towns and neighborhood theatres than in large metropolitan theatres:—

John Boles returns to the United States, after having studied for an operatic career in Europe. He is surprised to learn that his wife (Mona Barrie) had divorced him, and had placed their young son (Billy Lee) in a military school. Boles' agent (Roscoe Karns) tells him that Miss Barrie had married a wealthy business man (Selmer Jackson). Boles takes Billy to the old boarding house where he had once lived with Miss Barrie; they are greeted with open arms by the woman who owned the house. Unable to get work as a singer, Boles finally accepts a position on a radio serial program to play an Indian character. Miss Barrie seldom visits her child; she invites him to her home on his birthday but at the last moment changes her mind. Noticing how miserable this made Billy, Boles telephones Miss Barrie and insists that she invite Billy the following week, the day on which he was to make his radio debut. She does this; but when Billy tries to turn on the radio to hear the program, his mother's hard-drinking friends laugh at it and turn it off. Billy tearfully leaves the apartment and goes back home. Jackson, ashamed of his wife's actions and genuinely fond of Billy, calls to see Boles and begs him to turn Billy over to him, offering to give him good schooling. But Boles refuses. Billy accompanies his father to the broadcast studio for rehearsal; while waiting outside he learns that the operatic singer on an important program had suddenly taken ill. Billy excitedly suggests that his father be given a chance; in desperation, the program arranger takes Boles. To his delight, Boles turns out to be a fine singer. An important impresario hears him sing and rushes to the studio to sign him up for opera work. Father and son are overjoyed.

Robert D. Andrews wrote the screen play from a story by Matt Taylor; Phil Rosen directed it, and Scott R. Dunlap produced it. In the cast are Lillian Elliott, Paul Porcasi, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"A Yank on the Burma Road" with Laraine Day and Barry Nelson

(*MGM, February; time, 65 min.*)

Just a fair program melodrama. The main thing in its favor is its timeliness; also a few exciting scenes towards the end. Otherwise, it is lacking in thrills and interest. As a matter of fact, the story is a little silly, the action somewhat unbelievable, and the romance routine. There is little that the players can do to brighten the proceedings:—

Barry Nelson, a New York taxicab driver, becomes famous when he single-handed captures two dangerous killers and turns them over to the police. He is approached by a Chinese organization to undertake a dangerous job—to supervise a fleet of trucks, carrying medical supplies for the Chinese, over the Burma Road. Keye Luke, a member of the organization, offers to accompany him. At first Nelson refuses; but he is touched by the sacrifices made to sponsor this undertaking and he takes the job. At Rangoon, where the trucks are unloaded, Nelson meets Laraine Day and is attracted to her. He does not know that she was married to a flier who was working for the Japs, and that she had been ordered by the authorities to return to America. She is determined to get to her husband and to use Nelson to carry

out her plans. Nelson, thinking that she wanted to get to an old friend in the interior of China, offers to take her along in his truck. He attempts to make love to her but she repulses him. Just before they reach their destination, Nelson learns the truth, also that Miss Day's husband (Stuart Crawford) was held prisoner by a band of Chinese guerillas. He is disgusted with Miss Day, but offers to take her to her husband. Having passed towns devastated by Jap bombings, Miss Day is horrified to think that her husband had had a part in it. They finally reach the guerilla camp. Nelson strikes a bargain with the leader—if he would turn Crawford over to him, he would get the trucks through the enemy lines and deliver them to the Chinese authorities. A brave young Chinese driver goes through the enemy lines first and his truck is blown up. This gives Nelson his chance to get through, followed by the other trucks and the guerillas. They wipe out the Jap forces. Crawford is killed by Luke when he attempts to shoot Nelson in the back. The trucks finally arrive at their destination and Nelson and Miss Day are united.

Gordon Kahn, Hugo Butler, and David Lang wrote the screen play, George B. Seitz directed it, and Samuel Marx produced it. In the cast are Sen Yung, Phillip Ahn, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Bombay Clipper" with William Gargan and Irene Hervey

(*Universal, February 6; time, 60 min.*)

A pretty good program melodrama. Although the plot is based on a formula story of theft and murder, it is more interesting than the average picture of its type because of its timeliness—it revolves around the attempts of enemy agents to obtain valuable jewels en route to the United States for defense purposes. Moreover, the action moves at a fast pace, even though it is concentrated in mostly one set—that of a clipper bound from India to San Francisco. Until the identity of the enemy agents is disclosed, one naturally suspects all the passengers and so one is held in suspense. Romance and a little comedy round out the plot:—

Irene Hervey, who had arrived in India to marry William Gargan, globe-trotting correspondent for an important American newspaper, is annoyed when their marriage is put off because of Gargan's work. She informs him that their engagement was off and that she was leaving by clipper for San Francisco. He tells her that, since his work interfered with their romance, he would resign his position and leave with her; she is delighted at the news. Gargan goes to see his chief to tell him of his decision. The chief offers to help him get a position back home if he would just run down one story for him—to whom and why was the Maharajah sending jewels valued at £1,000,000 by messenger via the clipper. Gargan plans to interview the passengers before sailing time, but he is knocked out mysteriously, and regains consciousness just in time to get aboard the clipper. The excitement then starts; two murders are committed and the jewels stolen. Gargan finally finds the jewels and turns them over to the authorities when the Clipper stops at Singapore. The foreign agents poison the Maharajah's messenger; but he manages to slip the jewels to Gargan before he dies. The clipper starts out again, and this time the agents go after Gargan. At the risk of his life, he manages to uncover the villains and to get back the jewels. He and Miss Hervey are finally united.

Roy Chanslor and Stanley Rubin wrote the screen play, John Rawlins directed it, and Marshall Grant produced it. In the cast are Charles Lang, Maria Montez, Lloyd Corrigan, Mary Gordon, Truman Bradley, Peter Lynn, and others.

The murders make it unsuitable for children.

it has proved detrimental, to such an extent that ninety per cent of the exhibitors look upon it with horror. They say that it has "jacked up" the prices to a point where they can no longer make a living.

This selling system must go, and in its place there should be adopted a system that would not be the old system in its entirety but something that would possess the best features of each. Perhaps permitting a distributor to sell all the pictures he has produced in one group with some sort of cancellation privilege for the exhibitor would be the answer to the exhibitors' prayer. At any rate the exhibitor must be given a chance to cancel a given number of pictures that do not suit his locality, not from either a racial or religious point of view, but from that of the box office. A western picture in a Greater New York theatre, for example, would show to empty seats, whereas in a theatre in some western town it would pack people in. On the other hand, a bed-room farce may cause lines to be formed for an entire block around a Greater New York theatre, yet it may keep people away from a theatre in a mid-western town, even though the picture might be excellent from an artistic point of view. Why then compel the western theatre to play a farce, and the Greater New York theatre a western picture, when the picture will in each case prove injurious to the theatre's box office? The exhibitor should be given, under the circumstances described, latitude in cancelling such pictures.

Perhaps the MPICC will be the means by which the adoption of a better selling system may be put into force. The task of accomplishing this may give us a chance to find out whether the unity desired by all can benefit the exhibitors as much as the producers.

* * *

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has told Lowell Mellet, Coordinator of Government Films, that there should be no more restrictions on motion pictures than are made necessary by the dictates of safety.

"The American motion picture is one of our most effective media in informing and entertaining our citizens," the President said partly to Mr. Mellet in a letter dated December 18, and published in the Federal Register January 3. "The motion picture must remain free in so far as national security will permit.

"I want no censorship of the motion picture; I want no restrictions placed thereon which will impair the usefulness of the film other than those very necessary restrictions which the dictates of safety make imperative. . . ."

The fact that the President of the United States has expressed views that are so definitely in favor of motion pictures places upon the producers a greater responsibility. It is not enough that they should refrain from including in their pictures scenes that might prove detrimental to the safety of the nation; it is necessary that they avoid including scenes which, although they might pass Mr. Mellet's scissors, might reflect upon this nation. Scenes that show members of the U. S. fighting forces either as drunkards or as rowdies; scenes that show lynchings and the like should be avoided entirely, for they lower the prestige of these forces as well as of the nation itself.

THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY, like every other industry, will soon be asked to bear an additional taxation burden for the financing of the war.

There will be some grumbling—naturally, but this paper believes that there will be very little of it. The grumblers may say that, since entertainment is almost as necessary as food, the motion picture entertainment should, like food, be given the same consideration as food when it comes to taxing it.

Grumbling, even in the mildest forms, should not be heard in this industry. The war must be won. And it takes money to fight this war—more than the human race has ever dreamed of. And what will it avail us if we were spared additional taxation but lost the war? Could we think about taxes then? We shall merely be slaves, working for a master.

With all the suffering that war entails, when we compare ourselves with the people of Europe, we cannot help coming to the conclusion that we are living in heaven on earth.

* * *

IT SEEMS AS IF THE TWO COMEDIANS, Abbott and Costello, are beginning to take themselves too seriously; according to Thomas Brady, Hollywood correspondent of the *New York Times*, they have suddenly acquired dramatic aspirations. Universal has lent them to the MGM studio for one picture, "Rio Rita," and while working at that studio, they have been receiving very respectful and cordial treatment. This has so swelled their heads that they are grumbling about going back to Universal, and Costello has expressed a desire to make a dramatic picture.

Will someone inform them that their success on the screen has been due as much to the team work the Universal studio has done on their pictures as to their own artistic ability? There have been dozen of cases where players, raised to stardom overnight, have gone down to oblivion because, having laid too much stress on their own ability and too little on the studio organization that was back of them, they left the studios that made them and thus they lost the benefit of good team work.

Their case may be different, but they owe something to the company which, by good team work at the studio, and by good exploitation at the home office, has made them what they are today. They were given a chance, at considerable risk. That they succeeded, it is to their credit, as much as to the studio's. Who would have given them a job at the salaries they are now getting had they made a flop of their first effort?

If they should take the feeling of gratitude out of their souls, this paper believes that their life as star comedians will be short.

* * *

MR. JACK KIRSCH, temporary chairman of Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee, announces that he has postponed the time of the meeting of his committee from 10:30 a.m., January 21, to 2:30 in the afternoon, (in New York City), so as to give the members of the Committee and others a chance to attend the big parade of the "March of Dimes," which Harry Brandt has arranged for.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions ..	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia	17.50
35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 1942

No. 4

HERE AND THERE

THE MINNESOTA EXHIBITORS asked Wendell Willkie last week to accept an assignment from them in their efforts to reduce film rentals in the Minnesota territory, and Mr. Willkie has refused to accept the assignment, giving "previous commitments" as his excuse.

Any one could have told the leaders of the Minnesota exhibitor organization that Mr. Willkie would not accept the assignment because no lawyer of his intelligence and standing would accept an assignment from exhibitors once he has accepted one from the producers. Besides, their treasury hasn't enough money to pay what he would ask had he accepted it.

Perhaps the exhibitor leaders of that state felt that the publicity they would get from such a move would be worth the rebuff.

In discussing this episode, however, the object of HARRISON'S REPORTS is, not to point out to an error of judgment on the part of the exhibitor leaders of that state, but to express a surprise that the Minnesota block-booking law, which is now in effect as a result of the fact that the five consenting companies have obtained permission from Judge Goddard to comply with it, has not proved the film-rental panacea that they thought it would prove. In other words, whether they are buying film under the Minnesota statute, which compels the distributors to sell their year's output at once, or the consent decree, which compels the five consenting companies to sell their film in groups of pictures that do not exceed five in number, the exhibitors in that state have to pay big prices for film, and all the big lawyers in the United States, including Wendell Willkie, cannot alter the facts.

Naturally, HARRISON'S REPORTS regrets that such should have been the case, and the purpose for which it has discussed the Minnesota situation again is its desire to prevent wishful thinking by exhibitors in other territories—that they would get their film cheaper if the group-of-five selling were eliminated.

The Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee is meeting in New York this week. Its usefulness to the exhibitors will be demonstrated by devising a selling system that would prove more equitable to them. If it cannot do something for the independent exhibitors in a matter that concerns the life and death of their business, what benefit can they derive by supporting it?

* * *

DARRYL ZANUCK HAS STATED THAT, for the remainder of the 1941-42 season, no Twentieth Century-Fox picture will have a sad ending.

"The death rate will take a sudden drop," says a dispatch that has appeared in a late issue of "Dynamo," the Home Office house organ, "on the screen during the next few months. Very few stars will be 'killed' this winter, in comparison with a year ago when many reached untimely ends. . ."

"Dynamo" then gives the reasons that prompted Mr. Zanuck to make the decision—public disapproval of the death of its favorites.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that Mr. Zanuck will stick to his decision at least for the duration of the war, and that other producers will emulate his example. People feel miser-

able enough because of the war; they no doubt believe that the moving pictures should not accentuate it.

* * *

IN THE DECISION AND OPINION No. 13, concerning the case of Fred W. Rowlands, proprietor of the Parsons Theatre, against several national distributors and J. Real Neth, owner of the Markham and a number of other theatres in Columbus, Ohio, which case Mr. Rowlands had appealed from the decision of the local arbitrator of the Cincinnati district, the Appeal Board reversed the local arbitrator and reduced clearance, from fifty-two days, to forty-five days.

Though the Appeal Board seems to have acted fairly, the reduction of seven days of the Parsons Theatre's clearance does not seem to be sufficient. The down-town first-run theatres have a thirty-day clearance over the Markham, and the Markham had a twenty-two day clearance over the Parsons. The members of the Appeal Board recognized that the two theatres are of different type, the people that patronize the two theatres being of different types. For this reason competition between the two theatres, according to the record, either does not exist, or it exists to a minimum degree, a degree that has prompted the Appeal Board in other cases, where competition did not seem to be any more, to reduce clearance to one day.

As said in these columns before, in most cases clearance is artificial, and its maintenance harms, not only the exhibitors, but also the distributors. In a quick turnover, the distributor has a chance to obtain greater rentals by reason of the fact that, since his expensive pictures are shown on a percentage basis, the playing of a picture when it is fresh in the mind of the public draws a bigger number of ticket-buyers to the box office.

Why should they have reduced clearance to one day in the cases where competition is no greater than there is in the case of the Parsons and the Markham theatres and leave a fifteen-day clearance over the Parsons?

HARRISON'S REPORTS acknowledges the fact that the Consent Decree does not grant to the arbitrators the right to eliminate clearance altogether, but they should at least reduce clearance to the minimum possible when no worth-while competition exists. If they should assume such an attitude they would render the industry a real service.

* * *

VARIETY CLUBS OF AMERICA is launching a drive, not only for additional members of existing tents, but also for organizing new tents where none exist at present. The drive, which will start about February 1st, has been named "Hey Rube."

John Harris and Bob O'Donnell, National Chief Barker and Assistant Barker, respectively, will make a tour of New York, New Haven, Chicago, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Denver and Salt Lake City for establishing Tents. It is their intention to have a Tent in every exchange center.

In view of the charitable nature of the Variety Clubs, it is felt that the drive will be a great success.

* * *

DURING THE HOLIDAYS your copy of one or more issues may have gone astray. If so, look over your files and see what copies are missing and let this office know so that it may send you duplicate copies.

"Torpedo Boat" with Richard Arlen, Jean Parker and Mary Carlisle

(Paramount, Rel. not set; time, 68 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining program picture. The story, besides being routine, is developed in the main by dialogue instead of by action; for this reason one's interest lags. There are only two situations that offer any real excitement; both revolve around tests of a small torpedo boat driven at a high rate of speed. Yet, even these are limited in their appeal to those interested in boats. The two romances are developed along formula lines:—

Richard Arlen and his pal (Phillip Terry) invent a new type of torpedo boat. They meet an old pal (Dick Purcell), manager of the shipbuilding firm owned by Robert Middlemass. At the same time, they are embarrassed when they meet Middlemass's daughter (Mary Carlisle), because they had had an unfriendly encounter with her on the road when their car had bumped into hers. Purcell gives both Arlen and Terry jobs at the plant, promising to speak to Middlemass about their torpedo boat idea. Terry falls in love with Jean Parker, Arlen's former sweetheart, and marries her. This so enrages Arlen that he breaks with Terry. They are brought together again when Middlemass decides to permit them to build a model of their torpedo boat. Everyone turns out to see the test, which is fine until Arlen decides to find out how fast the boat could really go; the hull gives way and there is an accident; Terry dies. Arlen, ashamed of himself, leads Miss Carlisle, who had fallen in love with him, to believe that he had used her to get to her father. He then takes a job with another ship firm and starts building a new model; Middlemass starts building a new one, too. The two boats are scheduled to make the test run at the same time; Arlen risks his life to save Miss Carlisle, whose boat was in the path of an oil tanker. Arlen lands in the hospital, but he is happy for his boat is accepted by the Navy and he and Miss Carlisle are reconciled.

Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play from a story by Aaron Gottlieb. John Rawlins directed it, and Wm. Pine and Wm. Thomas produced it. In the cast are Ralph Sanford, William Haade, and Oscar O'Shea.

Morally suitable for all.

"Fly By Night" with Nancy Kelly and Richard Carlson

(Paramount, Rel. not set; time, 73 min.)

This is a good program espionage melodrama. The action is fast-moving, and at times exciting; and, even though the plot is highly far-fetched, it holds one's interest and keeps one in suspense. The tension is occasionally relieved by some good comedy bits and a pleasant romance:—

Martin Kosleck escapes from a sanitarium for mentally deranged patients by strangling a guard. Although the escape is discovered within a few minutes, he manages to elude his pursuers by hiding in the car of Richard Carlson, a young doctor, who had parked the car in front of the sanitarium while he went to buy a can of gasoline. At the point of a gun, he forces Carlson to drive him to the city; and, since he noticed that his pursuers had trailed them, he orders Carlson to take him to his hotel room. He then tells Carlson a strange story—that he was not insane, that he had been working with a famous scientist (Miles Manger) on a powerful ray for the American Army, and that the heads of the sanitarium were actually spies, seeking his invention. Carlson steps out of the room; when he returns he finds that Kosleck had been murdered. He manages to remove from his clothes the baggage check for the invention which had been left at a railroad station. By that time, the police arrive and insist on arresting Carlson for the murder. He escapes and hides in the room below occupied by Nancy Kelly. In order to prevent her from giving him away, he forces her to leave with him, and they drive away in her car. He convinces her of his innocence, and even induces her to work with him on the spy theory. In order to avert the suspicion of two policemen, they pretend they were eloping. The policemen take them to their father, a justice of the peace, who marries them. Miss Kelly thinks of a plan—she would take Carlson to the sanitarium, pretend he was a mental case, and leave him there. He could thus search for the scientist and get the proof he needed. But the spy chief (Albert Basserman) recognizes him from a sketch appearing in a newspaper and holds him prisoner. He forces him to turn over the invention which he had picked up at the railroad station. Manger agrees to show Basserman how it worked; the ray is so strong that Basserman is blinded—that was the invention. Carlson and Miss Kelly, who, too, had been brought to the sanitarium, start fighting their way out. They are helped by the two friendly policemen, who arrive in time to round up the spies. Since they

were in love, Miss Kelly and Carlson are happy that they were married.

Jay Dratler wrote the the screen play, Robert Siodmak directed it, and Sol C. Siegel produced it. In the cast are Walter Kingsford, Edward Gargan, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Remarkable Andrew" with William Holden, Ellen Drew and Brian Donlevy

(Paramount, Rel. not set; time, 80 min.)

Here is a prestige picture; it is so out of the ordinary, that it should prove interesting and inspiring to those who see it. It is a phantasy, in which famous dead persons come to life in order to help the hero out of a mess. Toward the end, the young hero makes a speech in court, telling the judge and jury what democracy means to him; most people will be touched by it. Some of the situations are amusing because the hero alone can see the "ghosts" and naturally confuses those around him who cannot see them. The romance is pleasant:—

William Holden, who worked for the city as a bookkeeper, finds a shortage in the accounts of \$1240. He realizes that something crooked had been pulled, and refuses to close the books, even though his superior (Porter Hall), and later the District Attorney and even the Mayor order him to do so. Since these officials were all mixed up in stealing city funds, they decide to make Holden the goat. Accordingly, they bring embezzlement charges against him. But Holden is not afraid for he was receiving aid from General Andrew Jackson (Brian Donlevy), George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Chief Justice Marshall, Thomas Jefferson, and two others, who had come to life to help him. Since no one else could see the ghosts, word spreads that Holden had gone crazy and was talking to himself. Even his sweetheart (Ellen Drew) fears the worst, although she had faith in his innocence. The ghosts find the necessary evidence to help Holden. They rush with this to the court room and then instruct him as to how to proceed. He proves his innocence and forces the crooks to resign. Holden marries Miss Drew, but is embarrassed on his wedding night when Jackson insists on staying with him. He finally induces him to leave. As he goes, Miss Drew, for the first time, is able to see him.

Dalton Trumbo wrote the novel and screen play, Stuart Heisler directed it, and Richard Blumenthal produced it. In the cast are Rod Cameron, Richard Webb, Frances Gifford, Montagu Love, and others.

Suitable for all.

"Salute to Courage" with Conrad Veidt and Ann Ayars

(MGM, Rel. not set; time, 82 min.)

A fairly good espionage melodrama. Although the plot is highly far-fetched, it holds one's interest and keeps one in suspense because of the constant danger to the hero. Moreover, one feels deep sympathy for the hero, who sacrifices his life for the sake of another. The direction and performances are competent, and the production values good. There is just a suggestion of a romance:—

Otto Becker (Conrad Veidt), formerly of Germany and now an American citizen, is the proud owner of a book store. He receives a visit from his twin brother Baron Von Detner (also played by Veidt), the new German consul, and an ardent Nazi. Von Detner informs Becker that, unless he permitted them to use his store as their hideout for sending and receiving messages, he would inform the U. S. officials that Becker had entered the United States on a forged passport, the means he had chosen to escape from Germany. Becker is held a prisoner in his own store. When he tries to get a message through to the police, Von Detner intercepts the message and calls at the store to kill his brother. In the fight that ensues Becker kills Von Detner instead. He decides to dress in his brother's clothes, and take his place in an effort to obtain information about the spy activities and turn it over to the F.B.I. His plan works for a time. Through his tips, the F.B.I. rounds up and arrests many spies and prevents sabotage. But he is eventually found out by the spies. He makes them a proposition: he would return to Germany as a prisoner in return for silence on their part with respect to Kaaren DeRelle (Ann Ayars), a young girl whom he loved and who had been forced into doing spy work by the Nazis in order to protect her relatives in France. His proposition is accepted.

Paul Gangelin and John Meehan, Jr., wrote the screen play from an idea by Lothar Mendes. Jules Dassin directed it, and Irving Asher produced it. In the cast are Frank Reicher, Dorothy Tree, Ivan Simpson, Martin Kosleck, Marc Lawrence, and Sidney Blackmer.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Lady Has Plans" with Paulette Goddard and Ray Milland

(Paramount, Rel. not set; time, 76 min.)

This is good mass entertainment. It is a fast-moving espionage melodrama, with plentiful comedy and a romance. Most of the hearty laughter is provoked during the first half, where the heroine, who had unknowingly become involved in a spy plot, mistakes the offers made to her by German and British representatives as immoral proposals. The conversation during these scenes is particularly amusing because of the heroine's erroneous impression. The second half, during which the heroine gets into the clutches of the German gang, holds one in tense suspense, and ends in a thrilling manner. The romance is pleasant:—

After having stolen important plans of a radio-directed torpedo, Addison Richards takes his assistant (Margaret Hayes) to the office of a draftsman and orders him to draw the plans on Miss Hayes' back. He then kills the draftsman and wipes the drawing off Miss Hayes' back with a special chemical making the ink temporarily invisible. Miss Hayes was then to proceed to Lisbon, where the plans would be photographed from her back by a Nazi agent (Andrew Dekker). Richards had arranged to kidnap Paulette Goddard, a reporter, who was supposed to leave on the Clipper for Lisbon to work as assistant to Ray Milland, Lisbon correspondent for a large broadcasting company. Miss Hayes could then pose as Miss Goddard and use her passport. But Miss Goddard, unaware of the whole plot, manages to get to the Clipper and finally arrives in Lisbon. She is amazed to find that a luxurious suite had been engaged for her, and that trunks of clothes had been placed at her disposal. She thinks that Milland had supplied the luxuries; but he soon puts her straight about that and she is considerably puzzled. No sooner is she lodged in the suite than she receives visits from both the German agent (Dekker) and British agent (Roland Young); she is horrified when both men suggest that she take off her negligee and permit them to look at her back. Not knowing what it was all about, she throws them out of her rooms. But eventually she and Milland find out what it is all about and plan to allow the Germans to go on thinking she was the agent; in that way they hoped to get a good story. But she is trapped when Richards arrives with Miss Hayes. Milland, rushing to her rescue, is also made a prisoner. But, before going there, he had met Miss Hayes, had knocked her out and, after photographing the plans, erased the plans from her back, thus outwitting the spies. Milland and Miss Goddard cleverly evade their captors, get a message out for help, and are responsible for the capture of the spy gang; at the same time they get a big news break for themselves. And they had fallen in love with each other.

Harry Tugend wrote the screen play from a story by Leo Birinski; Sidney Lanfield directed it, and Fred Kohlmar produced it. In the cast are Cecil Kellaway, Edward Norris, and Arthur Loft.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Fleet's In" with Dorothy Lamour, William Holden and Eddie Bracken

(Paramount, Rel. not set; time, 92 min.)

Very good mass entertainment. It is a musical remake of "Sailor Beware," produced by Paramount in 1936 under the title "Lady Be Careful." The title and one of the situations used in the old Clara Bow picture, "The Fleet's In," produced by Paramount in 1928, have also been used. As in "Lady Be Careful," the filth of the stage play has been removed; yet the story is still weak. This version, however, is a much better entertainment than "Lady Be Careful" and certainly a stronger box-office attraction considering the drawing power of Dorothy Lamour; moreover, what puts it in the "hit" class are the musical numbers and the specialty performers. The picture starts out with a bang, slows up, but then ends so entertainingly that audiences will forget about the slow lapses:—

William Holden, a sailor in the U. S. Navy, is shy and retiring. Yet he gets the reputation of being a "lady-killer," when, to his embarrassment, a motion picture actress kisses him as a publicity stunt. Leif Erickson, a sailor on the same ship, refuses to believe that Holden could make any lady kiss him, and so he places bets with all the other sailors that Holden could not kiss in public Miss Lamour, singing star at a San Francisco dance hall. The sailors make the bet, even

though they knew that Miss Lamour was unapproachable. Eddie Bracken, Holden's sailor pal, is worried, because he had put up for the bet a watch belonging to someone else, and he knew he would be beaten up if he lost it. For Bracken's sake, Holden promises to make an attempt to kiss Miss Lamour in public. But when they meet they fall in love with each other; yet Holden does not kiss her. Miss Lamour finds out about the bet and is so angry that she breaks the engagement and orders Holden out. Holden attempts to speak to her at the dance hall, but a bouncer tries to put him out. That starts a riot in which the other sailors join. Holden is brought to trial for starting the riot. In order to save him, Miss Lamour appears as a witness and besmirches her own reputation in order to prove that Holden was innocent. This naturally shows Holden that she loved him; he races after her and induces her to marry him before he sails away. She accompanies him to the boat and, in the presence of everyone, kisses him, thereby helping the sailors win their bets.

Walter DeLeon, Sid Silvers, and Ralph Spence wrote the screen play from a story by Monte Brice and J. Walter Ruben and the play by Kenyon Nicholson and Charles Robinson. Victor Schertzinger directed it, and Paul Jones produced it. In the cast are Betty Hutton, Cass Daley, Gil Lamb, Jimmy Dorsey and band.

Morally suitable for all.

"Captain of the Clouds" with James Cagney, Dennis Morgan and Brenda Marshall

(Warner-First Nat'l, February 21; time, 112 min.)

A very good aviation picture. It is both timely and thrilling. The flying scenes, filmed in unusually fine Technicolor, are spectacular. But the picture does not depend solely on the air scenes for its attraction; it has a good human interest story, plentiful comedy, and a romance. And the performances and direction are fine. The scenes at the end, in which a group of American and Canadian flyers, piloting five bombers from Newfoundland to England, are suddenly set upon by a German plane and are unable to fight back because they were unarmed, hold one in tense suspense:—

Dennis Morgan, Alan Hale, Reginald Gardiner, and George Tobias, Canadian bush pilots, are enraged because a newcomer (James Cagney) was stealing their business by cutting prices. Coming upon him suddenly, they try to force his plane down, but he outmaneuvers them and escapes. On one of his trips he meets Brenda Marshall, a French-Canadian girl engaged to Morgan, and returns to see her. He meets with an accident and Miss Marshall takes him to her home. Morgan risks his life to fly through a heavy fog to bring back a doctor to operate on Cagney. Cagney, not knowing about this, proceeds, upon his recovery, to make love to Miss Marshall, who gladly accepts his attentions. Later he learns the truth and joins forces with Morgan to get business so that Morgan might earn enough money to start an airline. Morgan gets the money together but plans to marry Miss Marshall first. Cagney, knowing that she was no good and would ruin Morgan's life, induces her to run away with him and to marry him. Morgan, in disgust, gives away all his money and joins the Royal Canadian Air Force. Cagney leaves his wife the day after the wedding, turning over to her all his money. He, Gardiner, Hale, and Tobias also enlist in the RCAF, but are disappointed when they are told that they were too old to fight; instead they would go through a rigorous training period and then become instructors themselves. Hale is dismissed for drinking, and Cagney is dismissed for breaking rules. In an effort to prove their fitness, Cagney and Hale, both intoxicated, fly over the field during the wings ceremony parade. Hale is killed, and Cagney is heartbroken. Morgan learns from Miss Marshall what Cagney had done for him; so when Cagney shows up, under Hale's name, as a pilot to fly bombers to England, he takes him. Five bombers start out at once. A short distance from England, they are set upon by a German flyer. Being unarmed, they are unable to fight back; one bomber is downed. Cagney, for the sake of the others, purposely crashes into the German flyer thereby sacrificing his life so that the others might get through.

Arthur T. Horman, Richard Macaulay, and Norman R. Raine wrote the screen play, Michael Curtiz directed it, and William Cagney was associate producer. J. M. Kerrigan, Clem Bevans, and Russell Arms are in the cast.

Morally suitable for all.

*Title is CAPTAINS OF THE CLOUDS.

"Born to Sing." MGM, a fairly good program picture. Review next week.

"Jail House Blues" with Nat Pendleton, Anne Gwynne and Robert Paige

(*Universal, Jan. 9; time, 61 min.*)

A moderately entertaining program comedy with some music. It starts out in an amusing fashion, but by the time the picture is half way through the action begins to pall. Most of the comedy is forced; and the story itself is of so little consequence that it fails to hold one's interest. It is best suited for a double-feature program in secondary houses:—

Although Nat Pendleton had been pardoned from the State Penitentiary, he refuses to leave the prison. The warden cannot get rid of him because he had stolen and hidden the pardon. The reason for his refusal to leave is that he had suddenly become interested in his career as a theatrical producer, that is of the prison show and he was determined to see it through. But when his leading man escapes from prison, Pendleton is angry. He then produces his pardon so that he could be freed; but he makes a deal with the Warden to bring back the prisoner on condition that the Warden would reinstate him in prison so that he could put on his show. Once out, Pendleton finds himself mixed up in a racket started by his mother (Elizabeth Risdon) of organizing peddlers. She is disgusted at her son's softness in preferring the theatre to a life of crime. Pendleton, who had been given a ride into town by Anne Gwynne, after he had helped her fix a flat tire, becomes acquainted with her boy friend (Robert Paige), a young singer who could not get a start. Since Pendleton could not find the escaped prisoner, he decides to sneak back into prison and to take with him Paige, as the star of the show. At the same time he instructs his henchmen to round up all the important dramatic critics and to force them to come to the prison to see the show and hear Paige sing. The scheme works; the show is hailed as a success, Paige is acclaimed a new star, and he and Miss Gwynne are overjoyed that now they could get married.

Paul Gerard Smith wrote the story, and he and Harold Tarshis, the screen play; Albert S. Rogell directed it, and Ken Goldsmith produced it. In the cast are Horace MacMahon, Warren Hymer, Samuel S. Hinds, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Treat 'Em Rough" with Eddie Albert and Peggy Moran

(*Universal, Jan. 30; time, 61 min.*)

A fair program melodrama, suitable for the action fans. Although the story is developed along familiar lines, the action moves at a fairly brisk pace, and so it manages to hold one in fairly tense suspense. The most exciting scenes are those in the end where, in an all-out fight, the hero and his pals overcome the villain and his henchmen. A little comedy and a formula romance have been worked into the plot:—

Although Eddie Albert was the son of a millionaire (Lloyd Corrigan), he preferred prizefighting to working in his dad's oil business. Albert receives an urgent message from Peggy Moran, his father's secretary, to return home. Accompanied by his trainer (William Frawley) and his valet (Manton Moreland), Albert arrives at his father's office. He quarrels with his father when the latter suggests that Albert give up the ring for a legitimate business. But Miss Moran prevents him from leaving by telling him his father was in trouble, that the government was investigating his business because of the disappearance of thousands of gallons of oil and that he had no way of proving his innocence. Miss Moran overhears a conversation between Joseph Crehan and Truman Bradley, two of the oil company officials, and realizes that they were the criminals; also that they intended killing Corrigan, who had become too curious. She relays the information to Albert, who rushes after his father who had started out in a car to investigate a wreck involving one of his oil trucks. The man who was supposed to have killed Corrigan is himself trapped in Corrigan's car and is burned to death. Albert rushes his father to safety. When the police identify the body as that of Corrigan's, Albert decides to let everyone believe his father was dead so that he could work on the case and obtain the evidence to clear his father's name. The scheme works, and Albert traces the whereabouts of the missing oil. Together with the police he traps the criminals. Corrigan's name is cleared. By this time Corrigan is so

pleased with his son that he permits him to follow his career as a prizefighter. Miss Moran and Albert plan to marry.

Roy Chanslor and Bob Williams wrote the screen play, Ray Taylor directed it, and Marshall Grant produced it. In the cast are Ed Pawley, William Ruhl, Monte Blue, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Harvard Here I Come" with Maxie Rosenbloom

(*Columbia, Dec. 18; time, 64 min.*)

Boresome! A silly plot, slow-moving action, and modest production values limit this picture to secondary houses. And at that, it is doubtful if even the most indiscriminating patrons of these theatres will have the patience to sit through it. Sixty-four minutes of listening to Maxie Rosenbloom slaughter the English language is a little too much for anyone; it may provoke laughter the first few minutes, but after that it wears on one's nerves. Besides being silly, the story is in bad taste, for it revolves around the efforts of several persons to make a fool of Rosenbloom:—

Rosenbloom, a night club owner, is delighted when a group of Harvard students present him with a medal, for he believed they were honoring him. But when he learns they had given it to him for his stupidity, he decides to give up his business and go to college—that is to Harvard. A group of professors, overjoyed at the specimen Rosenbloom represented, offer him board, schooling, and \$1500 a year to permit them to make tests with him, for they believed he was the world's greatest moron. This benefits, not only the professors, but also Rosenbloom, for the tests bring fame to him through the theory that he was supposed to represent the reactions of millions of morons. He makes a great deal of money and goes back into the night club business.

Karl Brown wrote the story, Albert Duffy, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Arline Judge, Stanley Brown, Don Beddoe, Marie Wilson.

Morally suitable for all.

"Honolulu Lu" with Lupe Velez, Leo Carrillo and Bruce Bennett

(*Columbia, Dec. 11; time, 67 min.*)

A mild program comedy with music. Whatever entertainment value the picture possesses is owed to Lupe Velez, who works hard, and amuses one by her songs, dances, and imitations. Aside from her efforts, there is little to recommend, for the story is silly and the action slow-moving; besides, there is too much talk. The romance is mildly pleasant:—

Miss Velez and her uncle (Leo Carrillo), a crook, arrive in Honolulu. She notifies him that she had returned to the owners the jewels he had stolen and that from now on he was to live an honest life. When he refuses, she leaves him and, through the help of a native woman (Nina Campana), who had attached herself to her, obtains work as an entertainer at a cafe frequented by American sailors. She makes an immediate hit with them, particularly with sailor Bruce Bennett. Meanwhile Carrillo had attached himself to wealthy Marjorie Gateson, and was active in helping her prepare for a charity affair; those who bought tickets were entitled to vote for a "Miss Honolulu." The sailors are determined that Miss Velez should win. When Miss Gateson learns that a common entertainer had been entered for the title, she is horrified and appeals to Carrillo for help. Carrillo, unaware that the entertainer was his own niece, promises that he will find Miss Velez and induce her to run in the campaign. When he finds out Miss Velez's occupation, he insists that she enter the race as his niece and not as the entertainer. He even tries to frame her by notifying the police that the entertainer was a spy. But the sailors take matters into their own hands, and force Carrillo to clear her. She wins the "Miss Honolulu" title as the entertainer, and the admiration of Carrillo's society friends.

Eliot Gibbons and Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play from a story by Mr. Gibbons. Charles Barton directed and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Don Beddoe, Forrest Tucker, George McKay, Roger Clark.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1942

No. 5

HERE AND THERE

PURSUANT TO THE CHICAGO DECISIONS, the Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee met here last week and took certain decisions.

By a unanimous decision the Committee is to be known hereafter as UMPI (United Motion Picture Industry).

One of its important acts was to appoint a committee to iron out whatever exhibitor-distributor problems may arise; it consists of Abram F. Myers for Allied, Felix Jenkins, attorney for 20th Century-Fox, and Howard Levenson, attorney for Warner Bros.

A committee to undertake to work out a trade practice code was approved; it consists of Jack Kirsch, as chairman, Ed. Kuykendall, Joseph Vogel, Max A. Cohen, William Crockett, Robert White and Robert Poole.

A third committee was appointed to set up the machinery for the unity program; it consists of Col. H. A. Cole, Ned E. Depinet, Harry Brandt, and Ed. Kuykendall.

W. F. Rodgers, general manager of distribution for MGM, was elected permanent chairman of UMPI. In his talk accepting the assignment, he said that the committee, in considering point 5, was confronted with the following problems: (1) to find a better selling plan than the group-of-five; (2) to devise a system by which the forcing of shorts could be prevented, if such forcing did occur; (3) to set up the proper machinery whereby territorial disagreements could be investigated and corrected; (4) to devise a method by which individual complaints could be investigated and determined; and (5) to evolve a substitute arbitration plan if the present plan should be found unsatisfactory.

If anybody in the industry can do the job of reconciling conflicting opinions and interests, the exhibitors believe that Mr. Rodgers can do it.

* * *

SINCE MANY ALLIED LEADERS were here attending the unity meetings, the Allied organization held its annual meeting of the Board of Directors to elect officers. Col. H. A. Cole refused to accept the office for a fourth term and the board elected M. A. Rosenberg, of Pittsburgh, as Allied president. Other officers elected were the following: Don Rossiter, of Indianapolis, recording secretary, replacing Arthur Howard, of Boston; Meyer Leventhal, of Baltimore, financial secretary, replacing Herman Blum, of Baltimore, retired. Abram F. Myers, Martin G. Smith, and Charles Olive were reelected—chairman of the board and general counsel, treasurer, and secretary, respectively. All the members of the executive committee were reelected; they are M. A. Rosenberg, H. A. Cole, Nathan Yamins, S. E. Samuelson, Martin G. Smith, Jack Kirsch, Roy E. Harold and A. F. Myers, ex-officio member.

The Allied Information Department (AID) was discontinued for the time being in the interests of the unity movement; its last compilation of facts will be published in a few days.

One of the acts of the board was to approve a plan for a deal with ASCAP whereby small exhibitors will pay less for seat tax than bigger exhibitors. It was stated that Allied had at no time approved anti-ASCAP legislation by reason of the fact that the dissolution of ASCAP would, Allied believes, prove detrimental to the interests of the exhibitors, in that it will multiply the fees that the exhibitor would have to pay to each author, composer, or publisher, of whatever copyrighted music of his he would play. But

HARRISON'S REPORTS feels that Allied should sponsor a movement for the modification of the present copyright act to prevent the multiplication of fees. If an exhibitor pays a fee to an author, or to his representative organization, such fee should include all the rights—recording, reproducing, performing. Such a modification would be just, on account of the fact that he has no voice as to what music should be included in the film he buys from a producer, and for that reason he has no choice but to play it. In other words, it is taxation without representation.

The board approved also the acts of those of its officers or members who took part in the industry joint conference meetings.

Northwest Allied was not represented at the meeting of the board.

* * *

IT IS NOT ONLY EXHIBITORS who are dissatisfied with the operation of the Consent Decree; the Department of Justice itself has expressed a dissatisfaction, through a report made by Robert L. Wright, head of the Department of Justice, in which he states that the Government considers to effect amendments to the Decree's present form.

How dissatisfied the Government is with the first-year operation of the Decree may be evidenced by the fact that it recommends theatre divorcement as the only definite cure of the industry evils.

But the Department of Justice does not want to see the industry go back to the block-booking and blind-selling system, whereby the exhibitor was compelled to buy everything a producer produced for the season, sight unseen, until the year of trial is at least over. "The Department is open to any suggestion for the substitution of a better plan at the end of that period," the report states, "but it will continue to oppose a return to the system of season block-booking and blind-selling which was previously in effect."

Perhaps the suggestion that was made recently in these columns to the effect that a producer should be allowed to sell as many pictures as he has ready, and even such as he has under production provided he can furnish the exhibitor with a synopsis, with the right on the part of the exhibitor to cancel a certain percentage of pictures, will furnish the solution. If you like the suggestion, forward it to Mr. Wright.

ANNUAL REPORT OF ABRAM MYERS CHAIRMAN OF THE ALLIED BOARD

The Board of Directors at its January, 1941 meeting decided that further resistance to the consent decree would be futile until the escape clause should become operative. It felt that until the time for further opposition was ripe, the decree should be given a fair trial. Allied conducted a campaign of education among its members to acquaint them with their rights under the decree and urged them to extract whatever benefits it held for them. A manual of arbitration was published for their use. The general counsel attended numerous meetings to lecture on the decree; he passed upon a number of proposed arbitration proceedings submitted through the regional associations and helped prepare and brief such cases as were of general interest; he rendered a series of opinions interpreting the decree. A *bona fide* effort was made to cooperate in making the decree workable.

Despite this reasonable attitude on the part of Allied, the decree has proven a lamentable failure. Under it, and

(Continued on next page)

largely because of it, the exhibitors are experiencing one of the blackest years in their history. All the dire predictions made by Allied in opposing the decree have come to pass. Few, if any, of the claims made in support of the decree have been vindicated. A brief summary will reveal the accuracy of these statements.

Decree used to jack up film rentals

In opposing the decree before Judge Goddard the general counsel said: "When an exhibitor buys one group of pictures, he does not know what the next will cost, and he is faced with ever-increasing demands for high film rentals. The independent exhibitor may have to contend with his competitor for each group of pictures, thus running up the price, whilst the affiliated theatres are protected by their sacrosanct franchises." After Judge Goddard had brushed all protests aside and signed the decree, hope was expressed that the distributors, who professed a desire to end the controversies raging in the industry, would not take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the decree to add to the burdens under which the exhibitors already were staggering.

This was a short lived hope. Almost as soon as the first blocks-of-five were announced, angry protests began to flow in from all parts of the country. It was apparent that if the same ratio of high bracket pictures to low bracket pictures should be maintained throughout the year, the averages would exceed the wildest predictions of the most rabid opponents of the decree. Now it is apparent that, unless there is an abrupt change of policy on the part of distributors, this dizzy pace will be continued with disastrous results to all concerned. The goose is being slaughtered in a foolish attempt to increase its production of golden eggs.

Those of us who have been working for more harmonious relationships in the industry, at least for the duration of the war, have been shocked and discouraged by recent callous rejoinders in distributor circles to the effect that the present outcry against high film rentals is just the usual exhibitor squawk; that the complaints come from the chronic kickers who have long complained that they were being put out of business but are still doing business at the same old stand. That is like saying that because a man has survived a pin prick he is immune from a dagger thrust. Maybe some exhibitors have cried "wolf!" when it was only a shadow. But there is no mistaking the danger that besets them now.

I do not need to cite specific cases to this group of leaders to support the foregoing generalizations in regard to the terrific increase in film rentals under the consent decree. But for the information of any others to whose attention this report may come, let me cite one graphic illustration. Subsequent to June 6, 1940, and prior to the signing of the consent decree, one of the consenting companies negotiated two year franchises with certain Allied members, which franchises were approved by the home office. All parties acted in good faith and the franchises were valid when made. The decree (Sec. XV) spared only franchises signed prior to June 6, 1940 and the company in question refused to honor the deal. A comparison of the franchise deals with the actual allocations to date under the new system tells the story.

In order not to identify the parties in question, I will consolidate the deals for two theatres. This is how the account stands:

Classification	Franchise	Allocations to date
A (40%)	3	6
B (35%)	13	8
C	16	4
D	29	8
E	21	8
F	10	3

Thus with the season less than half over, these accounts have had to take double the number of A pictures provided for in the franchises and almost two-thirds of the number of B pictures provided for in the franchises. On the other hand, they have received only one-fourth of the C pictures, less than two-sevenths of the D pictures, less than two-fifths of the E pictures and less than one-third of the F pictures provided for in the franchises.

Could there be a more complete demonstration of the use by the distributor in question of the consent decree to jack up film rentals?

Arbitration near collapse

Allied in commenting to the Department of Justice on the proposed decree pointed out not only the many imperfections in the provisions which were to be subject to arbitration but also recommended that "because of the concentration of producer power and influence in Los Angeles and New York" the reviewing agency (i.e. the Appeal Board) should not have headquarters in either of those cities. Regardless of whether the source of the trouble is that apprehended by Allied at that time, the decisions of the Appeal Board have for the most part been a profound disappointment. The distributors through aggressive counsel, have resorted to all manner of technicalities in defending arbitration proceedings. The Appeal Board all too often has sustained and encouraged such tactics. The Board has applied a microscope to cases coming before it and has emasculated most of the awards in favor of the exhibitors. It has been diligent in upholding awards against independent exhibitors.

The Board in some of its recent opinions has shown somewhat greater liberality of thought, but the damage can not be undone. The Board, like a court, now cites and relies upon its former decisions as binding precedents. This situation led the general counsel to protest that the Board, instead of giving effect to the ostensible purpose of the decree to curb monopoly, had interpreted it as a bill of rights for the existing order. Since then two attorneys formerly employed by the Department of Justice, who helped negotiate and write the decree, are reported to have said that the decisions of the Board have nullified the document and that it is well-nigh futile to institute proceedings thereunder. The number of cases filed each month appears to be declining and unless life is injected into the system it soon will cease to merit the great expense of its upkeep.

Allied's criticisms of the highly technical Section X of the decree—refusal to license on the requested run—have been vindicated by the total failure of that provision to afford relief. That section was supposed to strike at the very heart of the Government's charge—circuit monopolization of preferred runs. But to date, not a single exhibitor has secured relief thereunder.

Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee

By midsummer the war clouds had become ominous and Allied sensed the need of the maximum degree of harmony and cooperation for the protection of the industry as a whole, for cooperation with the Government and for the adjustment of trade problems within the industry. Especially was it felt that the development of a new selling method to supplant the blocks-of-five could best be accomplished by the distributors and exhibitors working together. Following a referendum, a plan for a national joint conference committee was approved by the Board of Directors on October 22. After much hard work and careful planning, and with the cooperation and good will of the other branches, the Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee was launched at an all-industry gathering in Chicago on December 9 and 10. This meeting, sponsored and planned by Allied, was the first all-industry gathering since 1927; it was the first such gathering attended by the top executives of all interests concerned. It was praised as the most constructive step ever taken in the industry.

A full report on the Chicago meeting was sent to all affiliated regional associations and provision is made in the agenda for a full discussion of this activity.

As a result of the declaration of policy issued by the Board of Directors in Pittsburgh last October, Allied stands committed to a policy of working out the problems presented by the consent decree and the adjustment of trade irritations through the Motion Picture Industry Conference Committee as far as possible. Allied faces the new year hopeful that all thoughtful persons in the industry will see the wisdom and advantage to all concerned of making the so-called "unity" program a success. This will call for the curbing of personal ambitions and selfishness and the practice of self-restraint and discipline. This would have been too much to have hoped for a year ago—possibly it is too idealistic even today. But the unfair attacks on the industry by the Clark-Nye forces and the grim realities of the war should soften some points of view. Certainly during the next few years all Americans are going to be on trial. Those who

use the emergency to enrich themselves, and those who wilfully obstruct the smooth functioning of industry, will invite the wrath of the people and the attention of the Government. I am convinced that if the several branches of the motion picture industry do not hang together, they will certainly hang separately.

Two main obstacles have been encountered by the unity program. First, the harsh and unnecessary attacks which certain executives have seen fit to make on the exhibitors since the Chicago meeting and the unyielding attitude reflected thereby. One executive, usually regarded as a leader in constructive endeavors, after abusing the exhibitors for their complaints concerning high film rentals, saw fit to announce that in his judgment the blocks-of-five method had not yet received a fair trial and to advocate an extension of the system beyond June 1. To say that this was a bombshell is to put it mildly. Another obstacle is the attitude of certain friends of the exhibitors that because the MPICC, which has held only one brief organizing session in Chicago, has not yet produced results beneficial to the exhibitors, it should be discarded. The implication of this criticism is that the experienced Allied leaders who have taken part in the movement are the dupes of a plot to lull them into inaction while the exhibitors are being fleeced by the distributors.

While I have tried not to be disturbed by thoughtless utterances by the distributors or captious criticisms from exhibitor sources, I nevertheless am convinced that the value of MPICC as a constructive force in the industry should be developed without further delay. The distributors will soon be making their plans for the 1942-1943 season. They will have to decide very soon whether they will sell under the consent decree or by some other method. I have taken it upon myself to urge on Allied's representatives on MPICC to ascertain now whether the distributors propose to cooperate with the exhibitors in developing an acceptable substitute for blocks-of-five selling. If the distributors propose to continue under the decree, or to adopt a new method without consulting the exhibitors' wishes, the exhibitors should be so informed. As we gather here, the disillusioned and embittered exhibitors are demanding action to abolish the blocks-of-five method. If this can not be accomplished harmoniously through MPICC, it is a moral certainty that the exhibitors in many States will seek to accomplish it by legislation.

Because of the apprehension that has been expressed in some quarters regarding the possible dangers inherent in the so-called unity plan, it may be well at this time to remind the Board—and its critics—of the express limitations on the Board's policy as set forth in an Allied bulletin dated October 23:

(1) Allied's representatives will not submit to the joint committee any matter which, in the opinion of the general counsel, is outside the purview of the joint committee or matters the consideration of which might be unlawful;

(2) As regards all matters for which no solution is found within a reasonable time by the national joint conference committee that is acceptable to Allied, Allied reserves the right to pursue such course and to adopt such measures as the Board of Directors may approve.

The tax situation

Second only to the Chicago unity meeting in importance was the accomplishment of National Allied in connection with the Revenue Act of 1941. After polling its leaders, Allied formulated a plan which was presented to the House Committee on Ways & Means by the general counsel. This included opposition to the proposed 5% tax on film rentals, complete abolishment of all exemption from the admission tax (except children's 10c admissions) and the taxing of rival forms of amusement. In this effort Allied was almost completely successful. After the same plan had been presented to the Senate Committee on Finance, that body, without warning, reported an amendment increasing the admission tax by more than 50%. Senators from Allied territory, responding to the telegraphic pleas of Allied members, took the lead in defeating the Committee amendment and restoring the 10% rate. This was a tremendous victory that meant much to the entire industry, especially the exhibitors. I take

this occasion to make special acknowledgment of the efforts of the Allied units in New England, Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Much of the trouble experienced in this fight resulted from the taking of different and inconsistent positions by the various factions in the industry. One group stimulated exhibitors in various parts of the country to wire their opposition to a proposal which no one in Congress had made. That experience, as much as any other, convinced Allied leaders of the need for greater cooperation. It accounts for one of Allied's seven points which were telescoped into five points at the Chicago meeting. The future, as regards taxation, is dark. The paralyzing cost of the war effort will make it necessary for Congress to seek out every penny of revenue it can find. The task of the exhibitor representatives will be to see that motion pictures are not unfairly taxed in comparison with other businesses, and that the burden is fairly distributed as between the several branches of the industry. It is hoped that the proper teamwork can be developed through MPICC.

Priorities

Allied has sent to its regional members a comprehensive report covering the meeting held in Washington on January 9 under the auspices of the Office of Production Management. The interests of the industry in this connection are being looked after by two separate and distinct organizations—a committee of MPICC and the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry. Authority and responsibility should be centered in one or the other, preferably MPICC. Inasmuch as MPICC is a standing all-industry body, future movements affecting the industry as a whole should be confided to that body rather than to newly-formed hand-picked committees.

Other activities in 1941

While the efforts to make a success of arbitration, to soften the impact of the new selling system, to establish a national joint conference committee and to protect the industry against unfair taxation were the outstanding activities of Allied during the year, much additional work for the benefit of the members was done. A summary of the various exhibition contracts was issued and numerous opinions were rendered on contract disputes. Several individual grievances were relieved through the good offices of the association. Acknowledgment is made of the fair and open-minded consideration of special complaints by certain of the major distributors. Allied Information Department (AID) has continued to function and Mr. Samuelson will report on the details of its work. A well-attended and successful national convention was held in Philadelphia. Numerous bulletins dealing with subjects of current importance were issued. The Board held meetings in Washington, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The general counsel attended and addressed a large number of regional conventions. The treasurer's report will show the results of his splendid efforts during the year. The good work of the treasurer, coupled with the practice of rigid economy at headquarters, finds the association with a slightly larger balance on hand than it had last year. I am indebted to the regional associations and leaders for their loyal and unselfish support and encouragement throughout the year.

"Born to Sing" with Virginia Weidler, Leo Gorcey and Ray McDonald (MGM, no release date set yet; 81 min.)

Despite its length and its spectacular ending, "Born to Sing" is only a program picture, for the story is artificial and the stars of the program-picture class. The ending is the most strikingly artificial: A group of penniless youngsters give a show that would cost probably \$250,000 to produce. Yet there is more to this picture than there is to the program pictures of other companies, despite the story's limitations—it fills the eye. There is mild human interest, and considerable light comedy. And there is the breezy enthusiasm of the youngsters, who set out to win out and do win out. "Ballad for Americans" is sung at the finale of the show. The story lacks, of course, romance:—

Leo Gorcey leaves the reformatory and, upon his return to the city with Ray McDonald, who had waited for him at

the gate, finds that Larry Nunn, another of his gang, had been wearing his best suit of clothes and Larry, being chased by Leo, enters an apartment. There the trio smell gas and, upon investigation, they find Henry O'Neill unconscious. They open the window and move him out and revive him. A note to his daughter, Virginia Weidler, indicated that he had tried to take his own life. From Virginia, the trio learn the O'Neill had composed a new show, and that a producer had stolen it from him. They call on the producer, but he frames them as blackmailers and puts the police on their trail. O'Neill is arrested for complicity. In trying to hide they find themselves in an abandoned theatre, formerly owned by the German Bund. They get a number of talented youngsters together to give a show so as to raise money enough to help clear O'Neill. Sheldon Leonard, a racketeer, whom they had met accidentally, takes an interest in them and helps them to put the show over. From the stage Virginia tells the audience all about her father's predicament. Leonard bails out O'Neill in time to conduct the show.

The story is by Franz G. Spencer; the scenario, by Harry Clark and Mr. Spencer. Edward Ludwig directed it. Fredrick Stephani produced it.

Not objectionable for the family.

"North to the Klondike" with Brod Crawford, and Andy Devine

(*Universal, Jan. 23; time, 58 min.*)

This program outdoor melodrama should entertain the action fans. The story is not unusual; it follows the pattern of the typical western, even though it is set in a different locale. Yet it has enough action to hold the interest of the fans; particularly good is the way it ends, with a terrific fist fight between hero and villain. It has some comedy, and a pleasant romance:—

Brod Crawford, a mining expert, arrives in the Alaskan settlement of Haven, to prospect for Lon Chaney, a trader with a bad reputation. The boat on which he had arrived carried winter food supplies for the settlers, who were trying to establish a farming community. Crawford is annoyed when Willie Fung, a Chinaman whom he had saved from drowning, insists on following him around. Fung's son (Keye Luke), a Harvard graduate, explains that, according to Chinese custom, since Crawford had saved Fung's life he had to take care of him and his son, too, for the rest of their lives. Crawford accepts them, since they were of help to him. Crawford is suspicious when Chaney tells him he had made a mistake in sending for him, for he now did not need him. Chaney had discovered a gold mine in the farming community and wanted to get rid of the settlers before Crawford could find out anything about it and warn them. First he burns the boat carrying their supplies. Then he kills the man sent for the new supplies, and even kills Roy Harris, community leader and brother of Evelyn Ankers. Crawford sends another man secretly for the supplies. Then he starts investigating and discovers the mine. In a terrific fight with Chaney he forces him to admit to the settlers what he had done, for they were ready to leave. Just then the steamer carrying the new supply of food comes around the bend of the river, thus cheering the settlers. Crawford and Miss Ankers are united.

William Castle wrote the story from a story by Jack London. Clarence U. Young, Lou Sarecky, and George Bricker wrote the screen play, Erle C. Kenton directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it. In the cast are Lloyd Corrigan, Stanley Andrews, Monte Blue, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Broadway Big Shot" with Ralph Byrd and Virginia Vale

(*Producers Releasing Co.; time, 63 min.*)

Although modestly produced, this comedy offers fair program entertainment that should be acceptable in neighborhood theatres on double-feature programs. The principal parts are handled competently by Ralph Byrd and Virginia Vale, who are given adequate support by a few unknown but competent performers. One is held in suspense because of the hero's predicament in being unable to prove that his jail sentence had been a frameup. The football scenes are

worked into the plot in a natural way and are enjoyable. The romance is pleasant:—

Byrd, a newspaper reporter and professional football player, is eager to cover an important assignment for his paper. His editor makes a suggestion: Byrd should permit himself to be framed and sent to prison so as to obtain a story from another prisoner, who was known to have taken the rap to protect some on higher up. In this way he could get his first important story. Herbert Rawlinson, the district attorney, is in on the scheme. The editor and Rawlinson assure Byrd that, once he had the story, they would have no trouble in obtaining his freedom. Byrd arrives at prison only to find that the other prisoner had died. Feeling it was too soon to free him, the editor and the district attorney refuse to admit their part in the frameup and Byrd is forced to remain in prison. The editor assigns Byrd to do a series of articles on the penal system. The warden allows Byrd some freedom and even invites him to his home. There Byrd meets and falls in love with Miss Vale, the warden's daughter. Just then he receives bad news—the former governor had been defeated in the election and Byrd stood no chance of getting a parole because his paper had fought the election of the new man. By helping a prisoner who had been released from solitary, Byrd gets the information for which he had gone to prison. His paper breaks the story, involving noted politicians; but before the editor gets the story, Miss Vale extracts a promise from him to admit his part in framing Byrd. Thus Byrd wins his release. Before leaving the prison, however, he plays in a football game, thereby helping the prison team to win their first game. Byrd and Miss Vale are united.

Martin Mooney wrote the screen play, William Beaudine directed it, and Jed Buell produced it. In the cast are William Halligan, Dick Rush, Bill Hunter, Tom Herbert, Stubby Kruger, and others. Morally suitable for all.

"Hay Foot" with William Tracy, Joe Sawyer and James Gleason

(*Roach-United Art., Dec. 12; time, 47 min.*)

This is a followup to "Tanks A Million." But it is not as good as the first picture, for in this case the comedy is forced. One or two situations provoke laughter, but for the most part the action is mild and is developed in so routine a manner that it loses its comic value and fails to hold one's interest. William Tracy repeats the character of a mental wizard that he depicted in "Tanks A Million," but its comic value seems to have dwindled. There is a mild attempt at a romance:—

Top Sergeant William Tracy is a joy to the Colonel (James Gleason), for he writes the Colonel's speeches; moreover, his amazing memory helps the Colonel in many situations. But his mental prowess is a source of irritation to Sergeants Joe Sawyer and Noah Beery, Jr., who tried to humiliate him, without success. They finally discover one thing Tracy was incompetent in—shooting. They are, therefore, amazed when the Colonel bets them that, in a competition between Tracy, Sawyer, and Beery, Tracy would win. The Colonel based his opinion on two shots Tracy had made, not knowing that they had been accidental. Tracy loses and the Colonel is enraged when he learns, for the first time, that Tracy actually did not know how to shoot. Tracy finds himself in a predicament when, invited to dinner by the Colonel's daughter (Elyse Knox), he arrives at her home to find Sawyer and Beery already there. They had read the invitation and each one thought it was for him. They try to throw out Tracy; but he outwits them by placing their favorite pistols at the edge of a deep well. One wrong move from them and Tracy would whistle to his dog, who would come running thus throwing the pistols into the well. The dog throws them in anyway. Worried about what the sergeants would do to him, Tracy induces the Colonel to sleep at the barracks. The sergeants enter, and throw out of the window the bed in which they thought Tracy was sleeping. When they realize it was the Colonel they had thrown out, they sink to the ground knowing they would be demoted.

Eugene Conrad and Edward E. Seabrook wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol directed it. In the cast are Douglas Fowley and Harold Goodwin.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

HARRISON'S REPORTS

No. 6

HERE AND THERE

TWO WEEKS AGO, Pat Casey, the motion picture producers' labor representative, concluded with representatives of ten employees' unions, affiliates of IATSE, a two year agreement which, in the opinion of Richard Walsh, IATSE president, will give a lasting peace in the studios.

Other industries should take a leaf out of the book of these negotiations. The talks were conducted under sound principles. Instead of delegating minor officials to carry on the negotiations, there were present, under the chairmanship of Pat Casey, the industry's top executives. There was no acrimony in the negotiations, and the producer side was as fair as human beings could ever be. As a matter of fact, when the agreement was completed, the union representatives stated that eighty per cent of their demands were obtained for them by the producers themselves.

What pleased the union people was the fact that the men in overalls rubbed elbows with the men who earned five or more thousand dollars a week. Nicholas Schenck, Sidney Kent, Barney Balaban and all the other first-rank executives who took part in the negotiations treated the union representatives as equals, and did not argue against demands that they felt were fair.

Pat Casey, who is one of the fairest producer representatives, deserves great credit for the patient and skillful way by which he led the negotiators. When everything was over, he expressed himself in the highest terms about the new IATSE president, Richard Walsh. He called him honest, intelligent and fair. And he meant it.

* * *

THE TRADE JOURNALS gave a full account of Sam Goldwyn's appeal to the public against the Sparks circuit for its refusal to play "Little Foxes" on percentage terms. In every town where there is a Sparks theatre, Mr. Goldwyn took an advertisement in the local newspaper informing the public of the controversy.

Mr. Goldwyn based his argument on his theory that, when a producer risks his money to make a big picture and is willing to let the public be the judge whether that picture is good or bad, the exhibitor has no right to object. If the picture appeals to the public, Mr. Goldwyn feels that he is entitled to receive a remuneration commensurate with the public's support; if the public does not support the picture, he is willing to take his loss. In such a case, the exhibitor has nothing to lose.

In the opinion of this paper, E. J. Sparks has had, and no doubt will have, a hard time making the public believe that Mr. Goldwyn is wrong.

It is the irony of fate that the system of appealing to the public, conceived by a big company against small exhibitors, should hit back an affiliated circuit, the home office of which invented the system. It was Paramount that invented the method, and, if I remember right, applied it for the first time against a Mattoon, Illinois, theatre. Those of you who are exhibitor veterans will no doubt remember the advertisement, "Mattoon is a good town but—why the But? . . .," suggesting to the readers of the newspaper advertisement to urge their local exhibitor to book Paramount pictures if they liked them. The Sparks circuit is a Paramount partner.

* * *

IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED by Warner Bros. that "Sergeant York" will not be released to subsequent-run theatres for showing at lesser than 50c minimum admission prices until July, this year.

Commenting upon this fact, Pete Wood, business manager of The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, contrasts this announcement with a patriotic statement Harry Warner made on New Year's day calling upon every one in the industry to do his best to help win the war, and finds it inconsistent.

Pete Wood has been carrying on a campaign to induce Warner Bros. to release this picture to subsequent-run exhibitors now, not in July, and HARRISON'S REPORTS finds justification in Pete's fight, for this reason: "Sergeant York" is a money-maker and, like all other money-making pictures, the quicker it is played the more money the exhibitors will make. By July the picture will have lost much of the publicity value that has resulted from the intensive advertising campaign.

Warner Bros. is willing to release the picture to any small exhibitor who will agree to play it at a minimum admission price of 50c (55c with the tax).

Considering the number of poor pictures that the exhibitors are compelled to show to their patrons, if an exhibitor whose admission price is for example, 20c or 25c, were to raise his admission to 50c, can any one doubt that he will do much harm to his business? His patrons, not knowing that he is compelled to charge such an admission price, will think that he is profiteering. They will undoubtedly say that he has often shown them pictures that were not worth the regular admission price charged them, and now that he has a good picture he raises the prices on them.

(Continued on last page)

"A Tragedy at Midnight" with John Howard and Margaret Lindsay

(Republic, released February 2; 68 min.)

This is one of the better Republic productions, not only as to supporting cast, but also as to treatment. The supporting cast contains the following names: Roscoe Karns, Mona Barrie, Keye Luke, Hobart Cavanagh, Paul Harvey, Lillian Bond and others. As to treatment, it has been directed and acted well, and the spectator is kept in pretty tense suspense throughout, as a result of the fact that the personal liberty of the hero is shown endangered, and the murder mystery is kept well concealed until the end. The background is considerably "classy":—

John Howard, a well known radio commentator whose particular line was to solve murder mysteries that the police could not solve, is disliked by the Commissioner and his detectives for being put "on the spot" by him frequently. To silence him, they determine to involve him in a murder; they plan to put in his apartment a corpse taken from the morgue. While their apartment was redecorated, Howard and his wife (Margaret Lindsay) accept the offer of Mona Barrie, wife of Miles Mander, a physician, to live in her apartment during their absence. During a party, Howard is separated from his wife and when he returns home and sees the form of a woman in one of the twin beds he thinks it is his wife and goes to sleep in the other bed. Shortly afterwards, Margaret returns and when she sees another woman in the other bed she places the worst construction upon what her eyes had seen. She rushes out of the apartment with the intention of applying for a divorce. Soon, however, she learns from Howard that what is in the other bed was a corpse—that of a woman stabbed to death. Roscoe Karns, a plainclothes man feels that it is the opportunity he and the police Commissioner had been looking for. Knowing that a person behind bars cannot prove his innocence so easily, Howard and his wife, aided by Keye Luke, their Chinese butler, escape. In their investigation, they discover that the dead girl had been kept by two different men, and that, in order to prevent the one man from meeting the other accidentally, she had been maintaining two different apartments, and had been going under two different names. She had been killed in Howard's temporary apartment by Miles Mander, who was jealous of his wife; not knowing that Howard and Margaret had been living in his wife's apartment, he enters the apartment at midnight and, seeing a woman in bed, and thinking it was his wife, stabbed her in the back and killed her. Howard succeeds in arriving at the broadcasting station to broadcast the solution of the murder while an astonished police listens in. Mander is in the audience and, while he was levelling a pistol to shoot at Howard, Keye Luke springs at him and disarms him. The police arrive and arrest the real murderer.

The story is by Hal Hudson and Sam Duncan; the scenario, by Isabel Dawn. Robert North produced it and Joseph Santley directed it.

There are no objectionable sex situations.

"Castle in the Desert" with Sidney Toler and Sen Yung

(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 27; time, 62 min.)

This is another picture of the Charlie Chan series and not as good as many of its predecessors. There occur usual complications, caused by one or more murders and by the efforts of Sidney Toler, as Charlie Chan, to solve them. The interest is held fairly well to the end, and Mr. Toler again undertakes to explain to the other characters, and through them to the audiences, some of the details of the action that led him to suspect the murderer, and to avoid suspecting those whom others had been suspecting. Sen Yung, "Number 2 son," again interferes with his father's doings, and again he furnishes some comedy thereby.

This time Sidney Toler's detecting activities take place in a castle built in a remote place in the Mojave desert, where he had gone by an invitation ostensibly sent by the owner of the house, but really by some other person. In the castle are already Douglas Dumbrille, owner of the castle; Lenita Lane (supposedly former Princess Lucrezia Della Borgia, of the famous historical Borgia murderers,) his wife; Edmund MacDonald, Dumbrille's attorney; Arleen Whelan, MacDonald's wife; Steve Geray (a doctor), Dumbrille's physician, and Paul Kruger, authority on mediaeval life. There comes to the castle, on an invitation from Lenita, Lucien Littlefield, a gynecologist who collapses when he drinks a cocktail. Geray diagnoses poisoning. Dumbrille is horrified, for he believes his wife could not escape suspicion, being a descendant of the famous historical poisoners. He persuades Geray to take Lucien's body to a hotel to prevent scandal. Sidney Toler undertakes an investigation.

During his following of clues, others are murdered. Even his own life is placed in danger at times. And so is that of his son, who had followed him from San Francisco despite Toler's admonitions. In the end, Toler brings to light that the murderer had been Kruger, who proves to be one of the long lost Borgia descendants, brother of Lenita. He planned to kill Dumbrille so that, through his sister, he might control their fortune.

Ralph Dietrich produced it and Harry Lachman directed it from an original screen play by John Larkin, based on the character "Charlie Chan," created by Earl Derr Biggers.

The murders naturally make the picture unsuitable for sensitive adolescents and for children.

"Song of the Islands" with Betty Grable, Victor Mature and Jack Oakie

(20th Century-Fox, March 13; time, 75 min.)

The technicolor photography, which in spots is extremely beautiful but also extremely gaudy in spots, has not been able to give life to a story that is slow and most of the time boring. Most of the action revolves around hula-hula dancing, with the girls' legs protruding through the flimsy dresses considerably. In other words, it is a leg show primarily and secondarily, with some beautiful outdoor scenery, its beauty enhanced by color. Mr. Oakie contributes some mild laughs, but he should go on a forty-day diet to take some of the fat off his stomach and hips before appearing in another picture if he wants to get anywhere; otherwise his comedy will be flat most of the times. There is nothing to the story; it could have been confined to a single reel and still tell everything the feature-length tells. As to the love affair between Grable and Mature, it does not ring true. And the senseless bickering between Thomas Mitchell and George Barbier does not help the story much:—

A feast is on for the reception of Betty Grable, daughter of Thomas Mitchell, an easy-going ranch owner at Ami Ami, one of the smaller Hawaiian islands. Soon afterwards Victor Mature, son of George Barbier, a wealthy man, reaches the island to inspect his father's cattle ranch, which adjoined Mitchell's ranch. He meets Betty Grable, and it is love at first sight. Soon Barbier arrives to buy out Mitchell, but Mitchell resents his dollar-tactics: he does not want to sell. The bickering between the two then starts, and this brings about a quarrel between the two lovers. In the end, however, everything is adjusted satisfactorily, and the love-making has the blessing of the two parents.

Joseph Schrank, Robert Pirosh, Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the screen play, an original one. William LeBaron produced it, and Walter Lang directed it. Some lyrics with music are sung.

Morally there is nothing wrong with it.

"On the Sunny Side" with Roddy McDowall and Freddie Mercer

(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 13; 70 min.)

It is a fine picture of its kind. Only that it is hardly for much of the adult trade; it is chiefly for juveniles. There is naturally no romance; but there is much human interest. The most touching part is where the English children, living in the United States, talk to their parents in Great Britain in a specially arranged broadcast; it is done so well that one feels as if seeing a real broadcast. Roddy McDowall is particularly effective:—

Don Douglas and Katherine Alexander, his wife, eagerly await the arrival of Roddy McDowall, an English war refugee of twelve; they felt that their son, Freddie Mercer, would be happier to have a companion at home. At school, Roddy enters the same class as Freddie. But the attention every one pays to Roddy so hurts the feelings of Freddie that he becomes sulky and irritable. Roddy does all he can to please Freddie and to avoid giving him offense but it seems useless until one day Freddie sees the school bully aim an arrow at Roddy and strike him unconscious; he rushes after the bully and, when he overtakes him, a battle royal ensues. Certain remarks that Freddie had made before the incident had led Jane Darwell, the cook, to believe that it was Freddie who had injured Roddy. But when Roddy regains consciousness he assures them that Freddie was innocent. Roddy rushes out and joins the fight; he takes on the bully's friend. The fact that they come out victorious changes Freddie's attitude completely. The two become fast friends.

The plot has been suggested by Mary C. McCall's story "Fraternity." The screen play is by Lillie Howard and George Templeton. Harold Schuster directed it.

Good for a double bill. It could be paired with a western to good advantage.

**"Roxie Hart" with Ginger Rogers,
George Montgomery and Adolphe Menjou**
(20th Century-Fox, Feb. 20; 74 min.)

Some of the situations provoke considerable laughter. These occur mostly in the first half. The second half is either mildly amusing or boring. The reason for the loss of interest is the fact that the action revolves around the same circumstances—a golddigger's efforts to get newspaper publicity out of being accused of a murder that she had not committed. Another drawback is the fact that the picture, though a comedy, holds the courts up to ridicule, for the judge is shown as craving for publicity and as allowing the dignity of the court to be lowered. Fourteen years ago, when the play "Chicago," upon which the plot of this picture has been founded, was first produced, the picture might not have been considered injurious, and might have gone over better, but it seems to be out of place in these days, particularly when one bears in mind that the picture will be shipped abroad, to be shown to people who might not understand that it is all done in the spirit of fun.

The plot is somewhat different from the play, for it is told in retrospect—the reporter who had married the heroine tells to a bartender, under the influence of liquor, the story of Roxie Hart, who, years previously, had been tried for murder and acquitted by the jury. She had engaged a lawyer, who had never lost a case; he had made her use her feminine charms on the jury with telling effect. But the bartender happens to be one of the jurors, who had become fascinated by her, and had helped acquit her. When the reporter (George Montgomery) finishes his story, he asks the bartender, whom he had recognized, if he still had the Packard he owned when he was a juror in the case, with which he tried to date Roxie. He then exits and meets Roxie, who was now his wife and the mother of several children.

In the play, the heroine had murdered the man who had been keeping her; but in the picture she does not do the murdering—it is done by her husband. Her husband, because he loves her, tries to shield her by assuming guilt. Reporters then enter in the case and one of them, Lynne Overman, catches Ginger trying to enter her own apartment. Suspecting that she was the murderess, and sensing a good story, he restrains her. Finally he persuades her to admit guilt by holding before her a mental picture of the front page newspaper publicity she would get. The "rub" occurs when the man who could have proved to the court in case of need that she had not committed the murder dies. Her lawyer is desperate, but he determines to save her anyway. Knowing that Chicago up to that time had not hanged a woman, he felt that no jury would now hang one. He succeeds in bringing about her acquittal by inducing her to tell the newspaper people that she was about to become a mother; Menjou appeals to the jury's sympathies by pointing out to them that convicting Roxie would have convicted also a human being not yet born. In the meantime, George Montgomery, who had followed the case, falls in love with her and marries her, since her first husband had obtained a divorce.

The picture was produced by Nunnally Johnson, by a screen play by himself. William Wellman directed it.

Since it is a comedy, it is doubtful that the implications of infidelity will hurt anybody's morals. Miss Rogers' popularity should help the picture draw. But it is hardly a woman's picture.

**"Blondie Goes to College" with
Arthur Lake, Penny Singleton
and Larry Simms**

(Columbia, Jan. 15; running time, 73 min.)

Up to the standard of the other pictures of this series. The action unfolds at a pretty fast pace, there is human interest in some of the situations, and some comedy. Some of this comedy is provoked by the intelligence of Daisy, the canine:

While attending a football game with his family, Arthur Lake gets a desire to go to college for additional education with the hope of getting a quick promotion as an architect's employee. When Penny Singleton asks the opinion of Jonathan Hale, her husband's employer, Hale recommends a college education, not only for Lake, but also for herself. Putting little Larry in a military academy, Penny and Arthur matriculate in the same college. But they conceal the fact that they are married. Larry Parks, Leighton's all-American half-back "appropriates" Penny, and Janet Blair, the Campus Belle, attaches herself to Arthur. And to make matters worse, Penny is in the sorority before she knows it, even though the rules were against admitting married women to it. At the academy, Larry is made a corporal. Arthur goes in for football, track and baseball but is a flop. Arthur makes

blunder after blunder, and his college loses many a race as a result of his clumsiness. He is also arrested as a kidnaper of his own son. But things are eventually disentangled, and they quit college. Arthur goes back to his boss at a bigger salary.

The plot has been founded on a comic strip created by Chick Young. Lou Breslow wrote the screen play. The picture was produced by Robert Sparks; it was directed by Frank R. Strayer.

Good for the entire family.

**"Cadets on Parade" with
Freddie Bartholomew and Jimmy Lydon**

(Columbia, Jan. 22; 63 min.)

An ordinary program picture. Though there is human interest in some of the situations, the direction is so poor and the acting in some spots so old-fashioned that the effect is lost. As a matter of fact, in spots the spectators will laugh deridingly at the picture. An additional handicap to the picture is the fact that there is no romance in it:—

Officers of the military academy call on Joseph Crehan and inform him that there is something wrong with Freddie Bartholomew, his son. Heartbroken, Crehan decides to find out for himself. After a talk with Freddie, Crehan obtains a promise from him that he will try to conquer his shyness. But after his father's departure, Freddie loses his nerve and runs away from school. In a distant town he is befriended by Jimmy Lydon, a motherless newsboy, whose father (Raymond Hatton) was a drunkard and a "loafer." Freddie sells newspapers and lives at Jimmy's shack. Hatton sees in the newspapers the picture of Freddie with a story that he had been kidnapped, and decides to obtain from Freddie's wealthy father a ransom. Freddie returns home but refuses to give an accounting of his movements either to his father or to the police. Feeling grateful for the treatment he had received from Jimmy, Freddie asks his father to let him have one thousand dollars, which he sends to Jimmy to enable him to educate himself. By means of this money, which had been marked, the police arrest Jimmy as the kidnapper. Jimmy realizes that it was his father who had sent the ransom note, but he assumes the guilt himself. Realizing that Jimmy would be convicted of a crime he had not committed, Hatton goes to Freddie's father and confesses everything. Jimmy is induced to tell the true story to the Judge and thus he obtains his freedom. Freddie's father puts Jimmy in the same military Academy and Freddie, revealing to the students that he was not a "kidnap" hero, succeeds in establishing himself in their esteem.

The story is by Frank Fenton and Martha Bennett; the screen play, by Howard J. Green. Lew Landers directed it. Minna Gombell, Robert Warwick are in the cast.

Morally suitable for all.

**"A Close Call for Ellery Queen" with
William Gargan and Margaret Lindsay**

(Columbia, January 29; 67 min.)

Of about the same quality as the other pictures of this series. The murder mystery is fairly intriguing, the action is fairly fast, and the romance mildly interesting. William Gargan has been substituted for Ralph Bellamy:—

William Gargan receives a visit from Edward Norris, who asks him to investigate the two strangers (Andrew Tombes and Charles Judels) who had intruded on Ralph Morgan, his employer, a retired business man. Gargan discovers that the two men had been blackmailing Morgan; also that Morgan had been seeking his two long lost daughters. Assisted by Norris, Kay Linaker succeeds in convincing Morgan that she was one of his daughters. While Gargan was absent from his office, Micheline Cheirel, one of the real daughters, arrives to engage Gargan's services to find her father, and Margaret Lindsay decides to do the work herself. By an understanding, Margaret goes to Morgan's home and poses as the daughter, her intention being to uncover the imposter. Morgan agrees to pay to the blackmailers a large sum of money under the understanding that they were to cease blackmailing him. After leaving the appointed place, where he had taken the money, Morgan learns that the blackmailers had been murdered. Suspicion was directed towards Morgan. Soon Morgan, too, is found murdered. Gargan, aided by Miss Lindsay, eventually brings to light that it was Norris who had murdered the two blackmailers so as to hijack the money; and he had murdered Morgan to hush him. Miss Linaker, the imposter, was in league with Cole.

The story is by Ellery Queen; the screen play by Eric Taylor. James Hogan directed it. In the cast are James Burk, Addison Richards, Ben Weldon.

Unsuitable for children.

It would have been different had the picture been roadshown in all the big cities at prices ranging from 75c to \$2; few picture goers would then complain if the exhibitor were to charge prices ranging from 50c to \$1; he would find it easy to explain the difference to them, and could even convince them that they were getting a bargain. But for him to charge 50c when the first-run theatre in his territory charged the same price, which is that theatre's regular admission price, he would have a hard time justifying his action.

If Harry Warner should like to preach patriotism, he should not be like the preacher who says to his congregation: "Do as I say and not as I do."

* * *

AS YOU ALREADY KNOW, Morris A. Rosenberg, president of the Pittsburgh Allied unit, has been elected president of the national organization by the Allied board of directors at their recent meeting here.

Every one of you knows, I am sure, that the office does not pay a salary, in spite of the fact that the president has to devote a great deal of his time to it at the expense of his personal business. For this reason, anyone who accepts the office deserves much credit for his self sacrifice.

Recognition that hard work is connected with the office, however, does not get an Allied president anywhere; he must be given the support of every member of the organization so that he may do his work more effectively. Letting Mr. Rosenberg do all the work is not fair; every member must try to do some part of it so that it might be easier for Mr. Rosenberg to discharge his duties.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that Mr. Rosenberg will receive so much support that he will want to accept the office for a second, and perhaps for a third, term.

And while we are talking about the office of president of the Allied organization, it might not be a bad idea for Allied members to send a letter of thanks to Col. H. A. Cole for the service he rendered to Allied for three consecutive terms. His address is: Allied Theatre Owners of Texas, 2011 1/2 Jackson St., Dallas, Texas.

* * *

MR. HENRY MORGENTHAU, Secretary of the Treasury, has appealed to all exhibitors to show "The New Spirit," a Donald Duck cartoon short which Mr. Disney has made, at his own expense, for the Treasury Department. This short stresses the necessity for paying the taxes.

It is hardly necessary for this paper, or for any other paper for that matter, to stress Mr. Morgenthau's appeal; every exhibitor will undoubtedly run this short.

While talking about "The New Spirit," I should like to remind you that the new defense shorts, "Safeguarding Military Information," and "Tanks," having been approved by the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry, are now available for showing.

The first of the two was produced by Darryl Zanuck as one of a series of training films made for the War Department at cost under the auspices of the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture

Arts and Sciences; it depicts, in narrative form, the consequences of careless revelation of military secrets.

"Tanks" was produced by the Office of Emergency Management Film Unit, and the commentary is spoken by Orson Welles; it presents the production of armored tanks in one of the great arsenals of the nation.

Other such shorts available for showing are: "Women in Defense," "Bomber," "Red Cross Trailer," "Food for Freedom," "Pots to Planes," "Army in Overalls," "America Builds Ships," "Bits and Pieces," "Where Do We Go," "Seven U. S. Treasury Tags," "America Preferred," "Calling All Workers," and 12 one-minute Army-recruiting trailers calling attention to the need for men of special skill in the air force, field artillery, infantry, cavalry and other branches.

* * *

THERE WILL BE NO NEW THEATRES erected as long as the war lasts, and perhaps you will find it difficult obtaining replacement parts. For this reason you should exercise great economy beginning today.

The following item is contained in the January 14 Bulletin of The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio:

"OPM RESTRICTIONS"

"Theatres face a serious shortage not only of replacement parts but also such items as radiotrons (tubes), theatre chairs, carbon tetrachloride, freon gas, projector carbons, motor cork and wool carpets. There will also be a shortage in iron, steel, copper, rubber and many other materials which are vital in theatre operation and upkeep.

"All of this means that exhibitors should immediately examine all of their equipment and do everything possible to put it in the best operating condition so that the wear and tear on the moving parts will be at a minimum. This is particularly important with respect to booth equipment because it has been announced that replacement parts are available for the equivalent of only approximately seven hundred fifty complete projection units, and there are over fifteen thousand theatres in daily operation throughout the United States.

"The condition is really serious and theatre owners should not wait until their equipment breaks down before servicing it. As stated above, the best way to keep breakdowns at a minimum is to make a thorough examination of your equipment *now* and frequent regular examinations in the future. Otherwise, you are apt to have a dark house.

"WHAT TO DO"

"Exhibitors desiring to purchase restricted materials must fill out Form PD-1, copies of which can be obtained from motion picture equipment and supply dealers. After making requisition for the needed equipment or supplies, it usually requires from seven to twenty-five days to secure approval of the OPM, plus the length of time required for the dealer to fill the order. This means that theatre owners will have to be patient and not expect the same service they have been receiving in the past."

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States \$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1942

No. 7

HERE AND THERE

A SHORT TIME AGO, the Hays association put out a booklet, which it has named "Film Facts 1942," in which it gives certain statistical information.

The booklet is full of inaccuracies. Just to bring to your attention one or two of them:

Under the heading, "Motion Picture Theatres in the U. S.," "Film Facts" gives 19,055 as the number of theatres for 1941. The Department of Commerce gives the number as slightly more than 15,000. And certainly that Department knows better than the Hays Association, for it has taken its figures from the Census. The Hays association has no way by which it could get the right figures. In the days when the Film Boards of Trade were in existence, each regional board used to compile a list; but now that the Boards are out of existence, no one compiles a similar list.

Even when the film boards were compiling the lists, these were inaccurate; the film salesmen, who were supposed to furnish the information, made a mess of it.

Thomas M. Pryor, of the *New York Times*, commented extensively on "Film Facts." He says partly: "The Hays office offers no explanation as to how it arrived at the 85,000,000 figure. Nor does it state how it determined that in the rest of the world an average of 150,000,000 people go weekly to the movies. War apparently has had no effect on the movie-going habits of the world, for the 150,000,000 figure has remained constant since as far back as 1927.

"Set against those of 1940, last year's statistics tell a startling story about the motion picture industry. For instance, in 1941, the industry produced 546 feature pictures, or sixty-seven more than in the preceding twelve months, and at the same time reduced its employed personnel by 88,400 workers which resulted in a payroll savings of \$84,060,000. The bulk of the savings was registered among exhibition and distribution payrolls, the former costs dropping from \$250,000,000 in 1940 to \$160,000,000 last year; the latter from \$27,560,000 in 1940 to \$23,500,000 in 1941. However, production payrolls rose to \$139,000,000 last year, or \$10,000,000 more than in 1940, while production personnel increased from 28,500 in 1940 to 33,700.

"How the industry managed to drop 88,000 regularly employed workers without causing a major public disturbance is perhaps the most startling revelation of the century. Yet the figures are there in bold type.

And the report must be right, for being a Hays office undertaking it is, or should be, barring some possible miscalculations, as accurate as human endeavor could make it.

"The report also contains other pertinent information, such as that the average admission price has gone up from 23 cents to 25.2 cents; that double features were shown in fifty-nine per cent of the nation's 16,951 theatres in operation in 1941; that the big box-office rush throughout the land takes place nightly between 7:30 and 8:30 o'clock."

What will infuriate the independent exhibitors, however, is the statement, made on Page 11, to the effect that the theatre retains 65% of the receipts. Evidently Mr. Hays has never heard of 35%, 40%, and 50% pictures, not counting the money an exhibitor has to pay for shorts, newsreels and trailers. Manifestly he thinks that all these are furnished to the exhibitors by the film companies free.

Mr. Hays could have certainly obtained more accurate figures for the money he gets.

* * *

ON THURSDAY LAST WEEK, the Department of Justice filed suit against Paramount and Twentieth Century-Fox (National Theatres) to compel them to divest themselves of all theatres that they acquired between November 20, 1940, the day on which the Consent Decree was entered, and December 1, 1941.

If the Government should succeed in attaining its object in this case, it might later go further,—sue all the theatre-owning companies for the divestment of their entire theatre holdings.

Section XI, Sub-Section 5, of the Consent Decree reads as follows:

"For a period of three years following the entry of this decree, no consenting defendant shall enter upon a general program of expanding its theatre holdings. Nothing herein shall prevent any such defendant from acquiring theatres or interests therein to protect its investment or its competitive position or for ordinary purposes of its business. Proceedings based on a violation of this subdivision (5) shall be only by application to the court for injunctive relief against the consenting defendant complained against, which shall be limited to restraining the acquisition, or ordering the divestiture, of the theatres or interests therein, if any, about to be acquired, or acquired, in violation of this section."

(Continued on last page)

"Ride 'em Cowboy" with Bud Abbott and Lou Costello

(Universal, February 13; time, 86 min.)

Although the story is not as strong as the stories in the previous pictures of these stars, and although the comedy gags are not as plentiful, there are enough laugh-provoking gags to give the Abbott and Costello fans a good time watching the action. Dick Foran is given a considerably prominent part, to the picture's advantage. A great deal of the comedy and of the thrills are provoked by the rodeo, in which Costello is shown both riding and being thrown from a broncho; also by his efforts to avoid marrying a squaw. Some of the thrills are caused by a fighting mad bull escaping from the pen and entering the rodeo field. A few songs are sung, some of them by Dick Foran, and he does well. The romance is between Dick Foran and Anne Gwynne:—

At a charity rodeo given at a wealthy man's home in Long Island, in which were present Abbott and Costello, two hot-dog vendors, Dick Foran, author of sage brush novels and of range songs, meets Anne Gwynne, rodeo ace, daughter of an Arizona dude ranch owner, and is so attracted to her that when she leaves for the west Dick boards the same train. Meanwhile Abbott and Costello, as a result of one of their usual blunders, enter a cattle car and are carried to Arizona. Awaiting Anne's arrival at the flagstop are her father (Samuel S. Hinds), his foreman (Johnny Mack Brown, in love with Anne), a racketeering Indian Chief (Douglass Dumbrille), a gambler (Morris Akrum), and many ranch hands. Costello accidentally shoots an arrow through the tepee of Dumbrille's sister, and since this means a marriage proposal according to an Indian custom, Dumbrille insists, to the discomfiture of Costello, that he marry his sister. Anne finds out that the great Dick Foran had never ridden a broncho and did not even know how to stay on the saddle, and she rails him. Foran admits it but he informs her that his fame had been due to his publicity agent. He convinces her that he wants to learn. Thus she undertakes to teach him. He progresses rapidly. Morris Akrum, having staked his bankrolls on the defeat of Hinds' team in the state rodeo championship, kidnaps Brown and Foran, but Costello saves the situation when he, being chased by Dumbrille for not marrying his sister, leads the rangers into the hills and thus aids in the capture of Akrum and in the liberation of Brown and Foran. Brown, having realized that Anne loved Foran, gracefully yields to him. Of course, it is the altar also for Costello and the Indian girl.

Edmund L. Hartman wrote the story, and True Boardman and John Grant the screen play. Alex Gottlieb produced it and Arthur Lubin directed it. In the cast are also the Merry Macks (Judd, Ted and Joe McMichael, and Mary Lou Cook).

Good for the entire family.

"The Courtship of Andy Hardy" with Mickey Rooney and Lewis Stone

(MGM, March release; time, 93 min.)

A delightful picture of this series. Rooney again distinguishes himself by his good acting and his good character. And Lewis Stone repeats his excellent performance of the other pictures of this series. Fay Holden is the lovable mother as always. There are youthful doings, of course—such as should amuse and delight the picturegoers. But above all there is deep human appeal. The scenes that shows Mickey Rooney telling his troubles to his father and receiving the best advice a father can give to a son; the loyalty among the members of the family; the efforts of Lewis Stone to bring happiness to Donna Reid, a victim of quarreling parents, succeeding in these efforts with the cooperation of Mickey—all these doings and others touch one deeply. There is also a romance:—

Judge Hardy feels so deeply the unhappiness that her quarreling parents had brought upon Melodie, the seventeen-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roderick Nesbit, that he enlists the aid of Andy, his son, to bring happiness into her life. At his suggestion, his son Andy invites Melodie to a school prom but his suffering is great because his pals would not cut in to dance with Melodie; she looked so old-fashioned. Marian, the Hardy's daughter, returns from a year's schooling in New York and assumes such a sophistication that the family is shocked. She insists upon going out with Jeff Willis, a man-about-town whom she had met accidentally. In spite of the fact that she is informed of the fact that Willis drank heavily and was free with women, Marian insists upon going out with him. Since Judge Hardy had brought up his children as a good father and depended upon their good judgment to save them from trouble, he does not forbid his daughter from going. The family worries because Marian failed to return even though the hour was

past midnight and Andy goes in search of them in his car. He finds the car wrecked after hitting a tree. Willis is drunk but neither of them is injured. Marian learns her lesson to the joy of her parents and of Andy. Incidentally, this accident brings about Willis's reform. Melody finds out that Andy had paid some of his chums to dance with her at the school prom and determines to make herself attractive. At the second dance she transforms herself to so dazzling a beauty that his chums pay Andy for permission to dance with her. Judge Hardy eventually succeeds in bringing Melodie's parents together, to her joy.

The plot has been founded on the characters that have been created by Aurania Rouverol. The screen play is by Agnes Christine Johnston. George B. Seitz directed it.

"This Time for Keeps" with Ann Rutherford, Robert Sterling, Guy Kibbee, Irene Rich and Virginia Weidler

(MGM, released March; time, 73 min.)

Indifferent! It is a picture that the world would not have missed if it had not been produced at all. Most of the footage is consumed in depicting the father-in-law interfering with his son-in-law's efforts to do his work at the office in an intelligent way. A great deal of it is devoted also to showing the daughter's unreasonable conduct—she had not yet grown out of the habit of considering her father above her husband. The husband awakens considerable sympathy because of the fact that he is a victim of the unreasonableness of both wife and father-in-law. There is nothing in the action that would interest much the young generation:—

While his wife (Ann Rutherford) is away, Robert Sterling weakens and agrees to work in the office of his father-in-law, (Guy Kibbee), a real estate man. But soon his life becomes miserable because, every time he wanted to close a deal, Kibbee would step in and take it off his hands. He was so accustomed to doing everything himself, and that he felt no one else could do things as well as he. For some time Sterling had been trying to close a deal with Henry O'Neil, a soap manufacturer, for the sale of a lot. Just as he had brought the deal to a closing point, Kibbee steps in and spoils it. This insenses Sterling. Sterling's dissatisfaction with Kibbee's conduct becomes a source of quarrelling between Sterling and Ann. In the end, however, Sterling is able to put the deal through.

The plot has been founded on the characters created by Herman J. Mankiewicz. The screen play was written by Muriel Roy Bolton, Rian James, and Harry Ruskin. The picture has been produced by Charles Reisner, and directed by Samuel Marx.

Morally there is nothing objectionable in it.

"The Night Before the Divorce" with Lynn Bari, Mary Beth Hughes and Joseph Allen, Jr.

(20th Century-Fox, March 6; time, 66 min.)

The question in the case of this picture is, not that it is poor entertainment, but that it should have been produced at all. Certainly some one at the studio must have known that the story should have been dumped on to the junk pile. There is no emotional appeal in any of the situations, and what the actors do seem childish; for this reason no one can take an interest in their doings. As to the direction, you may judge for yourself by the fact that the heroine, though she is suspected of the murder of a man, she acts as if she were going to a picnic:—

Joseph Allen, Jr., is irritated because his wife knows everything, and can do everything; his false pride is hurt. For this reason Mary Beth Hughes has no trouble in making him "fall" for her when they accidentally meet and she displays her wiles. The consequence is that Joseph asks Lynn for a divorce. On the eve of the trial Nils Asther, with whom Lynn had become acquainted, and in whose company she had been seen, is murdered and Lynn conceives the stupid plan of drawing suspicion upon herself and then asking Allen to protect her. Allen takes Lynn to his yacht with the intention of spiriting her away to Canada. But the engine is out of commission. Before it is repaired, Mary Beth Hughes arrives. And so does Truman Bradley, a detective, friend of Allen's. In a desire to protect Lynn, Allen takes the blame for the murder on himself. Bradley is about to arrest them both when Allen knocks him unconscious. They swim ashore. The crime is solved when Asther's former wife confesses to the murder. By this time Allen has had a chance to see through Mary Beth's character and goes back to his wife, who loved him.

The plot has been based on a play by Gina Kaus and Ladislav Fodor. Ralph Dietrich produced it, and Robert Siodmak directed it.

"The Lady Is Willing" with Marlene Dietrich and Fred MacMurray

(Columbia, February 12; time, 90 min.)

Despite the lavishness with which this picture has been produced, it is no more than fair entertainment by reason of the fact that the story is lightweight. Consequently, an exhibitor has to depend on the popularity of the stars for box-office results. There is some human interest, but for the most part the emotional appeal is forced. A baby is employed for effect, but in view of the fact that Miss Dietrich has been appearing in glamorous stories and has never been given mother parts, the present attempt to present her with maternal instincts does not ring true. The romance between her and MacMurray is not very stirring:—

While passing by a tenement house, Marlene Dietrich, a glamorous actress, sees a crowd and, when she approaches it, a policeman hands her a baby, which he had found abandoned, and asks her to hold it. Her maternal instinct having been aroused, Marlene takes the baby to her apartment, and orders immediately that a doctor be sent for to teach her how to take care of a baby. She ignores the protests of her maid and of her manager that she might get into trouble carrying a baby away in that manner. The doctor (Fred MacMurray) arrives and informs her that the baby is not a "she" but a "he." Soon the police descend on the apartment looking for the baby and, despite her efforts to hide it, she is unsuccessful. The police inform her that, before she could adopt a baby, she either had to be solvent or married. Despite her big salary, she is financially insolvent. As to her not being married, she solves the problem by inducing MacMurray to marry her. He marries her because he would thus have a chance to experiment on rabbits for a pneumonia cure he was working on. As time goes on, Marlene and Fred become fond of each other until one day Fred sees her leading man become too affectionate, and she sees another woman in Fred's life; then the parting takes place. She goes to Boston with her company. In Boston the baby becomes seriously ill and Marlene, frantic with anxiety, attempts to telephone Fred. But Fred, having been informed of the baby's illness, goes to Boston. After an operation, the baby's life is saved. Fred succeeds in inducing her to go on with the show instead of staying at the hospital during the operation. While Marlene gives a listless performance, her thoughts being on the baby, Fred appears on the wings with a smile, denoting that the baby was out of danger. Then Marlene becomes her former self and gives a fine performance.

The plot has been founded on a story by James Edward Grant. The screen play is by Albert McCleery in cooperation with the author. Charles K. Feldman produced and directed it. Aline McMahon, Arline Judge and others are in the supporting cast.

There are no objectionable situations in it.

"Mississippi Gambler" with Kent Taylor, Frances Langford and John Litel

(Universal. rel. date not yet set; 61 min.)

An indifferent program picture. It is a murder melodrama, in which the acts of the characters arouse only mild interest, and the romance is not of much consequence. It might do for the second half of a double-bill on nights the exhibitor does not expect much of a crowd:—

Kent Taylor, a New York newspaper reporter with a great memory for faces, sees at the racetrack a murder, after which the murderer disappears like a flash. Although he tells the police that he had not seen the murderer closely enough to remember him, he informs the editor (Wade Boteler) that it was Douglas Fowley, a gambling racketeer once associated with John Litel (under the character name Jim Hadley). He persuades Boteler to let him follow the murderer, for he believed that he would get a good story. Taylor goes from town to town in search of Fowley until he lands in a small Mississippi town. At the hotel he registers, he meets John Litel (under the character name Francis Carvel), and soon recognizes him as the man who (under the name Jim Hadley) had faked his own murder, in spite of the fact that he had his face lifted. Still in search of Fowley, Taylor goes to the gambling boat and there he meets Frances Langford, a singer and it is love at first sight. On the boat he learns that Litel was the boss of the gambling joint. Litel has Fowley murdered for bungling. Taylor brings to town people that knew Litel but they fail to recognize him until he has Boteler send Litel's dog, which recognizes him. Litel is thus trapped and his many murders are revealed. Taylor and Miss Langford become engaged.

Paul Malvern produced the picture and John Rawlins directed it.

"The Man Who Returned to Life" with John Howard

(Columbia, February 5; time, 61 min.)

This is a fair program melodrama. The story is rather harrowing in that the hero, although innocent, is persecuted by two vicious men. Yet, even though it lacks fast action, it holds one's attention, for the performances are good and the direction is intelligent. The story is told in flashback:—

John Howard, happily married to Lucile Fairbanks, is a successful small-town businessman. Reading the newspaper one morning, he is amazed to learn that Paul Guilfoyle was going to hang for the murder of one "David Jameson." That had been Howard's name, which he had since changed. His mind goes back to his former life as "Jameson." He had lived in Guilfoyle's town, and had enjoyed a good reputation as a bank teller. He had fallen in love with Marcella Martin, much to Guilfoyle's anger, for he loved her. Guilfoyle was a member of a hot-headed family, generally disliked. To add to Howard's troubles, Guilfoyle's sister (Ruth Ford) had fallen in love with him and pursued him, leading folks to believe that he had led her on. She was furious when Howard had announced his engagement to Miss Martin. She had stopped Howard in the street one day and had asked him to step into her car. Then she had started driving at a furious pace, warning Howard that unless he married her she would wreck the car. The car had gone over a cliff, and she had been killed. Howard had been arrested for planning the "murder" and had been tried. The judge had declared a mistrial. Howard had gone to his farmhouse. Fortunately he had looked through the window and had seen a shotgun rigged to kill whoever opened the door—obviously the work of Guilfoyle. In the meantime, Guilfoyle had aroused some friends to lynch Howard. Howard had run away. No sooner had he left than Miss Martin married Guilfoyle. Howard had met and been befriended by Miss Fairbanks, and, under another name, had started over again and had risen to a prominent position; he had married Miss Fairbanks. As he reads the newspaper item, he realizes that some tramp who had forced an entrance into the house must have been shot, and that the authorities must have taken it for granted that it was Howard's body. He flies to the old town, clears Guilfoyle, but naturally has to stand trial on the old charge himself. He is cleared and joyfully rushes back to his wife.

Samuel W. Taylor wrote the story, and Gordon Rigby, the screen play; Lew Landers directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it. In the cast are Roger Clark, Elisabeth Risdon, Helen MacKellar, and others.

Although there is nothing immoral in it, it is hardly entertainment for children.

"Man from Headquarters" with Frank Albertson and Joan Woodbury

(Monogram, January 23; time, 64 min.)

Judging this picture by Monogram standards, one may pronounce it as a fair double-bill picture; but if one were to judge it by other standards, one would be compelled to say that it is amateurish, for direction and acting are poor. Frank Albertson has done better acting than in this picture. The romance is indifferent:—

Frank Albertson, an ace reporter, receives from the chief of police a beautiful service revolver as a reward for having helped capture the gang headed by Max Hoffman, Jr., a notorious criminal. Hoffman, out on bail, orders his henchmen to kill Frank. The henchmen abduct Frank but, realizing the chance they are taking in abducting a reporter, refrain from killing him. Instead, they knock him unconscious and then ship him to St. Louis. In that city, Frank accidentally meets Joan Woodbury, penniless, like himself, and he takes her under his wing. He pawns his revolver. Hoffman holds up a night club and his henchmen shoot a policeman outside. But the policeman shoots and kills the driver of the car. Frank, who happened to be leaving the night club with Joan at that time, instructs her to wait for him at a short distance. Dragging the body of the driver out of the car, he enters it and sits at the wheel. Hoffman at that moment exits and, throwing the money bag into the car, instructs Frank, whom he had mistaken as his driver, to meet him later. Frank, then goes to the editor of the local paper and receives an assignment to apprehend the criminal and get a good story. Frank eventually succeeds in helping the police capture Hoffman, thus clearing himself of the implication that he had had something to do with the murder by reason of the fact that the gangsters had taken his gun out of the pawn shop and had used it in the commission of the murder. By this time, Frank and Joan are in love with each other.

John Kraft and Rollo Lloyd wrote the screen play; Lindsay Parsons produced it and Jean Yarborough directed it.

It is assumed that the defendants will have to prove to the court that their latest theatre acquisitions were made for the purpose of protecting their investments, or perhaps their competitive positions.

* * *

AS EVERY ONE OF YOU UNDOUBTEDLY knows by this time, the motion picture industry has been recognized by the U. S. Government "essential in certain instances to the national health, safety and interest, and in other instances to war production," and that artists and mechanics have the right to ask an exemption from the draft. That is how it has been ruled by Brig. General Lewis B. Hershey, director of Selective Service, according to Mr. George Schaefer, chairman of the war activities committee of the industry.

In announcing this ruling, Mr. Schaefer has assured the people of the United States that deferrment will be sought in a limited number of cases—where exemption is absolutely necessary.

* * *

THE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME, which went into effect last Monday for the duration of the war, may not affect the business as much in winter time as it will affect it during the summer months.

Even in the summer months, the harm to the business will not be as great as it would have been in ordinary times, by reason of the fact that the use of the automobiles has been restricted, and people will not be so ready to drive to the country.

But that it will affect the theatre receipts to some extent, no one can have any doubt.

The only way by which the damage could be offset is for the producers to make the percentage of box office meritorious pictures much higher than it is now. They must make pictures that will be a great competition to good weather.

* * *

CORRECTING A SLIGHT INACCURACY: Messrs. Myers, Jenkins and Levenson were charged by the UMPI, not to iron out exhibitor-distributor problems, but to draft a Constitution and by-laws. This paper owes this correction to Pete Wood, executive secretary of The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio.

* * *

IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT Leon J. Bamberger, sales promotion manager of RKO, has been appointed executive secretary of the UMPI committee.

The post was offered to Mr. Lowell V. Calvert, general manager in charge of sales for Selznick-International, and former sales manager for Frank Capra's "Meet John Doe," but he declined it.

* * *

IN THE PRICE CONTROL BILL, the control of film rentals was eliminated on account of the great difficulty of fixing fair prices for film. That was

natural, for as a rule the price of film is governed, not by what a film costs, but by what it draws at the box office.

There is a limit, however, to what the exhibitors can pay. Asking them to pay prices that cannot, even if the pictures were to be exploited with the most intensive exploitation campaign, leave them a profit, is poor business on the part of the producer-distributors. Nothing is gained by driving exhibitors out of business.

There has been an outcry lately against the distributors' rental demands and terms. The exhibitor representatives on the UMPI may be able to convince the distributor representatives that a downward revision of film rentals is necessary. If they cannot, there may be a renewal of the attempt to put through Congress a bill such as former Senator Neely introduced in Senate, twice succeeding in having the Senate pass it.

* * *

A SUBSCRIBER OF THIS PAPER writes as follows:

"I am enclosing a check in payment of my subscription, but I am afraid that, if the Consent Decree stays for long, there will not be many independent exhibitors left to subscribe to your paper.

"What has the Consent Decree done for me?

"1. It has raised the price of pictures from 50% to 100% over what I paid last year and years back.

"2. It has taken away from me the chance of eliminating any features that I wouldn't like to play.

"3. I cannot get pictures for my Sunday shows any more unless I give most of my profits to the distributor.

"4. If by some mistake I did a big business on a Sunday, the price on the next block goes sky-high. You see they check and blind check you to make sure that you haven't made any extra profit.

"5. 'Blocks' don't mean a thing. I cannot buy a block of pictures before I buy all the blocks released previously.

"6. I cannot buy features without buying shorts first.

"7. The film salesman is not a medium any more between his company and the exhibitor. He has three or five pictures to sell and he must get the price fixed by his New York office.

"8. In case of Metro, I like to know what I am buying for how much.

"9. The Consent Decree has not left me any time to do any janitor work; my time is taken up by the film salesmen.

"I can keep on enumerating the harm that the Consent Decree has done to the small-town exhibitor, but I am sure you know them all. It is up to you and your good paper to organize the small town independent exhibitors to do away with the Consent Decree and bring back the old system with a twenty per cent cancellation privilege."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1942

No. 7

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Roxie Hart—20th Century-Fox (74 min.)	23
Salute to Courage—MGM (82 min.)	14
Sing Your Worries Away—RKO (71 min.)	8
Song of the Islands—20th Century-Fox (75 min.)	22
Son of Fury—20th Century-Fox (100 min.)	6
Torpedo Boat—Paramount (68 min.)	14
Tragedy at Midnight, A—Republic (68 min.)	22
Treat 'Em Rough—Universal (61 min.)	16
Valley of the Sun—RKO (78 min.)	6
We Were Dancing—MGM (93 min.)	10
Woman of the Year—MGM (112 min.)	10
Yank on the Burma Road, A—MGM (65 min.)	11
Young America—20th Century-Fox (72 min.)	6

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3024 Honolulu Lu—Velez-Bennett-Carrillo	Dec. 11
3039 Harvard Here I Come—Rosenbloom-Judge	Dec. 18
3202 Riders of the Badlands—Starrett (57 m.)	Dec. 18
3004 Bedtime Story—Young-March-Benchley	Dec. 25
3211 The Lone Star Vigilantes—Elliott (57 m.)	Jan. 1
3028 Confessions of Boston Blackie—Morris	Jan. 8
3017 Blondie Goes to College—Singleton-Lake	Jan. 15
3203 West of Tombstone—Starrett (59 m.)	Jan. 15
3035 Cadets on Parade—Bartholomew-Lydon	Jan. 22
3031 A Close Call for Ellery Queen—Gargan	Jan. 29
3034 The Man Who Returned to Life—Howard	Feb. 5
3007 The Lady is Willing—Dietrich-MacMurray	Feb. 12
3212 Bullets for Bandits—Elliott (55 m.)	Feb. 12
Shut My Big Mouth—Joe E. Brown (71 m.)	Feb. 19
Adventures of Martin Eden—Ford-Trevor	Feb. 26
Camp Nuts—Rice-B. Bennett	Mar. 12
Lawless Plainsman—Starrett (59 m.)	Mar. 12
Canal Zone—Morris-Hilliard	Mar. 19
Two Yanks in Trinidad—O'Brien-Terry	Mar. 26

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

220 The Bugle Sounds—Beery-Main-Stone	Jan.
221 Joe Smith, American—Young-Hunt	Feb.
222 Woman of the Year—Tracy-Hepburn	Feb.
223 The Vanishing Virginian—Morgan-Grayson	Feb.
224 A Yank on the Burma Road—Day-Nelson	Feb.
225 We Were Dancing—Shearer-Douglas	Mar.
226 Born to Sing—Weidler-McDonald	Mar.
227 House of Spies—Veidt-Ayars	Mar.
228 This Time for Keeps—Rutherford-Sterling	Mar.
229 The Courtship of Andy Hardy—Stone-Rooney-Parker-Holden	Mar.

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

I Killed That Man—Ricardo Cortez	Nov. 28
Borrowed Hero—Baxter-Rice	Dec. 5
Lone Star Law Man—Keene (61 m.)	Dec. 5
Riot Squad—Cromwell-Quigley-Miljan	Dec. 12
Road to Happiness—Boles-Barrie	Dec. 19
Forbidden Trails—Buck Jones (60 m.)	Dec. 26
Freckles Comes Home—Downs-Storm	Jan. 2
Thunder River Feud—Range Busters (56 m.)	Jan. 9
Snuffy Smith the Yard Bird—Duncan (67 m.)	Jan. 16
Man From Headquarters—Albertson-Woodbury (64 m.)	Jan. 23
Below the Border—Buck Jones (57 m.)	Jan. 30

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4110 Glamour Boy—Cooper-Foster-AbelDec. 5
 4108 Among the Living—Dekker-Hayward.....Dec. 19
 4136 Louisiana Purchase—Hope-Zorina-Moore ..Dec. 25
 4111 Bahama Passage—Carroll-HaydenJan. 23
 4112 Sullivan's Travels—McCrea-LakeFeb. 6
 4113 No Hands on the Clock—Morris-Parker.....Feb. 13
 4115 Pacific Blackout—Preston-MerivaleMar. 16
 4114 Mr. Bug Goes to Town—Cartoon.....Not yet set
 4150 Secret of the Wastelands—Boyd) No dates have
 4151 Outlaws of the Desert—Boyd) been set on
 4152 Riders of the Timberline—Boyd) these Westerns
 4153 Stick to Your Guns—Boyd) but they are
 4154 Twilight on the Trail—Boyd) all available

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 143 Sierra Sue—Gene Autry (64 m.).....Nov. 12
 173 A Missouri Outlaw—Red Barry (58 m.).....Nov. 25
 113 Tuxedo Junction—Weaver Bros.....Dec. 4
 152 Red River Valley—Rogers (62 m.).....Dec. 12
 163 West of Cimarron—Three Mesq. (58 m.)....Dec. 15
 112 Mr. District Attorney in the Carter Case—
 Ellison-GilmoreDec. 18
 101 Lady for a Night—Blondell-Wayne.....Jan. 5
 174 Arizona Terrors—Red Barry (56 m.).....Jan. 6
 153 Man From Cheyenne—Roy Rogers (60 m.)...Jan. 16
 131 Cowboy Serenade—Gene Autry (66 m.).....Jan. 22
 122 Pardon My Stripes—Henry-Ryan (64 m.) (re.) Jan. 26
 114 Tragedy at Midnight—Howard-Lindsay.....Feb. 2
 154 South of Santa Fe—Roy Rogers.....Feb. 17
 102 Sleepytime Gal—Canova-Tom Brown.....Mar. 5
 175 Stagecoach Express—Don Barry.....Mar. 6
 144 The Heart of Texas—Gene Autry.....Mar. 11
 115 Yokel Boy—Albert Dekker-Joan Davis.....Mar. 13

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 216 Valley of the Sun—Ball-Craig.....Feb. 6
 217 Call Out the Marines—McLaglen-Lowe.....Feb. 13
 218 Joan of Paris—M. Morgan-P. Henreid.....Feb. 20
 283 Riding the Wind—Tim Holt (60 m.).....Feb. 27
 219 Sing Your Worries Away—Lahr-Havoc (re.) Mar. 6
 220 Mexican Spitfire at Sea—Velez-Errol (re.)...Mar. 13
 The Bashful Bachelor—Lum-Abner.....Mar. 20
 The Magnificent Ambersons—Cotten-Costello-
 Holt.....Mar. 27
 292 Fantasia—Walt DisneyApr. 3

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 216 I Wake Up Screaming—Grable-Mature.....Nov. 14
 219 Rise and Shine—Oakie-Berle-Darnell.....Nov. 21
 220 Cadet Girl—Landis-MontgomeryNov. 28
 221 Marry the Boss' Daughter—Joyce-Edwards...Nov. 28
 218 Swamp Water—Brennan-Huston-BaxterDec. 5
 222 Confirm or Deny—Ameche-J. Bennett.....Dec. 12
 223 Perfect Snob—Bari-WildeDec. 19

- 224 How Green Was My Valley—Pidgeon-O'Hara..Dec. 26
 226 Remember the Day—Colbert-Payne.....Jan. 2
 227 Blue, White and Perfect—Nolan-Hughes.....Jan. 9
 228 A Gentleman at Heart—Romero-Landis.....Jan. 16
 229 A Right to the Heart—Joyce-Wilde.....Jan. 23
 230 Son of Fury—Tyrone Power-Gene Tierney...Jan. 30
 231 Young America—Withers-DarwellFeb. 6
 232 On the Sunny Side—McDowall-Darwell.....Feb. 13
 233 Roxie Hart—Rogers-Menjou-Montgomery ...Feb. 20
 234 Castle in the Desert—Toler-Whelan-Derr....Feb. 27
 235 The Night Before the Divorce—Bari-
 Hughes-Allen-AstherMar. 6
 236 Song of the Islands—Grable-Mature-Oakie...Mar. 13

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- The Corsican Brothers—Fairbanks-Warrick.....Nov. 28
 Fiesta—Anne Ayars-George Negrete.....Nov. 28
 Love on the Dole—Kerr (English picture).....Dec. 12
 Hay Foot—Tracy-GleasonDec. 12
 The Gold Rush—Charles Chaplin reissue with
 words and music.....Dec. 25
 Dudes Are Pretty People—Woodworth-Rogers...Dec. 25
 Twin Beds—J. Bennett-G. Brent.....Jan. 1
 The Shanghai Gesture—Tierney-Mature-Huston...Jan. 15
 The Jungle Book—Sabu-Calleia.....Jan. 30
 To Be Or Not To Be—Lombard-J. Benny.....Feb. 15

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6038 Sealed Lips—Litel-Gargan-ClydeDec. 5
 6015 The Wolf Man—Rains-Chaney.....Dec. 12
 6029 Melody Lane—Sandy-Paige-GwynneDec. 19
 Road Agent—Foran-Carrillo-DevineDec. 19
 6046 Hellzapoppin'—Olsen-Johnson-RayeDec. 26
 6037 Don't Get Personal—Herbert-Auer.....Jan. 2
 6032 Jail House Blues—Paige-Gwynne.....Jan. 9
 6014 Paris Calling—Bergner-ScottJan. 16
 6023 North to the Klondike—Crawford-Chaney...Jan. 23
 6039 Treat 'Em Rough—Albert-Moran.....Jan. 30
 6031 Bombay Clipper—Hervey-GarganFeb. 6
 6064 Stagecoach Buckaroo—J. M. Brown (59 m.) Feb. 13
 6002 Ride 'Em Cowboy—Abbott-Costello (86 m.) Feb. 13
 What's Cookin' Soldier—Jean-Andrews
 Sisters-PaigeFeb. 20
 6042 The Mad Doctor of Market Street—Atwill..Feb. 27
 Ghost of Frankenstein—Lugosi-Chaney....Mar. 6
 6027 Frisco Lil—Hervey-TaylorMar. 13
 The Saboteur—P. Lane-Cummings.....Mar. 20

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 118 Wild Bill Hickok Rides—Bennett-Cabot.....Jan. 31
 119 Sons of the Sea—Redgrave-Hobson.....Feb. 7
 121 Dangerously They Live—Garfield-Coleman...Feb. 14
 122 Captains of the Clouds—Cagney-Morgan....Feb. 21
 123 Bullet Scars—Toomey-Da Silva.....Mar. 7
 124 Always In My Heart—Francis-Huston.....Mar. 14
 125 Murder In the Big House—Emerson-Johnson..Mar. 21
 126 The Male Animal—Fonda-deHavilland.....Apr. 4

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 3975 Strange Facts—Cinescopes (10 m.).....Dec. 6
- 3903 New York's Finest—Panoramics (10 m.)...Dec. 11
- 3603 Kitchen Quiz No. 2—(9½ m.).....Dec. 12
- 3805 Rack 'Em Up—Sport Reels (9 m.).....Dec. 19
- 3503 Red Riding Hood Rides Again—Color Rhapsody (7 m.).....Dec. 25
- 3655 Community Sing No. 5—(9½ m.).....Dec. 26
- 3752 The Tangled Angler—Cartoons (5½ m.)...Jan. 2
- 3855 Screen Snapshots No. 5—(10 m.).....Jan. 2
- 3504 A Hollywood Detour—Color Rhap. (8 m.)...Jan. 23
- 3656 Goodfellowship Songs—Com. Sing No. 6 (10 m.).....Jan. 23
- 3753 Under the Shedding Chestnut Tree—Cart....Feb. 2
- 3806 College Champions—Sport Reels (re.)....Feb. 5
- 3604 Kitchen Quiz No. 3.....Feb. 6
- 3554 The Great American Divide—Tours.....Feb. 12
- 3856 Screen Snapshots No. 6—(9 m.).....Feb. 12
- 3904 Spare Time in the Army—Panoramics.....Feb. 12
- 3505 Wacky Wigwams—Color Rhapsody.....Feb. 22
- 3657 Community Sing No. 7.....Feb. 22

Columbia—Two Reels

- 3427 Sweet Spirits of Nighter—Brendel (16 m.)..Dec. 11
- 3124 Menaced by Fate—Holt No. 4 (19 m.).....Dec. 12
- 3125 Exits to Terror—Holt No. 5 (18 m.).....Dec. 19
- 3410 The Kink of the Campus—Gloveslingers (17 m.).....Dec. 25
- 3126 Deadly Doom—Holt No. 6 (18 m.).....Dec. 26
- 3127 Out of the Past—Holt No. 7 (17 m.).....Jan. 2
- 3404 Loco Boys Make Good—Stooges (17 m.)....Jan. 8
- 3128 Escape to Peril—Holt No. 8 (17½ m.).....Jan. 9
- 3129 Sealed in Silence—Holt No. 9 (16½ m.)....Jan. 16
- 3428 Three Blonde Mice—Mowbray (16 m.)....Jan. 22
- 3130 Named to Die—Holt No. 10 (18 m.).....Jan. 23
- 3454 International Forum No. 4.....Jan. 30
- 3131 Ominous Warnings—Holt No. 11 (18 m.)..Jan. 30
- 3429 Nothing But the Pest—Clyde.....Feb. 5
- 3132 The Stolen Signal—Holt No. 12 (17 m.)....Feb. 6
- 3411 Glove Birds—Gloveslingers (17½ m.)....Feb. 12
- 3133 Prison of Jeopardy—Holt No. 13 (18 m.)..Feb. 13
- 3141 Mysterious Pilot—Captain Midnight No. 1..Feb. 15
- 3134 Afire Afloat—Holt No. 14 (18½ m.).....Feb. 20
- 3142 The Stolen Range Finder—Captain No. 2...Feb. 22
- 3405 Cactus Makes Perfect—Stooges (17 m.)....Feb. 26
- 3135 Yielded Hostage—Holt No. 15.....Feb. 27
- 3143 The Captured Plane—Captain No. 3.....Mar. 1
- 3144 Mistaken Identity—Captain No. 4.....Mar. 8
- 3145 Ambushed Ambulance—Captain No. 5.....Mar. 15
- 3146 Weird Waters—Captain No. 6.....Mar. 22
- 3147 Menacing Fates—Captain No. 7.....Mar. 29

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- S-363 How to Hold Your Husband Back—Pete Smith (9 m.).....Dec. 13
- T-315 Historic Maryland—Traveltalks (9 m.)...Dec. 27
- W-342 The Field Mouse—Cartoons (9 m.).....Dec. 27
- T-316 West Point on the Hudson—Travel. (9 m.)..Jan. 10
- W-343 Fraidy Cat—Cartoons (8 m.).....Jan. 17
- M-332 The Greenie—Miniatures (11 m.).....Jan. 24
- S-364 Aqua Antics—Pete Smith (8 m.).....Jan. 24
- K-382 We Do It Because—Passing Par. (10 m.)..Jan. 24
- C-394 Melodies Old and New—Our Gang (11 m.)..Jan. 24
- T-317 Minnesota, Land of Plenty—Travel. (10m.)..Jan. 31
- K-383 Flag of Mercy—Passing Parade (10 m.)....Jan. 31

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- X-310 War Clouds in the Pacific—Special (22 m.)..Dec. 24
- A-302 Main Street on the March—Special (20 m.)..Jan. 10

Paramount—One Reel

- A1-2 The Copacabana Revue—Head. (9½ m.)..Nov. 28
- R1-4 Quick Returns—Sportlight (9 m.).....Nov. 28
- Z1-2 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 2—(9 m.)..Dec. 5
- Q1-2 The Quiz Kids No. 2—(10 m.).....Dec. 5
- L1-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2—(11 m.).....Dec. 12
- E1-3 Nix on Hypnotricks—Popeye cart. (7 m.)...Dec. 19
- U1-1 Rhythm in the Ranks—Mad. Models (10m)..Dec. 26
- R1-5 Buying a Dog (How to Buy a Dog)—Sportlight (10 m.).....Dec. 26
- S1-2 Nothing But Nerves—Benchley (11 m.) (re.)..Jan. 9
- W1-3 Superman in the Billion Dollar Limited—cartoon.....Jan. 9
- Y1-3 At the County Fair—Animals (9 m.) (re.)...Jan. 16
- E1-4 Kickin' The Conga Round—Popeye (7 m.)..Jan. 16
- R1-6 Better Bowling—Sportlight (10 m.).....Jan. 23
- J1-3 Popular Science No. 3.....Jan. 30
- A1-3 Cariocas—Headliner.....Jan. 30
- Q1-3 The Quiz Kids No. 3.....Feb. 6
- W1-4 The Arctic Giant—Superman cartoon....Feb. 13
- E1-5 Blunder Below—Popeye.....Feb. 13
- Z1-3 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 3.....Feb. 20
- R1-7 Lure of the Surf—Sportlight.....Feb. 20
- U1-2 Jasper and the Watermelons—Mad. Models..Feb. 27
- L1-3 Unusual Occupations No. 3.....Feb. 27

RKO—One Reel

- 24203 Information Please No. 3—(11 m.).....Dec. 12
- 24305 Fighting Fish—Sportscope (9 m.).....Dec. 26
- 24405 Picture People No. 5—(8 m.).....Jan. 2
- 24204 Information Please No. 4—(10 m.).....Jan. 16

RKO—Two Reels

- 23703 Home Work—Errol (19 m.).....Jan. 9
- 23106 March of Time No. 6—(20 m.).....Jan. 16
- 23502 Keep Shooting—Whitley (17 min.).....Jan. 30
- 23107 March of Time No. 7.....Feb. 13
- 23404 Heart Burn—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.)....Feb. 20

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 2403 Dutch Gu'ana—Lowell Thomas (10 m.)....Jan. 2
- 2556 A Torrid Foreador—Terry-Toon (7 m.)....Jan. 9
- 2204 Men For the Fleet—Paul Douglas (10 m.)....Jan. 16
- 2557 Happy Circus Days—Terry-Toon (7 m.)....Jan. 23
- 2304 Evergreen Playland—Sports (10 m.).....Jan. 30
- 2507 Funny Bunny Business—Terry-Toon (7 m.)..Feb. 6
- 2105 Secret of the Fjord—Hubbard Adv. (10 m.)..Feb. 13
- 2558 Cat Meets Mouse—Terry-Toon.....Feb. 20
- 2305 Winter's Wonderland—Sports.....Feb. 27
- 2508 Eat Me Kitty Eight to the Bar—Terry-Toon..Mar. 6
- 2404 Hub of the World—Lowell Thomas.....Mar. 13
- 2559 Sham Battle Shennanigans—Terry-Toon....Mar. 20
- 2104 Jewel of the Pacific—L. Thomas (10 m.)....Mar. 27

Universal—One Reel

- 6245 Under the Spreading Blacksmith's Shop—
Cartoon (7 m.).....Jan. 12
- 6376 Barnyard Steam Buggy—Stranger Than
Fiction (9 m.).....Jan. 19
- 6354 Trail of the Buccaneers—Scenic (9 m.).....Jan. 26
- 6357 Keys to Adventure—Scenic (9 m.).....Feb. 2
- 6246 Hollywood Matador—Lantz cart. (7 m.)....Feb. 9
- 6377 Sugarbowl Humpty Dumpty—Stranger Than
FictionFeb. 16
- 6358 Flashing Blades—ScenicFeb. 23
- 6247 The Hams That Couldn't Be Cured—
Lantz cartoonMar. 2
- 6378 Desert Ghosts—Stranger Than Fiction.....Mar. 9

Universal—Two Reels

- 6684 Towering Doom—Winslow No. 4 (18 m.)...Jan. 27
- 6685 Trapped in the Dungeon—Winslow No. 5
(18 m.)Feb. 3
- 6686 Menaced by Man Eaters—Winslow No. 6
(19 m.)Feb. 10
- 6687 Bombed by the Enemy—Winslow No. 7
(21 m.)Feb. 17
- 6688 The Chamber of Doom—Winslow No. 8
(20 m.)Feb. 24
- 6227 Rhumba Rhythms—musical (15 m.).....Feb. 25
- 6689 Wings of Destruction—Winslow No. 9
(20 m.)Mar. 3
- 6690 Fighting Fathoms Deep—Winslow No. 10
(19 m.)Mar. 10

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 7705 Saddle Silly—Merrie Melodies (7½ m.)...Nov. 8
- 7604 Porky's Midnight Matinee—L. Tunes
(7½ m.) (re.)Nov. 22
- 7706 The Cagney Canary—Merrie Melodies (8 m.)..Nov. 22
- 7707 Rhapsody in Rivets—Mer. Melodies (8 m.)..Dec. 6
- 7503 40 Boys and a Song—Mel. Masters (10 m.)..Dec. 6
- 7708 Wabbit Twouble—Merrie Melodies (8 m.)..Dec. 20
- 7303 Points on Arrows—Novelties (10 m.) (re.)..Dec. 20
- 7603 Porky's Pooch—Looney Tunes (7 m.) (re.)..Dec. 27
- 7402 King Salmon—Sports Parade (8 m.) (re.)...Dec. 27
- 7709 Hop, Skip & A Chump—Mer. Mel. (8 m.)..Jan. 3
- 7504 Carl Hoff & Band—Mel. Masters (10 m.)...Jan. 3
- 7605 Porky's Pastry Pirate—L. Tunes (8 m.)....Jan. 17
- 7710 The Bird Came C.O.D.—Mer. Mel. (8 m.)..Jan. 17
- 7711 Aloha Hooey—Merrie Melodies (8 m.)....Jan. 31
- 7404 Rodeo Roundup—Sports Parade (10 m.)...Jan. 31
- 7712 Conrad the Sailor—Mer. Melodies.....Feb. 14
- 7606 Who's Who in the Zoo—L. Tunes (8 m.)...Feb. 14
- 7304 Miracle Makers—Novelties (10 m.).....Feb. 21
- 7505 The Playgirls—Mel. Masters (10 m.).....Feb. 21
- 7607 Porky's Cafe—Looney Tunes (8 m.).....Feb. 21
- 7405 Hunting Dogs at Work—Sports.....Feb. 28
- 7713 Crazy Cruise—Merrie Melodies.....Feb. 28

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 7105 West of the Rockies—Bway. Brev.
(19 m.) (re.)Nov. 29
- 7003 Gay Parisian—Special (20 m.).....Jan. 10
- 7106 Calling All Girls—Bway. Brev. (20 m.)....Jan. 24
- 7002 Soldiers in White—Tech. Spec. (21 m.)....Feb. 7

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

- 25149 Sat. (O.)..Feb. 14
- 25250 Wed. (E.)..Feb. 18
- 25151 Sat. (O.)..Feb. 21
- 25252 Wed. (E.)..Feb. 25
- 25153 Sat. (O.)..Feb. 28
- 25254 Wed. (E.)..Mar. 4
- 25155 Sat. (O.)..Mar. 7
- 25256 Wed. (E.)..Mar. 11
- 25157 Sat. (O.)..Mar. 14
- 25258 Wed. (E.)..Mar. 18
- 25159 Sat. (O.)..Mar. 21
- 25260 Wed. (E.)..Mar. 25
- 25161 Sat. (O.)..Mar. 28

Universal

- 58 FridayFeb. 13
- 59 Wednesday ..Feb. 18
- 60 FridayFeb. 20
- 61 Wednesday ..Feb. 25
- 62 FridayFeb. 27
- 63 Wednesday ..Mar. 4
- 64 FridayMar. 6
- 65 Wednesday ..Mar. 11
- 66 FridayMar. 13
- 67 Wednesday ..Mar. 18
- 68 FridayMar. 20
- 69 Wednesday ..Mar. 25
- 70 FridayMar. 27

Paramount News

- 49 Saturday ...Feb. 14
- 50 Wednesday ..Feb. 18
- 51 Saturday ...Feb. 21
- 52 Wednesday ..Feb. 25
- 53 Saturday ...Feb. 28
- 54 Wednesday ..Mar. 4
- 55 Saturday ...Mar. 7
- 56 Wednesday ..Mar. 11
- 57 Saturday ...Mar. 14
- 58 Wednesday ..Mar. 18
- 59 Saturday ...Mar. 21
- 60 Wednesday ..Mar. 25
- 61 Saturday ...Mar. 28

Metrotone News

- 244 Thursday ...Feb. 12
- 245 Tuesday ...Feb. 17
- 246 Thursday ...Feb. 19
- 247 Tuesday ...Feb. 24
- 248 Thursday ...Feb. 26
- 249 Tuesday ...Mar. 3
- 250 Thursday ..Mar. 5
- 251 Tuesday ...Mar. 10
- 252 Thursday ..Mar. 12
- 253 Tuesday ...Mar. 17
- 254 Thursday ..Mar. 19
- 255 Tuesday ...Mar. 24
- 256 Thursday ..Mar. 26
- 257 Tuesday ...Mar. 31

Fox Movietone

- 46 SaturdayFeb. 14
- 47 Wednesday ..Feb. 18
- 48 SaturdayFeb. 21
- 49 Wednesday ..Feb. 25
- 50 SaturdayFeb. 28
- 51 Wednesday ..Mar. 4
- 52 SaturdayMar. 7
- 53 Wednesday ..Mar. 11
- 54 SaturdayMar. 14
- 55 Wednesday ..Mar. 18
- 56 SaturdayMar. 21
- 57 Wednesday ..Mar. 25
- 58 SaturdayMar. 28

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1942

No. 8

Almost One-Quarter Century of Reviewing

This week begins my 25th year as a moving picture reviewer—almost one-quarter of a century. William Johnston, editor-in-chief of *Motion Picture News*, one of the predecessors of the present *Motion Picture Herald*, gave me my first chance.

Although I had not written for publication for pay previously, Mr. Johnston, when I applied to him for the position, was intrigued by the idea of having his reviewing done by a former exhibitor entirely from an exhibitor's point of view. With the consent of his editorial board, I was engaged with full power to give each picture the rating that I thought it deserved.

Subsequently I learned that the late Fred Beecroft, advertising manager of *Motion Picture News*, opposed at first my engagement on the ground that "you can't take their money and 'pan' their poor pictures," but later he consented on condition that, as he said, "if you decide to put Harrison on, you must go all the way—let him express his opinion freely."

My reviews appeared under the heading, "Exhibitor to Exhibitor Reviews."

Mr. Johnston did not discontinue the old reviewing department. Thus the exhibitors had an opportunity to make comparisons. There were times when the old department would praise a picture and my department would condemn it severely. One such case still remains vivid in my memory; it was that of the Louis J. Selznick picture, "The Savage Woman," with Clara Kimball Young.

This freedom of expression in my department naturally surprised and pleased the exhibitors and the "News" gained so much prestige because of Mr. Johnston's fearlessness that it jumped from second to first place in circulation as well as in advertising. *Moving Picture World* was the leading paper at that time.

Things continued that way for six months, and then the old department was discontinued, leaving only my department.

After a while, however, some of the distributors began to complain. The first one to register a complaint was Walter Irwin, general manager of the old Vitagraph. He threatened to withdraw his advertising unless his pictures were treated with more kindness.

Mr. Johnston was able to pacify Mr. Irwin by pointing out to him the fact that the pictures of all distributors were treated alike.

For a while he accepted the situation, but soon he began to complain again and, since no change was contemplated, Vitagraph withdrew its advertising.

I soon began to feel that I was a white elephant in the hands of *Motion Picture News*, particularly in those of Bob Welch, who was managing editor at that time, and, in a spirit of friendship with my employers, I resigned to start a paper of my own.

The first issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS appeared under date July 5, 1919. In that issue I announced that I would accept no film advertising.

In the beginning, the producers were very hostile. Most of them would not show me their pictures. Some of them even barred me from their projection rooms. The first one to bar me was Dick Roland, at that time president of Metro, (before it was bought out by the late Marcus Loew). The second was Fred Warren, at that time head of PDC. In each case I wrote an editorial in HARRISON'S REPORTS, as those of you who have been subscribers from the very beginning

well remember, condemning the discrimination and urging the subscribers to protest. Letters of protest poured in, resolutions condemning this producer attitude were passed at exhibitor conventions, and both Warren and Rowland were compelled to lift the ban.

The first few years were hard, very hard, particularly so the first year, for since I had no renewals I had to depend entirely on whatever money came in from new subscriptions. My capital had all been spent in equipping the office and in stocking up with paper.

For four years progress was slow, chiefly as a result of the hostility of many film salesmen who, in order to make deals with exhibitors, would not hesitate to say against me anything that came to their tongue whenever a bad review was called to their attention. Often I became so discouraged that I felt like giving up the effort. But through all those discouraging times I had never lost my faith in the good judgment of the exhibitors; I believed that if I rendered them the proper service—if my judgment of pictures were correct and if I did not hesitate to deal editorially with their problems as they arose, they could not help recognizing the sincerity of my efforts and would subscribe. And that is exactly what happened. In September, 1924, I decided to exert greater efforts in frequent circularization campaigns and within six months I doubled the subscription list, and in later years I continued adding to it. Today HARRISON'S REPORTS is considered an institution, not only by exhibitors, but also by the distributors themselves. The old hostility has disappeared, for they know that, if some of their pictures receive rough treatment in these columns, it is at least a fair treatment.

The toughest time that I experienced was in the fall of 1920, when I carried on an analysis of the First National Franchise. I did not like the methods of the home office, and the subfranchise agreement was, in my opinion, so one-sided that I warned the exhibitors against subscribing to it. This hurt me considerably for a short time, because the owners of the company—the franchise holders,—were exhibitors, and it was not difficult for them to make the independent exhibitors believe that it was a sacrifice on my part to criticize an exhibitor organization. For about two months I continued receiving cancellations. But again my judgment of the exhibitors' sense of fairness proved correct. I said to myself, "I know I am right, and it is a question of time that the exhibitors will find it out and, not only they themselves will come back but also will urge other exhibitors to subscribe." And that is exactly what happened.

Some of the interesting events in which I have either been a witness or taken a part have been the following:

- (1) The Cleveland Convention in 1920, in which MPTOA was formed.
- (2) The break-up of MPTOA immediately after the entry of Will H. Hays into the industry as a result of the fight between the Jimmy Walker and the late Sidney Cohen factions.
- (3) The break-up of First National as a result of mismanagement and of politics. First National had a chance of becoming the most powerful film company in the business, but selfishness and greed, which made them disregard the interests of the small exhibitors, whom they were supposed to have set out to protect, killed those chances. (First National was bought by Warner Brothers, and is used today merely as a trade name for some of their pictures.)
- (4) The advent of the talking picture.
- (5) The formation of Allied States Association.

(Continued on last page)

"Frisco Lil" with Irene Hervey and Kent Taylor

(Universal, March 13; time, 60 min.)

Although only a short feature, "Frisco Lil" is surprisingly good. There is considerable human interest in most of the situations, awakened by the heroine's self-sacrifice. Kent Taylor, too, is a sympathetic character. And so is Samuel S. Hinds, who takes the part of Taylor's father. The action is pretty fast, and the spectator is held in fairly tense suspense. The picture has been produced with the care that is given to bigger productions—direction, acting, settings, photography are of high standard. And there is a sweet romance:—

Beautiful Irene Hervey, a law student, is in love with Kent Taylor, her instructor at the university. She is the daughter of Minor Watson, an honest gambler, co-owner of a gambling house in town, but she is enjoined by her father not to reveal their relationship; he wanted his daughter to have every opportunity in life. Gus Glassmire, an old friend of Watson's, wins a large sum of money at his gambling place and Jerome Cowan sends two of his own men, unknown to Watson, to hold him up and take his winnings away from him. Watson enters Glassmire's car as he was starting his car and, when they are held up, Watson fights their assailants. Unfortunately, Glassmire is killed and Watson is accused of the murder, with robbery as the motive. Watson forbids his daughter from acknowledging him. Poor defense causes Watson's conviction on first degree murder. Irene is sure of her father's innocence and, in order to obtain the necessary evidence, succeeds in being engaged by Cowan as one of the dealers at the gambling place, under the name of Frisco Lil. She was an expert at card dealing. Irene vanishes from Taylor's life, but the mystery is solved when Taylor, seeking evidence against the gambling place, is induced by his mother to visit the place. He is shocked when he sees her. Because he still loves her, he informs her that the place would be raided the following night. Irene, in order to get into the graces of Cowan still more and thus get her evidence, informs him about the contemplated raid. With her law knowledge she is able to induce Cowan's lawyer to obtain a writ against the raid since the place was under the jurisdiction of the County authorities. When the raiding party enters the gambling place the following night, Hinds (Taylor's father) joins it. He, too, is shocked to see her there. She is compelled to confess to him her reasons. Kindly Hinds is glad of her motive and offers to help her. With the aid of Hinds, Taylor, and Claire Whitney, Taylor's mother, the police are able to trap the guilty persons and to obtain the evidence that saves Watson from the electric chair.

The story is by Arthur V. Jones and Dorcas Cochran; the screen play, by George Brecker and Michael Jacobs. Paul Malvern produced it and Erle Kenton directed it.

In view of the fact that there is deep human interest in the story, and the crooked characters suffer deserved punishment, the fact that it deals with crooked gambling may not make the picture so objectionable for young folk.

"The Invader" with Leslie Howard, Laurence Olivier and Raymond Massey

(Columbia-British made; not yet rel.; time, 104 min.)

This is a peculiar picture. Thought it is fiction, it gives one the impression that it is just an episode of the present war. It has been produced so well that one feels as if present in real-life occurrences. The interest is kept pretty tense all the way through, and in some parts one is held in tense suspense. Some parts of it are somewhat harrowing in that killings are done. There is no romance. In one part of it there is only a touch of one. The picture was produced in England and in Canada:—

The first German submarine to invade the western hemisphere wreaks havoc among Canadian shipping in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Answering the alarm the Royal Canadian Air Force and Canadian destroyers take up the chase. Low in supplies, the U-boat enters Hudson Bay and Lieutenant Eric Portman, accompanied by five members from the crew—Raymond Lovell, Niall McGinnis, Peter Moore, John Chandos and Basil Appleby, go ashore on a foraging expedition. Shortly afterwards the R.C.A.F. sends the submarine to the

bottom along with every one aboard. The Nazis burst into the trading post in the Eskimo village and tell Lawrence Olivier, a French Canadian trapper, that Hitler would free the French. Having been free all the time, Olivier does not understand what he was driving at and, in his attempt to talk to Montreal by radio, he is shot and killed by the Nazis. The Germans ambush the plane that had come to investigate and seize it and kill the pilots. In the takeoff, Appleby is shot and killed by an Eskimo. With Lovell at the controls, the fugitives fly inland, landing in a Manitoba lake. Lovell is killed in the crash. The four take refuge among the Hutterites, a devout Christian sect in the wheat belt. They are fed and, according to tradition, are not asked questions. Portman tries to convert them to the New German Order, but Anton Walbrook, the Hutterite leader, rejects his pleas. Meanwhile McGinnis becomes impressed with their creed. He shields Glynis Johns, a young girl, from the leers of his comrades and decides to remain. Portman proclaims him a traitor and has him shot. Leaving a trail of pillage and violence, the remaining three Nazis flee westward and arrive at Banff during the celebration of the Indian Day. Description of the fugitives is broadcast by the Mounted Police to the crowd and Moore is recognized and captured. The remaining two take refuge in the mountains near Lake O'Hara. Here they come across Leslie Howard, a writer who wanted to get away from the world turmoil. Portman and Chandos steal Howard's money and burn his precious paintings and manuscripts. Howard trails them and, in a hand to hand fight, captures Chandos. Portman steals into the baggage car of a United States-bound train and, since the United States was still neutral, he feels that escape is within his grasp. In the baggage car he meets Raymond Massey, a Canadian Army private who had overstayed his leave and eluded the military police. The car is sealed and Portman surrenders his gun to a U. S. Customs official. Massey remonstrates, but the U. S. officials can do nothing because of the International law, until Massey reminds them that, in the baggage car there were two "articles" that had not been declared in the customs manifest. The Americans take the hint, seal the car again and send it back to Canada.

The story and screen play is by Emeric Pressburger. It was produced and directed by Michael Powell.

The situation that shows the Germans among the Hutterites leering at Miss Johns may be considered objectionable by some exhibitors from the moral point of view; otherwise it is harmless.

"Freckles Comes Home" with Johnny Downs and Gale Storm

(Monogram, January 2; time, 60 min.)

Just a fair program picture. The interest is maintained fairly well, and toward the end there is a fairly thrilling situation. Gale Storm has a pleasing personality:—

Johnny Downs (Freckles), returning home from college, becomes acquainted on the bus with Walter Sande, a gangster looking for a hideout. Downs' talk about his little town resolves Sande to settle there. When he reaches his town, Downs learns that Marvin Stephens, a young friend of his, had invested the money his uncle had left him for paying off the mortgage on the hotel in a wildcat real estate scheme and decides to help the boy save the money. Feeling that if a highway should be run through town real estate would boom, the two set out to bring it about. But John Ince, the town's banker, would not cooperate with Freckles and his father, and Sande, who thought that he could make money out of the town, induces Bradley Page, a promoter, to come to town to float a bond issue to finance the road. Sande is murdered and two gangsters, posing as F. B. I. men, accuse Page of the crime. But Page denies guilt and offers to cut them in on the robbery of the bank which he and the dead man had planned. But Downs and Stephens, having overheard the conversation, give the gangsters an automobile chase and help in their capture. The two boys learn that the reward would be sufficient to cover the payment on the mortgage as well as to finance the road.

The screen play was written by Edmond Kelso; it was suggested by the Gene Stratton Porter story. Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Jean Yarrow directed it. Betty Blythe, Mantan Moreland and others are in the supporting cast.

"Pardon My Stripes" with Bill Henry, Sheila Ryan and Harold Huber

(*Republic, January 26; time, 63 min.*)

A fair program burlesque comedy. It could have turned out better but for the fact that the first part is a little bit too serious when the rest of the action is burlesque, and the hero is made too big a "dope"—it is hard to be in sympathy with so stupid a character. The attention is held fairly well, but the romance is not too striking:—

Halfback Bill Henry wins the nickname "Dope of the Year," because of the blunders he had committed at football as a member of the football team of his college playing another college. Harold Huber is so happy about it that he bets and wins a large amount of money and offers Bill, through his uncle, a job. As Bill boarded the plane to fly east to Huber, carrying with him Huber's winnings, which Bill had been authorized to collect, he is followed by Sheila Ryan, a reporter, who had suspected that Bill had been bribed by Huber to throw the game. While up in the air, the pilot becomes so drowsy that the plane flies wild. In one of the dives, the bag containing the money is tossed against the window; the glass breaks and the bag flies through the window and falls on top of a tree in the state prison. Huber has Bill arrested and tried for embezzlement and since there was no evidence to prove that he had lost the money deliberately he is acquitted by the jury. But Bill, without his lawyer's advice, rises and admits guilt. Thus the judge sends him to prison. Since it was not the prison where the money bag had fallen, he manages to be transferred to the right prison. Then begins the hunt for the bag. Another prisoner finds it, there is a riot, and the bag flies from hands to hands until it falls into the hands of Bill. He then tosses it away; it falls into the hands of Huber, who, perched upon a telegraph pole, had been watching the strife. A government agent takes the money from Huber for back taxes. Since Bill is now proved innocent, he is freed and turns to Sheila for romance.

The screen play is by Lawrence Kimble and Stuart Palmer, from a story by Mauri Grashin and Robert T. Shannon. It was produced by Albert J. Cohen, and directed by John H. Auer. Edgar Kennedy, Paul Hurst, and Tom Kennedy are in the supporting cast.

No objectionable situations in it.

"Mister V" with Leslie Howard

(*United Artists-British, March 20; time, 99 min.*)

If you have seen "The Scarlet Pimpernel," you should be able to tell how this picture will take in your house, for its theme is similar. Only that it takes place in the present day—the time when Germany was about to invade Poland, instead of the remote past. For this reason the action is more vivid. The part of Mr. Howard is appealing, in that he risks his very life to rescue people confined in German concentration camps. And so are the parts of his fellow-workers. Yet, like "The Scarlet Pimpernel," it should appeal to the better class audiences more than to the masses. It was produced in England:—

Prof. Horatio Smith (Leslie Howard), teacher of archaeology at Cambridge, England, devotes his time to rescuing intellectuals from inside Germany, some of them confined in concentration camps. He is so suave, so gentle and yet so intelligent that no German had suspected him of his secret activities. Having rescued and brought to England Dr. Benckendorf (Allan Jeayes), he announces that he was going to Germany on an "archaeological expedition," and asks for volunteers among his students to go along. Several offer, among them an American (Hugh McDermott). They reach Germany and spend their first evening at an inn near the Swiss border. That night a prisoner escapes from a concentration camp nearby. The Gestapo identify the mysterious liberator only by an English tune he had whistled. The following day another escape is engineered but the liberator, who had disguised himself as a scarecrow, is wounded on the wrist by a shot the German guard had fired. Yet he manages to escape unnoticed. On the day following

Maxwell, while the party was on the train headed for Berlin, notices Smith's wounded wrist and confronts the professor with his discovery. Prof. Smith admits it and enlists the services of Maxwell and of all the other students in his rescue crusade. Meanwhile General Von Graum (Francis Sullivan), high-ranking Gestapo official in Berlin, is furious and is bent upon the mysterious liberator's extermination. But the only clue he has is the English tune, which he eventually identifies as "A Tavern in the Town." At a reception at the British Embassy, Ludmilla Koslowski (Mary Morris), aiding the Gestapo, identifies Smith to Von Graum, but he scoffs at her. That night Ludmilla visits Smith in his room and tells him that she knows who he is, and that she had promised to help Von Graum only because she was trying to have her father, a Polish political leader, liberated from the concentration camp. After checking her story and finding it correct, he undertakes to rescue her father. He rescues him with the aid of his students, who had masqueraded as American journalists. In the end, he rescues also Ludmilla herself and takes her to England.

The screen play has been written by Anatole De Grunwald, from a story by A. C. McDonnell and Wolfgang Wilhelm. It was produced and directed by Leslie Howard himself.

There is nothing objectionable in it from the moral point of view.

"Shut My Big Mouth" with Joe E. Brown, Adele Mara and Victor Jory

(*Columbia, February 19; time, 71 min.*)

For the brand of comedy of Joe E. Brown, "Shut My Big Mouth" is not a bad picture. There are laugh provoking situations all the way through, and the action unfolds at a pretty fast pace. There are also a few thrilling situations. The action unfolds in the west, and there is shooting and horse riding:—

Joe E. Brown, son of a wealthy family, has a whim for flowers, and plans to beautify the wide-open spaces of the west. Accompanied by Fritz Feld, his valet, he leaves for Big Bluff, a frontier town. When Victor Jory, a notorious bandit, holds up the stage, Joe wilts from fright. As he collapses, the door flies open and knocks Jory out cold. Just as the bandits escape, a posse arrives and they declare Joe a hero. Thus Brown finds himself elected Marshall of Big Bluff. His first job is to capture Jory. When he finds out at the hotel that the heap of flowers was, not for guests, but for funerals, he decides to leave town. Having learned that Jory did not harm women, he masquerades as a woman. In the coach he meets Adele Mara, daughter of a wealthy cattleman. Jory holds up the stage but treats Brown with courtesy. But he takes all the passengers to his hideout where he held Miss Mara's father for ransom. That night Jory insists that Brown, still masquerading as a woman, share the same room with Miss Mara. Thus he is up against it. To frighten Miss Mara, he lets out a blood curdling howl. Jory sends Miss Mara back to Big Bluff for the ransom money. Brown escapes. On the road, he thumbs a ride. The horsemen turn out to be Indians. Brown will gladly give them his scalp, which they wanted, provided he takes it out himself; he cuts half of his wig and the Indians are so impressed that they make him blood-brother of their chief, swearing everlasting friendship. All he had to do when he needed them was to send up three puffs of smoke. When he returns to Big Bluff, Brown is again acclaimed as a hero for having tamed the Indians. He promises Miss Mara, who does not recognize him in men's clothes, to rescue her father. Jory and his men arrive but they do not recognize Brown. There is a fight, and Brown against finds himself an unwilling hero. The bandits are jailed, but soon they are freed to lead Brown to their hideout. Brown reaches the hideout and, in an exhibition of real courage, he catches Jory and his gang.

The screen play is by Oliver Drake, Karren DeWolf and Francis Martin, from a story by Oliver Drake. It was produced by Robert Sparks, and directed by Charles Barton.

Good for the entire family.

(6) The outlawing of the compulsory arbitration in effect up to 1929.

(7) The ignominious failure of the 5-5-5 conference as a result of producer manipulation.

(8) The acquisition of a large number of theatres by producers and distributors, reducing the independent exhibitors to almost complete impotence.

(9) The downfall of William Fox.

(10) The NRA.

After the early struggle to put HARRISON'S REPORTS on a basis that would enable me to make a living, my career as a reviewer has been a happy one. Throughout these years my one object has been to render real service to the exhibitors without being unfair to the producers and distributors. That this policy of mine has been recognized by the distributors themselves may be evidenced by the fact that today I enjoy the respect of the producer-distributors as much as that of the exhibitors. They may feel that my reviews of their poor pictures are harsh, but they know that my opinion of them is not influenced by any factors other than their merit. Whatever opinion I may have of a company's policy toward the exhibitors I reserve for the editorial columns. It is as if a thick wall separates the editorial pages from the review pages. The greatest compliment paid me on this policy was by the late Robert Lieber, president of First National. We were attending the dinner given to Mr. Ernest Fredman, publisher of the *Film Renter*, of London, visiting New York. He said to me, "Harrison! There is one thing with you—no matter how hard you are fighting a company, if it has a good picture you give it a good review."

HERE AND THERE

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT the Consent Decree may be suspended June 1 by the Government's inability to have the case against the "Little Three" tried before that time, the different units of Allied States Association conducted a poll to ascertain from the members what selling system they favor. The board of directors, however, at its January meeting in this city, did not consider the answers sufficiently comprehensive to enable them to form an opinion. For this reason late in January the Washington office of the Allied organization sent to the members a post card questionnaire requesting them to state their preference of the following three selling systems:

1. To select identified pictures when licensing them.
2. Full block-selling with the right to cancel 20% from each bracket.
3. Full block-selling with the right to cancel pictures representing 20% of the combined rental value.

The majority of the exhibitors will, no doubt, vote for the third proposal even though a great many of them might favor the first proposal if they could induce the producers to accept it—a forlorn hope; but that will not solve the problem. Feeling that a twenty per cent cancellation right will, as expressed by Tom Connor of Twentieth Century-Fox recently, bankrupt them, the producers may resort to the old tactics if the Government should force it on them—making cheap pictures, both in cost as well as quality, for the exhibitors to cancel. One top-ranking executive admitted that that is what they had done when the cancellation privilege was only ten per cent; you may imagine what will happen if it were to be twenty per cent.

In the opinion of HARRISON'S REPORTS, the solution of the problem lies in the adoption of a system that will be, neither the block-of-five, nor the full season's output, but, as explained twice in these columns, a combination of the block-of-five and of the Neely Bill, with a cancellation privilege. The distributor should be permitted to sell to an exhibitor his entire year's output, provided he can furnish him with a synopsis on every picture he can not tradeshow at the time of the signing of the contract, at the same time permitting the exhibitor to cancel a given percentage either of pictures or of the total rental value in pictures.

Adoption of the old block-booking system will bring public group objections to the fore again, and this time the industry cannot stand adverse criticism.

Exhibitor leaders should mull this plan over before offering to the distributors some other plan.

* * *

ACCORDING TO AN ANALYSIS made by the Allied Information Department under date of February 10 from reports received directly from exhibitors, forcing of shorts,

newsreels and trailers continues. In most cases the salesmen refuse to make a deal with exhibitors unless these agree to buy also the shorts.

This matter was discussed at the UMPTI meetings at the Hotel Warwick in this city last month, and W. F. Rodgers promised the committee that such a practice should be discontinued if upon investigation it was found to be correct.

I have no doubt in Mr. Rodgers' sincerity as to his desire to put an end to the salesmen's desire to compel an exhibitor to buy the shorts before getting a contract for the features, but so long as the human element enters into it the abuse will continue, no matter what orders are issued by the home offices. As long as the salesman feels that the greater his sales the greater his chances at promotion, he will undoubtedly use subtle methods to induce the exhibitor to buy also his shorts.

Under these circumstances, the cure lies in the suggestion that the Allied representatives made to the Department of Justice—to give the exhibitor the right to cancel his contract for shorts two days after receiving his approved contract for the features.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests to the Allied Representatives on the UMPTI Committee that they repeat this suggestion and insist upon its acceptance.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION was passed by the Allied board of directors at their January meeting in New York City:

"Resolved, that the Board of Directors congratulates P. S. (Pete) Harrison on the 25th anniversary of his published review of a motion picture; that it appreciates his long record of usefulness to the independent exhibitors; and that it wishes him well in the observance of his Silver Jubilee."

* * *

UNDER THE HEADING "PRIORITIES," the bulletins sent out by the various Allied units to their members three weeks ago contained the following:

"To sum up the entire priorities situation it can be definitely stated that the old way of handling supplies and equipment is *OUT* for the duration of the war. Each one of us will have to conserve on every item. Priority information now available is listed below:

"*Repairs and Alterations:* General and extensive alterations will not be permitted. Only alterations required for the safety of the public will be allowed. Machinery should be repaired now and put in first-class condition.

"*Projectors and Sound Equipment:* Unless damaged beyond repair no new equipment will be available. Keep your equipment in good condition by constant vigilance.

"*Screens:* New screens will be scarce—preserve the one you now have and if it needs replacement put your order in quickly.

"*Tubes and Electric Lamps:* require rare metals. Save the used tubes in order to secure new ones.

"*Rubber and Cork:* No cork can be bought. Rubber can only be obtained for fire hose.

"*Seats:* can only be repaired; no new seats will be available.

"*Carbons:* Instruct your operator to use carbon savers. Keep the short end butts and if you use copper coated carbons install a drip pan to catch the melted copper. It is more than likely when purchasing new carbons theatres will be required to turn in a certain amount of copper and butts.

"*Freon Gas:* After April 1 absolutely no Freon will be available. Until April 1 there is a small amount of this gas on sale. Exhibitors with cooling systems should immediately check over the entire system—eliminate leaks and points of wastage and purchase a sufficient amount of gas to operate the system during the hot weather.

"*Tetrachloride, Cleaning Solvents, and Soaps:* All these items will be hard to get. You should carefully supervise their use.

"*IN GENERAL:* Check over your supplies and your equipment immediately. Put everything in first-class condition. Order and use only the material you normally require. If you have any questions or run into any difficulties be in touch with your organization. All information will be available for you there.

"Furthermore, instruct your operator particularly and all your employees that **WASTE MUST BE ELIMINATED.** A slight saving of supplies today might be the means of keeping your theatre open tomorrow."

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Room 1812

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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1942

No. 9

HERE AND THERE

THE RISE IN OPERATING COSTS has given concern to Mr. Morris A. Rosenberg, new Allied President, to such an extent that, in a recent bulletin of his, he recommends an increase in admission prices to cover these costs. Says he partly:

"Despite these steadily increasing operating costs, most theatres have made no increase in admissions during 1941, and the net result is a lower profit to the theatre owner. . . .

"The problem of increased taxes and higher operating costs will become even more aggravated in 1942. We face the possibility of a film tax, seat tax, and higher admission taxes. The latter affects the grosses at the box office. Judging from latest tax proposals before Congress it is quite likely that the 1942 tax burden will be at least double that of 1941. In addition, we may expect many additional local or State taxes, which will not ease the burden. The solution is, of course, an increase in admission prices to correspond with increased costs generally.

"It is estimated that a 20 per cent increase in admission charges would be sufficient to absorb the increased operating costs and leave the average theatre owner with a slight profit. . . ."

This paper is in sympathy with Mr. Rosenberg's views. As a matter of fact, it recommended an increase of prices sometime ago. But right now conditions are such that should compel each exhibitor to study his own situation carefully before putting into effect an increase. Everything is going up and an increase of the price of the theatre tickets may in some instances cause resentment, and may prompt many picture-goers to protest in the only way they know — to reduce the number of times they go to pictures.

Mr. Rosenberg admits that the higher admission taxes "definitely affect grosses at the box office." If higher admission taxes hurt the box office, a twenty per cent increase in the admission prices, added to the increase of the taxes, Federal, State and local, should certainly hurt it still more.

The real remedy lies in increased attendance. This can be effected only by an improvement in the qual-

ity of the pictures. Still an increase in the admission prices is necessary where they are too low.

* * *

WHEN THE CONSENT-DECREE SELLING was first established, I believed that the quality of pictures would improve materially within a short time. The improvement would, in fact, be so great, that those exhibitors who opposed the new selling system on the ground that it would increase the cost of film to them and would retard the flow of product would, in my opinion, regret that they had opposed it, for I felt that, when a producer has to show his pictures to the exhibitor before offering them to him, he would not find it profitable to produce meritless pictures. Unfortunately, such has not been the case; the number of worthless pictures produced today is as great as it ever has been. As a matter of fact, it is greater, if anything.

Since such is the case, it will be wise on the part of every exhibitor to conserve the good pictures and not waste them in double bills, particularly in double bills where the pictures shown are good box office attractions.

There is another reason why the good pictures should be conserved; there may be a shortage of product because of the war.

Discussing the matter under the heading, "Don't Waste Product," in the February 21 issue of his "Showmen's Trade Review," "Chick" Lewis says partly:

"This page repeatedly has sounded warnings to exhibitors that smart showmanship in making the very utmost of product must be exercised far more generally than appears to be the case.

"Now from several sections come reports of moves to lengthen bookings wherever possible and single-bill on a more extensive scale to prevent the "dissipation of product" warned against a long while back.

"There is every reason to be confident that a good flow of product will continue to be available. However, this is no time to be wasting entertainment or anything else. Theatremen who have fallen into the rut of automatically double-billing and running

(Continued on last page)

"Martin Eden" with Glen Ford, Claire Trevor, Evelyn Keyes and Stuart Erwin

(Columbia, February 26; running time, 87 min.)

A very well produced drama. A great deal of its action is violent, but there is much human appeal throughout as a result of the hero's loyalty to his pal, and of his efforts to rise above his environment, because of his love for a woman. The heroine's great belief in the hero is touching. There is a romance between the hero and a wealthy girl, but he eventually returns to the loyal heroine. The story, which is by Jack London, is partly fiction but partly true—the life of Jack London himself who, though he had little education, had succeeded in gaining the world's recognition as a great writer. Mr. London had suffered the same disappointments as befell the hero of his book.

The book was put into pictures once before, in 1914, by Hobart Bosworth, and released through Paramount, which had just been incorporated. That version, however, cannot be compared with the present production in any way. But it is chiefly a picture for men, although it should attract literary women because of the popularity of this author's works:—

Before Joe Dawson (Stuart Erwin) is sentenced for mutiny on the high seas, Martin Eden (Glen Ford) requests of the court permission to read "Death Wagon," the diary of the S.S. Lorelei, so as to prove Joe's innocence, but his request is denied him. He vows, however, that some day the whole world will read it. Having decided on direct action, Eden invades the home of Morley (Pierre Watkin), owner of the ship, and endeavors to convince him that the Lorelei, under the command of Butch Ragan (Ian McDonald), was a hell ship. There he meets Ruth (Evelyn Keyes), Morley's daughter, and soon he comes to feel that she is a literary god; she takes an interest in him. An interest is shown toward him also by Carl Brissenden, a famous writer, who had been visiting the Morleys. Brissenden, quite a drinking man, invites Eden to his apartment, and there he reads "The Death Wagon," which reveals Captain Ragan's brutality toward his crew, of the death of a cabin boy, and of the crew's mutiny for which Joe had been convicted and given a twenty-year term, from which term Eden vows to rescue him by proving his innocence. Brissenden tells Eden that his stuff is too brutal for print and advises him to write romantic stories so as to build up a reputation. While at his lowly home at the waterfront, writing, Eden is visited by Ruth. She agrees to inspect her father's ship with him. But when the party arrives, Ragan had received the information and, while the party is there, everything seems to belie Eden's accusations. Under the influence of Ruth, Eden continues to write, but his hard luck still persists—he cannot sell his stories. Eden realizing that he is in love with Ruth, asks her to give him a year's time to make good. He writes a romantic story, "The Girl from Moa Loa." During this time, Connie (Claire Trevor), Joe's sister, secretly in love with him, sells "The Girl from Moa Loa," with the last two chapters not yet finished. The magazine with his first installment hits the news stands. At the same time a rival magazine appears with a similar story, under the title, "Moa Kaloa," and Eden is branded as a plagiarist. Eden is soon able to convince Brissenden that he (Brissenden) had taken the theme from his own story, which he had read while under the influence of liquor. Brissenden is convinced of it and he blows his brains out. To prove his authorship, Eden goes to the ship and beats Ragan severely in order to induce him to give him an affidavit. Ragan has him shanghaied. In San Francisco, Eden's story becomes a sensation. The magazine editor presses Connie for the missing chapters. These she is able to find after ransacking Eden's belongings. Then "The Death Wagon" is published, and it creates so much public indignation that a new trial is demanded for Joe. When the ship reaches Tahiti, a representative of Morley discharges Ragan and humane treatment is restored on board the ship. Eden, freed, again goes after Ragan and this time he succeeds in obtaining his affidavit after beating him up severely. Back in San Francisco, Eden is acclaimed a hero. Ruth and her father attempt to induce Eden not to present his affidavit to the court at Joe's trial, but he does present it, and Joe is freed. This brings about a break between Eden and Ruth, but he is glad to go back to Connie.

W. L. River wrote a good screen play out of Jack London's book. B. P. Schulberg produced it, and Sidney Salkow directed it.

It is strong fare, but there are no objectionable situations in it from the sex point of view.

*Released as ADVENTURES OF MARTIN EDEN.

"Private Snuffy Smith" with Bud Duncan

(Monogram, released January 16; time, 65 min.)

This is a good comedy, mingled with fantasy. It should be accepted by audiences very well. There are a great many mirth provoking situations throughout, and the action unfolds at a pace that holds the interest. A picturesque locale and homey atmosphere is provided by the hillbillies of Smokey Mountain. Some stock shots of manoeuvres have been inserted, giving the picture a tone of authenticity, and creating considerable excitement. The romance is secondary but pleasant:—

Bud Duncan (Snuffy Smith), a hillbilly of the Smokey Mountain region, who had been constantly evading the revenue agents, hears about the army and decides to enlist. The idea of getting free food, clothes and a monthly pay appeals to him. Being too short, he is rejected. But because he saves the General's life he is permitted to become a "Yard Bird," or servant around camp. On his arrival, he learns that Edgar Kennedy (Sergeant Cooper), the revenue officer whom he had been dodging, is his superior. Being unaccustomed to the discipline, Duncan finally walks out on the army and returns to his Smokey Mountain home. Jimmy Dodd (Don), a hillbilly friend of Duncan's, in the Army, invents a range finder that the General had planned to use in manoeuvres. Fifth columnists steal the instrument and, being unable to make a get away, they hide it in Duncan's kit. It is in his kit when he leaves for home. Before leaving, Duncan promises the General to come to his assistance should he need him. When the war games are held in the Smokey Mountain region, the General summons Duncan for advice on tactical moves. Sarah Padden, Duncan's wife (Lowizie), captures the fifth columnists when they enter her home and try to take the range finder away. At the point of a rifle, she leads them to headquarters in time to help the General's side win.

The story is based on the comic strip "Barney Google and Snuffy Smith" by Billy De Beck. Edward Gross produced it and Edward Cline directed it.

Good for the entire family.

"Mr. Wise Guy" with Leo Gorcey and other "East End Kids" and "Tough Guys"

(Monogram, February 20; time, 70 min.)

A fair entertainment. It is evident that Monogram hoped to duplicate the success of "Bowery Blitzkrieg," in which almost the same cast appeared, but it has not turned out as entertaining. The reason for it is the fact that the East Side Kids are made a little too tough, and the spectator is not given an opportunity to get a glimpse of their real character. Their conviction for a crime they had not committed is not pleasurable. Had they been sent to the reformatory by perjury of the forces of evil, they would have won much greater sympathy. Besides, they talk too much. Some laughter is provoked in several of the situations. There is a mild romance:—

A group of East Side kids frighten Billy Gilbert into abandoning his truck, which he had stolen; he was waiting with a truck to receive and spirit away Guinn Williams, an escaped convict. The East Side Kids playfully take possession of the truck and are arrested. Since they were unable to prove their innocence, they are sent to the reformatory. Douglas Fowley, Bobby Jordan's brother, enters a drug store to buy some cigarettes and, as he was about to start his car to drive away, Williams and Hymer, after holding up the drug store and murdering the owner, exit and, since Billy Gilbert, their accomplice, had been frightened away, they commandeer Douglas' car and force Douglas to drive them away. A short distance from the starting point, Douglas purposely wrecks the car, but the criminals get away; and since he was taken as their accomplice, he is tried, convicted and sentenced to the electric chair. Bobby learns of his brother's conviction and, being firmly convinced that he was innocent, induces his friends to run away with him with the hope that they will be able to prove his innocence. With a clew furnished them by another boy in the reformatory, they are able to track down the criminals and to bring about their arrest. Douglas is reprieved at the last minute.

The story is by Martin Mooney; the screen play, by Sam Robbins, Harvey Gates and Jack Henley. Sam Katzman produced it, and William Nigh directed it. Some of the others in the cast are Huntz Hall, Benny Rubin, David Gorcey, Joan Barclay and Sunshine Morrison.

Since it deals with crooks and murders, it may not be suitable for young children.

"To Be or Not to Be" with Carole Lombard, Jack Benny and Robert Stack

(United Artists, March 6; time, 99 min.)

An absorbing comedy-drama of war time, expertly directed and acted. The action holds one in tense suspense at all times, and comedy of dialogue as well as of acting keeps one laughing almost constantly. Ernst Lubitsch, who produced and directed the picture, again proves his skill; he has injected comedy in tense situations. The comedy is provoked by the outwitting of Nazi Army officers by Polish patriots; also by the jealousy the hero shows towards his wife. The suspense is created by the danger to which the Polish patriots subject themselves when they impersonate high-ranking Nazis, at Nazi headquarters and outside them. The romance between Carole Lombard and young Robert Stack is amusing, and even though Miss Lombard assumes the part of a married woman it is inoffensive. As to box office results, it may be said that the picture is so meritorious that the picture-going public may forget the tragedy that has befallen Miss Lombard:—

In London, Stanley Ridges, a Nazi spy posing as a Polish patriot, undertakes to fly to Warsaw to deliver instructions to the patriots. He accepts written messages from many of the pilots to their relatives and friends. Stack gives him an oral message to deliver to Miss Lombard. When Ridges asks Stack where he can find this person, Stack's suspicions are aroused immediately because Ridges had stated that he had resided in Warsaw and Miss Lombard, a famous actress, was known to every man, woman and child. He informs the Intelligence Service of his suspicions but the plane carrying Ridges had already left. Stack undertakes to fly to Warsaw to warn the patriots and to urge them to meet him at the landing field and kill him so as to prevent him from giving the information he had gathered to the Gestapo. But he arrives too late. Some of the Polish patriots, being actors, impersonate high-ranking Nazi officers. Jack Benny assumes the highest title. The Gestapo chief sends for Miss Lombard to interrogate her about the underground movement, but she pretends that she has no knowledge whatever about it. Being a beautiful woman, he becomes attracted to her and he tries to induce her to accept the Nazi ideology. She pretends to accept it and to work for it. The Polish patriots eventually succeed, not only in killing Ridges, but also in stealing a Nazi plane by which they reach England, with Stack piloting.

The screen play was written by Edwin Justus Mayer, from an original story by Melchior Lengyel and Ernst Lubitsch. The picture was produced and directed by Mr. Lubitsch. Some of the members of the supporting cast are: Felix Bressart, Lionel Atwill, Halliwell Hobbes, Miles Mander and Sig Ruman.

"What's Cookin' " with Gloria Jean, Billie Burke, Charles Butterworth, the Andrew Sisters and Woody Herman

(Universal, February 20; time, 67 min.)

A pleasing entertainment for the entire family, particularly for the swing fans. The producer has done well in his selection of a group of talented teen-age youngsters; they are not only pleasant persons, but also good actors, and they keep the action moving at a fast pace. Gloria Jean is her usual charming self and in good voice. Woody Herman with his Orchestra, and the Andrew Sisters, furnish delightful swing music. Although the story is light, there is human interest in most of the situations, particularly in those that show Leo Carrillo and Gloria Jean trying to secure a radio spot for the youngsters. Charles Butterworth, as the radio sponsor, and Billie Burke, as his classical music-minded wife, provoke comedy in their inimitable manner. The romance is mild:—

Leo Carrillo, a jobless magician, takes David Holt and his pals, a youthful singing and dancing troupe, who were on the verge of disbanding, to the palatial estate of Jane Frazee, a radio songstress, who previously had appeared with him in vaudeville. He hopes to enlist her aid in finding an engagement for the kids. At the time, Jane is vacationing at her new country home with the other members of her show, the Andrew Sisters, and Woody Herman and his Orchestra. Ray Walker, Jane's press agent, is trying to sell her new radio show to Charles Butterworth, the American Foods sponsor, who takes up knitting and sleight-of-hand tricks to offset a nervous breakdown. Billie Burke, Butterworth's wife, instructs Robert Paige, handling American Foods advertising, that the Classical Hour must be con-

tinued. While riding by Jane's house, Gloria, Billie Burke's niece, who has been trained in classical music, overhears the kids swinging a hot number; she joins in the harmony and develops a crush on David Holt. Gloria learns that Paige wants to change the Classical Hour for modern swing, and she brings him to Jane's house where he sees the whole gang perform. He falls in love with Jane. When Billie Burke signs a contract with Charles Lane, Paige's advertising rival, for the presentation of Franklyn Pangborn and his symphonic orchestra, Gloria and Paige set about sabotaging the first broadcast scheduled to take place on the grounds of the Butterworth estate. Meanwhile, Carrillo, by teaching Butterworth magical tricks, wins him over to Paige's plan for a new program. With the aid of Carrillo, Gloria gets herself signed as a "Mystery Child" singer with Charles Lane. On the night of the broadcast the kids stuff the instruments of the symphony orchestra with old vegetables, eggs and water, and burn the strings of Pangborn's violin. Consequently, the symphony orchestra is replaced by Woody Herman's band, and Gloria swings a classic and is joined by the Andrew Sisters and the kids. Billie Burke, noting that her guests enjoyed the swing music, tears up Lane's contract and executes a truckin' routine. Robert gets the radio contract for Jane's show.

The screen play is by Jerry Cady and Stanley Roberts from a story by Edgar Allan Wolf. It was produced by Ken Goldsmith and directed by Edward Cline.

"Brooklyn Orchid" with William Bendix, Joe Sawyer, Marjorie Woodworth and Grace Bradley

(United Artists, February 20; time, 51 min.)

This picture is best summed up as a modernization of an old Keystone comedy, except that the Keystone cops are missing. Had they been included, it might have resulted in fair entertainment. As it is, the picture is boring. An attempt is made to provoke comedy by situations that are old-fashioned and hardly plausible. Such antics as walking on window ledges, blowing out light fuses, hiding in wall beds, and being thrown in swimming pools, does not help to create interest nowadays:—

William Bendix and Joe Sawyer, ex-cab drivers, own the Red Circle Cab Co. Bendix's wife, Grace Bradley, an ex-stripteaser with social ambitions, gives an ultra swank party to celebrate their wedding anniversary and attracts the socialites by engaging Leonid Kinsky, famous pianist, to perform. Sawyer arrives at the party with Florence McKinney, his explosive girl-friend, bearing a pair of trout fishing poles as gifts. Bendix and Sawyer test their casting prowess in the drawing-room, creating a bedlam. They retreat to the river bank to continue their casting and drag from the river the half-drowned Marjorie Woodworth. But she berates them for having saved her life. She explains that, ever since she had won the title of Brooklyn Orchid at a Coney Island Beauty Contest, she had lost her job and boy friend and had decided to end it all. She insists that since they had saved her, she is their charge and where they go, she goes. In an attempt to shake her off, they take the wife and girl-friend to an exclusive mountain resort. Miss Woodworth learns of their plans, and follows. They manage to "palm" her off on the very social and wealthy Skeets Gallagher. Curious about this newcomer, who had made such an enviable catch, the wife and girl-friend make her acquaintance and Miss Woodworth relates her experiences, without divulging the name of her two benefactors. All are present at a dinner party given by Gallagher, and Miss Bradley recounts Miss Woodworth's experiences and recounts what she would do if her husband were mixed up in a similar affair. The party ends when Miss Bradley pushes Miss McKinney, with whom she had had a perpetual feud, into the swimming pool. Miss Woodworth grabs two fishing poles, and thrusts them at Bendix and Sawyer with the admonition, "Do your stuff boys!" The truth dawns on Miss Bradley, who very deftly kicks both of them into the pool.

Earle Snell and Clarence Marks wrote the screenplay, Kurt Neumann directed it, and Hal Roach produced it.

There are no objectionable situations.

LOOK OVER YOUR FILES

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shows on set time schedules as to length of engagements, had better look to their operations and examine (or rather reexamine) their own situations' potentialities for more single billing and longer runs of product that hits a certain mark of quality. . . ."

It seems as if the war will bring about what the prayers and hopes of many exhibitors have not been able to accomplish these many years—the elimination of the double-bill.

* * *

THAT THERE IS NEED for conserving, not only the good pictures, but all pictures may be realized by what has been printed in the Hollywood trade papers. The issue of January 9 of "The Hollywood Reporter" says partly the following:

"Hollywood faces changes in production so sweeping as to be almost revolutionary as a result of restrictions imposed for the duration of the war emergency by U. S. Army officials in this area. Due to these comprehensive regulations, practically all scripts now in work and those in production will have to be revised extensively, not because of story content so much as the actual physical production problems involved. This is due to the fact that new Army decrees all but drive producing companies back within their studio walls for production. Location efforts almost anywhere within the confines of California will be virtually eliminated, and whenever location work is a vital necessity, the troupes will have to go beyond the limits of blackout areas and military control, possibly to Arizona. . . ."

Couple this with the fact that, because of the increased flights by planes, both Army and commercial, and you will realize how necessary it is for exhibitors to stretch the runs of pictures. The restrictions in location, imposed by the military, may have an effect to reduce the number of pictures made.

There is another factor that must be taken into consideration when one tries to figure out what effect will the present situation have on the number of pictures that are to be produced: Most young men have been or will be drafted. This will make casting more difficult.

It is true that the Government has put the motion picture industry on the preferred list. This no doubt applies to skilled mechanics, authors, directors and stars. But many of this type of artists have refused to ask for an exemption.

Creating new male stars to take the place of the "withdrawals," will be difficult, because most young men will, as said, be taken by the army.

It is wise for every one in the industry to take stock and act accordingly.

* * *

THE UMPI COMMITTEE convened in this city last week in an effort to bring about a solution of

what sort of selling plan to adopt after June, this year.

The present system will not be used beyond that date on account of the fact that the trial of the "Little Three" will not take place before that time, unless, of course, the Government should be able to obtain from Judge Goddard an extension beyond the June deadline.

Section 12 of the Consent Decree stipulates that, if the Government should be unable to enter against Columbia, United Artists and Universal a decree to compel them to tradeshow their feature pictures before offering them to the exhibitors for sale, in blocks consisting of no more than five pictures, that section will become inoperative so far as the five signatories of the Consent Decree are concerned, and the "Big Five" may, after September 1, return to the old selling system whereby their pictures were sold in blocks consisting of the entire year's output.

The UMPI Committee is reconvening this week in an effort to find a solution—a most difficult undertaking.

HARRISON'S REPORTS again suggests that Allied study the recommendations about a new selling plan, which were made in these columns repeatedly—that the producer be allowed to sell as many of his pictures as he has ready for trade-screening, and as many more as he can furnish synopses for, with the right granted to the exhibitor to cancel a certain percentage of the pictures he contracts for.

* * *

IN THE ISSUE OF NOVEMBER 11, 1939, I published a table showing what should be the approximate percentage cost of the different items in the operation of a theatre. There have been so many requests for copies of that issue since that time that I feel a reproduction of that table would benefit additional exhibitors.

Here are the percentages:

Rent, 15%; Film, 30%; salaries, 20%; heat and advertising, 6%; light and power, 4%; taxes, 3%; incidentals, 2%; depreciation, 3%; maintenance, 3%; miscellaneous, 2%; profit, 12%.

These figures I obtained from exhibitors. But whether the average independent exhibitor can limit his film rentals to 30% when one takes into consideration the cost of newsreels, shorts and trailers, and of the greater number of percentage pictures that he is compelled to play under the selling system that has been instituted by the Consent Decree, it is another question. The affiliated theatres may be able to limit the film cost to 30%; but few independent exhibitors can, in my opinion, get away with less than 40% for all film.

It is a well known fact that, when the percentage cost for film increases, the profits diminish, and often-times vanish.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

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Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1942

No. 10

HERE AND THERE

WHEN THE NINE EXHIBITOR LEADERS, who for the first time in the history of the industry represented the united exhibitor interests, left the Warwick Hotel on February 27, after almost continuous sessions lasting from early in the morning till late at night, they seemed to have left with the knowledge that they had taken part in producer-exhibitor conferences that may make history. According to information, a new selling plan has been worked out, and unity has been achieved.

The details of the plan are by this time in the hands of the individual exhibitor organizations throughout the country, submitted to them for action. But there seems little doubt that the plan, which their leaders worked so hard to bring about, will be approved.

The plan has been guarded closely until the different organizations vote upon it. I could publish rumors about it, but I feel it is better to respect the wishes of the committee that comment on it be withheld until action by the different organizations has been taken.

The exhibitor representatives—H. A. Cole, Jack Kirsch, Sidney Samuelson, Ed Kuykendall, Max Cohen, Joe Vogel, Robert Poole, Robert White and William Crockett—were faced with the problem of working out a sales plan to take the place of the present plan, which those whom they represented have so vigorously condemned. Most of their membership wanted some plan that would permit full-line selling with the right to cancel a given number of pictures. The exhibitor as well as the producer representatives knew that the Department of Justice would not approve full-line selling, and that it would demand either tradeshowing or identification of pictures. It is said that the plan that has been adopted lies between these two extremes.

From some of those who have taken part in the conferences I have been able to learn in a general way that something more than a mere new selling plan has resulted from the deliberations. No details were given me. Only that for the first time the representatives of both groups approached the problem with an open mind—for the first time the producer representatives showed a real willingness to take into consideration the wishes of the independent exhibitors.

A substantial share of the credit for the successful conclusion of the deliberations should go to William F. Rodgers, general manager of distribution of Metro-

Goldwyn-Mayer. He said that unity can be accomplished and he would not give up until it was accomplished.

* * *

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT of Allied States Association comes the following interesting release under the heading, "Blind Checking":

"There have been, there are now—and we look to the future for more kindly treatment—many abuses in our business. Of the many now existing, one of the most dastardly is the 'blind-checking' as applied to pictures which are non-percentage.

"The reason for this type of blind-check as outlined by the offenders is, they claim, made to ascertain a proper count of returns on a definite engagement for future guidance on pictures of equal standard and box-office appeal. The fallacy in this, however, is that the picture usually chosen for such checking is a 'freak' and does not in any sense reflect normal and consistent box-office returns. We believe further that some distributors practice this type of checking in reference to pictures other than their own and try to evaluate their own product on that basis. This is not an equitable method of doing business.

"Where a theatre has recently opened and never played percentage there may be some justification for such checking to arrive at a basis for establishing price; even so the checker may become over-enthusiastic and turn in inflated figures to show big returns. The theatre owner is fighting a 'phantom' and has no means of protection except the legitimate box-office reports, which the distributor normally doubts. In our experience exhibitors will produce such records for examination to help establish a fair precedent.

"The figure obtained through a blind-check is used merely as a 'club' to force higher film rentals. It further creates a weapon hitherto unknown and may act as a gentle and persuasive 'blackmailer' by the possessor. It enables him to mildly refer by inference that others may become aware of the same count. We know this to be true. We also believe there is an exchange of this misinformation among distributors, to the detriment and confusion of all concerned.

"This practice does not induce good will and amicable relationship in the industry. We are rather inclined to believe that a discontinuance of the practice would materially aid the good will of the business. From the ethical standpoint, it is as bad for a dis-

(Continued on last page)

"Sleepytime Gal" with Judy Canova and Tom Brown

(Republic, March 5; time, 79½ min.)

This is an eccentric sort of comedy, the type in which Martha Ray used to appear in. Miss Canova is the Martha Ray type of actress; and the comedy is a farce with music. The action is very fast, and most of the gags provoke laughter, a great deal of it is of the explosive type. The music is lively. It is the sort of picture that should go very well with small-town audiences. The picture has been produced lavishly, betraying an ambitious effort by Republic:—

Tom Brown, bell captain in a swanky restaurant at Miami, decides to enter Judy Canova in the contest that was sponsored by Skinnay Ennis, famous band leader, under the auspices of Thurston Hall, head of a large recording company. Judy has a good voice. Tom has a recording made of her voice and takes it to Skinnay's apartment. While there he overhears Harold Huber, a big-time gambler, demand of Skinnay that he choose Ruth Terry, his girl, as a winner, promising to wipe out the large gambling debt Skinnay owed him. Tom substitutes the recording of Judy's voice for that of Ruth's, and when Skinnay hears it he feels that his conscience would not bother him if he should declare "Ruth" the winner of the contest. When the real Ruth arrives in town, three of Tom's pals—Billy Gilbert, Fritz Feld and Jay Novello—chefs at the hotel, meet her at the station and abduct her. In the meantime, Judy is substituted for Ruth. When a Chicago underworld character whom she had helped send to jail learns that Ruth had left for Miami, he sends there two of his killers to murder her. Thus these men go after "Ruth" (Judy). First they place chloroform in the microphone and she goes to sleep. Then they abduct her and Jerry Lester, Skinnay's assistant, and put them in the ice box. Thus it seems as if Ruth would win the contest. At the last minute, however, Judy and Lester are found by Tom's pals and she appears on the stage and wins the contest.

The plot has been founded on a story by Mauri Grashin and Robert T. Shannon. The screen play was written by Art Arthur, Albert Duffy and Max Lief. Albert J. Cohen produced it and Albert S. Rogell directed it.

Because of the gangster angle, each small exhibitor will have to use his own judgment as to the picture's suitability for Sunday showing.

"Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" with Jackie Gleason, Jack Durant, Florence Rice and Bruce Bennett

(Columbia, March 12; time, 67½ min.)

Obviously the producer attempted to imitate the antics of Abbott and Costello in "Buck Privates," but the players, Jackie Gleason and Jack Durant, despite their efforts, are at a disadvantage on account of the poor material. Given good material, they should make a good comedy team. The story is silly and, lacking in novelty and surprise, it bores. Its comedy will probably provoke more laughter among children than among adults. At best, the picture is suited for small towns and neighborhood theaters on double bills:—

When Bruce Bennett and a thousand other Bellville boys are drafted for military service, Jackie Gleason and Jack Durant, partners in a barber shop, decide that their best bet would be to close up shop and follow the boys to Camp Horton; there, they would enlist, and continue their business on the side. When they are rejected by the army doctors, they go to live with Bennett's grandmother, who owned a house near the camp. Eager to do their part for national defense, they conceive the idea of organizing a Home Defense Army and they begin enlisting the over-age men in town. Through the nation-wide publicity that was given to this army, Mabel Todd learns of the whereabouts of Gleason, her former boy-friend, and arrives at the camp determined to marry him. Failing to dissuade her, Gleason succumbs and the two are married. Soon after, Florence Rice, Bennett's sweetheart, who was working for a newspaper, comes to the camp seeking material for a feature story. Trouble develops for the boys when a band of criminals, deciding that the best place in which to hide from the police would be the Home Defense Army, come to the camp and enlist. Forrest Tucker, one of the fugitives, makes a play for Miss Rice and inadvertently reveals his identity. She gives this information to Gleason and Durant, and they, with the aid of the Defense Army, subdue and capture the entire gang.

Harry Rebus and Ned Dandy wrote the screen play. Charles Barton directed it. Wallace MacDonald produced it. No objectionable situations morally.

"The Male Animal" with Henry Fonda and Olivia de Havilland

(Warner Bros., April 4; time, 100 min.)

Very good entertainment. Adapted from the stage play of the same name, the film provides high-spirited comedy. The performances are good, and some of the situations provoke considerable laughter. Although the plot revolves around husband, wife and former sweetheart, with the wife as the "pawn," it contains nothing objectionable. In Mr. Fonda's portrayal as the Professor who "bucks" the Board of Trustees in their endeavors to control the teachings of the faculty, the picture takes a dig at the "red-baiting" heads of many colleges:—

Henry Fonda, Professor of Literature at Midwestern University, is unenthusiastic about the football rally to be held on the eve of the traditional game with Michigan. Among the returning graduates is Jack Carson, former All-American and an old flame of Fonda's wife, Olivia de Havilland. Fonda announces to his class that on Monday he would read Bartholomeo Vanzetti's last statement as an example of English composition by an untrained writer. Herbert Anderson, fiery editor of the college literary magazine, writes an editorial denouncing the university for dismissing liberal professors, ignorantly called reds. He praises Fonda for his intentions to discuss the Sacco-Vanzetti case. The editorial arouses the ire of Eugene Pallette, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and he threatens Fonda with dismissal if he should read the letter. Fonda is in no mood for festivities and Miss de Havilland, craving excitement, goes to the rally with Carson. This depresses Fonda and he foolishly decides that Carson and his wife belonged to each other. He avoids her and she, angered, goes to the game with Carson. Fonda and Anderson get drunk while listening to the radio account of the game. He tells Anderson that it is the instinct of the male animal to fight for its mate and he decides to forego his intentions of giving up his wife. When they return from the game, Fonda tries to fight Carson, but he is drunk and only succeeds in knocking himself out. When Fonda awakes on Monday, Miss de Havilland tells him she is leaving with Carson. Several hours later, Fonda reads the Vanzetti letter to the student body, in the university auditorium, and explains that he chose this letter only as an example of English composition, and not for its political beliefs. Now that freedom of speech is endangered, he must read it. The letter proves both moving and eloquent and Fonda, cheered by the students, becomes the campus hero. Miss de Havilland and Fonda are reconciled.

Julius Epstein wrote the screen play, Elliott Nugent directed it, and Hal B. Wallis produced it. The cast includes Joan Leslie, Jack Carson and Eugene Pallette.

"Always In My Heart" with Gloria Warren, Kay Francis and Walter Huston

(Warner Bros. April 4; time, 90 min.)

This is very pleasant entertainment. The story, though simple, combines human interest and good music. Gloria Warren, a newcomer, has a pleasing voice and acting ability. Outstanding is the performance of Patty Hale, a boisterous, but "cute" youngster, who gets in everyone's hair. Borrah Minnevitich and his Rascals add to the musical highlights. The characters depicted are pleasant and some of the scenes are extremely touching:—

Kay Francis, the divorced loyal wife of Walter Huston, a pianist convicted of a crime, visits him at the State Prison to seek his advice on the marriage proposal of Sidney Blackmer. He conceals the fact that he has just been pardoned and advises her to marry again. Their children Frankie Thomas and Gloria Warren believe their father to be dead. After his release, Huston, desirous of seeing the children, returns. He lives with Anthony Caruso, a music loving fisherman and friend of the children. Huston organizes the local harmonica players as a band to give shows for the USO, and invites Gloria to be soloist. She rehearses Huston's song "Always In My Heart" at home, and Miss Francis, recognizing the tune, visits Huston and tells him she will not marry Blackmer. He insists that she do. Gloria discovers that Huston is her father, and that he plans to leave town. The children and Miss Francis induce him to stay, and Blackmer graciously steps out of the picture.

The story has been suggested by a play by Dorothy Bennett and Irving White. The screen play was written by Adele Comandini. Walter MacEwen and William Jacobs produced it. Jo Graham directed it. Frankie Thomas, Una O'Connor, Frank Puglia and others are in the cast.

Suitable for the family.

"This Was Paris" with Ann Dvorak and Ben Lyon

(Warner Bros., March 21; time, 77 min.)

Though we have had some fine British-made pictures lately, this is not one of them, in spite of the fact that two well-known American actors take leading parts. It is an espionage melodrama, and it is poor, not only from the entertainment, but also from the production, point of view. Nothing is shown that has not been "hashed and rehashed" in former pictures of this type produced, not only in English, but also in American pictures. Moreover, the photography is so poor that one's feeling that the picture is antiquated is augmented. There is an unimportant romance:—

Griffith Jones, of the British Intelligence Service in Paris, collides with the car that was driven by Ann Dvorak, who worked for a fashionable gown shop owned by Vera Boggetti. After the accident, Jones enters a saloon for a drink and there he becomes acquainted with Ben Lyon, an American-born reporter who had been convinced that France was undermined by fifth columnists. The two become fast friends. Lyon is approached by British steel interests in Paris to investigate fifth-column activities and to combat them. He agrees to investigate Miss Dvorak, whose activities were of a suspicious nature. Miss Dvorak is ordered by her employer to drive an ambulance to the front just as Germany started an invasion of France, unaware of the fact that in her ambulance had been concealed certain plans that the Germans wanted. Lyon, suspicious, accompanies her. A bomb strikes the ambulance and puts it out of commission. Lyon overpowers a German searching the ruins of the ambulance, takes the message away from him and sends it to the British Intelligence to be decoded. A second German spy prevents the blowing up of a bridge nearby, and over it the German Army pours into France. Miss Dvorak succeeds in convincing Lyons that she was not connected with espionage and he drives with her to Paris, which city they find occupied by Germans.

Brock Williams and Edward Dryhurst wrote the scenario from an original by Gordon Wellesley and Basil Woon. John Harlow directed it.

"A Gentleman After Dark" with Brian Donlevy and Miriam Hopkins

(United Artists-Edward Small, February 27; time, 75 min.)

A fine jewel thief melodrama. Despite its nature, it stirs the emotions of sympathy in several situations, and the cleverness of the hero, a jewel thief, arouses the spectator's interest—not in his acts, but in the manner he executes them. The human interest is awakened at first by the hero's regeneration, and later by his determination to prevent a faithless mother from ruining the life of their child. The picture has been produced lavishly, and at times the hero appears in an evening dress suit and a silk hat. Harold Huber's loyalty to the hero would have been really inspiring but for the fact that he, too, is a crook. Miriam Hopkins' part is very unpleasant; she is, not only a jewel thief herself, but also unfaithful to her marriage vows:—

After stealing a valuable bracelet, Brian Donlevy, a silk-hatted jewel thief, goes to the maternity hospital to see his wife (Miriam Hopkins), who had just given birth to a girl. Preston Foster, a detective, boyhood friend of Donlevy's, recognizes the theft as his work and follows him to the hospital. But Donlevy slips the jewel to his wife. The birth of the child so affects Donlevy that he decides to be a good father and to quit his disreputable profession after doing a last job. Miriam is glad when she comes out of the hospital and wants to go to a nightclub. It is then that Donlevy reveals to Miriam his decision, much to her disgust. Shortly afterwards Philip Reed proposes to Miriam, with whom he had been infatuated, to drop Donlevy and team up with him. At the night of a grand ball at a wealthy man's Long Island home, Reed informs the police that Donlevy contemplated a robbery and they watch his home. At the ball, Donlevy does steal a valuable jewel. As he was approaching his home, he notices that he was watched. He slips the jewel into an urn and, when Foster confronts him in his apartment, Donlevy invites search. Foster does not find the jewel, even though he seeks it in the secret trap in his top-hat, of which only his wife and Reed knew. Thus he suspects the trickery. A few minutes later he walks in on Reed and Miriam who, feeling sure that Donlevy had been arrested by this time, had been expressing their joy with an embrace. He spares

Miriam on condition that she never attempt to see their daughter (Sharon Douglas), but he kills Reed. Realizing the impossibility of escaping and taking along his daughter, he calls on Foster, informs him of the murder and its cause, hands the jewel over to him, and induces him to adopt Diana and rear her with the reward money. Preston is eventually persuaded to accept the proposal. Donlevy is sent to Sing Sing and makes a model prisoner. Diana grows up into a woman, is in love with Bill Henry, son of a socialite family, and the marriage date is announced. Then Miriam, accompanied by a shyster lawyer (Douglass Dumbrille), calls on Foster, now a supreme court judge, and threatens to expose Diana's parentage unless he pays her fifty thousand dollars. When Donlevy is informed of the attempted blackmail by his faithful friend Harold Huber, he escapes and, while the police are searching for him, calls on Foster. Foster pleads with him not to add another murder to his life. Donlevy promises him not to resort to murder, but he eventually brings about the indirect death of both Miriam and Dumbrille. He then walks into the police headquarters and surrenders. Thus the marriage of his child takes place without a scandal.

The plot has been founded on "Heliotrope Harry," a story by Richard Washburn Child. Patterson McNutt and George Bruce wrote the screen play. Edwin L. Marin directed it under the supervision of George Arthur.

Because of the nature of the story, it is hardly a picture for children under fourteen.

"Larceny, Inc." with Edward G. Robinson, Broderick Crawford and Jane Wyman

(Warner Bros., May 2; time, 95 min.)

A fair comedy melodrama, whose box-office chances will have to depend on the popularity of Edward G. Robinson. He takes the part of a gangster. Although the story is trite and develops in routine fashion, the action is steady and manages to hold the attention. Some of the situations are novel and good gags help to provoke laughter. One cannot feel sympathy for the characters, for there are no redeeming features to their crookedness:—

Prior to their release from Sing Sing, Edward G. Robinson and his partner-in-crime Broderick Crawford, while playing in the final baseball game of the prison season, are approached by Anthony Quinn, a fellow convict, and are asked to join him in the robbing of a bank. Having other plans, Robinson declines. With the money he expects to receive from the sale of slot machines he had entrusted to his ex-partner, Edward Brophy, Robinson plans to open a dog race track. But on gaining freedom, he learns from Brophy that the police had destroyed the machines. Needing money, they decide to rob Quinn's bank after all. With funds received from a fake accident to Crawford, they buy a small leather goods store adjoining the bank, intending to dig a tunnel to the bank's vault. They do their best to discourage sales so that they might attend to their digging. When Jane Wyman, Robinson's adopted daughter, learns of the plan, she enlists the aid of Jack Carson, a leather goods salesman, and together they set out to foil the robbery by concocting sales stunts that made the customers flock to the store. The business thrives and Robinson decides to forego the robbery to become a respected business man. Meanwhile Quinn, learning of Robinson's plan to rob the bank, breaks out of prison and intimidates him into proceeding with the robbery. Robinson does everything possible to keep a crowd in the store in order to prevent Quinn from exploding the dynamite charge. Quinn clears the store, sets off the explosion, and the store catches fire attracting a crowd. When the police arrive, Robinson and his pals eagerly point out that Quinn had forced them into the robbery at the point of a gun and they are released. They sell the store and, finding themselves again without funds, plot to have Crawford hit by an automobile, so that they might collect damages. Crawford declines and Robinson, volunteering, steps in front of a passing car, which turns out to be a police car. They beat a hasty retreat.

Everett Freeman and Edwin Gilbert wrote the screen play. Lloyd Bacon directed it, and Hal B. Wallis produced it.

It is strictly adult fare; its demoralizing nature makes it unsuitable for children.

"Bullet Scars," Warner Bros. A poor program picture. Review next week.

tributor to blind-check an exhibitor as it would be for an exhibitor to plant an agent in the distributor's office to copy confidential information from the latter's books. At this time when the spirit of Unity is riding high it is most important that this practice be immediately discontinued.

"A recent survey on good will definitely proved that a certain distributing company practicing this type of blind-checking is very much in disrepute and disfavor with its customers. Eventually it must and will reflect on their contracts and collections.

"Let's stop being 'blind' about this type of blind-checking!"

* * *

THE FEBRUARY 26 DAILY VARIETY, published in Hollywood, describes what prevailed there as a result of the recent air-raid alarm. Instead of becoming hysterical, people went up on the roofs of buildings to watch the "show." They were curious, and seemed to enjoy the experience.

In the case of the Twentieth Century-Fox studio, shooting on one film was delayed because five hundred workmen with early calls reached the studio late—they were unable to reach the studio because of the blackout. There was another delay on location where scenes for "The Gentleman from West Point" was shot; a truckload of horses arrived late.

Whether the Hollywood people enjoyed the experience or not, however, you must realize that these raid alarms cannot help having a decided influence upon production. The picture makers cannot have their minds on picture making when they have them on the possibility of a visit by enemy planes. This is one more reason why you should preserve your good pictures and not waste them in double-feature bills.

* * *

ACCORDING TO A TRADE PRESS RELEASE, the earnings of Paramount Pictures Corporation for the fifty-two weeks ending January 3, 1942, amounted to \$10,125,000, after interest and all charges, including reserves and for all Federal taxes, were deducted.

When one remembers the wails that the distributors put up when they lost the foreign market, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that the picture business is like a cat—it has nine lives. By all laws of logic, the profits of Paramount, and for that matter of every other company, should have been so low that they would have the right to shed tears before the exhibitors, asking them to pay a little more money for film to make up in part the profits that they have lost abroad. But the profits are even larger than they were before the foreign market was lost.

There is no question that the size of the profits is owed to the improvement of the quality of the Paramount pictures under the leadership of Y. Frank Freeman, studio head, and of Buddy De Sylva, production head. But in the opinion of this paper, the exhibitors, too, have contributed their share, in increased film rentals.

* * *

HOLDOVERS ARE CAUSING TROUBLE to the subsequent-run exhibitors. The circuit theatres,

because either of home-office orders or of merit, play pictures longer than what usually is the case, compelling the subsequent-run exhibitors to look around for fillers; and because of the fact that all pictures are more or less released late as a result of the system that compels the five major distributors to sell their pictures in accordance with the provisions of the Consent Decree, many exhibitors frequently find themselves unable to obtain suitable pictures with which to substitute the holdovers.

This is one more reason why exhibitors should conserve their good pictures. They should also think of showing them more days than they used to.

* * *

AFTER A LONG INVESTIGATION by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the cooperation of the Copyright Protection Bureau, three men who had been indicted last year for criminal violation of the copyright law in the unauthorized dealing in motion picture films, admitted guilt last week and Federal Judge Alfred C. Coxe imposed sentences on them in accordance with the part each had played in the violation of the law.

Five of the counts of the indictment charged the wilful infringement, for profit, of the copyrights in five films belonging to major companies; the sixth, a conspiracy to violate Section 28 of the Copyright Law, which forbids the duplication of negatives and of positive prints to be rented for exhibition.

One of the defendants, Colisimo (Collosimo, or Colson,) conducting his business under the name, "Colson Motion Picture Service," pleaded guilty to all counts. And so did Antonio Cardillo, who assisted him. Sol Jaffe, the third defendant, connected with Movielab Films Labs, pleaded guilty to the first and fifth counts.

The investigation had been originally started by the Copyright Protection Bureau after receiving information to the effect that dupe 16mm, as well as 35mm, prints of major distributors' feature films had been distributed illegally for exhibition purposes. Then the aid of the FBI was sought.

No regular picture theatres have been involved in the violation of the Law concerning this case, and my motive for dealing with it is my belief that exhibitors who gain knowledge that dupe 16mm, or 35mm, films are shown without authority should report the matter to the Copyright Protection Bureau, RKO Bldg., New York, N. Y., for this reason: when one of the travelling picture shows comes to your town and exhibits a major company's picture without the authority to do so, unfair competition is created, for you pay big prices for whatever films you show; these fly-by-night individuals pay very little for the films they show—perhaps no more than \$2.50 a night. That is what makes it possible for them to exist. And every quarter they take away from the people of your town for amusement is taken away from you.

Incidentally, any one who shows a film of this kind becomes equally guilty and may be fined \$250 per showing. In other words, if a picture is shown three times, the fine may be \$750. You can see for yourself how quickly you can stop competition of this type.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1942

No. 11

HERE AND THERE

THE CURTAILMENT OF AUTO DRIVING as a result of the rationing of tires and no doubt soon of gas has made the readjustment of clearance in time as well as area absolutely necessary. Since in rural areas the distributors ordinarily base clearance on the competition created by automobile travel, it is natural that the restriction of such travel reduces competition to the minimum and often almost eliminates it altogether.

Every exhibitor should demand that his clearance, in area as well as time, be readjusted to meet the changed conditions. If a distributor should refuse to comply with an exhibitor's request, he should bring a case before his local arbitration board.

The Appeal Board has already established the principle of reducing clearance to meet the altered conditions—in the case of B. R. McLendon, which was heard by the Dallas Arbitration Tribunal.

Mr. McLendon operates the State and the Texan theatres, in Atlanta, Texas. He brought his case before the Atlanta Board complaining that Twentieth Century-Fox, RKO, and Warner Bros. were granting to Paramount and Strand, owned by Paramount-Richards Theatres, at Texarkana, (about 28 miles away), a clearance of anywhere from thirty to sixty days over his theatres, and demanded that this clearance be found unreasonable and be eliminated.

The Arbitrator held that Mr. McLendon had not sustained his complaint and dismissed it without giving the ground on which he had based his opinion.

Mr. McLendon appealed the case, and the Appeal Board, pointing out that, regardless of the form of Mr. McLendon's complaint, Section VIII of the Consent Decree does provide for arbitrating clearance disputes, reversed the Dallas arbitrator, reducing clearance to one day.

One of the motives that prompted the Appeal Board to reduce the clearance is stated in the following excerpt:

"If wartime control of automobile traffic results in the effectual limitation of this method of transportation, a different situation will be presented. On the record the present extent of the competition between Texarkana and Atlanta is, however, not so slight as to warrant us in holding that any clearance between the two would be unreasonable as to area. On the other hand it is our opinion that the competition is such that the maximum clearance should not exceed one day. When competition is slight clearance to be reasonable must also be short in point of time. . . ."

In other words, though the Appeal Board recognized that the two towns are in a competitive area, war conditions have so affected travel that competition has been reduced to the point of being only slight, and not deserving more than one day clearance.

* * *

THE NEW SALES PLAN that has been agreed upon by the UMPI Committee is as follows:

1. A distributor shall offer to the exhibitor twenty-five per cent of his contemplated output for the season, but at no time shall the number of pictures be more than twelve.

2. Five pictures of that group must be completed and tradeshown; the remainder shall be identified in a manner that will be determined jointly by the exhibitor and the distributor representatives on the UMPI Committee.

3. The exhibitor shall have no right to cancel any one of the five tradeshown pictures, but he shall have the right to cancel two out of the remaining seven, if his average rental for each picture does not exceed \$100, and only one picture, if it exceeds that amount and up to \$200.

The cancellation privilege conceded to represent a minimum; any of the consenting distributors may grant a greater number.

A distributor may roadshow a picture. In such a case, he has the right to consider such a picture as individual, and not forming a part of a group.

The meaning of the special provision entitled, "Regular Customer," under provision (5) is so obscure that an exhibitor will have to have a code book to decipher it. After consulting one of the framers of that provision, I learned that the meaning is as follows:

It has been the practice of the circuits to go into a town where there was another theatre and, by using their buying power, take the film service away from the old theatre. In the recent Code, which was worked out by the trade practice conference that was wrecked in Minneapolis about three years ago, there was a provision to take care of such a condition by compelling the distributor to stand by his old customer, as long as he was reputable, had a recent theatre, and paid satisfactory rentals. That provision was untelligible, just as were most of the provisions in the old contracts, which emanated from the Hays Association. The UMPI Committee, not having the time to work out a provision for the purpose of protecting old customers, lifted that provision out of the defunct Code bodily, and inserted it into the new plan. But it is assumed that it will be rewritten so as to make it intelligible to any exhibitor.

In view of the fact that RKO may reduce the number of its season's pictures to 30 and may find it inconvenient to sell them ten or twelve at a time, a special provision has been made to permit this company to offer to an exhibitor one-fourth of its annual output. The cancellation arrangement will have to be worked out at a later date so as to take care of the fractions.

It is evident that, in the number of pictures that are to be sold to the exhibitors before production, probably a synopsis of the story with the leads in the cast will be offered as a means of identification. It is known definitely that the Department of Justice, which has the interest of the public in mind, offers strenuous objections to any sales plan that will bring back the old blind-selling system.

The plan has already been approved by several regional units representing different exhibitor affiliations, and meetings for a vote have been scheduled by the other units.

At the time that the plan had been released to the trade press, it had not been submitted to the Department of Justice for approval. In all probability it will not be submitted until after a vote by every regional exhibitor association has been taken.

In talking to an exhibitor leader who had taken a prominent part in the negotiations, I learned that the concessions obtained are the greatest that could be exacted from the distributors. But this paper feels that, even though these may not be all that the independent exhibitors have hoped for, definite progress has been made. Under the new system, an exhibitor will reduce his buying from each company to four times, instead of ten, or almost that many; and in the case of the unproduced pictures that he will be offered for purchase, he will at least have some idea as to what kind of pictures he will be asked to buy.

* * *

COMMENTING ON THE NEW PLAN, Mo Wax, editor and publisher of *Film Bulletin*, has this to say partly:

"Off-hand, it is obvious that there are merits and demerits in this proposed system. We present no analysis at this time, but submit the plan with the recommendation that every exhibitor reader study it fully in relation to his business. The ultimate decision of whether it is accepted or rejected rests with you and your fellow exhibitors. If the scheme seems reasonable, support it. If you do not like it, let your local organization know—and loud!"

**"To the Shores of Tripoli" with
John Payne, Maureen O'Hara
and Randolph Scott**

(20th Century-Fox, April 10; time, 85 min.)

A fine picture, produced in technicolor. The direction and acting are of high standard. There is considerable human interest here and there. The action is fast enough to hold the interest all the way through. The background is fascinating because of the color. Some of the scenes are glamorous. For instance, the ball room scenes, where the Marines are dancing with women wearing gorgeous dresses. The story is simple, but a tone of patriotism pervades it. As to the title, it does not fit the picture very much. "The Spirit of the Marines," or some other title where the word "Marines" would be included would have been much better, because the picture deals with the making of a Marine. The picture was produced in San Diego, California, in the Marines' barracks, and Pearl Harbor. The romance is appealing:—

As Sergeant Randolph Scott was relating to the new recruits the part the Marines had played off the shores of Tripoli, Africa, on the night of August 3, he is interrupted by John Payne, who had come to join the Marines. He had a letter from his father, a retired Captain, for Scott, a lifelong friend. The letter pleads with Scott to try to make a man out of Payne. The night before he is inducted, Payne goes to a bar, but he cannot find a girl because of the competition offered by officers' uniforms, until Maureen O'Hara enters, looking for Major Russell Hicks, her uncle. While the bell boy was paging Hicks, Payne approaches her and pretends that Hicks had sent him to take care of her until his arrival. He eventually succeeds in persuading her to dance with him. She is drawn to him, because he is attractive. Scott puts Payne through the paces and treats him no better than he treated any other recruit. Payne, having been an officer at a military academy, knows a great deal and shows off. This, Scott resents. The next time Payne meets Maureen she is in a nurse's uniform, and learns that she was attached to the Marine hospital, and because he acted a little "fresh" he is told by Scott that he must treat her with the same deference as the rules required that he treat a second lieutenant, because that was her rank. Payne takes an interest in O. Z. Whitehead, a young man who hoped to pass the test and become a Marine. There is bad blood between Payne and Scott, particularly when Whitehead is rejected; Payne felt that Scott had been the cause of his failure because of the yelling he had done constantly at him. Maureen is resentful when she sees Payne's former sweetheart on the grounds making much fuss over him, and refuses to see him. Payne pretends injury and is sent to the hospital. But when Maureen finds out that he had not been injured she puts mustard plaster on his supposed injuries and, when the mustard begins to burn, he begs Maureen to take the plaster off. Payne strikes Scott in a fight over young Whitehead, but because Scott had told his superior officers that it was he who had struck Payne first, Payne goes to Hicks and tells him the truth, but is not believed. Payne is let free and Scott is demoted. During target practice, Scott, Payne and other Marines are sent to repair the targets. After returning to the ship, the Marines discover that Scott was missing and Payne, against the orders of the officers of the day, takes the motorboat, goes to the target where he had last seen Scott while the guns were shooting, finds him unconscious and carries him away. Payne uses his influence to obtain a clerical job in Washington. As he was leaving with his transfer papers, he hears over the radio about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, returns to his company, which was going to board a battleship at that moment, and pleads with Scott to take him back. On board the ship he finds Maureen, and is received by her with a glad heart.

The story is by Steve Fisher; the screen play, by Lamar Trotti. Milton Sperling produced it and Bruce Humberstone directed it.

Good for every member of the family.

**"Bullet Scars" with Regis Toomey,
Adele Longmire and Howard da Silva**

(Warner Bros., March 7; time, 59 min.)

An indifferent gangster melodrama. This is the sort of stuff that keeps movie fans away from the theater. The story is trite, and one guesses the twist each situation will take. The action is tiresome. There is a formula romance:—

Howard da Silva and his gang of gunmen commit a bank hold-up in which Michael Ames, one of his men, is badly wounded. Being particularly fond of Ames, da Silva drives him to the nearest doctor (Hobart Bosworth) and orders him, at gun's point, to operate. The doctor attempts to telephone the police and is shot dead. The gangsters then work

their way through a police net by hiding their car in a camouflaged hay truck and reach a mountain hideaway. Da Silva sends for Ames' sister, Adele Longmire; she is a trained nurse and administers first aid while da Silva seeks another doctor. Nearby, he finds Regis Toomey (Dr. Steven Bishop) who, after performing an emergency operation, starts to leave when he is detained by the mobsters as knowing too much. Miss Longmire and Toomey feel sympathy for each other. Fearing for her safety, Toomey does not take advantage of an opportunity to escape. Finally the bullet wounds prove fatal to Ames and da Silva prepares to take Miss Longmire and Toomey to a new hideout. Before leaving, however, one of the mobsters complains of illness and da Silva orders the doctor to prescribe a medicine. Seizing this opportunity, Toomey, writing in Latin, indicates his peril to the pharmacist. One of the gang is sent to town to fill the prescription and the druggist, noting the contents, notifies the police. The authorities arrive in time to save Miss Longmire and Toomey, who by this time are deeply in love. In the gun duel, da Silva and his gang are killed.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play and D. Ross Lederman directed it.

Unsuitable for children.

**"The Ghost of Frankenstein" with
Lon Chaney, Sir Cedric Hardwicke
and Bela Lugosi**

(Universal, March 6; time, 68 min.)

As entertainment, this horror melodrama should appeal to the followers of the Frankenstein series. Though the production values are good, the story is unpleasant and is, for the most part, repetitious of the first Frankenstein picture. Horror fans, however, will probably find it engrossing. The scenes lend the same eerie atmosphere associated with the series, while the Monster continues his acts of violence against the populace. The son of Frankenstein continues his father's experiments with the Monster. The photography is a treat to the eye:—

Believing that there is a curse upon them, the people of Frankenstein Village dynamite the Frankenstein Castle, so as to remove all traces of the dead Monster (Lon Chaney) and his mad friend Ygor (Bela Lugosi). Ygor survives the blasts, and finds the Monster among the debris alive, preserved by the sulphur in the pits into which Dr. Frankenstein's first son had thrown him. Having found the Monster's electrical-life fluid dissipated, Ygor decides to bring him to Dr. Ludwig Frankenstein (Sir Cedric Hardwicke), second son of Frankenstein, who has kept his parentage secret. Arriving at Vassaria, the Monster is attracted to a little girl. Though he does not harm her, the villagers attack him, and he kills two men. He is overpowered and jailed. Ygor threatens to expose Dr. Frankenstein unless he agrees to instill new life in the Monster. The Doctor refuses, but at the request of Erik Ernst (Ralph Bellamy), the prosecutor, he agrees to examine the Monster in Court. When the Monster sees the Doctor, he flies into a rage and escapes with Ygor. They come to the Doctor's sanitarium and, when a young interne recoils in fright, the Monster strangles him. Dr. Frankenstein renders the Monster unconscious through the use of gas, and plans to destroy him by dissection. Instead, he decides to replace the Monster's brain with that of the dead interne, so as to make his father's creation an instrument of good, rather than of evil. Ygor cunningly connives with Dr. Theodor Bohmer (Lionel Atwill), Frankenstein's jealous assistant, to use his brain instead of the interne's. The operation results in a Monster that speaks and thinks like Ygor, but is blind. When the Monster goes berserk in the Laboratory, Dr. Bohmer is electrocuted, fire razes the sanitarium, and Dr. Frankenstein and the Monster perish in the flames.

W. Scott Darling wrote the screen plan, Erle C. Kenton directed it, and George Waggner produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Sundown Jim" with John Kimbrough

(20th Century-Fox, March 27; 53 min.)

No different from the westerns that some independent concerns produce. The plot is according to the old established formula of the hero's dropping into town and taking the side of justice. This time he sees a man shot, and when he learns that it was the heroine's father he decides to stay in town to find the murderer. He fights it out with the gang of outlaws, and eventually triumphs—he drives the lawless element out of the town and restores law and order.

The plot has been founded on the Collier's novel by Ernest Haycox. Sol M. Wurtzel produced it and James Tinling directed it. In the supporting cast are Virginia Gilmore, Paul Hurst and others.

"The Remarkable Mr. Kipps" with an all-English cast

(20th Century-Fox, March 27; time, 86 min.)

This is not one of the better productions that have been imported from England. As a matter of fact, it is one of the poorer type. There is nothing remarkable about the story, even though it has been written by a famous author, H. G. Wells,—it is long drawn out; and the direction and acting are nothing to brag about. As to the photography, it is what it used to be in this country twenty-five years ago. The hero does not win the audience's sympathy because he is a vacillating character. Michael Redgrave, who takes the part, seems to have considerable ability. With an American director and a good story, he could be made a box-office asset in this country:—

For several years Michael Redgrave worked for a department store in London, starting as an errand boy while he was still young. At a culture center, where he had gone to improve his manners, he meets Diana Wynyard; she likes him but her mother would not even look at him because he lacked the manners of a gentleman. Suddenly he inherits a large fortune and Diana's family has no objection to his becoming engaged to Diana. Upon his return home for a visit, he meets Phyllis Calvert, sweetheart of his boyhood days, and renews their friendship. In London, he meets by chance Arthur Riscoe, an actor and playwright, and they become quite chummy. He invests some money in a play of his for production. Sometime later he again meets Phyllis and is so fascinated by her delicate charm that he kisses her. Shortly afterwards Phyllis learns that he was engaged to Diana and is furious. But he pursues her and assures her that he loves her and that he is willing to marry her. Shortly after they are married he learns that he had lost all his money when his solicitor, brother of Diana, absconds with it. But just as the two had been talking about their future, Riscoe calls on him and informs him that the play was a success, and that his share would make him rich. Soon his wife gives birth to a son and they are happy.

Sidney Gilliat wrote the screen play. Edward Black produced the picture, and Carol Reed directed it.

There is nothing objectionable in it morally.

"Rings on Her Fingers" with Henry Fonda and Gene Tierney

(20th Century-Fox, March 20; 85 min.)

Not so good, despite the hard work of both Henry Fonda and Gene Tierney. It is not so easy for any actress to win the spectator's sympathy with a part such as she plays in this picture. She joins two crooks to fleece wealthy people. Henry Fonda is one of their victims. The fact that, after the two had fallen in love with each other, she tries to return the money to him in some way without confessing to him the part she had played does not win her the audience's good will. One feels as if she ought to be more courageous and tell him the truth; she should risk losing his love rather than keep on trying to hold his love without a confession. The romance is fairly passionate:—

Gene Tierney, a shop girl in a Fifth Avenue department store, longs for the nice things in life. Spring Byington and Laird Cregar, two high-society sharpers, enter the department store to make purchases and, being struck of Gene's beauty, and seeing an opportunity to use her in their business, strike up an acquaintance. They make her a proposition, and she accepts it. They pass her for their daughter. At Palm Beach, Gene meets Henry Fonda, supposedly a young millionaire, seeking to buy a yacht. He meets Gene and falls for her, but he feels that she is out of his reach. Cregar uses Gene to lure Fonda into buying "his" yacht but when Fonda goes to take possession of it he finds that he had bought the "Brooklyn Bridge." The trio disappear. In New York they become acquainted with John Shepperd, a rich young man. Soon he falls for Gene hard. Cregar is panic-stricken when he sees Fonda visiting Shepperd, whom he knew, but he manages to conceal himself before his relationship with Gene and Miss Byington becomes known to Fonda. Fonda is glad to meet Gene again and he confesses his love for her and of the fact that he was not rich but merely a hard working man. Gene takes from her confederates the \$15,000 and elopes with Fonda. Because he will accept no money from his wife-to-be, Gene arranges with a friend who conducted a gambling establishment to let Fonda "win" that money in gambling. She then entices him into the place, where he wins it. Eventually Fonda comes upon Cregar, and learns all about Gene. But when he finds out that she was not their daughter, he takes her away and marries her.

The story is by Robert Pirosh and Joseph Schrank; the scenario, by Ken Englund. Milton Sterling produced it and Rouben Mamoulian directed it. (Not for children.)

"Kid Glove Killer"

(MGM, no release date set yet; time, 71 min.)

One of the most intelligently produced crime stories released for some time. It is so absorbing that one feels as if watching an actual solution of a crime. One is taken back of the scenes and is shown the different scientific methods employed in crime detection. In one scene, a spectroscope is used to determine a powder's ingredients so as to learn what factory had manufactured it, and, through that information, identify the person who had bought the powder used in the commission of the crime. A picture of strands of hair found on the scene of the crime is compared with the picture of strands of hair taken from suspects. The solution of the crime is logical:—

Questioned by Samuel Hinds, Mayor, about a large investment in an insurance company, Lee Bowman, special prosecutor who posed as an honest leading citizen but who really was in league with underworld characters, fearing exposure, plants a bomb under Hinds' car and, when Hinds enters it and steps on the starter, he is blown to pieces. Van Heflin, police department chemist, and Marsha Hunt, his assistant, reach the scene of the crime and collect fragments of the bomb and other articles with the hope of obtaining a clue to the identity of the murderer. Because he was an old friend of Heflin, Bowman is able to walk freely in and out of Heflin's workshop and thus keep tabs on what goes on. Heflin's efforts to get a clue are a failure until he stumbles upon a writing pad in Hinds' office and, by means of oblique rays, is able to read the impression left on the paper with the point of the pencil: he is shocked to find that the notation on the paper over it was about investigating Bowman on suspicion of grafting. By a clever method, Heflin is able to obtain strands of hair from Bowman's head without arousing his suspicion, and when he projects their picture on a screen he finds that they are the same as those found on the scene of the crime. Confronted with the evidence, Bowman, at the point of a gun, demands of Heflin the evidence, but he is overpowered and arrested.

The story is by John Higgins; the screen play, by Allen Rivkin and Mr. Higgins. Jack Chertok produced it, and Fred Zimmerman directed it.

"Who Is Hope Schuyler?" with Joseph Allen, Jr., Ricardo Cortez, Mary Howard and Sheila Ryan

(20th Century-Fox, April 17; time, 57 min.)

A program mystery melodrama, suitable for small towns and neighborhood theaters as part of a double bill. The performances lack conviction and the dialogue, more than the action, makes up the plot. The story follows the usual pattern of mystery stories, in which the one least suspected turns out to be the criminal. The romance is routine:—

Special Prosecutor Joseph Allen, Jr., finding his case against District Attorney Ricardo Cortez for malfeasance in office falling apart, asks the court for a forty-eight hour continuance of the trial, so as to produce Hope Schuyler, a key witness, presumably the link between Cortez and the city's gambling element. He is assisted by Mary Howard, his fiancée and daughter of his political sponsor; also by Sheila Ryan, a reporter, who uncovers some dealings that Cortez had had with a man named Guerny, manager of an airport. Guerny admits to Allen that he had rented a plane to a woman known as Hope Schuyler, but insists that he could not describe her because of a disguise she wore. Guerny is afterwards found dead besides his burning hangar, for giving this information. Allen's trouble is that Hope Schuyler was almost a mythical woman since no one had ever seen her: She might be Cortez's secretary, Janis Carter, or Rose Hobart, his wife, or even Joan Valerie, wife of Guerny, who all had been intimate with Cortez. When examines the body and finds nearby a book of matches with the name Cedarville,—a town 100 miles from the city. Hoping to find "Hope Schuyler," he goes there with Mary and Sheila and discovers that Cortez owned a lodge outside the town. When they reach the lodge, they find Guerny's wife about to shoot Miss Carter who is inside. Allen prevents the shooting and while questioning them Cortez arrives. They exchange pleasantries and Allen, pouring kerosene on the logs in the fireplace, sets fire to them with Mary's lighter, and throws the lighter in. He turns on Mary and charges her with the murder of Guerny and with being the Hope Schuyler. He produces another of her lighters, which he had found melted at the hangar fire. Mary draws a gun and, motioning Cortez to her side, starts to escape. But she is shot dead by Cortez's wife, who has been outside the lodge during these revelations. Allen wins his case.

Arnaud d'Usseau wrote the screenplay, from a novel by Stephen Ransome. Thomas Z. Loring directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it.

"Secret Agent of Japan" with Preston Foster and Lynn Bari

(20th Century-Fox, April 3; time, 67 min.)

An engrossing espionage melodrama that is timely. The story values are good, and competent direction and excellent performances help maintain the interest throughout. The situations are full of surprise, and hold one in suspense. The role portrayed by Preston Foster is colorful, though somewhat unpleasant, yet he wins one's sympathy by some of his acts. A tense and exciting scene is the liberation of Miss Bari and of Foster by a squadron of Chinese soldiers, who, though part of the Japanese Army, are secret agents of free China:—

Lynn Bari, a British spy, enters the Dixie Cafe, a Shanghai gambling house and spy rendezvous, operated by Preston Foster, and asks the bartender for a letter addressed to a Captain Larsen. He refers her to Foster, but he refuses her request. While in confidence with Noel Madison, a Japanese spy, who is anxious to buy the cafe, Miss Bari interrupts and during the conversation steals the letter. When Foster misses it he follows her to her hotel where he discovers it. He opens it and finds that it contained only an address. She tells him that she was trying to make a secret deal for a shipment of jade, and for a cut of \$20,000 he agrees to help her by substituting her address for the one in the envelope. When Foster learns that his partner, Frank Puglia, has been arrested by the Japanese agents, he hurries to their headquarters to find that Puglia has been tortured to death by Madison. The Japs try to detain Foster, but he manages to escape. He returns to his cafe where he finds the Japs in control, his safe robbed, and the body of Janis Carter in the closet. He notices that Miss Carter was wearing earrings that were similar to those worn by Miss Bari. Meanwhile Captain Larsen calls for his letter and Foster gives him the substitute. He returns to Miss Bari's hotel and sees Madison leaving her room. He tells her of Miss Carter's death and accuses her and the dead woman of being secret agents of Japan and in league with Madison. When Captain Larsen knocks on the door and hands Miss Bari a note in code, Foster hides, then hijacks the note. To get it back, Miss Bari reveals that she is a British spy and that her organization knows that the Japs are up to something. This note, she feels, may be the key. She appeals to his Americanism, but he claims his country, having branded him a criminal falsely, he owes it nothing. He tells her he will sell the note to the highest bidder of any country. He hides the note and, when he goes to Madison for an offer, the Japs seize him with the intention of taking the letter by torture. Miss Bari saves him this ordeal by effecting a rescue with the aid of two male British agents, but with the intention of taking the letter away from him. He escapes them and seeks refuge in the home of Steve Gary, an old friend. Miss Bari follows him and, when they are both together, Gary reveals that he is a German agent, working with Madison. Under threat of torturing Miss Bari, he forces Foster to produce the note. The note discloses that the attack on Pearl Harbor has been set in motion, and the message is part of an alarm for Japanese fifth columnists everywhere. Foster makes his escape and goes to the U. S. authorities to warn them of the impending attack, when a platoon of Japanese soldiers marches in and informs them that the attack has been accomplished and that they are under arrest. Miss Bari and Foster are ordered executed and are brought to a hidden airfield by the squadron of soldiers who reveal themselves as secret agents of free China. They help them escape.

John Larkin wrote the original screenplay, Irving Pichel directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Man with Two Lives" with Edward Norris and Eleanor Lawson

(Monogram, March 13; time, 65 min.)

A fair but somewhat harrowing program melodrama. It deals with the transmigration of the soul of a criminal to the body of an honest young man, causing him to become a murderous character. As a story, it seems implausible, but one feels somewhat differently when it turns out to be a dream. There is too much dialogue, and this slows up the action in spots; yet it manages to maintain the interest fairly well. The picture should be seen from the beginning; otherwise one may find it difficult to understand it. The romance is of no importance:—

When Edward Norris, returning from the home of his fiancée, Eleanor Lawson, is apparently killed in an automobile accident, his father, Frederick Burton, a well known banker, pleads with Edward Keane (Dr. Clarke) to bring him back to life. Keane had been able to perform this feat with animals. During the operation, Norris regains life at

the precise moment that Panino, a vicious criminal, is electrocuted. When he recovers, Norris fails to recognize anyone. He becomes surly and, instinctively, seeks out the haunts of Panino. Without revealing his identity, Norris assumes the leadership of Panino's gang by shooting one of its members. A crime wave breaks out in the city and many killings take place. Worried by his attitude and continued absence, Norris' father and the Doctor follow him to the gang's hangout, where both are recognized by one of the gang. They question this gangster regarding Norris and reveal that he is Burton's son. Norris learns of this and murders those members of the gang who had found out his identity, not realizing that a brother of one of the murdered gangsters also knows his secret. This man exposes Norris to the police and tells them of a robbery the gang is about to commit. The police capture the gang, but Norris escapes and returns home. There, he kills a detective who had followed him, but is in turn killed by the doctor. A transition to the hospital finds Norris coming out of a coma in which he dreamt these adventures.

The original story and screen play was written by Joseph Hoffman. Phil Rosen directed it, and A. W. Hackel produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Canal Zone" with Chester Morris, John Hubbard and Harriet Hilliard

(Columbia, March 19; time, 78 min.)

Although the plot is routine and develops in an obvious manner, good performances and fast action makes this picture a fairly good entertainment. The subject is timely, in that it deals with the training of pilots for the ferrying of Army bomber planes. The scenes that depict the method of coordination between the pilot and the air base at a time when the plane is in distress, hold one in tense suspense. Stock shots of planes doing combat flying and diving, have been inserted; they add realism. The romance, though pleasant, is not important:—

At Ginger Bar, a relay air base located on the outskirts of the Canal Zone, Chester Morris, training officer, is instructing pilots how to fly Army bombers from the United States to Africa. John Hubbard, a vain, reckless society playboy, nevertheless, a qualified flyer, reports to Ginger Bar in his private plane. Before landing, he executes some flying stunts and narrowly misses a headlong crash with Morris, who, at that time, was test diving. His recklessness incurs Morris' wrath; consequently, he is grounded. Hubbard, in his determination to fly a bomber, takes his "medicine," but he is eventually reinstated. He further antagonizes Morris by being attentive to Harriet Hilliard, the commander's daughter, with whom Morris is in love. In keeping a date with Hubbard, Miss Hilliard discovers that he is breaking training rules and she demands to be taken home. He does so, and then proceeds to Panama City from where he returns, in the early hours, in a drunken stupor. At combat flying the following day, he is in so poor a physical condition, that he hits another plane in mid-air, killing the pilot. Remorseful, he takes to drink to drown his sorrow. Miss Hilliard talks to him kindly and induces him to resume training. While leading a squadron of bombers to Africa, Morris encounters bad weather and crashes in the jungle. The other planes are ordered to return to the base. Seeing Miss Hilliard distressed, Hubbard, ignoring the commander's orders, flies his plane to the jungle and effects the rescue of Morris and his co-pilot. Hubbard leaves with the bomber squadron for Africa and presents Miss Hilliard and Morris with his private plane as a wedding gift.

Robert L. Johnson wrote the screen play, Lew Landers directed it and Colbert Clark produced it. In the cast are Stanley Andrew, Forrest Tucker and Eddie Laughton.

"Lone Star Ranger" with John Kimbrough

(20th Century-Fox, March 20; 54 min.)

This is another picture of the Kimbrough series of westerns, a little better than "Sundown Jim," reviewed elsewhere in this issue, but not much better. Even though it deals with the Texas Rangers, the action is more or less stereotype.

This time Kimbrough is deputized by William Farnum, head of the Rangers, and sent to wipe out a band of cattle rustlers who had been terrorizing an entire county. He succeeds, in spite of the fact that the lawless element was aided and abetted by the sheriff.

The story is by Zane Grey; the screen play, by William Conselman, Jr., Irving Cummings, Jr., and George Kane. Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and James Tiling directed it. Sheila Ryan, George E. Stone, Russell Simpson, Fred Kohler, Jr., and others are in the cast.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
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1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1942

No. 12

TOO MANY CAPTAINS MAY SINK THE SHIP!

The twelve picture sales plan that has been worked out by the UMPI Committee does not seem to be faring so well. Some exhibitor units have approved it, some have rejected it, and some have offered counter plans.

New Jersey Allied has submitted the following counter-proposals:

1. Sales to be made quarterly.
2. All pictures to be identified by star, director, synopsis. In the event that two or more of the identifying factors are changed, the picture should be considered as a substitution and thus eliminated at the exhibitor's option.
3. A twenty per cent cancellation based on the total amount of money paid.
4. In computing the total amount in a group that includes also percentage pictures, the value of the percentage pictures of each class should be determined by the average rental paid on the previous four percentage pictures of the same company.

New England Allied, too, has rejected the plan and has proposed a counter plan, which may be summarized as follows:

1. Pictures to be sold after trade showing, each block to consist of no more than five pictures. An additional block, not to exceed twenty-five per cent of the company's feature product, may be offered, provided it can be reasonably identified. But the purchase of the one block shall not be contingent upon the purchase of the other.
2. Every exhibitor to have the right to cancel one picture out of each block regardless of the price he agrees to pay.
3. The price for each picture to be put into the contract at the time he signs it, and the distributor shall not be permitted to reallocate any of them.

The Michigan Allied wants pictures sold in blocks of twenty or twenty-four pictures, sold semi-annually.

The MPTOA units and the Pacific Coast Conference have rejected the plan.

I asked Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association, to write something for the benefit of the subscribers of this paper so as to clarify the situation and he has sent me the following letter:

"Dear Pete:

"The two attempts to secure an expression by mail on a substitute for the blocks-of-five plan demonstrates the futility of this procedure in complicated matters. At the January meeting, three selling methods were proposed, and it was decided to take a preferential poll by mail.

"Although speed was requested, the cards are still straggling in.

"The vote on two of the proposals (for a 20% elimination by pictures and a 20% elimination by value) was very close. Quite a few favored the proposal for identification and selection, which resembled the Neely Bill.

"Some wrote in that they favored the Neely Bill; some spoke up for blocks of five; one unit submitted a plan of its own which, having been already approved by the organization, received quite naturally a majority of votes in that territory.

"When the UMPI proposal came along, I decided, with the advice of the Allied Committee, to submit it to the units by mail. Each regional gathering thereupon constituted itself a UMPI meeting to work out a plan of its own. Six have approved the UMPI plan with reservations, counter proposals or, at least, expressions of dissatisfaction. Three have

rejected the plan and have submitted substitutes, suggestions or reservations. In the circumstances, the Allied committee could not be expected to take the responsibility of either approving the UMPI plan, or of sponsoring any of the counter-proposals. On motion of the New England association, backed by nine other units, it was decided to hold a special meeting of the board in New York on March 24 to try to work out a compromise.

"The drafting of a single sales method for all types of theatres is a difficult task and those who attempt it are entitled to the sympathy of all concerned. Exhibitors with closed situations want widest selectivity; many of them profess to be satisfied with blocks of five. Small town operators in the rural districts care nothing for trade showings and want to license a lot of pictures at a time; they cannot make frequent trips to the exchange centers. Exhibitors in highly competitive situations like to tie up as much product as possible to keep it from their competitors.

"These are generalizations and the pattern is not consistent. Each exhibitor has his personal slant on the subject, and unless a breadth of view should be manifested it is possible that the exhibitors who have worked so hard in UMPI will decline to take the responsibility for developing a new selling system, thus leaving the distributors free to continue the blocks-of-five.

"I initiated this movement in the belief, based on much evidence, that there was deep-seated opposition in exhibitor ranks to the selling method prescribed by the Consent Decree. Allied has sponsored no particular substitute for that method. It has only sought to develop a plan that would suit the majority of the exhibitors. If Allied were the only interest to be considered, we might count noses and call it a day. But there are others who have a finger in the pie: the other exhibitor groups, the distributors and the Department of Justice.

"I still think that it will be possible to work out an improvement on the blocks-of-five. But to do this, those who bear the burden must have the support of the organized groups, together with some tolerance in the appraisal of whatever plan they develop.

"It has been suggested to me that perhaps opposition to the blocks-of-five has died down in some quarters. If so, those who have changed their minds will confer a favor upon all concerned by frankly acknowledging the fact."

"Sincerely

"Abram F. Myers."

Those who will read this letter cannot help forming the opinion that it is a sober statement of facts, and that Mr. Myers goes deep into the problem.

It seems to this writer that, unless each class of exhibitors is willing to consider the interests of the other classes, a real plan cannot be adopted. Each class must give if it wishes to take.

Without desiring to slight the exhibitor organizations that are not affiliated with the Allied States Association, I may say that Allied is a more coherent group and represents by far the greatest number of independent exhibitors. For this reason, I suggest that the other organizations let Allied use its best judgment in approving the final sales plan. Since the interests of the members of the Allied association are no different from the interests of the members of other organized exhibitor groups, they should rest assured that the greatest protection will be offered to their interests.

There are too many captains at present. Let there be only one captain. Otherwise the ship may sink.

"The Great Man's Lady" with Barbara Stanwyck and Joel McCrea

(Paramount, no release date; time, 88½ min.)

Although it is a big picture so far as physical production values and length are concerned, it is not a big entertainment, by reason of the fact that the hero takes a very unsympathetic part. A situation here and there directs a powerful appeal, but such an appeal ends when the action changes to some other event. One of such situations is where the hero and the heroine, once husband and wife, meet after a lapse of many years; one can hardly restrain his emotions. The action is "choppy" in several places because the lapse of time is not indicated clearly, and because the continuity is faulty. The fact that the story is told in flashback is another blemish. Nothing is gained by showing the end of the story first and then going back to the days when the heroine and the hero were young, occasionally injecting the heroine again, showing her relating the story of her life. Miss Stanwyck does her best work in her makeup as an old woman; in the opening scenes, where she is supposed to be sixteen, she is not so convincing. The action starts in Philadelphia, in 1848, and shifts west, lasting several years. The picture, not being glamorous, should appeal chiefly to elderly people, particularly to elderly women. The stars should help to draw the younger folk:—

Joel McCrea meets Barbara Stanwyck while calling on her father on business, and becomes so attracted by her beauty that he carries her away and marries her. He then takes her west, to the town (Hoyt Town) his father had founded. He dreamed of making a big city out of it some day. Things go so bad with them that Miss Stanwyck agrees to follow him to California to dig for gold. McCrea feels joyful at her decision and goes to Donlevy's saloon and gambling establishment to celebrate. There he gambles and loses, not only his last dollar, but all his cattle. When Miss Stanwyck sees their cattle taken away, she calls on Donlevy and, at the point of a gun, demands everything back. Donlevy offers to cut the cards with her, his reward to be a kiss in case he lost. She wins everything back. Eight years afterwards the three find themselves in Sacramento. Later Miss Stanwyck conducts a boarding house, while McCrea is in Virginia City looking for gold. He returns despondent. Noticing a curious-looking mud on his boots, he scrapes out a sample and takes it to an assayer and is told that it was ore, containing five thousand dollars per ton. She borrows some money from Donlevy and, handing it to her husband, bids him return to Virginia City so as to stake as many claims as he could. Suspecting infidelity on her part, McCrea goes away angry. Soon he becomes rich. During a flood in Sacramento, Donlevy puts Miss Stanwyck on the stage coach that was leaving for Virginia City. The bridge over which the stage coach was crossing collapses and Miss Stanwyck struggles in the water with her twin baby girls. The babies drown but she saves herself and returns to San Francisco. Donlevy, believing that she, too, had drowned, goes to Virginia City to tell McCrea of her death and is rewarded with six bullet holes in his body. Sometime later Donlevy reaches San Francisco looking like a ghost. He comes upon Miss Stanwyck and is shocked. He opens a gambling place and Miss Stanwyck handles the roulette wheel for him. Her father comes upon her and is shocked. He informs her that McCrea had married again, that he had children, and that he was running for Congress, and pleads with her not to create a scandal. She orders her father away, goes to Virginia City, meets McCrea and assures him that she would not create a scandal. She pleads with him to fight for the interests of the people. Years later McCrea returns to her humble home to die.

The story is told by Miss Stanwyck to Katherine Stevens, a biographer, who had attended the unveiling of McCrea's statue in honor of his greatness. Reporters had forced their way into her house to interview them, but she sends every one of them away except Miss Stevens, whom Miss Stanwyck had pitied. Miss Stevens, after hearing her story, tells her that the statue should have been erected for her and not for McCrea.

The story is by Adele St. John; the screen play, by W. L. River. William Wellman produced and directed it.

Suitable for the family.

"This Gun for Hire" with Veronica Lake, Robert Preston and Alan Ladd

(Paramount, no release date; time, 79 min.)

This melodrama, which centers around fifth columnists activities, is not cheerful entertainment, nor is the story exceptional. But it has been produced with such care that it grips one's interest. The performances of Veronica Lake

and Alan Ladd are exceptionally fine. The role portrayed by Ladd is harrowing; he commits many murders:—

Alan Ladd, a murderous criminal, is hired by Laird Cregar, contact man for Tully Marshall, wealthy head of a chemical concern and fifth columnist, to murder Frank Ferguson to obtain secret documents from him. Cregar pays him one thousand dollars in ten dollar marked bills. He then reports a fake holdup to Police Lieutenant Robert Preston in the hope that Ladd would be caught passing a bill. Cregar, who also owned a night club, engages Veronica Lake, an entertainer and sweetheart of Preston, a detective, to perform. Miss Lake is taken to a U. S. Senator investigating saboteurs and she agrees to work for the cause to watch Cregar, whom the Senator suspects. When Ladd spends a ten-dollar bill, the serial number is recognized by the shopkeeper, who notifies the police. Ladd evades them and, angered, sets out to kill Cregar. He follows him to a railroad station and also boards the train. There, he meets Miss Lake, who is on her way to Los Angeles, to assume her night club job. Cregar sees them both on the train and wires ahead to the police. Forcing Miss Lake to help him, Ladd escapes. Cregar, suspicious of Miss Lake, invites her to his home and plans to kill her, but arranges for his chauffeur to do the killing. Ladd, hovering outside the house, learns of this and rescues Miss Lake. He accompanies her to the night club hoping to find Cregar. Warned by his chauffeur that Ladd was on the way, Cregar, with the aid of Preston, prepares to capture him. By using Miss Lake as a shield, Ladd escapes once more. Cornered in a railroad yard, each reveals to the other his reasons for wanting to catch Cregar. On his promise that he will commit no violence, but will uncover the fifth columnists, Miss Lake agrees to act as a decoy so that Ladd may make his escape. The ruse fools the police and Ladd makes his way to the offices of the fifth columnists, and kills them. But he, in turn, is killed by Preston, who had followed him.

Albert Maltz and W. R. Burnett wrote the screen play, Frank Tuttle directed it, and Richard M. Blumenthal produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"The Tuttles of Tahiti" with Charles Laughton and Jon Hall

(RKO, April 17; time, 91 min.)

Very good entertainment. Although the locale is the South Seas, it is not a typical "sarong type" love picture. The story deals with the fortunes and misfortunes of the Tuttles, a poor but happy-go-lucky big family. The human interest is plentiful and some of the situations provoke considerable laughter. Charles Laughton, as the blundering and bewildered head of the family, turns in an excellent performance. His characterization is pleasant, and one is sympathetic toward his aims. Skillful treatment of the story helps maintain the interest. A pleasant romance takes place:—

When Chester Tuttle (Jon Hall), returns to Tahiti, he brings home with him a game-cock, which brings joy to the Tuttles, a huge and eccentric family, confirmed gamblers. Jonas Tuttle (Charles Laughton), head of the family, immediately arranges a match with a bird belonging to Emily (Florence Bates), a wealthy neighbor. He bets everything, including the furniture and the vanilla crop, plus whatever money he can raise from the sale of fish. Needing gas for his fishing boat, Jonas borrows money from genial Dr. Blondin (Victor Francen), a friend of the family, to whom Jonas already owes a considerable debt. Jonas is obliged to give the doctor a mortgage on his property, which he assigns to Jensen (Curt Bois), an unscrupulous trader. When the cock fight takes place, the Tuttle bird is defeated and they forfeit most of their possessions. Realizing their predicament, Dr. Blondin advances the Tuttles enough money to buy gas for their fishing boat in the hope that they will earn enough money to pay off the mortgage. During a fishing trip, Chester and his brothers run out of gas just as a storm comes up and are given up as lost when not heard from for a week. While drifting, the boys find a huge ship, abandoned during the storm, and with gas found aboard they start their fishing boat and tow the ship to port. The salvage money makes the Tuttles wealthy. Being spend-thrifts, they use the money lavishly for new furniture and Chester's marriage to Tamara (Peggy Drake), Emily's daughter. Soon all they have left is the money to pay the mortgage which Jonas carelessly hid in a catalogue. The creditors remove the unpaid furniture and in the confusion, the catalogue is lost. They recover it just as they face eviction and pay the mortgage. Once again, Dr. Blondin advances money to Jonas for gas.

S. Lewis Meltzer and Robert Carson wrote the screen play, Charles Vidor directed it, and Sol Lesser produced it. Suitable for all the family.

"Fingers at the Window" with Lew Ayres, Laraine Day and Basil Rathbone

(MGM, release date not set; time, 80 min.)

Mystery picture lovers will find this murder-melodrama fairly entertaining. Dealing with an epidemic of axe murders, the story, though far-fetched, contains a novel twist in that the murders are committed by lunatics who are under hypnotic influence. Although the villain's identity is sensed by the audience, tense situations hold one in suspense. Combining melodrama and mild comedy, the picture maintains the interest to a fair degree. The romance is pleasant:—

Six persons are murdered in Chicago with axes and in each case the murderer, when caught, proves to be a lunatic. When Lew Ayres, an unemployed actor, sees Laraine Day, a dancer, being followed on the street, he escorts her home. Fearing for her safety, he hides in her apartment and overpowers a man coming through the window with an axe in hand. He finds him a lunatic. Ayres concludes that a "master mind" is behind the murders, but the police scorn the idea. When a twenty-five thousand dollar reward is offered by a newspaper for a solution to the mystery, Ayres resolves to win it. Following up a clue, Ayres and Laraine are led to Dr. Santelle (Basil Rathbone), a prominent psychiatrist, who evades them by having an assistant impersonate him. He follows them to the elevated railway and pushes Ayres in front of an approaching train. But Ayres hangs between the ties and falls to the street. He is taken to the hospital slightly injured. Meanwhile, the police form the opinion that Ayres himself might be the "master mind." Santelle, posing as an interne, comes to Ayres' bedside to inject a sedative, but instead gives him enough insulin to kill him. Seen by Laraine as he leaves, she recognizes him as Caesar, her former sweetheart in Paris. A nurse informs her that he is Dr. Santelle and, suspicious, she follows him. Saved by the quick action of an interne, Ayres recovers and learns that Laraine has followed Santelle. He telephones the police, then leaves the hospital for Santelle's home. The police, fearing that Ayres, whom they still believe is the "master mind," will harm Santelle, rush to aid the doctor. Meanwhile Santelle, noticing that Laraine is following him, forces her into his home and threatens to kill her. He reveals to her that he had come to Chicago and assumed the identity of a deceased Dr. Santelle, a Paris psychiatrist, whose inheritance he had collected. Fearing possible exposure from seven persons who had known him as Caesar in Paris, he had hypnotized the lunatics into committing the murders. When Ayres arrives, he finds the police already there to protect Santelle and is arrested. A slip of paper dropped by the fake doctor gives him away and he is killed in an attempted escape. Laraine and Ayres collect the reward.

Rose Caylor and Lawrence P. Bachmann wrote the screen play, Charles Lederer directed it, and Irving Starr produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Henry and Dizzy" with Jimmy Lydon, Mary Anderson and Charles Smith

(Paramount, no release date; 69 min.)

The value of this series to a picture theatre lies in the fact that the Aldrich family doings are presented over the radio, for the story of "Henry and Dizzy" is mostly childish. Only in one situation is there an appeal to the emotions of sympathy; it is where Henry Aldrich sadly relates to Dizzy Stevens the predicament he is in, his sorrow because fathers do not understand their children. Old man Aldrich was overhearing their conversation, and when Dizzy leaves he approaches his son and confesses to him that perhaps he had not given him the attention he deserved, asks him about his troubles, and promising him to stand by him to the end. Mary Anderson, though a good actress, and a beautiful one, has passed the stage when she could take the part of a sixteen or seventeen year old girl:—

While entertaining some girls and his friend Dizzy Stevens in a motorboat, Henry Aldrich wrecks the boat and is compelled by the owner to write a confession to the effect that he had stolen the boat. He is then threatened with prosecution for stealing unless he produced by a certain date either another boat or one hundred and twenty dollars. Fearing reprimand, he does not disclose his predicament to his father (John Litel). From then on he tries to obtain the money to pay off the owner of the motorboat. This leads him to many complications, many of which annoy his father. But in the end, his father stands by him. At a picnic, he and his father win the father-and-son race, with a motorboat as the prize; and the father, a lawyer, offers a reasonable settlement to the boat owner.

Val Burton wrote the screen play, Sol C. Siegel directed it, and Hugh Bennett produced it.

"True to the Army" with Judy Canova, Allan Jones, Ann Miller and Jerry Colonna

(Paramount, no release date; time, 75 min.)

A combination of slapstick, music, and Ann Miller's graceful tap dancing, makes this picture a fairly entertaining comedy. With an Army camp as a background, the leading players are given ample opportunity to display their individual talents. The story is of no consequence:—

When Judy Canova, a tight-wire performer, observes the murder of the circus boss, the Drake gang attempts to kill her, too. She evades them and seeks refuge with Jerry Colonna, her soldier sweetheart at Fort Bragg. Arriving at the camp, she mingles with a group of soldiers, dressed as one of the chorus girls, who were rehearsing for a show organized by Allan Jones, a former Broadway producer, now a buck private. Believing her to be one of the soldiers, Jones includes her in the show. Colonna, facing prison if caught harboring a woman, reveals Judy's predicament to Jones. Fearing the gang may kill her, they cut her hair and give her a uniform. At rifle practice, Judy scores top honors for marksmanship. Meanwhile, the gang learns of Judy's whereabouts when they see her picture in the newspapers in connection with publicity given to the show. When Jones learns that the gang planned to attend the show, he notifies the police. The night of the show Judy, realizing her danger, does a dance routine with a rifle and manages to shoot the gangsters as they aim at her.

Art Arthur and Bradford Ropes wrote the screen play, Al Rogell directed it, and Sol C. Siegel produced it.

Suitable for all the family.

"Black Dragons" with Bela Lugosi

(Monogram, March 6; time, 63 min.)

This espionage drama is best suited for small towns and neighborhood theatres, where the patrons are not too exacting in their demands for story values. The producer has taken a timely subject and turned it into a fantastic plot. It is difficult to believe that Japanese could be transformed into Americans. Intelligent audiences will hardly find it acceptable:—

Bela Lugosi comes to the home of George Pembroke, prominent Washington physician, leader of a group of American industrialists planning to sabotage the country's defense efforts. Pembroke had been entertaining them at dinner. Lugosi places the doctor under an hypnotic spell and induces him to ask his guests to leave. He then orders the butler to prepare a room for Lugosi. Moving in a mysterious manner, Lugosi kills the industrialists one by one, each time leaving the body on the steps of the Japanese Embassy with a dagger in one hand. Clayton Moore, an FBI man, learning that one of the murdered men had attended a dinner party at the doctor's home, goes there and meets Joan Barclay, the doctor's niece, who had just returned after an absence of ten years. He meets also Lugosi, who poses as Mr. Colomb, a house guest. Questioning the butler, Moore learns the names of those present at the party and notes that Robert Frazer, a New York banker, is the only person left of the group that had not been murdered. He induces Frazer to visit the Pembroke home in the hopes that the killer might make an attempt on his life. The FBI men are distracted by a commotion upstairs and, when Frazer is left unguarded, Lugosi strangles him. But Frazer manages to shoot Lugosi before dying. The FBI men return to the room with Pembroke, a horribly disfigured man, and learn from him that Lugosi, a plastic surgeon, had been sent to Japan by the Nazis to transform six Japanese into the identical likenesses of six prominent American industrialists. After performing the transformation, he was thrown into jail so that the secret would die with him. Lugosi had engineered his escape by transforming himself into the likeness of a prisoner who was about to be released. He made his way to this country for the purpose of exterminating the six Japanese, who had succeeded in assuming the positions of the industrialists. Pembroke reveals that he, too, is a transformed Japanese.

Harvey H. Gates wrote the story and screen play, William Nigh directed it, and Sam Katzman produced it.

It may prove frightful to children.

It is with deep sadness that I announce the demise of Sylvia Miller (Mrs. Louis Brooks), my faithful and able secretary for twelve years. Her kind, genial character won for her a host of friends in the industry. We shall miss her greatly.

"Rio Rita" with Bud Abbott and Lou Costello

(MGM, release date not set; time, 90 min.)

A moderately entertaining slapstick comedy, with music. Except for some of the songs, there is no resemblance to the 1929 version of RKO, either in the story, or production values. The plot is silly and merely serves as a background for Abbott and Costello's buffoonery. The music is good. Kathryn Grayson has an exceptionally fine voice and her singing is pleasing to the ear. The popularity of Abbott and Costello, who continue their familiar antics, will probably put the picture across. There is some romance:—

Abbott and Costello, two unemployed vaudevillians, arrive at the hotel Vista del Rio as stowaways in the rumble seat of John Carroll's car. Carroll, a radio singer, is greeted by Tom Conway the hotel manager, head of a secret gang of Nazi spies. Conway plans to insert a code message to other Nazi agents, in a broadcast to be made by Carroll that evening. When Abbott and Costello are chased from the premises, Kathryn Grayson, owner of the hotel and a childhood sweetheart of Carroll, feels sorry for them and employs them as house detectives. While both are having a drinking bout in Conway's office, Barry Nelson, a radio announcer, enters the office and reveals to them that Conway is a Nazi spy, and that he is searching for the spies' code book. They help him search and, just as they find the book, Conway and his gang break into the office. In the ensuing gun fight, Nelson is killed. Abbott and Costello escape with the book and bring it to Carroll. When Carroll informs Miss Grayson of the impending danger, she sends Costello to summon the Border Patrol, but both he and Abbott are caught by one of the spies, who leaves them, securely tied, in a room with a time bomb. Costello, however, manages to slip the bomb into the spy's pocket before he leaves. Subsequently, they set themselves free. Meanwhile, Conway and his gang force Carroll and Miss Grayson to begin the broadcast. Conway starts a fight with the spies, who, as they make their escape in a car, are blown to bits by the exploding time bomb.

Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman wrote the screenplay, S. Sylvan Simon directed it, and Pandro S. Berman produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Bashful Bachelor" with Lum and Abner

(RKO, March 20; time, 75½ min.)

Instead of entertaining one, this picture annoys. Produced as a comedy, the best it provokes is a few grins. The story is so silly that it is doubtful if the average "movie-goer" will have the patience to see it through. It is the sort of material that is best suited for daily radio serial broadcasts, when the listener could turn it off at will, but not for theatres, where the audiences cannot shut off the picture. Intelligent audiences will find the action boresome:—

Lum is annoyed with Abner, his partner in a general store, because Abner has traded their delivery car for a horse named Skyrocket. To make amends, he compels Abner to be a stooge for a daring "rescue" which, he hopes, will make him a hero in the eyes of Geraldine (Zazu Pitts), whom he had been bashfully courting for ten years. They are nearly killed by a train in the attempt. They try again, and this time Lum saves Abner from being kidnapped by two desperadoes and faints when he is told that the desperadoes he had fought were the real thing and not the hoboes he had hired for the job. Geraldine is deeply impressed and Lum, still bashful, gives Abner a written proposal to deliver to her. But by mistake Abner gives the note to the "Widder" Abernathy (Constance Purdy), who for long had designs on Lum. Backed by her scheming lawyer, Squire Skimp (Oscar O'Shea), the "Widder" insists that Lum go through with the marriage. Lum, peeved at Abner for his blunder, dissolves the partnership, but they soon join forces again to bet their store on Skyrocket against the Squire's horse in the big race at the County Fair. On the day of the race the Squire manages to get Skyrocket's jockey out of the way and has Abner thrown in jail on a horse-stealing charge, hoping to win the race by default. But Lum frees Abner by a ruse and gets him to the track just in time to ride Skyrocket to victory. They win the bet, but Lum is downcast at the prospect of marrying the determined "Widder." At the marriage ceremony, the Sheriff appears with the Widder's supposedly dead husband, and Lum is free again to continue the courtship of Geraldine.

Chandler Sprague wrote the screenplay, Malcolm St. Clair directed it, and Jack William Votion produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Scattergood Rides High" with Guy Kibbee

(RKO, April 24; time, 66 min.)

This is the fourth of the "Scattergood Baines" series and, at best, is ordinary program fare. Guy Kibbee continues his role as the kindly benefactor of the underdog. It is strictly homespun stuff, and its appeal is directed to the family trade in small towns and neighborhood theatres. The action is sluggish, and the outcome obvious. There is a juvenile romance:—

Guy Kibbee, saddened at the death of Charles Lind's father during a horse trotting race, offers the boy a job and tries to induce him to forget his passion for horses and concentrate on an education. The heavily mortgaged farm inherited by Charles is put up at auction and is bought by wealthy Jed Prouty at the insistence of his socially climbing wife, who wants to start a racing stable. Included in the deal is Starlight, a fine young trotter, with whom Charles cannot bear to part, even though Dorothy Moore, Prouty's daughter, promises to take good care of him. Charles privately makes a deal with Prouty to buy back the horse, and works like a demon to earn the money. When he sees Kenneth Howell, a house guest at the Prouty home, mistreat Starlight, Charles decides to steal the horse to save him from further harm, but he is caught and jailed. Kibbee, learning the truth, gets him out of jail, advances money to complete the purchase of the horse, and tricks Prouty's wife into promising to sell the farm back to Charles. Kenneth, jealous of the attentions shown Charles by Dorothy, persuades his wealthy mother to enter her prize trotter in the forthcoming handicap so as to defeat Starlight, which Charles had already entered. Charles blocks Kenneth's dirty tactics, wins the race and receives a five thousand dollar prize. Prouty's wife, discovering the ruse by which Kibbee had tricked her, refuses to sell back the farm. Kibbee builds an odorless pigsty on his property adjoining the farm and, with Prouty's support, forces her to go through with the sale. Charles and Dorothy plan to see much of each other.

Adapted from a story by Clarence B. Kelland, the screen play is by Michael L. Simmons. Christy Cabanne directed it and Jerrold T. Brandt directed it.

"The Mayor of 44th Street" with George Murphy, Anne Shirley, Rex Downing and Richard Barthelmess

(RKO, May 8; time, 86 min.)

Just fair! although the action is pretty fast, it is hard to stir the spectators' emotions of sympathy by the doings of a young hoodlum and his gang of hoodlums, who use strong-arm methods to compel the hero to pay them "protection" money. It is true that the hero and the heroine are sympathetic characters, but what stands out is, not their efforts to protect their interests, but the attempts of the hoodlums to coerce them. The romance is mild. Some band music is played. This may help the picture a little:—

When Richard Barthelmess goes to prison for racketeering, George Murphy and Anne Shirley, two of his assistants, turn his shakedown business into a legitimate band-booking enterprise and they prosper until Rex Downing, a youngster with gangster ideas, who had a following of a large number of juvenile hoodlums, boys and girls, try to shake down the band leaders by having his hoodlums create a disturbance while the band was playing. His refusal to pay protection money results in riots. Murphy decides to approach Rex with a business proposition, proving to him that as much money could be made legitimately. He induces the boy to live at his beautiful home with him. Barthelmess is out on parole and applies to Murphy for a job. Feeling sorry for him, Murphy employs him. But Barthelmess cannot keep from crooked deals. He approaches Rex and sells him the idea to join him so that the youngster might make more money. In vain does Murphy try to induce Rex not to follow Barthelmess; he learns that Rex looked upon the gangster as a hero. Barthelmess and Rex start a rival booking service and, by the use of strong-arm tactics, they set out to ruin Murphy, wrecking the halls where his band played. Murphy at last confronts Barthelmess and, when the latter induces Murphy to throw his gun away to fight man to man, Barthelmess summons his gang to help him. This so disgusts Rex that he, too, summons his gang, but only to protect Murphy. The police arrest Barthelmess and his gang.

The story is by Robert D. Andrews; the screen play by Lewis R. Foster and Frank Ryan. Cliff Reid produced it, and Alfred E. Green directed it.

Being a picture that deals with gangsters, it is hardly for young children.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1942

No. 13

HERE AND THERE

I HAVE READ AN INTERESTING EDITORIAL in The Hollywood Reporter about the case of William K. Howard, the famous director, and since I feel that it is of interest to every exhibitor I am reproducing that editorial:

Says W. R. Wilkerson:

"This fellow started in the picture business as a shipping clerk, making \$18 a week. Through hard work and fine picture intelligence, he shoved his way up through the sales end—on the road as a salesman, then a branch manager—where he was heralded as one of the best salesmen in pictures. World War I took him out of circulation for a while. When he returned, he decided to come to Hollywood for a fling at production. His effort was as successful as was his sales work. Starting in as a jack-of-all-trades on a lot, he worked himself up to an assistant director, then a director. Finally, he mounted the heights, with an earning capacity as high as \$6,250 a week. . . .

"But something happened. He went to Europe to a job, was misquoted in the London press on his vision of Hollywood. Returning to the U. S., he found the sign up against him. He worried and brooded, tried to explain his side, but none would listen. So—for two years this fellow did not earn a penny. He could not get a job. Possessing one of the finest directorial brains in the business, he had one job after the other pulled right out from under him, not so much as a penalty for his misquoted statements, but because one producer said to the other: 'You can't take a chance with him,' and the whole business then started saying the same thing.

"The \$18 a week shipping clerk who grew to be a \$6,250 a week director found himself without a job, without money for actual living expenses and seemingly the whole business turned against him. But he had too much guts to stop his fight for work he could accomplish with such great success. He took a job to direct a picture for a total salary of \$2,500. He agreed to turn out the picture in a week's shooting at a cost of \$30,000. He worked with the writer on getting a believable story; went out and talked players of some importance into working in the picture; grabbed an excellent cameraman, and then started shooting the picture. He shot it in eight days at a cost of \$33,000. The finished product, 'Klondike Fury,' . . . would do

credit to a \$500,000 budget and the product of a major plant. Good entertainment, finely made by William K. Howard, our \$18 clerk who has been missing on all pay days for the past two years, but who now demonstrates better than ever, why he was, at one time, paid \$6,250 a week."

I don't know what Bill Howard said in London and in what particular he was misquoted by the London papers; nor do I know the name of the producer who said to the other producer, "You can't take a chance with him." But I do know what a shame it is for the industry to shut out from the business a director of William K. Howard's intelligence, ability and knowledge, particularly at a time when there is so much need for artists of his caliber. But the shame of it is that one person, whoever he is, should have the power to pronounce "death" upon the livelihood of any one, let alone of William K. Howard.

This paper calls upon William F. Rodgers, chairman of the UMPI Committee, to use his influence to the end that the ban may be lifted from William K. Howard, not so much out of sentiment at the injustice done to him, but out of the need of bringing back into the industry an artist who can produce meritorious pictures. The draft has created such a void that the industry cannot afford to put on the shelf such an artist.

* * *

AND WHILE I AM ON THE SUBJECT, I might just as well bring to your attention another capable person who, for no earthly reason, has been shut out—prevented from making a living in Hollywood. I am referring to E. B. Derr, a unit producer, who has produced million dollar pictures just as successfully as he has \$25,000 pictures.

On the million-dollar side, some of the pictures he has produced are the following:

"Holiday" (Pathe), the picture that made Ann Harding a star.

"Her Man" (Pathe), with Helen Twelvetrees.

"Sky Devils," Howard Hughes—United Artists.

"Scarface," Howard Hughes—United Artists.

"The Trespasser" (United Artists), with Gloria Swanson.

(Continued on last page)

"Mokey" with Bobby Blake, Donna Reed and Dan Dailey, Jr.

(MGM, release date not set; time, 86 min.)

By masterful direction, the producer has taken a simple and unpretentious story revolving around a mischievous, but well-intentioned, child, and turned what might have been ordinary entertainment into something charming and filled with human appeal. The story deals with the efforts of a nine year old boy who tries to please his new stepmother, but fails, even though she is receptive to his efforts. Though his motives are sincere, they unfortunately lead him into trouble. One is sympathetic towards both him and his stepmother, for what occurs between them is the result of misunderstanding. Most situations are appealing and, though far-fetched in a few instances, are likely to occur to any boy. Bobby Blake, as the boy, gives an excellent performance, and his characterization is intelligent. Donna Reed, depicted as the kindly stepmother, does well:—

Mokey Delano (Bobby Blake), a boy of nine, whose mother died during his infancy, awaits the homecoming of his father and new stepmother. Dressed in his best clothes, he tires of waiting and leaves the house. He returns home late, dirty and dishevelled, and finds his father (Dan Dailey, Jr.) and new mother (Donna Reed) already there. His father laughingly excuses Mokey's appearance and assures Mrs. Delano that she will have no trouble in managing the boy. Within the week, Mr. Delano, who is a salesman, leaves on a business trip. Mrs. Delano and Mokey fail in their efforts to become pals, mostly through misunderstanding. Mokey, innocent of wrongdoing, is arrested with another boy on a theft charge. In Juvenile Court he is paroled in the custody of Mrs. Delano, who is berated by the judge for not taking better care of Mokey. She quarrels with Mr. Delano about the boy, but does her best to guide Mokey. An impasse is reached when the boy lies to her about getting a job and she berates the merchant for whom Mokey is supposedly working. Mokey runs away from home and, blackening his face, hides out with a negro family. Mrs. Delano, distraught, telephones her husband about it. After a search lasting many weeks, Delano succeeds in finding Mokey. When Mokey arrives home, he discovers a new baby sister. Inadvertently, he topples the baby from the crib and Mrs. Delano, incensed, demands of her husband that Mokey be sent away. A family quarrel ensues and Mokey, sure that no one loves him, leaves a note that he is going to California and again runs away. When a policeman is sent to the railroad junction to apprehend him, Mokey eludes him by stealing an old automobile, which he wrecks when he attempts to drive it. Mokey is caught and brought to court, but he is saved from a reform school when his stepmother, realizing that perhaps she is as much at fault as the boy, pleads that she be given one more chance. The plea is granted and the reunited family goes home.

The picture is based on stories by Jennie Harris Oliver. Wells Root and Jan Fortune wrote the screen play. It was also directed by Wells Root. J. Walter Ruben produced it.

"My Favorite Blonde" with Bob Hope and Madeleine Carroll

(Paramount, no release date; time, '76 min.)

Bob Hope fans will find him extremely funny in this espionage comedy. He and Madeleine Carroll are pursued across the country by a band of Nazi spies, and their series of escapades provoke much laughter. The gags are plentiful, and Bob Hope delivers them in his inimitable manner. Praiseworthy is the fashion in which Madeleine Carroll handles her end of the comedy. A short scene in which Bing Crosby plays a bit is surprising as well as amusing. Brisk action, humorous situations, and snappy dialogue, will keep the audience chuckling all through the picture:—

As Madeleine Carroll, a British agent, lands in New York, she is pursued through the streets by a band of Nazi spies; they are after a Scorpion brooch containing secret flight orders for a group of bombers flying from Los Angeles to Britain, which Madeleine had in her possession to deliver to a British agent named Marlowe, in Chicago. She eludes them by darting into the stage door entrance of a theater and seeking refuge in the dressing room of Bob Hope, a vaudevillian. From the window she notices the Nazi spies hovering nearby. Upon learning that Hope was to leave at once for Hollywood to fulfill a contract, Madeleine, without re-

vealing her mission, induces him to accompany her as far as Chicago. At the railroad station she sees the Nazis boarding the train. Embracing Hope, she deftly pins the Scorpion under his coat lapel. During the trip the Nazis, who suspected Hope of being Madeleine's accomplice, threaten him. He escapes them by following a passing conductor. Hope is at a loss to understand their threatening attitude. When they reach Chicago, Madeleine, noticing that Hope was not wearing the same coat, steals his bag and hurries to Marlowe's address with Hope in pursuit. He catches her at the door where Madeleine, wielding a gun, orders him into the apartment. She tells Hope that she is a British agent and produces the Scorpion from his bag to prove it. In an adjoining room they find Marlowe dead—apparently murdered by the Nazis. Madeleine discovers instructions for the delivery of the Scorpion to a Colonel Ashmont, in Los Angeles. Seeking to evade the Nazis, who had surrounded the building, they stage a mock "family quarrel." They are arrested by the police and escorted from the building, but are released when they "make up." Foiled, the Nazis report Marlowe's murder and both are accused of the crime. Appropriating a bus, then a plane, and finally stealing a freight car ride, they evade the police and arrive in Los Angeles. They hurry to Ashmont's address and, when they hand him the Scorpion, are confronted by the Nazis. They learn that the real Ashmont had been removed. Hope grabs the Scorpion from the Nazi who was impersonating Ashmont, and pretends to swallow it. In the ensuing tussle, he pins it on Madeleine's coat and helps her escape. Hope, too, makes his escape and together they deliver the Scorpion to the Commander of the British Fliers.

Don Hartman and Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Sidney Lanfield directed it, and Paul Jones produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Yokel Boy" with Joan Davis, Eddie Foy, Jr., Alan Mowbray and Albert Dekker

(Republic, March 13; time, 67 min.)

A satire on Hollywood, this program comedy, which on occasion goes slapstick, is moderately entertaining; but in crowded houses it should provoke considerable laughter. Joan Davis indulges in some of her familiar dance routines in which she is joined by Eddie Foy, Jr. The production values and the performances are adequate, and the action is fast. It was produced as a Broadway musical in 1939, but the movie version, aside from the title, bears no similarity to the play:—

Concocting a publicity stunt to bolster the diminishing fortunes of Mammoth Film Studios, Alan Mowbray, executive producer, and Roscoe Karns, his press agent, import Eddie Foy, Jr., a "typical" movie fan who holds a record for movie attendance, to advise them on what the public wants. The studio plans to produce "King of Crime," a film based on the life of Albert Dekker, a notorious gangster. Eddie suggests that the lead be given to Dekker himself and Mowbray, enthusiastic about the idea, sends him east to offer the part to the gangster. Dekker is reluctant, but Joan Davis, his sister, sees an opportunity for him to reform and compels him to accept Eddie's offer; she threatens to withhold the million dollars that Dekker had given her for safekeeping. When Dekker arrives in Hollywood with Tom Dugan and Marc Lawrence, two of his gunmen, he loses no time in taking over the studio. He drives Mowbray frantic by rejecting one script after another, repeatedly intimidates Mikhail Rasumny, the director, and finally takes the leading lady role away from Lynne Carver, and gives it to Joan. These constant interruptions of the shooting schedules cause the production costs to go sky-high. The final blow comes when Dugan and Lawrence, playing bits in a bank holdup, actually rob the bank while the scenes are being filmed in their building. The bankers sue Mammoth Films for damages, and Mowbray announces that he would have to suspend production owing to the lack of funds. Unwilling to allow his screen career to end in such a fashion, Dekker gets his money from Joan and finances the remainder of the picture. The Hollywood adventure ends with the marriage of Joan and Eddie.

The story is by Russell Rouse; the screen play, by Isabel Dawn. Joseph Stanley directed it, and Robert North produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Reap the Wild Wind" with Ray Milland, John Wayne and Paulette Goddard

(Paramount-De Mille, no release date; 120 min.)

Cecil B. DeMille does all that is expected of him in this latest of his screen offerings, a historical drama. Lavish in every detail, the production has been filmed in gorgeous technicolor. The photography is a treat to the eye. But the story, which unfolds in 1840, when steamships were yet in their infancy, and when the full-rigged sailing ships were America's lifeline, is somewhat artificial, just as is the story of almost every DeMille picture. The fact that it is a period picture makes its artificiality more pronounced. Otherwise it is a red-blooded tale of the sea, with the Florida Keys as its locale. It deals with the efforts of honest ship owners to rid the seas of piratical wreckers, who plundered the cargoes after the wreck. Fighting seamen and spectacular wrecks make for fast action amid scenes of arresting beauty. The closing scenes show a giant octopus wrapping its tentacles around the hero, and when his rival goes to the hero's rescue he becomes the victim. These scenes are ten-twenty-thirty melodrama, but thrilling just the same. The picture has been acted by a competent cast. A love triangle furnishes the dramatic interest. Despite the weakness of the story, the picture should prove a box office success:—

Captain Jack Martin (John Wayne) and his Chief Officer, Widgeon, are guiding their ship through a fierce storm when suddenly a blow from behind fells Martin. Widgeon lashes him to the mainmast, then deliberately heads the ship for the reefs. The alarm that a ship is aground spreads through the town of Key West and the sailors, whose business is salvaging the cargoes of wrecked ships, rush to their boats. Loxi Claiborne (Paulette Goddard), owner of the salvage schooner Claiborne, and Captain Phillip Philpott (Lynne Overman), the Claiborne's skipper, lead in the race of the salvage boats to the wreck. But they find that the Falcon, owned by the nefarious Cutler brothers, King (Raymond Massey) and Dan (Robert Preston), already alongside the wreck. The Cutlers board the ship and arrange with Widgeon, acting master, to salvage the cargo at an exorbitant fee. Loxi and Philpott come aboard to help off the injured crew. She brings Martin to her home and a romance ripens during his convalescence. But Martin is worried; he fears that the loss of his ship will endanger his chances of commanding the new steamship, Southern Cross, and that Stephen Tolliver (Ray Milland), a Charleston lawyer and his rival in the shipping company, will make capital of the wreck to ruin his chances. Loxi decides to go to Charleston to intercede with Commodore Devereaux, owner of the line. She is accompanied by Drusilla Alston, her cousin from Havana, who is secretly in love with Dan Cutler. At a tea party, Loxi learns that the Commodore is ill and that the affairs of the company are being managed by Tolliver, whom she meets at the party. Hoping to influence him in Martin's behalf, she makes many dates with Tolliver, who falls in love with her. Martin is summoned to Charleston by the Board of Directors who take him to task for losing his ship. While Martin awaits their verdict outside, Tolliver pleads his case, blaming the wreck on the Cutler brothers. He seeks, and is given, permission to go to Key West to secure evidence against the Cutlers. He is also given papers appointing Martin Captain of the Southern Cross, to be handed over only on the condition that Martin is cleared. In the meantime, Martin is not to be told of this commission and is to proceed to Key West to await further orders. Before leaving, Martin tells Loxi that Tolliver has "broken" him. Furious, she remonstrates with Tolliver and tells him she is returning to Key West with Martin and will marry him that evening on board ship. Tolliver pursues her to the ship and prevents the marriage by knocking out Martin and throwing Loxi overboard. Days later, Loxi and Drusilla return to Key West on the same ship that brings Tolliver. When Loxi learns that King Cutler plans to shanghai Tolliver, she and Martin go to warn him. Together, they succeed in fighting off the gang, led by Widgeon. During the fight, Martin finds his commission papers, which had fallen from Tolliver's pocket. He accuses Tolliver of holding out on him, and knocks him unconscious. Widgeon's leading the gang convinces Martin that Cutler had caused the wreck of his ship and he sets out to kill him. But Cutler outsmarts him. He convinces Martin that Tolliver is out to ruin his career and steal his girl. He induces him to go to Havana, take command of the Southern Cross, and then wreck it, both to share in the salvage profits. When the prices on commodities that the Southern Cross carried as cargo drop, it occurs to

Tolliver that Martin might be planning to wreck the ship. Commandeering Loxi's ship, he sets sail for Havana, hoping to stop the voyage. Loxi, resenting his lack of faith in Martin, disables the ship and prevents Tolliver's reaching Havana. Meanwhile, Drusilla, now in Havana, wishes to return to Key West aboard the Southern Cross, but Martin refuses her passage. She becomes a stowaway. Martin, upon reaching Key West, runs the ship onto the reefs, wrecking it. He is brought to trial and Tolliver, as special prosecutor, tries to prove conspiracy, implicating King Cutler who, as a licensed attorney, is defending Martin. Through testimony, Tolliver uncovers that Drusilla might have been drowned in the wreck. Seeking evidence of murder, Tolliver offers to go down in a diving suit to locate the body. Martin volunteers to go with him. They find Drusilla's body. Suddenly, they are attacked by a giant octopus. They aid each other, but Martin is killed saving Tolliver. Hoisted to the deck, Tolliver relates what had occurred below and hands over Drusilla's shawl as proof of her death. Blinded with rage, Dan Cutler turns on his brother King, but is shot and killed by him. King is in turn shot dead by Tolliver. Loxi and Tolliver embark on a new romance.

The plot has been founded on a story by Thelma Straber. The screen play was written by Allan LeMay, Charles Bennett and Jesse Lasky, Jr. Bill Pine assisted Mr. DeMille in producing it.

Not objectionable for families except that the octopus scene may frighten sensitive children under fourteen.

"Klondike Fury" with Edmund Lowe, Lucille Fairbanks and Bill Henry

(Monogram, March 20; time, 67 min.)

To old exhibitors, it may be said that "Klondike Fury" is a story somewhat similar to "The Storm," which was produced by Universal the first time in 1922, with House Peters, and which made a success. To those who have not been in the business at that time, it may be said that "Klondike Fury" is a tense drama of the frozen North, in which the theme is a love conflict. It is a story of primitive passions with much human interest, directed by William K. Howard with skill. As a matter of fact, it is admirable that Mr. Howard got so much dramatic value out of so small a budget as \$33,000. The production values would do honor to a picture made at a major studio. The romance is passionate, and the human interest pretty deep:—

When his patient dies after an operation in which he had used a new technique, Edmund Lowe, a famous surgeon, is accused of wilful murder because of the dead man's wife. Heart-broken at the unjust suspicion, he takes a plane and flies to Klondike. The plane is wrecked, his companion is killed, but he is only injured, though seriously. He is found by a trapper and taken to Robert Middlemass' trading post and there, cared for by Ralph Morgan, the doctor of the region, and by Lucille Fairbanks, he regains his health. Bill Henry, Middlemass' son, crippled by an accident, seeing that Lucille was too friendly with Lowe, plans to harm him. When the fact that Lowe was a famous surgeon becomes known, Middlemass pleads with him to perform an operation on his son to restore his health. At first Bill Henry refuses to submit to an operation out of fear lest Lowe kill him so as to get Lucille himself, but eventually submits. The operation is successful, thus proving Lowe's technique a success. But Henry, fearing that he might lose Lucille, pretends that he is still crippled. Lowe finds out that Henry was faking when he points a gun at him and threatens to shoot to kill him. But Lowe, calming him down, convinces him that Lucille loved him and no one else, thus preventing a tragedy. Morgan follows Lowe to civilization to attest the success of Lowe's technique. Thus Lowe is restored to his former honors.

The screen play, by Henry Blankford, has been founded on the story "Klondike," by Tristram Tupper. Monte Blue, Kenneth Harlan, Clyde Cook, John Roche, Vince Barnett and some others are in the supporting cast.

Not objectionable for families.

"Jungle Book" with Sabu

(United Artists-Korda, April 3; time not yet determined)

This is a jungle fantasy, with animals and all, produced lavishly, and photographed in beautiful technicolor. But the story is not the type that has universal appeal. Full review will be printed next week.

On the small-budget side, he has produced several pictures for Monogram, every one of which made money. Two of these pictures were, "Barefoot Boy" and "I Am a Criminal."

He has made pictures for other independent producing-distributing companies.

Despite so high a record of money-makers, E. B. Derr cannot get a job. Doesn't this indicate a boycott?

I have known E. B. Derr for years and I can say that he is, not only honorable, but highly capable. He understands drama, and can get out of a dollar as great production values as can any other producer in the business.

Mr. Rodgers will render the industry a great service if he should use his influence to have the ban lifted also from Mr. Derr.

* * *

THERE SEEMS TO BE a misunderstanding in some quarters about the substitute selling plan that has been worked out by the UMPI Committee. The plan was not devised, and not approved, by the Allied Representatives on the UMPI Committee, nor is Allied sponsoring it. The facts are as follows:

Following a long discussion during which the Committee considered many suggestions, the five consenting companies submitted the plan as one that they would be willing to adopt. Evidently the distributors felt that they were making a concession to the exhibitors when they offered to sell more than five pictures at a time.

As far as the distributors are concerned, they are willing to continue the present system, were it not for the demand of the exhibitors for a change.

In considering any plan, the views of the Department of Justice must be had in mind. The provisions of the Consent Decree that require a trade showing and that prohibit the selling of more than five pictures in each group will become inoperative June 1, this year. The suspension, however, concerns only the pictures that will be released after September 1. Since it is customary for the distributors to offer a new season's pictures for sale between June 1 and on or after September 1, it is, according to an Allied spokesman, inaccurate for them to say that they cannot avail themselves of the suspension until after September 1.

Theoretically, this spokesman says, the distributors are free after June 1 to sell their pictures in whatever way they choose; but actually they are unlikely to take steps that are not agreeable to the Department of Justice.

Representatives of the Department have expressed themselves only in general terms; they have stated that, in respect to the number of pictures that may compose each group, and as to the number of pictures that may be canceled, they are willing to consider any reasonable proposals with an open mind. So far as the UMPI plan is concerned, they have not approved it, for the reason that it has not yet been submitted to them. But they have expressed a definite opinion on one provision of the Consent Decree—that which requires the tradeshowing of the pictures. The UMPI

Committee's plan's provision that at least five pictures of each group of twelve be tradeshown has undoubtedly been adopted in deference to the views of the Government's attorneys. This circumstance, the Allied spokesman said, seems not to have been taken into consideration by those who have criticized the new plan for restricting the groups to twelve pictures.

On the other hand, the critics, because of the fact that all exhibitor groups could not be represented, should not criticize the UMPI Committee for having failed to take their wishes into consideration.

It seems as if the exhibitor groups are in a hopeless disagreement. Some of them are disappointed because no return was made to the old block-booking and blind-selling system; others, because the plan has gone too far in the direction of block-booking and not far enough in providing for a sufficient latitude in picture selection. Their failure to unite on some plan may compel the continuation of the blocks-of-five plan.

HARRISON'S REPORTS again suggests that all exhibitor groups let Allied handle the matter for them since the interests of the Allied members are no different from the interest of the members of other exhibitor groups.

A meeting of the Allied board of directors was called for March 24, and the UMPI Committee for March 25.

* * *

THE PASSING OF SIDNEY KENT removes from the motion picture industry one of its most colorful characters. From a boiler stoker in a greenhouse at five dollars a week to the presidency of one of the biggest film companies at a salary exceeding four thousand dollars a week reads like fiction but for the fact that we know it is true.

Sidney Kent became interested in the motion picture industry through Frank Hitchcock, former U. S. Postmaster-General, who had been assigned to liquidate the old General Film Company, which the U. S. Government had found a violator of the Anti-Trust law.

Following the settlement of the affairs of that company, Kent applied to Mr. Zukor for a position and was engaged, being assigned to the sales department as special representative. He was soon promoted to branch manager, then district manager and finally he was appointed general manager of distribution, with power and responsibility next to that of Mr. Zukor.

In January, 1932, he resigned and became president of Fox Film Corporation. Later he made a deal with Joseph Schenck and Darryl Zanuck, of Twentieth Century, merging the two companies.

Mr. Kent reached high, not only in the moving picture industry, but also in the banking world. It was because of the support of the bankers that he was able to reorganize Fox Film Corporation and, after merging it with Twentieth Century, to elevate Twentieth Century-Fox to its present position.

Sidney Kent will be missed by the industry.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1942

No. 14

WHAT WILL OFFSET THE RISING COSTS

In a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, I stated that the solution of the increased cost of theatre operation as a result of the taxes, of the higher wages, and of the advance in the price of everything needed by a theatre is, not higher admission prices, unless they are very low at present, but increased attendance; and that increased attendance may be brought about only by bettering the quality of the pictures.

Many persons, among whom are also exhibitors, feel that the producers are doing all they can now to improve the quality of the pictures, and that their failure to deliver a greater number of meritorious pictures is caused, not by their failure to exert greater efforts, but by their inability to find better story material. "Look at the stage!" they say. "The percentage of good plays is no greater than that of good pictures. If the stage people cannot find better plays when the number they produce each year is much smaller than the number of pictures that are produced, how do you expect the picture producers to do better? No producer ever starts out with the intention of making a picture poor."

Those who reason thus reason incorrectly. The art of the motion picture is altogether different from the art of the stage play. A successful stage play does not always make a successful motion picture. The two arts are similar only in one respect: what is acted on the stage and what appears on the screen is but an oral, or a visual, as the case may be, representation of what the author had in mind and put on paper. But the stage has to depend chiefly on dialogue to present what the author puts on paper, whereas the motion picture depends chiefly on action, and only secondarily on words. The fact that most Hollywood authors, aping the stage, unfold the action mostly by dialogue does not disprove the truth of this assertion. On most pictures, three-fourths of the talk could be eliminated to great advantage.

The producers' inability to deliver a greater percentage of meritorious pictures lies, not in lack of good stories, but in their refusal to recognize the fact that "the play is the thing," and thus give the writers the responsibility that they ought to have by the very nature of picture production. And the reason for it is that, either they do not know the difference between a good and a bad writer, or they wish to promote some friend or relative of theirs, or fear the safety of their position should they give a good writer responsibility. Can any of you explain the childish pictures that they serve you with week after week?

The producers are usually prone to blame a direc-

tor for the fact that a picture turns out poor when it is really the script and he who wrote it.

On this subject, I happened to come across an old issue of Welford Beaton's Hollywood Spectator in which Mr. Beaton puts the matter in its true perspective. He says partly:

"A motion picture on the screen is but a visual or oral translation of what a writer has put on paper; the birthplace of a successful picture, therefore, is the script, and the birthplace of the script is the writer's mind. He sees the picture while he is putting it into words; the public sees it as the director interprets it."

Further on in his article, Mr. Beaton attempts to rob the director of the credit for the success of a picture, but he fails to qualify his statement and for this reason one is likely to receive the wrong impression. Though it is true that the director is the interpreter of what the author puts on paper, there are many directors who, possessing a native gift of understanding story values, alter, or even completely change, the script before shooting, for not all scripts are good scripts, just as not all authors are good authors. In such cases, the director deserves all the credit for the success of the picture.

Just to mention one case—"How Green Was My Valley": First I saw the picture; then I read the scripts, and then the book, and I found that a great deal of what is in the book was left out of the picture, and the picture varies in many parts from the script. There are in the picture human touches that are not contained in the book. One such touch is where Roddy MacDowall's voice becomes squeaky, as is the case of boys when they reach a certain age. Every one in the audience seemed to enjoy the incident.

But Jack Ford is one of the directors that understands story values. Hence his success. Could we, then, attribute the success of his pictures entirely to the authors?

THE NEW SALES PLAN

At the Hotel Astor last week, William F. Rodgers, chairman, addressed the full Committee of UMPI. The members of the trade press were invited to attend the meeting.

In discussing the new sales plan, by which consenting distributors will be permitted to sell twelve pictures at a time, five completed and tradeshow and seven in the form of synopses, provided the government approves the plan, he said that the distributors did not want to adopt that plan as being against

(Continued on last page)

"Butch Minds the Baby" with Broderick Crawford, Dick Foran and Virginia Bruce
(*Universal, March 20; time, 75 min.*)

Very good! A mixture of pathos and humor, this comedy should prove entertaining to all classes of audiences. It is a simple story, filled with human appeal, of a hard-boiled but likeable convict, whose love for a baby becomes his prime interest in life. Commendable is the performance of Broderick Crawford in his portrayal of "Butch," the kindly gangster. The other players are cast expertly and perform well. The characterizations are colorful, the dialogue is in the Runyon manner, and the comical situations are plentiful:—

Broderick Crawford, a safe-cracker out on parole, is welcomed home at a testimonial dinner given by Richard Lane and Shemp Howard, his pals, who had become associated with Porter Hall, a new crime leader. Dick Foran, a policeman, breaks in on the party and warns Crawford not to violate his parole, for his next offense would mean a life term. One of the parole requirements being that he get a job, Crawford reluctantly becomes an apartment house janitor. Among the tenants are Virginia Bruce, a widow, and her year old baby, Michael Barnitz. Miss Bruce, friendless and broke, attempts to commit suicide by gas, but she and her baby are saved by Crawford, who prevails on Foran, the policeman on the beat, not to take her to jail. Subsequently, a romance blossoms between Foran and Miss Bruce. Crawford becomes attached to the baby and determines to help Miss Bruce. He gets her a job in Hall's night club and minds the baby while she works. As part of his political doings, Hall sponsors a Baby Beauty Contest each year. In exchange for Hall's promise that the baby will win the contest, Crawford agrees to crack a safe to remove evidence that Hall required to beat an income-tax charge. Not realizing that Foran was doing special police work, Crawford suspects him of being bribed by Hall to ignore the explosion. Desiring that the baby should have an honest stepfather, Crawford purposely sets off a loud explosion, rousing the neighborhood, in the hope that Foran will be forced to do his duty. He escapes with the evidence, but his pals are caught. He gives the evidence to Foran. After the baby wins the contest, he is arrested. But he is promised leniency, for his crime would help the government's case.

Damon Runyon wrote the story, and Leonard Spigelgass the screen play. Albert S. Rogall directed it, and Jules Levy produced it.

In view of the fact that it is a comedy, it should not prove unsuitable for children, despite the gangster doings.

"Unseen Enemy" with Leo Carrillo, Don Terry and Irene Hervey
(*Universal, April 10; time, 60½ min.*)

Just a mild espionage melodrama. The story is thin and follows a routine formula of undercover operations. Leo Carrillo is cast in an unfavorable role as an American-born Italian fifth columnist. To offset the unpleasantness of his role, he is pictured as being kindly to his stepdaughter, but this, in addition to his turning against the spies at the finish, are not redeeming features to his willful acts. The production values are ordinary, and the story lacks action and suspense. The picture is best suited for theatres whose patrons are not too exacting in their demands.

Full review next week.

"Jungle Book" with Sabu
(*United Artists-Korda, April 3; 108 min.*)

This is a jungle fantasy, in which animals play an important part. It has been produced in gorgeous technicolor. The surroundings in which Sabu is cast are familiar. This time he is a wild boy, reared among the animals of the jungle. The scenes in which Sabu is shown clashing with a tiger in a fight for life hold one in tense suspense. But, being a fantasy, its appeal is not universal. For this reason it will depend on the exploitation work that the United Artists organization will do to draw patrons to the box office. There is human interest in some of the situations. There is no romance:—

When Buldeo (Joseph Calleia), a professional Hindu story teller, is given a few silver rupee by an English girl, he relates a "true" story of India. Buldeo recalls himself as the leader of a little settlement on the outskirts of the great jungle where one day Shere Kahn, a tiger, kills the husband of Messua (Rosemary De Camp), and in the excitement her two-year-old son, Nathoo, wanders off into the jungle and is lost. Nathoo enters the cave of a wolf-pack and is adopted

by Reshka, the mother-wolf. He becomes known as Mowgli (Sabu) and grows up as the friend and hunting companion of all the jungle beasts, except of Shere Kahn, the tiger. One day Mowgli happens upon the village and is captured. Buldeo warns that, because of his strange ways, Mowgli is a demon, but Messua, instinctively feeling that he might be her lost child, begs the council to allow her to keep him. Mowgli learns the ways of the people from Messua, and becomes friendly with Mahala (Patricia O'Rourke), Buldeo's daughter. When Buldeo and two other tribesmen learn that Mowgli knows of a hidden treasure in an ancient jungle city, they cajole him to reveal the location, but he refuses. Just then Shere Kahn appears and kills a man. Mowgli tracks down the tiger and kills him. Jealous of the boy's accomplishment, Buldeo tries to kill him, but fails when Mowgli's animal friends rush to his defense. Buldeo and the two tribesmen finally find the treasure, but lose everything when they become lost in the jungle. Crazy by his misfortunes, Buldeo sets fire to the jungle, hoping to destroy Mowgli and his animal friends. A shifting wind sets fire to the village and Mowgli, with the aid of a herd of elephants, saves the villagers. Convinced that he would be happier living with the animals, Mowgli bids everyone goodbye. Thus Buldeo, the story teller, concludes his tale.

The story is by Rudyard Kipling, and the screen play by Laurence Stallings. Zoltan Korda directed it, and Alexander Korda produced it.

Suitable for all the family.

"Two Yanks in Trinidad" with Pat O'Brien and Brian Donlevy
(*Columbia, March 26; time, 83 min.*)

A fairly good comedy melodrama, which should appeal to the action fans. The picture is filled with gags and situations that will provoke hearty laughter. The story, treating on life in the Army in a flippant manner, is about two gangster pals who enlist for the purpose of carrying on their personal feud. There is plentiful two-fisted action, with Pat O'Brien and Brian Donlevy given ample opportunity to display their physical prowess. The picture strikes a patriotic note at the finish; when the two learn that the Japs had attacked Pearl Harbor, they forego their feud, join forces in the interest of their country, and destroy a gang of fifth columnists:—

While waiting for the arrival of Pat O'Brien at the surprise party he is giving for him, Brian Donlevy learns that his pal had been hoodwinking him in a number-guessing game. Donlevy is furious and plans to kill him. When O'Brien arrives, Donlevy reveals that he knows of his trickery, but O'Brien escapes in the bullet proof car that Donlevy had planned to give him as a birthday gift. He hides from Donlevy but is finally caught when he appears at his draft board to register. Seeking protection, O'Brien joins the Army; and so does Donlevy, vowing to get him. They are sent to Trinidad, where O'Brien is entrusted with the job of mine laying, and Donlevy is made a buck private in the infantry. Both are attracted to Janet Blair, an entertainer in John Emery's cafe. The cafe is a cover for Emery's real racket in supplying fuel to enemy submarines. Because the Army discipline proves too much for Donlevy, he plans to desert. He contacts Emery and offers him money if he will remove him from Trinidad. Emery agrees on condition that he, Donlevy, bring O'Brien to the boat; but he does not reveal his motive—to extort from him information about the mine laying, which is interfering with his refueling operations. Through a ruse, Donlevy succeeds in bringing O'Brien to the boat. Emery demands a map showing the locations of the mine fields in the harbor, but O'Brien refuses to divulge this information. Donlevy sides with O'Brien, and a fight starts. But O'Brien is overpowered and the map is taken from his pocket. He is left tied in the cabin, and Emery orders his men to sink the boat. Meanwhile, Donlevy manages to escape with the aid of Roger Clark, another private, who had accompanied him to the boat. He persists in his intentions to desert, but changes his mind when Clark tells him that the Japs had attacked Pearl Harbor. He returns to the sinking boat and rescues O'Brien. Together, they go about the harbor and render harmless the floating mines that had been released from their moorings by Emery, endangering the fleet, which was expected in the harbor on the following day. They then seek out Emery's refueling ship and succeed in blowing it up. Both are promoted to sergeants.

Sy Bartlett, Richard Carroll and Harry Segall wrote the screen play. Gregory Ratoff directed it, and Samuel Bischoff produced it.

Nothing morally objectionable in it.

"Affairs of Jimmy Valentine" with Dennis O'Keefe and Ruth Terry

(Republic, March 25; time, 71 min.)

A fair program murder melodrama. The story takes a novel twist in that Jimmy Valentine is sought, not for his crimes, but as the victim of a radio sponsor's advertising stunt. There is human interest in the efforts of a group of rehabilitated ex-convicts trying to keep their identities secret. There is enough action, comedy, and romance to please non-discriminating audiences:—

Dennis O'Keefe, idea man for a radio advertising agency, suggests to the sponsor of the Jimmy Valentine program that he offer a \$10,000 prize to anyone who would locate the real Jimmy Valentine. This so pleases the sponsor, that he signs a new contract. O'Keefe's boss gives him a \$1000 bonus, which he promptly squanders. When he recovers, his money is gone. With him is George E. Stone, a dubious character, who had attached himself to O'Keefe during his drunken debauch. Stone offers O'Keefe information that would lead him to Jimmy Valentine, providing he is given a cut of the prize money. But Stone does not reveal his true motive—to murder Valentine, who, he imagines, had framed his father. Through Stone's tip, O'Keefe traces Valentine to a small village, where he had been leading an honest life. When it is broadcast that the search is now centered in Fernville, the natives, led by Roman Bohnen, local newspaper editor, protest the invasion of their privacy. Ruth Terry, Bohnen's daughter, sides with O'Keefe against her father, not realizing that her father actually is Valentine. When Harry Shannon, Bohnen's gardener, suspected of being a pal of Valentine's, attempts to remove from Bohnen's newspaper morgue evidence of his identity, he is killed by Stone. To keep O'Keefe from knowing he is the murderer, Stone kills also Linda Brent, a manicurist. O'Keefe narrows the search down to six persons, and secures their fingerprints with Ruth's aid. Forejudging that Valentine will attempt to crack the safe, O'Keefe lets it be known that the fingerprints are in it. His reasoning proves correct, and O'Keefe and Stone catch Bohnen in the act. Stone tries to shoot Bohnen, but accidentally kills himself. O'Keefe, now in love with Ruth, is unwilling to identify her father as Jimmy Valentine. He makes it appear as if Valentine was the murdered Shannon. He gives the prize money to the village.

Olive Cooper and Robert Tasker wrote the screen play, Bernard Vorhaus directed it, and Leonard Fields produced it. Not suitable for children.

"The Strange Case of Doctor RX" with Lionel Atwill and Anne Gwynne

(Universal, April 10; time, 66 min.)

This is a horrible example of a horror picture, or whatever it was meant to be, but a good example of a production that should not have been made in the first place. The story is unintelligible, it leads nowhere, and ends in the same place. The plot is a sequence of disconnected situations, most of which have no point. Characters have been injected and made to appear mysterious, yet there is no apparent motive for their being so. Even the murderer, when caught, seems to have no motive for his crimes. All the hackneyed tricks of the trade have been used in a futile attempt to create an air of mystery, and an over-sized gorilla is employed for the horror angle. The players have been given poor material to work with. Consequently, the performance of everyone is unconvincing, except of course, the gorilla's:—

A series of murders committed by a mysterious "Dr. RX" baffles Police Captain Edmund McDonald, who tries to persuade Patric Knowles, ace detective, to help him on the case. But Knowles refuses. The murdered men had previously been acquitted of criminal charges through the brilliant defense work of Samuel H. Hinds, an attorney. Hinds induces Knowles to take the case. Meanwhile Knowles marries Anne Gwynne, his girl-friend. When Anne finds a note that Knowles had received warning him to drop the case and see "Barney Scott," she learns that Scott, a former detective, had lost his mind through a frightening experience he had undergone at the hands of "Dr. RX" while assigned to the case. Frightened, she persuades Knowles to drop the case. Through a ruse, "Dr. RX" captures Knowles and takes him to his laboratory. There, "Dr. RX" has a caged gorilla. He indicates to Knowles that he is going to exchange the detective's brain with that of the gorilla. Later Knowles is found wandering aimlessly along the waterfront, in the same manner that Barney Scott had been found—white-haired and apparently with his mind lost. But he had assumed the role only for the purpose of uncovering "Dr. RX," who

turns out to be Hinds. Hinds' attempt to frighten Knowles into insanity had failed.

Clarence Upson Young wrote the screen play, William Nigh directed it, and Jack Bernhard produced it. Included in the cast are Lionel Atwill, Paul Cavanaugh and Mona Barrie. Not suitable for children.

"Juke Box Jenny" with Ken Murray and Harriet Hilliard

(Universal, March 27; time 61½ min.)

This is a fair comedy with music. Compared with Universal's recent "What's Cookin'," it is inferior, for it fails to impart a pleasant feeling. The story serves merely as a background for a number of hot tunes; it lacks human appeal,—one is not in sympathy with any of the characters, for their acts are a series of "double-crosses." Ken Murray's talent as a comedian is wasted, for he is cast in a straight role. The popular musical organizations included in the cast, added to Harriet Hilliard's singing, should attract the swing-conscious youngsters:—

Don Douglas, head of a classical music recording company, is made the victim of a practical joke when two of his pals lead him to believe that he had married Iris Adrian, a night club torch singer, during a drunken celebration. Douglas enlists the aid of Ken Murray, his ace salesman, to straighten the affair out before it ruins his romance with Harriet Hilliard, his fiancée. Murray, dissatisfied with the sales of classical records, takes advantage of the situation by promising Miss Adrian a contract to make swing records. Although reluctant to record swing music, Douglas is compelled to agree. Meanwhile, Murray falls in love with Miss Hilliard, herself a musical snob with a voice so beautiful that he secretly records it. By trick recording, Murray combines her voice with the music of a swing orchestra. When Miss Adrian's voice proves "terrible," Murray creates the character of "Juke Box Jenny" by using Miss Hilliard's voice, telling Miss Adrian that the voice is hers, "doctored by the sound mixers." When Juke Box Jenny becomes a sensation, Miss Adrian plans to sign a contract with another recording company. But they brand her as an imposter when her voice does not match. Meanwhile, Miss Hilliard learns from Murray that she is Juke Box Jenny and is furious at him. Faced with Douglas' demand for additional records and with Miss Hilliard's refusal to sing, Murray reveals all. Miss Adrian insists that the trade name and voice of Juke Box Jenny is hers, and sues to protect it. But at the trial, Miss Hilliard relents towards Murray and sings for the court, proving the identity of Juke Box Jenny.

Robert Lees, Fred Rinaldo, Arthur V. Jones and Dorcas Cochran wrote the screen play. It was directed by Harold Young and produced by Joseph G. Sanford. In the cast are Charles Barnet and his Orchestra, Wingy Manone and his Orchestra, and the Milt Herth Trio. Suitable for all.

"Alias Boston Blackie" with Chester Morris

(Columbia, April 2; time, 66½ min.)

A fair double-bill comedy melodrama in which the action revolves mostly around the hero's efforts to prove the heroine's brother innocent of the crime for which he had been sent to the penitentiary. But the action taxes one's credulity to the limit many times. Chester Morris succeeds in keeping one's interest fairly tense, and to amuse one by his outwitting the detectives. The romance is mildly interesting:—

With the cast of a musical-comedy company, Boston Blackie (Chester Morris), a former convict gone straight, goes to the state prison and gives a show for the entertainment of the prisoners. Joe, the brother of Eve Sanders (Adele Mara) is in that prison, having been sent there after a conviction for a crime he had not committed. Although the prison rules forbade a visit by a relative more than twice a month, Eve had persuaded Blackie to take her along. At the prison, Joe lures Roggi McKay (George McKay), the clown, to his quarters and there, gagging and binding him, removes McKay's pantaloons and, making up as a clown, leaves the prison along with the other actors, undetected. But Blackie knows. In the city, Blackie tries to persuade Joe to return to prison, but Joe is bent upon finding and killing those who had framed him. Having convinced himself that Joe had been framed, Blackie sets out to prove his innocence. But to do so he had to use his wits to evade the police, who were seeking to arrest him as an accomplice in Joe's escape. He eventually succeeds in uncovering the culprits and in bringing about the freeing of Joe.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play from a character that has been created by Jack Boyle. Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

There are no objectionable sex situations in it.

their interests, but they accepted it out of a desire to work for industry unity. "I particularly mentioned when presenting the distributors' thoughts that this was not a compromise plan and should not be so construed," he said, "but in view of all conditions, it was a decided step forward in an attempt to approach the problem of the exhibitor who wanted, first, to buy more pictures at a time, and second, to have a greater product security, and third, more selectivity. The idea to sell quarterly was not an arbitrary decision but was the solemn conviction that it was impossible for the distributor in today's market to complete or properly identify the product beyond that period of time and still keep faith with its customers, the public groups, and the Department of Justice.

On the divergence of viewpoints on the plan in different territories, Mr. Rodgers stated that he was "quite frankly amazed," particularly as regards to territories the representatives of which had taken part in the deliberations. He said: "I find it nearly impossible to understand, when unity is considered, the method of approach that would permit in one afternoon's discussion before a large group, a determination to tear to pieces a plan that nine of the outstanding leaders in the exhibition field, after thoroughly exploring the situation, agreed it was the best possible solution at this time. I go further to say that I am likewise amazed to find that some, after unanimously approving the plan of their own volition, when they returned to their territories actually disapproved the plan or issued statements criticizing its content."

Mr. Rodgers made it clear that, in telling the exhibitor representatives that the distributors were unwilling to enlarge upon the plan, he did not mean to say, "This is all there is, there isn't any more," or to convey the impression that they were saying to the exhibitors, "Take it or leave it," but only that, after the experience of the past year, the distributors will find it difficult to fulfill even the obligation on the twelve-picture selling, when it is required that five of the pictures be tradeshown and seven sold by a synopsis for each picture, with an ample identification for them.

On the question of eliminations, Mr. Rodgers said that the discussions on eliminations "centered around the desire of the exhibitor to eliminate questionable box-office pictures, and was not intended to be an automatic film-rental cut intended for trading purposes."

"There are those companies within our group," he said, "which do not desire to veer away from the five picture no elimination screen-before-you-sell-plan; while there are those, as pointed out in the plan when submitted, who may make the elimination more general. I don't know when I have heard more asinine arguments than some of those voiced in connection with the plan—one being that a distributor might make 5 poor pictures for screening purposes knowing the exhibitor cannot eliminate any of these and include in the balance of 5, 6, or 7 all of the good pictures, knowing the exhibitor would not eliminate them. That is just as silly as the expressed belief the distributors would tradeshow only the best pictures and compel the sale of poor pictures that would be identified. I am in full sympathy with the exhibitor and organizations who desire, and have coming, a further explanation as to what the intent and purpose of the plan was. I have no sympathy or patience with the

individual who remains on the side-line to criticize—gives nothing constructive, but because of selfish desires tears down or attempts to depreciate the efforts of others."

Further on, Mr. Rodgers said: "Exhibitor leaders must be cloaked with the necessary authority to work out of this serious problem the best possible solution, otherwise they can hardly be considered as leaders and they are hampered in their endeavors. Individuals or an organization as a whole who realize this and understand that only if complete membership could be present and hear the many ramifications of the problems, could they intelligently criticize the final conclusion which received the unanimous approval of the members of the committee.

"The situation we find ourselves in today is to me faintly reminiscent of a similar situation that occurred just prior to the submission to the various companies of the Consent Decree. At the time we found exhibitor bodies divided on the merits and demerits of the fair trade practice code which was worked on a long time, yet, I think that every man in this room knows that if every exhibitor in the United States had been given his choice to choose between the code and the Consent Decree, the decision would probably have been almost unanimously in favor of the code.

"It would be unfortunate indeed if this program would suffer the fate of the fair trade practice code."

Mr. Rodgers reminded his hearers that not much time was left to work out something prior to June 1.

Discussing the "sabotaging" of the efforts at unity, Mr. Rodgers said:

"I have recently been genuinely disturbed by the repetition from several sections of the country of statements and bulletins purporting to come from exhibitors or their representatives, to the effect that something has to be done about excessive film prices, and ominously referring to a ceiling on film prices or a governor to be established by the Department of Justice, etc., and of the desperate situation many theatre owners find themselves in at the present time, or proposing short cuts, cure-alls, buying plans, etc. If there is a legitimate theatre operation in the United States in a desperate situation, speaking for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, I am deeply concerned about it and I want to know the facts.

"Many times I have said in the past, that we do not expect to make a profit on theatre owners' losses. Many times I have thrown open the door of our offices for any theatre owner who has a complaint, and who can within reason prove his case. If any theatre owner fails to avail himself of this invitation he can only blame himself. We have gone out of our way to welcome an exhibitor to discuss his problems with us and assure him that if he fails to get consideration in the local office, or when the exhibitor leader fails to receive proper consideration in the local or district office, my own services are available so that any unintentional wrong may be righted."

At the end of his speech, Mr. Rodgers offered his resignation, not because of the disapproval of the plan, but out of a belief that some one in his place may do a better job than he has done. His resignation was not accepted and he was asked to withdraw it. He withdrew it.

Exhibitor representatives of the UMPI Committee are still in New York trying to work out a solution of the problem. The feeling is that they will succeed.

IN TWO SECTIONS—SECTION TWO
HARRISON'S REPORTS

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NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1942

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Dude Cowboy—RKO (59 min.).....	not reviewed	Riding the Sunset Trail—Monogram (56 m.).....	not reviewed
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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

1941

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 3034 The Man Who Returned to Life—Howard...Feb. 5
- 3007 The Lady is Willing—Dietrich-McMurray...Feb. 12
- 3212 Bullets for Bandits—Elliott (55 min.)...Feb. 12
- 3021 Shut My Big Mouth—Joe E. Brown (71 m.)...Feb. 19
- 3013 Adventures of Martin Eden—Ford-Trevor...Feb. 26
- 3033 Tramp, Tramp, Tramp—Rice-B. Bennett (re) Mar. 12
- 3204 Lawless Plainsman—Starrett (59 min.)...Mar. 12
- 3025 Canal Zone—Morris-Hilliard ...Mar. 19
- Two Yanks in Trinidad—O'Brien-Terry...Mar. 26
- 3029 Alias Boston Blackie—Morris-Lane...Apr. 2
- 3213 North of the Rockies—Starrett (60 min.)...Apr. 2
- Blondie's Blessed Event—Singleton-Lake...Apr. 9
- Hello Annapolis—Brown-Parker ...Apr. 23
- 3205 Down Rio Grande Way—Starrett (57 min.)...Apr. 23
- 3214 The Devil's Trail—Elliott-Ritter (61 m.)...May 14

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 225 We Were Dancing—Shearer-Douglas...Mar.
- 226 Born to Sing—Weidler-McDonald...Mar.
- 227 Nazi Agent—Veidt-Ayars ...Mar.
- 228 This Time for Keeps—Rutherford-Sterling...Mar.
- 229 The Courtship of Andy Hardy—Rooney-Stone...Mar.
- 230 Kid Glove Killer—Van Heflin-Hunt...Apr.
- 231 Mokey—Dan Daly Jr.-Reed ...Apr.
- 232 Fingers At the Window—Ayes-Day...Apr.
- 233 Rio Rita—Abbott-Costello-Grayson ...Apr.

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Thunder River Feud—Range Busters (56 min.)...Jan. 9
- Private Snuffy Smith—Duncan (67 min.)...Jan. 16
- Man From Headquarters—Albertson (64 min.)...Jan. 23
- Below the Border—Buck Jones (57 min.)...Jan. 30
- Law of the Jungle—King-Judge (61 min.)...Feb. 6
- Western Mail—Keene (55 min.)...Feb. 13
- Mr. Wise Guy—East Side Kids (70 min.)...Feb. 20
- Rock River Renegades—Range Busters (56 min.)...Feb. 20
- Black Dragons—Lugosi (64 min.)...Mar. 6
- Arizona Roundup—Tom Keene (55 min.)...Mar. 6
- Man With Two Lives—Norris-Lawson (66 min.)...Mar. 13
- Klondike Fury—Ed. Lowe (68 min.)...Mar. 20

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4115 Pacific Blackout—Preston-Merivale (re)...Jan. 2
- 4111 Bahama Passage—Carroll-Hayden ...Jan. 23
- 4112 Sullivan's Travels—McCrea-Lake ...Feb. 6
- 4113 No Hands on the Clock—Morris-Parker...Feb. 13
- 4114 Mr. Bug Goes to Town—Cartoon (re)...Feb. 20
- 4150 Secret of the Wastelands—Boyd) No dates have
- 4151 Outlaws of the Desert—Boyd) been set on
- 4152 Riders of the Timberline—Boyd) these Westerns
- 4153 Stick to Your Guns—Boyd) but they are
- 4154 Twilight on the Trail—Boyd) all available
- 4116 Torpedo Boat—Richard Arlen ...Mar. 13
- 4119 The Lady Has Plans—Goddard-Milland...Mar. 20
- 4118 The Fleet's In—Lamour-Holden ...Apr. 3
- 4117 The Remarkable Andrew—Donlevy-Holden...Apr. 17
- 4120 Fly By Night—Nancy Kelly...Apr. 24

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1940-41 Program

- 101 I Take This Oath—Compton (67 min.)...May 29
- 151 Frontier Crusader—Tim McCoy (64 min.)...June 1
- 102 Hold That Woman—J. Dunn (66 min.)...June 28
- 157 Billy the Kid Outlawed—Steele (55 min.)...July 20
- 152 Gun Code—Tim McCoy (55 min.)...Aug. 3
- 103 Marked Men—Hull (69 min.)...Aug. 28
- 153 Arizona Gang Busters—McCoy (60 min.)...Sept. 16
- 158 Billy the Kid in Texas—Steele (55 min.)...Sept. 30
- 154 Riders of Black Mountain—McCoy (59 min.)...Nov. 11
- 105 Devil Bat—Lugosi (69 min.)...Dec. 13
- 104 Misbehaving Husbands—Langdon-Byrd (66) Dec. 20
- 159 Billy the Kid's Gun Justice—Steele (63 m.)...Dec. 27

- 163 The Lone Rider Rides On (64 min.)...Jan. 10
- 160 Billy the Kid's Range War—Steele (60 min.)...Jan. 24
- 106 Secret Evidence—Reynolds (65 min.)...Jan. 31
- 107 Caught in the Act—Armetta (62 min.)...Feb. 7
- 164 Lone Rider Crosses the Rio (64 min.)...Feb. 28
- 155 Outlaws of the Rio Grande—McCoy (55 m.)...Mar. 7
- 108 Federal Fugitives (66 min.)...Mar. 28
- 161 Billy the Kid's Fighting Pals—Steele (62 m.)...Apr. 18
- 110 South of Panama—Pryor (68 min.)...May 2
- 165 The Lone Rider in Ghost Town (64 min.)...May 16
- 109 Emergency Landing—Hughes-Brent (70 m.)...May 23
- 123 Paper Bullets—Woodbury (72 min.)...June 13
- 156 Texas Marshal—McCoy (62 min.)...June 13
- 111 Criminals Within—Linden (70 min.)...June 27
- 112 Double Cross—Richmond (65 min.)...June 27
- 113 Desperate Cargo—Byrd-Hughes (69 min.)...July 4
- 162 Billy the Kid in Santa Fe—Steele (66 min.)...July 11
- 124 Gambling Daughters—Pryor (67 min.)...Aug. 1
- 166 Lone Rider in Frontier Fury (62 min.)...Aug. 8
- 167 The Lone Rider Ambushed (67 min.)...Aug. 29
- 125 Reg'lar Fellers—Roscoe Ates (74 min.)...Sept. 5
- 115 Dangerous Lady (66 min.)...Sept. 12
- 126 Jungle Man—Buster Crabbe (63 min.)...Sept. 19
- 114 Mr. Celebrity—Day (69 min.)...Oct. 10
- 168 Lone Rider Fights Back (64 min.)...Oct. 17
- 116 The Blonde Comet—Vale-Kent (67 min.)...Dec. 5

1941-42 Program

- 205 Hard Guy—LaRue-Healy (68 min.)...Sept. 26
- 257 Billy the Kid Wanted—Crabbe (64 min.)...Oct. 3
- 213 The Miracle Kid—Neal-Hughes (69 min.)...Oct. 24
- 230 Swamp Woman—Corio-LaRue (68 min.)...Nov. 14
- 258 Billy the Kid's Roundup—Crabbe (58 min.)...Nov. 21
- 215 Law of the Timber—Brazeal-Reynolds (68)...Nov. 28
- 251 Texas Man Hunt—Boyd (60 min.)...Dec. 12
- 263 The Lone Rider and the Bandit (55 min.)...Dec. 26
- 206 Duke of the Navy—Byrd (65 min.)...Jan. 2
- 214 Today I Hang—King-Barrie (67 min.)...Jan. 30
- 207 Broadway Big Shot—Byrd-Vale (65 min.)...Feb. 6
- 252 Raiders of the West—Boyd (64 min.)...Feb. 13
- 259 Billy the Kid Trapped—Crabbe (59 min.)...Feb. 20
- 210 Too Many Women—Hamilton-Lang (67 m.)...Feb. 27
- 202 Girls Town—Storey-Fellows (68 min.)...Mar. 6
- 270 Rodeo Rhythm—Scott (72 min.)...Mar. 13
- 264 The Lone Rider in Cheyenne (59 min.)...Mar. 20
- 211 Dawn Express—Whalen ...Mar. 27
- 229 The Strangler—Campbell (67 min.)...Apr. 3
- 216 House of Errors—Langdon ...Apr. 10
- 217 The Panther's Claw—Blackmer...Apr. 17
- Rolling Down the Great Divide—Boyd...Apr. 24
- 218 Inside the Law—Ford...Apr. 31
- 260 Billy the Kid's Smoking Guns—Crabbe...May 1
- 201 Men of San Quentin—Hughes...May 8
- 209 The Mad Monster—Downs-Nagel...May 15
- 208 The Devil's Sister—Anna May Wong...May 29

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 164 Code of the Outlaw—Three Mesq. (58 min.)...Jan. 30
- 114 Tragedy at Midnight—Howard-Lindsay ...Feb. 2
- 154 South of Santa Fe—Roy Rogers...Feb. 17
- 102 Sleepytime Gal—Canova-Tom Brown ...Mar. 5
- 175 Stagecoach Express—Don Barry ...Mar. 6
- 144 The Heart of the Rio Grande—Gene Autry...Mar. 11
- 115 Yokel Boy—Albert Dekker-Joan Davis...Mar. 13
- 165 Raiders of the Range—Three Mesq...Mar. 18
- 118 Affairs of Jimmy Valentine—O'Keefe (72m.)...Mar. 25
- 176 Jesse James, Jr.—Don Barry...Mar. 25
- 116 Shepherd of the Ozarks—Weaver Bros...Mar. 26
- 155 Sunset on the Desert—Rogers (54 min.)...Apr. 1
- 117 Girl From Alaska—Middleton-Parker...Apr. 6
- Home in Wyomin—Gene Autry...Apr. 10

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

219	Sing Your Worries Away—Lahr-Havoc (re.)	Mar. 6
220	Mexican Spitfire at Sea—Velez-Errol (re.)	Mar. 13
221	The Bashful Bachelor—Lum-Abner	Mar. 20
222	The Magnificent Ambersons—Welles-Cotten	Mar. 27
292	Fantasia—Walt Disney	Apr. 3
284	Land of Open Range—Tim Holt (60 min.)	Apr. 10
223	Tuttles of Tahiti—Laughton-Hall (re.)	Apr. 17
224	Scattergood Rides High—Kibbee-Moore	Apr. 24
225	Mayor of 44th St.—Murphy-Shirley	May 8

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

231	Young America—Withers-Darwell	Feb. 6
232	On the Sunny Side—McDowall-Darwell	Feb. 13
233	Roxie Hart—Rogers-Menjou-Montgomery	Feb. 20
234	Castle in the Desert—Toler-Whelan	Feb. 27
235	The Night Before the Divorce—Bari-Hughes	Mar. 6
236	Song of the Islands—Grable-Mature-Oakie	Mar. 13
237	Rings on Her Fingers—Fonda-Tierney	Mar. 20
225	Lone Star Ranger—Kimbrough-Ryan	Mar. 20
238	H. G. Wells' Kipps—Redgrave-Wynyard	Mar. 27
239	Sundown Jim—Kimbrough-Gilmore	Mar. 27
240	Secret Agent of Japan—Foster-Bari	Apr. 3
241	To the Shores of Tripoli—Payne-O'Hara	Apr. 10
242	Who is Hope Schuyler?—J. Allen Jr.-Ryan	Apr. 17

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

	Love on the Dole—Kerr (English picture)	Dec. 12
	Hay Foot—Tracy-Gleason	Dec. 12
	The Shanghai Gesture—Tierney-Mature (reset)	Feb. 6
	A Gentleman After Dark—Donlevy-Hopkins	Feb. 27
	To Be Or Not To Be—Lombard-Benny (reset)	Mar. 6
	Dudes are Pretty People—Woodworth (reset)	Mar. 13
	Mister V—L. Howard-Morris	Mar. 20
	Kipling's Jungle Book—Sabu-Calleia (reset)	Apr. 3
	The Gold Rush—Charles Chaplin (reset)	Apr. 17
	About Face—Tracy-Sawyer	Apr. 17
	Twin Beds—Brent-J. Bennett (reset)	Apr. 24
	Ships With Wings—Clements-Banks	May 15

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

6017	What's Cookin'—G. Jean-Andrews Sis	Feb. 20
6042	The Mad Doctor of Market Street—Atwill	Feb. 27
6027	Frisco Lil—Hervey-Taylor	Mar. 6
6012	Ghost of Frankenstein—Lugosi-Chaney	Mar. 13
	Burch Minds the Baby—Bruce-Crawford	Mar. 20
6026	Juke Box Jenny—Hilliard-Murray	Mar. 27
6047	Saboteur—P. Lane-Cummings-Kruger	Apr. 3
6036	The Strange Case of Dr. R X—Atwill	Apr. 10
6053	Unseen Enemy—Terry-Devine	Apr. 10
6034	Mississippi Gambler—Taylor-Langford	Apr. 17
6065	Fighting Bill Fargo—J. M. Brown	Apr. 17
	Lady in a Jam—Dunne-Bellamy	Apr. 24
6041	You're Telling Me—Herbert-Paige	May 1
6048	The Spoilers—Dietrich-Scott-Lindsay	May 8
6024	Almost Married—Paige-Frazer	May 22
	Eagle Squadron—Stack-Barrymore-Hall	May 29

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

123	Bullet Scars—Toomey-Da Silva	Mar. 7
124	Always In My Heart—Francis-Huston	Mar. 14
129	This Was Paris—Lyon-Dvorak	Mar. 21
127	Gambling Lady—(Re-Issue) Stanwyck	Mar. 28
128	Kennel Murder Case—(Re-Issue) Powell	Mar. 28
126	The Male Animal—Fonda-deHavilland	Apr. 4
125	Murder in the Big House—Emerson (Re.)	Apr. 11
120	Kings Row—Sheridan-Cummings-Regan	Apr. 18
130	I Was Framed—Ames-Toomey	Apr. 25
131	Larceny, Inc.—Robinson-Wyman	May 2

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

3753	Under the Shedding Chestnut Tree—Cart. (8½ min.)	Feb. 2
3604	Kitchen Quiz No. 3 (9½ min.)	Feb. 6
3554	The Great American Divide—Tours (10½)	Feb. 12
3806	College Champions—Sport Reels (9½m) (r)	Feb. 12
3856	Screen Snapshots No. 6—(9 min.)	Feb. 12
3904	Spare Time in the Army—Panoramics (12½)	Feb. 12
3505	Wacky Wigwags—Color Rhapsody (8 min.)	Feb. 22
3657	Community Sing No. 7 (9 min.)	Feb. 22
3857	Screen Snapshots No. 7 (10 min.)	Mar. 6
3905	Health For Defense—Panoramics	Mar. 13
3605	So You Think You Know Music—Quiz (10)	Mar. 13
3506	Concerto In B Flat Minor—Col. Rap.	Mar. 20
3807	Wrestling Rhapsody—Sports	Mar. 26
3702	Dog Meets Dog—Phantasies	Mar. 27
3658	Community Sing No. 8	Mar. 27
3858	Screen Snapshots No. 8 (10 min.)	Apr. 10
3754	Wolf Chases Pig—Cartoon	Apr. 20
3703	A Battle for a Bottle—Cartoon	Apr. 30
3507	Cinderella Goes to a Party—Cartoon	May 3

Columbia—Two Reels

3141	Mysterious Pilot—Cap. Mid. No. 1 (28m.)	Feb. 15
3134	Ah're Afloat—Holt No. 14 (18½ min.)	Feb. 20
3142	The Stolen Range Finder—Captain No. 2	Feb. 22
3405	Cactus Makes Perfect—Stooges (17 min.)	Feb. 26
3135	Yielded Hostage—Holt No. 15	Feb. 27
3143	The Captured Plane—Captain No. 3	Mar. 1
3144	Mistaken Identity—Captain No. 4	Mar. 8
3430	Yoo Hoo General—Billy Vine (18 min.)	Mar. 12
3145	Ambushed Ambulance—Captain No. 5	Mar. 15
3146	Weird Waters—Captain No. 6	Mar. 22
3431	What Makes Lizzy Dizzy—All Star (17 m.)	Mar. 26
3147	Menacing Fates—Captain No. 7	Mar. 29
3148	Shells of Evil—Captain No. 8	Apr. 5
3432	Groom and Board—All Star (16 min.)	Apr. 9
3149	The Drop to Doom—Captain No. 9	Apr. 12
3150	The Hidden Bomb—Captain No. 10	Apr. 19
3406	What's the Matador—Stooges (16 min.)	Apr. 23
3151	Sky Terror—Captain No. 11	Apr. 26
3152	Burning Bomber—Captain No. 12	May 3
3433	How Spry I Am—All Star (18 min.)	May 7
3153	Death in the Cockpit—Captain No. 13	May 10
3154	Scourge of Revenge—Captain No. 14	May 17
3155	The Fatal Hour—Captain No. 15	May 24

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

T-317	Minnesota, Land of Plenty—Travel (10 m.)	Jan. 31
K-383	Flag of Mercy—Passing Parade (10 min.)	Jan. 31
T-318	Colorful North Carolina—Travel (9 min.)	Feb. 21
W-344	The Hungry Wolf—Cartoon (9 min.)	Feb. 21
S-365	What About Daddy—Pete Smith (10 min.)	Feb. 28
C-395	Going To Press—Our Gang	Mar. 7
W-345	The First Swallow—Cartoon	Mar. 14
T-319	Land of the Quintuplets—Travel	Mar. 14
M-333	Lady or the Tiger—Miniature	Mar. 28
W-346	The Bear and The Beavers—Cartoon	Mar. 28
T-320	Glacier Park or Waterton Lakes—Travel	Apr. 11

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

A-302	Main Street on the March—Special (20 m.)	Jan. 10
A-303	Don't Talk—Special (22 min.)	Feb. 28

Paramount—One Reel

S1-2	Nothing But Nerves—Benchley (11 m.) (re.)	Jan. 9
W1-3	Superman in the Billion Dollar Ltd. (9 m.)	Jan. 9
J1-3	Popular Science No. 3 (11 min.) (re.)	Jan. 11
Y1-3	At the County Fair—Animals (9 m.) (re.)	Jan. 16
E1-4	Kickin' The Conga Round—Popeye (7 min.)	Jan. 16
R1-6	Better Bowling—Sportlight (10 min.)	Jan. 23
E1-5	Blunder Below—Popeye (7 min.) (re.)	Feb. 7
U1-2	Jasper and the Watermelons—Mad Models (8 min.) (re.)	Feb. 8
Q1-3	The Quiz Kids No. 3 (9 min.) (re.)	Feb. 9
W1-4	The Arctic Giant—Superman Cart. (9) (r.)	Feb. 9
Z1-3	Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 3 (10m) (r.)	Feb. 10
R1-7	Lure of the Surti—Sportlight (10m.) (re.)	Feb. 10
L1-3	Unusual Occupations No. 3 (11m.) (re.)	Feb. 11
A1-3	Carnival In Brazil—Headliner (9m.) (re.)	Mar. 6
E1-6	Fleets of Stren'th—Popeye (7 min.)	Mar. 13
S1-3	The Witness—Benchley	Mar. 20
R1-8	Timing Is Everything—Sportlight (re.)	Mar. 20
W1-5	Superman in the Bulleteers—Superman	Mar. 27
U1-3	Sky Princess—Madcap Models	Mar. 27

RKO—One Reel

24306 Ten Pin Parade—Sportscope (9 min.)...Jan. 23
 24406 Picture People No. 6 (9 min.)...Jan. 30
 24307 Jungle Jaunt—Sportscope (8 min.)...Feb. 20
 24407 Picture People No. 7 (8 min.)...Feb. 27
 24101 Symphony Hour (7 min.)...Mar. 20

RKO—Two Reels

23404 Heart Burn—Edgar Kennedy (17 min.)...Feb. 20
 23108 March of Time No. 8 (19 min.)...Mar. 13
 23405 Inferior Decorator—E. Kennedy (17 m.)...Apr. 3

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

2507 Funny Bunny Business—Terry-Toon (7 m.)...Feb. 6
 2105 Secret of the Fjord—L. Thomas (9 min.)...Feb. 13
 2558 Cat Meets Mouse—Terry-Toon (7 min.)...Feb. 20
 2305 Snow Trails—Sports (10 min.) (re.)...Feb. 27
 2508 Eat Me Kitty Eight to the Bar—Toon (7)...Mar. 6
 2404 Hub of the World—Lowell Thomas (10m.)...Mar. 13
 2559 Sham Battle Shenanigans—Toon (10 min.)...Mar. 20
 2104 Jewel of the Pacific—L. Thomas (10 min.)...Mar. 27
 2509 Oh Gentle Spring—Terry-Toon (7 min.)...Apr. 3
 2205 Wings of Defense—Paul Douglas (10 m.)...Apr. 10
 2560 Gandy Goose in Lights Out—Toon (7 m.)...Apr. 17
 2306 Setting the Pace—Thorgenson (10 min.)...Apr. 24
 2510 Gandy Goose in Tricky Business—Toon (7) May 1
 2107 Gateway to Asia—Lowell Thomas (10 m.)...May 8
 2561 Neck and Neck—Terry-Toon (7 min.)...May 15
 2106 Heart of Mexico—Lowell Thomas (10 min.)...May 22
 2511 The Stork's Mistake—Terry-Toon (7 min.)...May 29

Universal—One Reel

6359 Sky Pastures—Scenic...Mar. 23
 6360 Thrills of the Deep—Scenic...Mar. 30
 6361 Sports in the Rockies...Apr. 6
 6248 Mother Goose on the Loose—Cart. (7 min.)...Apr. 13
 6379 Pussy Cat Cafe—Stranger Than Fiction...Apr. 20

Universal—Two Reels

6691 Caught in the Caverns—Winslow No. 11
 (11 min.)...Mar. 17
 6628 Tune Time—Musical (15 min.)...Mar. 18
 6692 The Scorpion Strangled—Winslow No. 12
 (21 min.)...Mar. 24
 6581 The League of Murdered Men—Gang Busters
 No. 1 (27 min.)...Apr. 7
 6582 The Death Plunge—Gang Busters No. 2
 (20 min.)...Apr. 14
 6229 Gay Nineties—Musical (15 min.)...Apr. 15
 6583 Murder Blockade—Gang Busters No. 3
 (21 min.)...Apr. 21
 6584 Hangman's Noose—Gang Busters No. 4
 (18 min.)...Apr. 28

Vitaphone—One Reel

7711 Aloha Hooey—Merrie Melodies (7 min.)...Jan. 31
 7404 Rodeo Roundup—Sports Parade (10 min.)...Jan. 31
 7304 Miracle Makers—Novelties (10 min.) (re.)...Jan. 31
 7505 The Playgirls—Mel. Masters (10 min.) (re.)...Feb. 14
 7606 Who's Who in the Zoo—L. Tunes (7 min.)...Feb. 14
 7607 Porky's Cafe—Looney Tunes (7 min.)...Feb. 21
 7305 Then And Now—Novelties (10 min.)...Feb. 21
 7712 Conrad the Sailor—Mer. Melodies (7m.) (r)...Feb. 28
 7506 Leo Reisman & Orch.—Mel. Masters (10m.)...Feb. 28
 7405 Hunting Dogs At Work—Sports (10m) (r)...Mar. 14
 7713 Crazy Cruise—Mer. Melodies (7 m.) (re.)...Mar. 14
 7608 Saps In Chaps—Looney Tunes (7 min.)...Mar. 28
 7714 Wabbit Who Came to Supper—M. Mel. (7)...Mar. 28
 7406 Shoot Yourself Some Golf—Sports (10m.)...Apr. 4
 7507 Richard Himber & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10)...Apr. 11
 7715 Horton Hatches the Egg—Mer. Mel. (7m.)...Apr. 11
 7609 Daffy's Southern Exposure—L. Tunes (7m.)...Apr. 25
 7716 Dog Tired—Mer. Melodies (7 min.)...Apr. 25

Vitaphone—Two Reels

7003 Gay Parisian—Special (20 min.)...Jan. 10
 7106 Calling All Girls—Bway. Brev. (20 min.)...Jan. 24
 7002 Soldiers in White—Tech. Spec. (21 min.)...Feb. 7
 7107 Wedding Yells—Bway. Brev. (20 min.)...Mar. 7
 7108 Maybe Darwin Was Right—By. Brev. (20)...Mar. 21
 7109 Calif. Jr. Symphony—Bway. Brev. (20m)...Apr. 18

**NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK
 RELEASE DATES**

Pathe News

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 25264 Wed.(E.) Apr. 8
 25165 Sat.(O.) .Apr. 11
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 25167 Sat.(O.) .Apr. 18
 25268 Wed.(E.) Apr. 22
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 25270 Wed.(E.) Apr. 29
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 25272 Wed.(E.) May 6
 25173 Sat.(O.) .May 9
 25274 Wed.(E.) May 13
 25175 Sat.(O.) .May 16
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 25177 Sat.(O.) .May 23
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Metrotone News

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Paramount News

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71 Wednesday ..May 13

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HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1942

No. 15

HERE AND THERE

WHAT IS UNITY?

Working together for the common good.

How can people whose interests are diverse work together?

When one understands the problems of the other fellows, feels sympathetic towards them, and is willing to help them, even at a sacrifice.

In taking an arbitrary stand by pulling out their play-dates for the Lew Ayres pictures, the heads of the Balaban & Katz circuit in Chicago did not try to understand the problem of the other fellow—the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer distributing organization, which produces and distributes these pictures, with the result that a great harm has been done to this company's interests, for many other exhibitors, upon learning that that circuit has pulled out its dates on all the pictures in which Lew Ayres appears, followed its example. There was hardly any justification for the act; they merely became panic-stricken and, before verifying public sentiment, rushed into action.

What does it matter to Balaban & Katz if, in taking the action they have taken, it put into jeopardy properties that are worth, in production cost alone, more than a million dollars?

How would Paramount, whose subsidiary Balaban & Katz is, feel if the Loew, the Fox-West Coast, the RKO and the Warner Bros. circuits would act the way the Balaban & Katz circuit has acted under similar circumstances?

The newspapers of the country have been tolerant toward the decision of Lew Ayres to claim exemption from military service on the ground that he is a conscientious objector. One of them—The New York Times, put it partly in the following manner:

"Those who are tempted to throw stones at Ayres would do better to ask themselves what their own faith is, and with how much forgetfulness of self they are living up to it. . . . We think that the men whose lives and deaths have testified most eloquently to this faith are the ones who would come closest to under-

standing Lew Ayres, though disagreeing with him to the last syllable. . . ."

Though I personally disagree with the views held by Lew Ayres on the ground that one cannot leave a mad dog have free access to city streets, I respect his viewpoint. It must have taken him great courage to risk his reputation in order that he may stand by his convictions.

My sympathies are fully with MGM, just as they would be with any distributing company that would find itself in the same predicament, and I have sufficient confidence in the good judgment of the exhibitors of the country to believe that they will do the fair thing. The "Dr. Kildare" series of pictures are valuable properties, not only for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, but also for the theatres.

* * *

AT LAST A NEW SALES PLAN has been worked out. Its terms, in condensed form, are as follows:

(1) Beginning September, the groups of pictures will consist of one-fourth of a company's product, not to exceed twelve pictures. Of these, five shall be completed and tradeshown, and seven by titles to be identified (a) by either star, or featured players, and (b) by writing into the contract the name of either the book or the stage play, if the picture is to be founded on a well known such work, or by furnishing an outline of the story, if the picture is to be founded on an original story.

(2) The exhibitor shall have the right to cancel two pictures, if the average rental for each picture does not exceed \$100, or only one picture, if the rental averages anywhere from \$101 to \$200. The cancellations are to be made from the unproduced (but identified) pictures.

(3) If the war emergency should compel a company to reduce the number of pictures it will produce by a minimum of 20%, the cancellation privilege is to be suspended, and the UMPI Committee will under-

(Continued on last page)

"Shepherd of the Ozarks" with the Weaver Brothers and Elviry

(Republic, March 26; time, 69 min.)

This hillbilly comedy is best suited for small town and neighborhood theater audiences, where the Weaver Brothers and Elviry have a following. The story is such aodge-podge of nonsense, bordering on the slapstick, that those who do not enjoy this brand of comedy may find the proceedings tiresome. As in their other pictures, the Weavers render a few hillbilly songs:—

When Frank Albertson, Lieutenant in the U. S. Army Air Corps, is forced to bail out of his plane, he lands in Weaverville, where, faking illness, he accepts the hospitality of the Weavers—Leon, Frank, and June, so as to be near Marilyn Hare, Leon and June's daughter. Thurston Hall, Albertson's father and head of an aluminum company, comes to take him home, and discovers that the Weavers' farm is rich in aluminum-bearing bauxite ore. Without revealing his knowledge, he offers to buy their land, but the Weavers refuse to sell at any price. Planning to capitalize on the romance between his son and their daughter, Hall takes the Weavers to his home city, where he showers them with luxuries. They eventually see through his trickery and return home. Meanwhile, Albertson, learning about this discovery of the bauxite deposits, is so angered by his father's attempt to profiteer on a metal so badly needed in defense work that he arranges for government agents to inspect the land. To thwart this move, Hall employs some actors, who, impersonating a poor farmer's family, convince the mountaineers that the government had forced them off their land, paying them a poor price. When the government men arrive, they find the villagers resentful. Just then, two units of the U. S. Army move into the region to begin their war games. The mountaineers, having never heard of a "mock war," believe it to be an invasion, and they attack to "save the United States from the enemy." They blaze away at the soldiers when Albertson arrives and stops them. By now, the mountaineers become so fired with patriotism that they agree to sell their land to the government. Albertson and Miss Hare resume their romance.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Frank McDonald directed it, and Armand Shaefer produced it.

Suitable for all the family.

"Juke Girl" with Ann Sheridan and Ronald Reagan

(Warner Brothers, May 30; time, 88 min.)

This is a rousing melodrama, offering good entertainment. It is a blend of fast action, human interest, romance, and some comedy, flavored with a touch of the "Grapes of Wrath." The locale is the produce farming section of Florida, where itinerant workers flock during the harvest season, bringing about boom-town activities. Because it deals with human suffering, murder and mob rule, the picture is unpleasant. It depicts the tribulations of poverty stricken farmers, who fall prey to the insidious methods practiced by the buyers of their produce. The production values are good, and the acting capable. The title, together with Ann Sheridan's popularity as the "oomph" girl, should help the box-office:—

Ronald Reagan and Richard Whorf, itinerant vegetable pickers, break up their friendship when Reagan backs the stand of George Tobias, a farmer, who refuses to sell his load of tomatoes to Gene Lockhart, owner of a vegetable packing plant, whose unscrupulous methods had long kept the farmers of Cat Tail, Florida, in extreme poverty. When Lockhart blocks Tobias' efforts to sell his produce to other buyers, Reagan resolves to help him. Aided by Ann Sheridan, a juke joint hostess, Reagan steals one of Lockhart's trucks, hoping to get Tobias' produce to the Atlanta market. Lockhart learns of the plan and sends Howard da Silva, his foreman, and Whorf, who now works for him, to Tobias' farm. There they retrieve the truck and ruin the produce. Reagan and Tobias become partners and grow a new crop. When da Silva tries to influence the pickers against helping Reagan and Tobias harvest the crop, Miss Sheridan rallies them and gets their cooperation. Through Lockhart's influence, she is fired from the juke joint. Reagan, now in love with Miss Sheridan, induces her to come to the farm. The harvesting finished, Reagan succeeds in trucking and selling the produce in Atlanta, despite Lockhart's attempt to stop him. Tobias returns to Cat Tail and, feeling joyful over his good fortune, gets drunk. Reagan takes him home and puts him to bed. But Tobias, in good

humor, sneaks out. He wants to shake hands with Lockhart and be friends. But Lockhart repulses Tobias, then murders him. Through Lockhart's scheming, Reagan and Miss Sheridan are accused of the crime and jailed. When da Silva organizes a lynching mob, Whorf protests to Lockhart, who, inadvertently, makes a slip of the tongue. Whorf forces a confession from him in time to save Reagan and Miss Sheridan from the mob's fury. The young couple settle down on the farm, while Whorf leaves to continue his wanderings.

A. I. Bezzerides wrote the screen play, Curtis Bernhardt directed it, and Hal B. Wallis produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Lady Gangster" with Faye Emerson, Julie Bishop and Frank Wilcox

(Warner Bros., Release date not set; time, 60 min.)

Just another program melodrama, suitable for a mid-week double bill. It offers little that is novel in the way of story or treatment. Dramatically, the story is weak: the heroine is jailed, not as a victim of circumstances, but for a crime she had willfully committed, and she does nothing that warrants the hero's efforts to secure a parole for her. Faye Emerson performs well, and tries hard to give substance to mediocre material. For the most part the action is slow-moving, and the production values are only fair. Audiences that are not too discriminating about story values may find it diverting. The romance is unconvincing:—

When Faye Emerson, an unemployed actress, is arrested on suspicion of being an accomplice in a bank holdup, Herbert Rawlinson, District Attorney, fails to break her alibi. Frank Wilcox, head of a radio station, takes Rawlinson to task for his failure to solve the case and, to his surprise, Rawlinson invites him to participate in the case. Wilcox recognizes Faye as a childhood sweetheart, and persuades Rawlinson to release her in his custody. He invites her to his home. She goes home to get some clothes, and they agree to meet within the hour. At her boarding house, which quarters also the holdup gang, she finds them preparing to leave without giving her a share of the stolen money. Noticing a police car prowling outside the building, the gang caches the money in the fireplace and flees. Faye retrieves the money and gives it to the landlady in a brief case, instructing her to give the case to none except to whoever would present the half of a torn dollar bill, the other half of which she gives her. When she meets Wilcox, he tells her he believes in her. This gives her the courage to confess. Stunned, Wilcox turns her over to the police. In prison, she receives many letters from Wilcox, who feels that he had failed her and is determined to help her. But she returns the letters unopened. Julie Bishop, her cellmate, persuades her to accept his aid. Through his efforts she is made eligible for parole. When one of the gang visits Faye in an unsuccessful attempt to learn the whereabouts of the money, the conversation is overheard by Ruth Ford, a "stool pigeon" inmate, who reports it to the head matron. The matron rejects the parole application after a stormy scene with Wilcox. Ruth cunningly reports to Faye that Wilcox had ruined her parole chances. Infuriated, Faye plans to harm Wilcox. Promising the matron the reward money, she is granted permission to arrange with Wilcox for him to pick up the stolen money. Meanwhile, she smuggles a letter to the gang informing them to get Wilcox when he calls for the money. When the matron unwittingly reveals to Faye that Wilcox had not spoiled her parole, Faye overpowers her and escapes from jail. She reaches the boarding house in time to save Wilcox, the money, and their love. She is paroled.

Anthony Coldeway wrote the screen play, and Florian Roberts directed it.

Not suitable for children.

"The Mystery of Marie Roget" with Patric Knowles and Maria Montez

(Universal, April 3; time, 60 min.)

A fair murder mystery horror-melodrama of program grade, with the horror angle toned down. In addition to the regular followers of this type of pictures, it should appeal to the lovers of Edgar Allen Poe's tales. The treatment is stereotype, but the interest is maintained fairly well, since the mystery is not solved until the end and it is not until then that the murderer's identity is divulged. The production has been treated lavishly, and the performances are competent.

Full review next week.

"Unseen Enemy" with Leo Carrillo, Don Terry and Irene Hervey

(Universal, April 10; time, 60½ min.)

Just a mild espionage melodrama. The story is thin and follows a routine formula of undercover operations. Leo Carrillo is cast in an unfavorable role as an American-born Italian fifth columnist. To offset the unpleasantness of his role, he is pictured as being kindly to his stepdaughter, but this, in addition to his turning against the spies at the finish, are not redeeming features to his willful acts. The production values are ordinary, and the story lacks action and suspense. The picture is best suited for theatres whose patrons are not too exacting in their demands.

Posing as a captured Nazi officer, Don Terry, a Canadian intelligence officer, joins Lionel Royce, a Nazi spy, in escaping from a Canadian concentration camp. During the escape, Royce is shot. Terry makes his way to San Francisco following instructions from the dying Royce. There, he visits a cafe owned by Leo Carrillo and Irene Hervey, his stepdaughter. Carrillo, a paid contact man for the Nazis, leads Royce to Fred Gierman, a Nazi agent. When Terry identifies himself as Royce, Gierman reveals that he had hidden a smuggled crew of Axis seamen near the waterfront. They were to "hijack" a Japanese ship interned by the Port Authority, and use it as a raider to attack American shipping. Unaware of her stepfather's affiliations, Miss Hervey, suspicious of Terry, notifies Andy Devine, a harbor detective. Devine arrests Terry, but releases him when he makes known his identity. Meanwhile, Royce, who had recovered from his wounds, reaches San Francisco and establishes his credentials with Gierman. At this point, Miss Hervey learns of Carrillo's activities and, when Devine tells her who Terry really is, sends Carrillo a warning note. When Terry and Miss Hervey are captured and taken to the ship by Royce and his henchmen, Carrillo turns on his former colleagues. He notifies the harbor police and, with their aid, overpowers the Nazis on board the ship. Carrillo, mortally wounded, begs Terry to take care of Miss Hervey. Terry gives him his word.

Stanley Rubin and Roy Chanslor wrote the screen play, John Rawlins directed it, and Marshall Grant produced it. Not for children.

"I Was Framed" with Michael Ames and Julie Bishop

(Warner Bros., April 25; time, 61 min.)

A mild program melodrama. Not only is the plot familiar, but it is developed in a routine manner—it lacks novelty. The picture starts off well enough in the first few reels, but soon peters out because the hero, instead of going after the politicians who had framed him and sent him to jail, does nothing about vindicating himself after his jailbreak—he just leads a normal life. Thus the story loses its dramatic value—it has no point. The players have been given poor material; their performances are uninspiring:—

When the testimony of Michael Ames, a crusading reporter, bent on clearing his city and state of corrupt politicians, hurts the gubernatorial chances of Howard Hickman, Ames is overpowered, slugged unconscious, soaked with whiskey and placed at the wheel of a car that is allowed to run wild. The careening car kills three people. He is arrested, convicted as a drunken-driver murderer, and is given a long sentence. Worried about the condition of Julie Bishop, his wife, about to have a child, Ames is urged to make an escape by John Harmon, his cellmate, who shows him a route the two might use to freedom. Ames succeeds in the escape, but Harmon, unsuccessful, is furious at being left behind. Outside, Ames is joined by his wife, who expects her baby momentarily. Driving all night, Miss Bishop faints, and Ames is compelled to take her to the nearest doctor. After the child is born, Miss Bishop, unknown to Ames, confides in Aldrich Bowker, the doctor, and tells him of their predicament. The doctor induces Ames to make his home with him, and finds a job for him with the local newspaper. Assuming a fictitious name, Ames does well with his job and within five years succeeds to the editorship, until one day Harmon, passing through the town, recognizes Ames. When he demands blackmail money from Miss Bishop to keep Ames' past a secret, she gives him a thousand dollars. He returns for more, but he encounters Ames. He shoots him, but he is in turn killed by the police, brought to the scene by the doctor. Ames recuperates and learns that he had been cleared of the charge for which he had been convicted.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, and D. Ross Lederman directed it.

Not suitable for children.

"In This Our Life" with Bette Davis, Olivia de Havilland and George Brent

(Warner Bros., May 16; time, 96 min.)

An engrossing, but somewhat depressing drama. Although it is not, strictly speaking, entertainment for the masses, it is not altogether for class audiences either. The story is unpleasant, for it pits sister against sister, and centers around the acts of a scheming woman, who brings tragedy and unhappiness upon the lives of innocent people. Once again Bette Davis is cast in a malignant role. Production, direction, and performances, are of the highest standard:—

On the eve of her marriage to George Brent, an attorney, Bette Davis runs off with Dennis Morgan, a young surgeon and husband of Olivia de Havilland, Bette's sister. Olivia and Brent are deeply affected, as are Frank Craven and Billie Burke, her mother and father. Charles Coburn, her wealthy uncle, who had spoiled her with money and gifts, is furious. Out of their mutual unhappiness, Olivia and Brent find love. Meanwhile, Bette and Morgan establish themselves in Baltimore, where Morgan finds a new post in a hospital. They marry when Olivia secures her divorce, but the marriage soon strikes a discordant note when their interests in life clash. His mental anguish so affects Morgan, that he commits suicide. Bette is brought home so broken up, that the family forgives her. But she soon tires of her grieving, and resumes her old tricks. She asks Brent to meet her at a roadside tavern for dinner, assuming he will be glad to accept. Peeved because he had not come, Bette decides to go home. Driving at a reckless pace, she kills a child. Panicky, she does not stop. When the police trace the car, Bette disclaims any knowledge of the accident, and cunningly intimates that it might have been Ernest Anderson, a colored boy, who did chores for the family. She tells them that she had given the car to the boy for a washing. The police jail the lad. Knowing Anderson to be of fine character, Olivia investigates, and becomes fully convinced that Bette had lied. Bette maintains that Olivia is persecuting her because of jealousy over Brent, but admits her crime when Brent produces proof of her guilt. Asked to accompany him to police headquarters, Bette rushes out of the house and drives away at a furious pace. Her car skids, overturns, and she is killed.

Howard Koch wrote the screen play and John Huston directed it. It was produced by Hal B. Wallis and David Lewis.

Morally objectionable for children.

"Murder in the Big House" with Faye Emerson, Van Johnson and George Meeker

(Warner Brothers, April 11; time, 59 min.)

This fairly good program murder mystery melodrama should please the followers of this type of pictures. This time the murder angle differs somewhat, and the murder mystery is solved, not by the police, but by a cub reporter. The interest is maintained fairly well, for the murderer's identity, as well as the solution to the mystery, is not divulged until the finish. It seems as if some of the "Front Page" situations have been copied:—

Threatening to implicate others unless his death sentence is commuted, Michael Ames is assured by Douglas Wood, his "mouthpiece," that the Governor will announce it on the radio one hour before the execution. Ames promises to listen on the small radio set in his cell, which is equipped with ear phones. In the offices of the Morning News, George Meeker, ace reporter, assigned to the execution, becomes intoxicated. Knowing that he cannot cover the assignment, Faye Emerson, a female reporter, takes Van Johnson, a cub reporter, and heads for the prison. There is a severe electrical storm in progress the night of the execution and, while waiting to be called from the press room, the reporters are told that a flash of lightning had killed Ames in his cell. Although the other reporters are satisfied with the warden's explanation, Johnson, upon his return to the newspaper office, confides in Meeker, who is now sober, his suspicions that Ames had been murdered. They both set out to get the evidence to confirm their suspicions. Johnson learns that also Roland Drew, a death-cell pal of Ames', had been assured by Wood that his sentence would be commuted and had been told to listen in on the radio for the announcement. Johnson contacts Ruth Ford, Drew's wife, and instructs her to see her husband to give him information that would save his life. On the night of Drew's execution, Drew pretends to have died in his cell just as the electric chair is tested. Johnson traps the warden when he shows that the radio ear phones had been connected to the electric chair with hidden wires.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play. B. Reaves Eason directed it.

Not suitable for children.

take to carry on negotiations with a view to arriving at a substitute privilege.

(4) In cases where the distributor reserves the right either to allocate or to reallocate the prices, the new price must be given to the exhibitor at the time the distributor either sends the availability notice, or books the picture—whichever is the earlier.

(5) Special features and roadshows, as defined in the Consent Decree, and such features as are covered by special producer and distributor contracts that do not permit their inclusion in group sales, may be sold separately—apart from the groups.

(6) All pictures canceled by the exhibitor are not to be included in any subsequent groups offered him for sale.

(7) As many as six western pictures identified by star may be sold in a group without screening.

According to a distributor survey, approximately eighty-three per cent of the theatres will enjoy the cancellation privilege of either one or of two pictures, and only a small number, not exceeding one hundred, independent theatres will be denied that privilege.

The plan will now have to be submitted to the Department of Justice for approval. If it approves it, then the Department will submit it to Judge Goddard for approval. But first it must be ratified by the majority of the exhibitor organizations.

As stated in last week's issue, the distributors could not go beyond selling one-quarter of a season's output each time, by reason of the fact that none of them could identify more than seven pictures and be honest with his accounts. That is at least what Bill Rodgers, speaking for his company, stated two weeks ago at the meeting of the full UPMI Committee. And what is true of MGM is undoubtedly true of every other major company. Besides, it is doubtful whether the Department of Justice would approve a sales plan that would include a greater number of "identified" pictures, for its views are definite so far as tradeshowing of pictures is concerned.

It seems as if the plan will be ratified by a majority of the exhibitor organizations. It is the best plan that could be obtained by the exhibitor representatives at this time.

* * *

QUESTIONED BY A REPORTER of The Film Daily as to his opinion of the new sales plan, H. A. Cole, former president of Allied States Association and one of the exhibitor members of the UPMI Committee, said that he could not state at present his personal viewpoint on the plan in that the details will have to be presented to the members of the Allied Board of Directors first when they meet on April 14, in Chicago. But he did say that the plan, in its present

form, contains all the concessions that the exhibitor members on the UPMI Committee could obtain from the distributors. Its provisions will be given a thorough consideration at the board's meeting. "The progress made by this sub-committee," he said, "has been most encouraging."

* * *

IS JACK WARNER, head of the Warner Bros. studios, suffering from gangster complex? Of the ten pictures that the Warner organization has offered to the exhibitors, five of which have already been reviewed and five are reviewed in this week's issue, five are gangster pictures.

Here is a list of them:

Of the previous five, "Larceny, Inc." and "Bullet Scars."

Of the five reviewed in this week's issue, "I Was Framed," "Lady Gangster" and "Murder in the Big House."

There might not have been a question if these pictures had been outstanding, but such is not the case: with the exception of "Larceny, Inc.," with Edward G. Robinson, which is a comedy and stands out somewhat, the others are mediocre program melodramas.

Not only Warner Bros. but also all the other producers should stop making so many gangster pictures. It is not good for the business.

* * *

ONE BLESSING THAT CURTAILING of production of luxury items has bestowed upon the industry is the disappearance of commercial advertisements in pictures, inserted surreptitiously. No longer do we see a close up of a Buick, with the name in bold relief, or of any other type of car, as well as of many other items. But we still hear the leading player in pictures say, "Give me a Camel," or "Give me a Chesterfield," or "Will you have a Coca Cola?" and the like.

* * *

MONOGRAM INFORMS this paper that the statement in the Hollywood Reporter giving the cost of "Klondike Fury" as \$33,000 is not correct in that the picture has cost more than that.

In view of the fact that HARRISON'S REPORTS, having copied from the Hollywood Reporter, gave the cost also as \$33,000, I am glad to make this correction.

* * *

NOW AND THEN YOUR COPY of HARRISON'S REPORTS for some reason fails to reach you. Look over your files and if you find the copy of any issue missing, order a duplicate copy. A sufficient number of copies of back issues for several years is kept in stock for just such a purpose.

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 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1942

No. 16

HERE AND THERE

GENERAL MOTORS HAS TAKEN page advertisements in leading newspapers throughout the nation to acquaint the American people with how much it is contributing towards winning the war.

Evidently the heads of that corporation feel that the cost is worth it if it will gain the good will of the public.

The motion picture industry has been contributing liberally, not only towards this war, but on every occasion for which its services have been requested. Can any one say that any theatre has refused to help a charity drive, the Red Cross drives, or any other drive for national, state or local welfare?

But how is the American public at large going to know about this industry's contributions unless it is told?

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that much good will would be gained if the film companies should buy newspaper space to let the American people know what the industry is doing to help the Government win the war. It is the best way by which attacks on the industry may be prevented in the future.

Let us acquaint the American people with what we are doing for them so that we may make it impossible for the Clarks, the Nyes, the Wheelers and the other isolationists and hate spreaders again to find fault with us.

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF THE NEW SEASON'S PICTURES

(The previous box office performances were printed in the issue of November 29 last year.)

Columbia

- "Ladies in Retirement": Good-Fair.
- "Secrets of the Lone Wolf": Fair.
- "Ellery Queen and the Murder Ring": Fair-Poor.
- "The Men in Her Life": Fair-Poor.
- "Go West, Young Lady": Good-Poor.
- "Sing for Your Supper": Fair.
- "Honolulu Lu": Poor.
- "Harvard Here I Come": Poor.
- "Bedtime Story": Good.
- "Confessions of Boston Blackie": Fair.
- "Blondie Goes to College": Fair-Poor.
- "Cadets on Parade": Poor.
- "A Close Call for Ellery Queen": Fair-Poor.
- "The Man Who Returned to Life": Fair.
- "The Lady Is Willing": Good-Fair.

The pictures checked are fifteen, with the following results:

Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 3.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

- "The Chocolate Soldier": Fair-Poor.
- "Unholy Partners": Good-Poor.
- "Shadow of the Thin Man": Good-Fair.
- "Two-Faced Woman": Good-Fair.
- "H. M. Pulham, Esq.": Very Good-Fair.
- "Design for Scandal": Good-Fair.
- "Tarzan's Secret Treasure": Good-Fair.
- "Kathleen": Fair.
- "Babes on Broadway": Very Good-Fair.
- "Dr. Kildare's Victory": Fair.
- "Johnny Eager": Good-Fair.
- "Mr. and Mrs. North": Fair-Poor.

- "The Bugle Sounds": Good-Fair.
- "Joe Smith, American": Very Good-Fair.
- "Woman of the Year": Excellent-Good.
- "The Vanishing Virginian": Good-Fair.
- "A Yank on the Burma Road": Fair.

Seventeen pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Fair, 3; Good-Fair, 7; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 2.

Paramount

- "New York Town": Good-Poor.
- "Birth of the Blues": Very Good-Good.
- "Skylark": Good.
- "Night of January 16": Fair.
- "Glamour Boy": Fair.
- "Among the Living": Fair-Poor.
- "Louisiana Purchase": Very Good-Fair.
- "Bahama Passage": Good-Fair.
- "Sullivan's Travels": Good-Fair.

Nine pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good-Fair, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

RKO

- "Suspicion": Very Good-Good.
- "Look Who's Laughing": Good.
- "Mexican Spitfire's Baby": Fair.
- "Weekend for Three": Fair-Poor.
- "Playmates": Good-Poor.
- "Ball of Fire": Very Good.
- "A Date with the Falcon": Fair.
- "Four Jacks and a Jill": Fair.
- "Obliging Young Lady": Fair.
- "Valley of the Sun": Good-Fair.
- "Call Out the Marines": Fair-Poor.
- "Joan of Paris": Good-Poor.

Twelve pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Good-Poor, 2; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 2.

Twentieth Century-Fox

- "Small Town Deb": Fair.
- "I Wake Up Screaming": Good-Fair.
- "Rise and Shine": Good-Fair.
- "Cadet Girl": Fair.
- "Marry the Boss' Daughter": Fair-Poor.
- "Swamp Water": Good-Fair.
- "Confirm or Deny": Fair.
- "Perfect Snob": Fair.
- "How Green Was My Valley": Excellent-Very Good.
- "Remember the Day": Good.
- "Blue White and Perfect": Fair.
- "A Gentleman at Heart": Good-Fair.
- "A Right to the Heart": Fair-Poor.
- "Son of Fury": Very Good.
- "Young America": Fair.
- "On the Sunny Side": Fair-Poor.
- "Roxie Hart": Good-Poor.

Seventeen pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 3.

"The Man Who Wouldn't Die" with Lloyd Nolan and Marjorie Weaver

(20th Century-Fox, May 1; time, 65 min.)

Combining horror and comedy, this murder mystery melodrama is good program fare. It contains all the eerie ingredients horror fans delight in—thunderous rainstorms, swinging windows, midnight burials, and a man with eyes that become luminous in the dark. Though routine, the story contains a farcical twist in that the detective poses as the husband of another man's wife. The sleuthing end is handled by Lloyd Nolan in a breezy fashion, furnishing considerable comedy relief. Although the murderer is identified half-way through the picture, the mystery remains unsolved until the end:—

Helene Reynolds, youthful wife of Paul Harvey, a millionaire industrialist, is upset over the unexpected visit of Marjorie Weaver, Harvey's daughter. Only a few moments before, her husband, together with Henry Wilcoxon, his physician, and Robert Emmett Keane, his secretary, had secretly carried from the house the body of a man for burial in the woods nearby. When the men return, Marjorie informs her father that she had eloped with Richard Derr, who had remained in Washington because of his government job. Marjorie retires but is awakened during the night by a man who shoots at her. Her screams bring her parents. When she cannot show them where the bullets had struck, she is told that she had a nightmare. As soon as Marjorie returns to bed, the three men hasten to the site of the grave they had dug, and find it empty. Feeling positive that she had not dreamt, Marjorie sends for Lloyd Nolan, a private detective. Because her father dislikes investigators, he agrees to pose as her husband. That night Wilcoxon is murdered. Harvey calls Olin Howland, the local police chief. In the midst of the questioning, the murderer returns. Nolan and Howland give chase in a police car, but the murderer's car overturns and he is apparently killed. He is Leroy Mason, a swarthy-faced East Indian. Informed by Harvey's caretaker about the mysterious burial, Nolan learns from a magician friend that Mason was one of the few men who could do the "buried alive" stunt. When Marjorie's husband shows up, Nolan is exposed and ordered by Harvey to leave. But Nolan informs Harvey that he is aware of the burial party. Harvey explains that he had accidentally killed a man who had attempted to blackmail him. Just then Howland arrives and announces that Mason's body had disappeared from the morgue. That night, Nolan, using Mason's body, tricks Miss Reynolds into confessing that she had been married to Mason, and had worked with him in his magic act. Believing him to be dead, she had married Harvey, but had become intimate with Wilcoxon. When Mason had located her and had asked for a bribe, she and Wilcoxon had agreed to frame Harvey into believing that he had killed Mason while fighting him. But they had planned to double-cross Mason, too, by actually burying him.

Arnaud d'Usseau wrote the screen play, Herbert I. Leeds directed it, and Sol M. Wurtzel produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Whispering Ghosts" with Milton Berle and Brenda Joyce

(20th Century-Fox, May 22; time 72½ min.)

The success of this horror murder mystery comedy will depend on the popularity of the featured players and the proper exploitation methods. The story is thin, artificial, and nonsensical. It lacks real excitement and a coherent plot; for this reason discriminating audiences may find it tiresome. The eerie atmosphere and mysterious doings aboard an abandoned ship are supposed to serve as a background for the comedy situations between Milton Berle and Willie Best, as his colored valet. Although the players try hard, they fail, for they have been given trite material to work with:—

When Milton Berle, a radio crime expert, informs his audience that on his following broadcast he would divulge the name of the murderer of Captain Eli Wetherby, a case that had baffled the police for ten years, Police Inspector Arthur Hohl threatens to arrest him for withholding evidence. Berle names Manuel Danzetta as the murderer, but the inspector laughs, informing him that Danzetta and Wetherby were one and the same person. In a spot with his sponsor, Berle, accompanied by Willie Best, his colored valet, goes to the rotted hulk of the Black Joker, beached at Hurricane Point, to search for additional clues. Meanwhile, also Brenda Joyce, grandniece of the dead captain, puzzled

by a dog collar she had received in her legacy, to which a note had been attached hinting at hidden treasure on the Black Joker, decides to visit the ship. Berle's investigation on board ship is interrupted by the strange antics of John Carradine and Renie Riano, a vaudeville team hired by an announcer on Berle's radio show as a practical joke, to frighten Berle. But Berle, detecting the plot, ignores them. When Brenda comes aboard and informs Berle of the dog collar, he believes that she, too, is part of the joke. More people board the ship. They are Milton Parsons, a scientist, and Grady Sutton, a book salesman, who seek shelter because of a dense fog; John Shelton, Brenda's sweetheart, who had come to take her home; and Abner Biberman, a boatswain on the Black Joker at the time that the captain had been murdered, who had followed Brenda and stolen the dog collar from her. Berle believes they, too, are a part of the practical joke until Biberman is found murdered. When Berle learns that the name plate on the dog collar refers to a passage in the bible hinting at the hiding place of the treasure, everybody starts to search the ship. Berle and Brenda locate what is apparently diamonds, hidden in a globe of the world that stood in the captain's log room. But their elation is short-lived as Hohl, disguised as Carradine and wielding a gun, demands the diamonds. But Berle overpowers him and uncovers that Hohl is really Manuel Danzetta, the captain's murderer. The diamonds prove to be duds, but Berle had secured the information he had promised to his listeners.

Lou Breslow wrote the screen play, Alfred Werker directed it, and Sol Wurtzel produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Spoilers" with John Wayne, Randolph Scott and Marlene Dietrich

(Universal, April 10; time, 85 min.)

Very good! Although produced thrice before, with very good results, (twice as a silent, in 1915 and 1923, and once as a talking picture, in 1930), this version, too, should prove highly entertaining for the masses. From start to finish it grips one's attention. The action is fast and exciting, particularly towards the end, where John Wayne and Randolph Scott put up a fight. This fight, though not as thrilling as that put up by William Farnum and Thomas Santschi in the first version, which made Mr. Farnum an outstanding screen star, is comparable to the fight shown in any picture for many years. The slight alteration of the story freshens the plot without lessening its dramatic value. Because of the wide popularity of the novel, from which it was adapted, as well as of its own merits, the picture should do very well at the box office:—

When the gold miners of Nome, Alaska, become aroused because their claims are "jumped," Marlene Dietrich, owner of a gin palace, seeks out Randolph Scott, the new gold commissioner, and is assured by him that the miners will get a square deal upon the arrival of Samuel H. Hinds, a U. S. Judge, to set up Nome's first court. Arriving on the same boat with Hinds are Margaret Lindsay, his niece, and John Wayne, partner of Harry Carey in the Midas mine. Miss Dietrich, who loves Wayne, is upset by the attentions he pays to Miss Lindsay. Unaware that Hinds and Scott plan to use their official positions thievishly, Wayne, assured by Hinds that they would get a quick hearing and a square deal on the spurious claim against their mine, allows them, over the protest of Harry Carey, to take possession of the Midas. But Hinds double-crosses them by postponing the trial for ninety days. Needing funds to send William Farnum, their lawyer, to Seattle for an appeal, Wayne, Carey and their men blow up the bank to get their safe, which had been impounded by Scott. Jealousy drives Richard Barthelmess, a gambler, who had a frustrated love for Miss Dietrich, to seize this opportunity to murder Wayne. Instead, his shot kills the town marshal. Scott tracks Wayne to Miss Dietrich's apartment and arrests him for murder. Learning from Miss Lindsay that Scott plans to allow Wayne to escape, then to shoot him, Miss Dietrich foils the plot and aids Wayne to make his escape good. Determined to take their mine back by force, Wayne and Carey, with the aid of their men, go to the mine and put Scott's deputies to rout. When Wayne returns to town, he apprehends and jails Hinds and Miss Lindsay, about to make a getaway. Seeking out Scott, Wayne beats him in a fierce fight.

Adapted from a story by Rex Beach, the screen play is by Lawrence Hazard and Tom Reed. Ray Enright directed it. Frank Lloyd and Lee Marcus produced it.

Suitable for all.

"About Face" with William Tracy and Joe Sawyer

(Roach-United Artists, April 17; time, 43 min.)

This is a fair slapstick comedy, of somewhat better grade than the other Hal Roach streamliners with the exception of "Tanks a Million." Being a comedy of Army life, the subject is timely, and it offers fair program entertainment, the kind that should prove acceptable on double feature programs. It is a continuation of the doings in "Tanks A Million" and "Hay Foot," with Joe Sawyer harrasing William Tracy in pretty much the same manner as that shown in the other two pictures. The direction and the performances are good:—

Penniless Sergeant Joe Sawyer invites himself along to town with Sergeant William Tracy, envisioning a grand time on a one hundred dollar check that Tracy had won in a quiz contest. Tracy prefers to go to the Aquarium, but Sawyer induces him to stop at a beer parlor, where Veda Ann Borg and Jean Porter, two habitués of the place, attach themselves to the boys. Tracy induces Sawyer to leave, promising him a good time at the home of Marjorie Lord, where a meeting of the Girl's Home Defense League is taking place. Arriving there, Sawyer throws the party into a bedlam, to the embarrassment of Tracy, who was trying to impress Marjorie. When Margaret Dumont delivers an address on vocational therapy and refers to Sawyer as an out-moded army mule, Sawyer stomps out of the party and returns to the beer parlor to pick up Veda and Jean for a real spree. Being short of funds, Sawyer, using the subterfuge of an emergency mission, shanghai's Tracy from the party, and the foursome sets out in a hired car for a big night at the Army-Navy dance. Attempting to park the car, Sawyer rams into another auto, and a near riot ensues with members of the army, navy and marines participating. During the fight, the car is considerably damaged, Sawyer disappears, and Tracy is held for the damages. Confronted by the Colonel, Tracy refuses to inform on Sawyer as a matter of honor among comrades. Just as Tracy is ordered arrested, Veda and Jean settle an old score with Sawyer by delivering him to the Colonel, and Marjorie arrives in time to see Tracy, her ideal, cleared.

Eugene Conrad and Edward E. Seabrook wrote the screen play, Kurt Neumann directed it and Fred Guiol produced it. Morally suitable for all.

"Twin Beds" with Joan Bennett and George Brent

(United Artists, April 24; time, 85 min.)

A fairly entertaining bedroom farce, suitable for the sophisticated trade. The story is not substantial and the plot developments are obvious, but the mood is light and a hodge-podge of marital mixups make for many comical situations, with Mischa Auer provoking most of the laughter. The production is lavish and the performances engaging:—

When George Brent marries Joan Bennett, her many activities compel them to dispense with a honeymoon. He soon realizes that his married life is just a series of banquets, charity balls and dog shows. At an engagement party Joan gives for Una Merkel and Ernest Truex, Brent suspects that Mischa Auer, a Russian singer and next door neighbor, is taking more than a friendly interest in Joan. His suspicions are heightened when Glenda Farrell, Auer's wife, explains that he is an incurable Don Juan. At Brent's insistence, he and Joan move to a new apartment house. Glenda, anxious to keep Auer away from Joan, also moves. Both couples are unaware that they had moved into the same building, and on the same tier. Brent, quarrelling with Joan because she had installed twin beds in their bedroom, leaves home in a huff. When Auer learns that Joan lives in the same building, he tries to date her, but she refuses him and he proceeds to get drunk. In his inebriated condition, he enters Joan's apartment and crawls into the empty twin bed, not realizing that he is in the wrong apartment. When Joan awakes in the morning and discovers him, she becomes frantic and tries to get rid of him, but before she succeeds, Brent returns home. Auer hides in a cedar chest. Glenda, wondering about her husband's absence, storms into Joan's apartment and questions her. Brent's suspicions are aroused and, searching the apartment, locates Auer still in his underwear. Glenda marches Auer towards their apartment to an undisclosed fate, while Joan, after a lengthy explanation, convinces Brent of her innocence.

Based on the stage play "Twin Beds," the screenplay was written by Curtis Kenyon, Kenneth Earl and E. Edwin Moran. Tim Whelan directed it, and Edward Small produced it.

Morally objectionable for children.

"Blondie's Blessed Event" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

(Columbia, April 9; time, 69 min.)

This latest of the "Blondie" comedies is on a par with the other pictures of the series. As entertainment, it will undoubtedly appeal to the series' ardent followers. The story is nonsensical and follows the familiar pattern used in the previous pictures, in which Arthur Lake incurs the wrath of his wife and that of his boss by his giddy-headed capers. But it all turns out for the best, as is usually the case. Hans Conried performs well as the "mooching" guest who upsets their family life:—

Approaching fatherhood for a second time, Arthur Lake is a nervous wreck. His jittery expectation interferes with his work and communicates itself to Penny Singleton, his wife, and to Jonathan Hale, his boss. Having felt that it would be best for everyone if Lake were not around, Hale sends him to Chicago to address a convention of Architects as his representative. The night before he is to speak, Lake meets Hans Conried, a broken-down but ingratiating playwright, and has him write a speech for him. It is revolutionary, in that it asks people to dispense with the services of Architects and Builders and, instead of the usual materials, build their homes with vegetable peelings—a new plastic Lake envisions. Lake is so pleased with the speech, that he asks Conried to visit him at the first opportunity. Lake returns home and becomes a father within a few days. When he takes his wife home from the hospital, he finds Conried waiting on the porch, all set for a long stay. Conried takes unfair advantage of Lake's hospitality and Lake, prodded by his wife, complains about rising expenses. Conried helps matters by inducing Hale to give Lake a raise in salary. Resenting Conried's meddling in her family affairs, Miss Singleton explodes and orders him to leave. In the midst of this excitement, Hale bursts in. Lake's Chicago speech had lost him some customers and he discharges him. Just then a government man enters and offers Lake a job; he was seeking a person with Lake's original ideas. Hale is so impressed by the interest shown in Lake that he outbids the government man for Lake's services. With Conried gone, and with Lake's job secure, the family once again is happy.

Connie Lee, Karen DeWolf and Richard Flournoy wrote the screen play. Frank R. Strayer directed it, and Robert Sparks produced it.

Suitable for all the family.

"The Mystery of Marie Roget" with Patric Knowles and Maria Montez

(Universal, April 3; time, 60 min.)

A fair murder mystery horror-melodrama of program grade, with the horror angle toned down. In addition to the regular followers of this type of pictures, it should appeal to the lovers of Edgar Allen Poe's tales. The treatment is stereotype, but the interest is maintained fairly well, since the mystery is not solved until the end and it is not until then that the murderer's identity is divulged. The production has been treated lavishly, and the performances are competent:—

Failing to locate the missing Marie Roget (Maria Montez), musical comedy star, Inspector Gobel (Lloyd Corrigan) is upbraided by M. Beauvais (John Litel), Minister of Naval Affairs and a family friend. But Dr. Paul Dupin (Patric Knowles), police medical officer, reassures him. When the body of a woman, with her face mangled, is fished from the Seine and is identified by Beauvais as Marie, Dupin goes to the home of Mme. Roget (Maria Ouspenskaya), Marie's grandmother, with the sad news. He is astonished when Marie herself walks in, and refuses to explain her disappearance. Marcel Vigneaux (Edward Norris), naval aide to Beauvais, becomes engaged to Camille (Nell O'Day), Marie's sister, who is about to receive a large inheritance. When Mme. Roget overhears Marie and Marcel plotting to murder Camille, she seeks Dupin's aid. But Marie disappears once more. Again a woman's body, with her face mangled, is fished from the river. But this time Dupin satisfies himself that it is Marie. When Dupin learns that the first woman fished from the river had been identified as Marcel's first wife, he hurries to the Roget home, fearful that Camille, too, will be murdered. Marcel is trapped and proved to be the murderer of Marie, whom he had killed so that he could proceed alone against Camille.

The story is by Edgar Allen Poe. Michel Jacoby wrote the screen play, Phil Rosen directed it, and Paul Malvern produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"My Gal Sal" with Victor Mature and Rita Hayworth

(20th Century-Fox; no rel. date; 97 min.)

Excellent technicolor work, skillful direction, fine performances, combined with the tunefulness of Paul Dresser's old songs, should make "My Gal Sal" a top-ranking box-office success. It is a love story—the love that Paul Dresser felt for the heroine, a woman of the theatre, which love burned in him like a flame and supposedly inspired him to compose his tunes, which proved instantaneous successes. Miss Hayworth's popularity should increase greatly with this picture, because she has a fine voice, and her looks, as she is photographed among the splendor of technicolor, should arouse the admiration of even old men. Mr. Mature is able to handle his part with skill; as Paul Dresser, the famous composer of melodies, he is believable. It is the first picture that has been produced by Robert Bassler, unit producer, a former cutter and for several years assistant to Julian Johnson in the 20th Century-Fox story department, but it appears as if it is the work of a highly seasoned producer. The story itself, which unfolds in the gay nineties, is not so strong. The songs of Paul Dresser's are: "My Gal Sal," "Come Tell Me What's Your Answer," "I See Your Honey," "On the Banks of the Wabash," "The Convict and the Bird," and "Mr. Volunteer"; also some songs by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger:—

Rebelling against his parents who insisted upon his becoming a minister of the Gospel, Paul Dresser (Victor Mature) runs away from home and, in his wanderings, joins a medicine man selling fake jewelry. After fleecing some people, the medicine man runs away. Paul is tarred and feathered and run out of town. Mae Collins (Carole Landis), a beautiful carnival songstress, finds him, washes him, and induces him to join their carnival show, which they used as a means to sell a patent medicine. During one of the performances, Sally (Rita Hayworth), and Truckee (Walter Catlett), from the show in the town, stop to watch the show and laugh at Paul's ostentatious clothes. Paul so resents it that he quits the Carnival and goes to New York, determined to write some day a song that Sally would beg him to sing. In New York, Paul hears a newsboy whistling a tune he had composed and played while with the carnival. Through the song's publisher he learns that it had been sold to him by Sally. He convinces the publisher that he was the author of the song, and is signed up by him. The publisher and Paul confront Sally and her producer, but when Paul is told that they had tried to find him before publishing it he agrees to a compromise. Being in love with Sally, Paul is inspired and writes many songs, which, introduced by Sally on the stage, become instantaneous successes. Paul prospers, but his love for Sally becomes a flame that is consuming him. She, too, loves him. Promising that he would give up all his women friends, particularly the Countess Rossini (Mona Maris), he extracts a promise from her to marry him in a few days. Through a ruse, the Countess lures him to her home, where she was giving a party. When the Countess takes him to his home next morning, Sally sees them as they arrive, and becomes irate. She leaves him and goes to San Francisco, and there she becomes a stage favorite. With the loss of Sally, Paul loses also his inspiration at writing songs, until he writes one for Sally and, through an agent of his, sends it to her without using his own name. Sally is impressed with the song and sings it on the stage. Paul then calls on her, and even though he has a hard time at first he succeeds in becoming reconciled with her.

The story is by Theodore Dreiser; the screen play by Seton I. Miller, Darrell Ware and Karl Tunberg. Irving Cummings directed it.

The sex relationship of Paul and Mae in the beginning of the picture is handled so delicately that children will not understand it.

"Tarzan's New York Adventure" with Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan

(MGM, no release date; time, 70 min.)

Though containing all of the wild melodramatic antics of the previous pictures, and notwithstanding the incredibility of the story, this latest of the Tarzan series should amuse most classes of movie patrons. Particularly amusing are the "monkey-shines" of Cheetah, the ape, who is given quite a bit of footage. This time Tarzan dons clothes, runs afoul of the law, and, while chased by the police, displays his jungle agility amidst the skyscrapers of New York, culminating with a dive off the Brooklyn Bridge. There is human appeal in Tarzan's efforts to locate his son, kidnapped by a circus owner. John Sheffield, a boy about nine, performs well:—

Buck Rand (Charles Bickford), a wild game trapper, Manchester Mountford (Chill Wills), an animal trainer, and Jimmy Shields (Paul Kelly), a pilot, arrive in Tarzan's jungle. Disturbed by their arrival, Tarzan (Johnny Weissmuller) orders them to leave the jungle before sunrise. While hunting, Mountford is saved by the quick-witted action of Boy (John Sheffield), Tarzan's son; Boy displays amazing animal training ability during the rescue. A savage tribe attacks the white men before they can leave. In attempting to rescue them, Tarzan and Jane (Maureen O'Sullivan), his mate, are knocked unconscious. Believing them to be dead, Rand seizes Boy and, with his two unwilling compatriots, flies away. Rand plans to use Boy in a circus. When Tarzan and Jane recover and find Boy gone, they follow the white men to recover their son. They journey to a coastal town where, with the money they get from the gold Tarzan brings with him, they charter a plane for New York. There, they locate Shields, and are led to the circus where Rand held Boy. But Rand compels them to take the case to court. During the trial, Tarzan is goaded by Rand's lawyer into violence, and is jailed for contempt of court. He manages to escape and, pursued by the police, is cornered on the Brooklyn Bridge, but he eludes them by diving into the river below. He makes his way to the circus grounds and, with the aid of the circus elephants, prevents Rand from abducting Boy to South America. Tarzan, Jane and Boy return to their jungle home.

William R. Lipman and Myles Connolly wrote the screen play, Richard Thorpe directed it, and Frederick Stephani produced it.

Suitable for all the family.

"Sunday Punch" with William Lundigan, Jean Rogers and Dan Dailey, Jr.

(MGM, no rel. date; time, 75 min.)

A fairly entertaining program melodrama, mixing comedy with romance and prize-fighting, managing to please in each respect. Even though the story is routine and develops in an obvious manner, one's attention is held to a fair degree because of the sympathy one feels for the leading characters. The comedy is provoked by a group of prize fighters, who try to impress a young lady by putting on their best manner. The performances are engaging, and the direction good. A formula romance takes place:—

Because of a rule forbidding women to live in her boarding house, which quarters a group of boxers managed by J. Carrol Naish, Connie Gilchrist threatens to discontinue cooking for his fighters when he insists that Jean Rogers, her niece, a jobless chorus girl, find a room elsewhere. Naish allows Jean to stay. When William Lundigan, his ace fighter, and Jean fall in love, Naish breaks up the love affair by offering Jean a night club job in a distant city, and telling Lundigan that she is after much bigger game than an ordinary prize fighter. Meanwhile, unknown to all, Dan Dailey, Jr., janitor at the boarding house, secretly loves Jean. Believing he can win her by becoming a fighter, Dailey pleads with Guy Kibbee, a fight manager, to give him a trial. Kibbee discovers that Dailey, although awkward, has a "Sunday punch," and he arranges a match, which Dailey wins. Helped by Lundigan, whom he worships, Dailey improves his boxing skill. Kibbee takes him for a tour of the country, and he becomes a sensation. Lundigan, too, becomes a top-notch fighter. When the public demands a fight between them, the two fighters, deeply attached to each other, refuse to fight. But Kibbee convinces Dailey that winning a championship is the only way by which he will ever get Jean. Lundigan reluctantly agrees to fight. The night of the match, Jean learns from Leo Gorcey, a fighter, that Naish had framed her to Lundigan. She goes to Lundigan to inform him of what she had learned, but he sarcastically tells her to return when he becomes the champion. She then goes to Dailey and pleads with him to win the fight, telling him that, if she returns to Lundigan after he loses the fight, he will be convinced of her love. Heartbroken, Dailey takes a severe beating in the ring, but manages to knock out Lundigan with his "Sunday punch." Dailey wins the battle, but Lundigan wins Jean.

Fay and Michael Kanin and Allen Rivkin wrote the screen play, David Miller directed it, and Irving Starr produced it.

Morally suitable for all the family.

"Dude Ranch": A poor feature. To be reviewed next week.

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United States\$15.00
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 Canada 16.50
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 Great Britain 15.75
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 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1942

No. 17

HERE AND THERE

IN LAST WEEK'S ISSUE, the main editorial suggested to the producers to buy advertising space in the newspapers to tell the public what the industry is doing to help in the winning of the war. That issue was printed and mailed on Wednesday.

By coincidence The New York Times of Wednesday carried the following advertisement, headed by, "MORALE is Mightier than the Sword":

"Out of the factories and shipyards of America are pouring the planes and tanks, the guns and boats to arm the United Nations in the all-out fight for Democracy.

"Day by day, week by week our power must grow until, at its flood, it sweeps the earth clean once more so that free men may live again in peace and security.

"That is our resolve—and from it no power on earth shall turn us.

"To carry it through, our minds must be as keen as our swords, our hearts as strong as our tanks, our spirits as buoyant as our planes. For morale is a mighty force—as vital as the materials of war themselves.

"And just as it is the job of some industries to provide the implements that will keep 'em flying, keep 'em rolling, and keep 'em shooting, so it is the job of the Motion Picture Industry to keep 'em smiling.

"Yes, that is our war-time job. We cannot build combat planes or bombers . . . we cannot make tanks or guns or ships. But we can build morale . . . we can give America the hours of carefree relaxation which will make its work hours doubly productive, the mental stimulus that will carry us on with heads up through dark days and bright, through good news and bad . . . to victory.

"We can—and we will!"

It was signed, "The American Motion Picture Industry," and at the bottom of the ad there was a note informing the readers that the ad was paid for by Donahue & Coe, Incorporated.

The advertisement was paid for by Eddie Churchill himself, president of that company. Mr. Churchill went to this expense, first, because he makes his living out of the industry, secondly, because he loves it, and thirdly, because he wanted to show to the producers what can be done to gain public good will. No profit motive was involved.

Mr. Churchill did not confine himself to that; he sent for the representatives of eleven movie fan magazines and induced each to donate a page ad for the industry; they are the following: "Movie-Radio Guide," "Stardom," "Screen Guide," "Movies," "Movie Life," "Movie Stars Parade," "Modern Screen," "Screen Romances," "Photoplay-Movie Mirror," "Screenland," and "Silver Screen." He furnished them with appropriate copy. The ads will appear in the June issues, on the stands April 30.

The motion picture industry is certainly indebted to Mr. Churchill for making the right start for it. It is now up to the producers to carry on. The benefit that the industry will receive from institutional advertising of this kind is incalculable.

* * *

AN APPEAL HAS BEEN MADE to the exhibitors through the trade papers by The Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers, a "Little" Hays Association composed of Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Walt Disney, Sam Goldwyn, David Selznick, Walter Wanger, Alexander Korda and Orson Welles, against the change in the present sales plan of block-of-five. The Society calls the old plan or any plan that will increase the block of pictures to a greater

number than five "unscientific and detrimental to the interests of the public."

In one part, the statement says that "the lure of cancellation is blinding many exhibitors to the far greater dangers and potential abuses in the proposed plan, which among other evils results in forcing on the public indifferent and trite product."

In another part, the statement says: "The spur to Hollywood talent has been reflected in better pictures, in public recognition of merit and talent and in the inevitable purging of incompetence and triteness heretofore fostered by volume selling."

Notice that, among the names given in the press release as being members of the Society of Independent Producers is the name of Walter Wanger. About two years ago last month Abram F. Myers was invited to Hollywood by the Screen Writers Guild to explain to them the Neely Bill so that the Guild members might be helped to make up their minds whether the organization should or should not support the Bill. The Neely Bill, as most of you know, tried to abolish block-booking and blind-selling in a measure by compelling the producers to present to the exhibitor, at the time of the sale, a synopsis for each picture of no fewer than one thousand words. Allied, which sponsored the Neely Bill, having felt that it would be impractical to compel the producers to tradeshow all their pictures before sale, framed the Bill with a view to compelling the producers to furnish synopses.

Who do you think showed the greatest opposition to the Neely Bill at that meeting? Walter Wanger! He did everything that he could to discredit Mr. Myers, going so far as to "dub" the Neely Bill a censorship measure. He wanted block-booking and blind-selling retained, for it was only under such a system that "experimental" pictures could be made, he said. But now Walter Wanger says that block-booking is wrong. Was he wrong then?

The trouble with the members of this Society is that they don't have to buy film; they only sell it.

No one has fought block-booking and blind-selling more vigorously than myself. I fought for the elimination of that system because I believed that exhibition would benefit. I felt that, when a producer has to show his wares before selling them, he will be compelled to produce better pictures.

In theory, improvement was inevitable; in practice it has proved differently—the percentage of good pictures has not increased at all. More pictures may be produced this season, but the percentage of "lemons" will remain the same. There may be a few—very few—better pictures, but there will be also more poor pictures.

Why? Because of the Hollywood system—a system that takes perfectly capable writers and makes formula writers out of them. Few new writers with imagination can survive if they should insist upon going against the system.

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF THE NEW SEASON'S PICTURES United Artists

- "Sundown": Very Good-Fair.
- "All American Co-Ed": Fair.
- "Miss Polly": Fair.
- "The Corsican Brothers": Very Good-Good.
- "Fiesta": Poor.
- "Love on the Dole": Fair-Poor.
- "Hay Foot": Fair-Poor.
- "The Gold Rush": Good-Poor.
- "Dudes Are Pretty People": Fair-Poor.
- "Twin Beds": Fair.

(Continued on last page)

"Suicide Squadron" with an English cast (Republic, April 20; time, 81 min.)

This is a strong romantic drama, produced in England, with a cast that is little known in this country. The direction and the performances are very good, but the picture is the kind that will appeal mostly to class audiences. It is a story of a depressed Polish refugee, pianist and aviator, who marries an American girl but leaves her to join a Polish Air Squadron in England. Excepting in the air-battle scenes towards the finish, the action is slow. Although the title would indicate this to be a flying picture, it is music that dominates the scene. The story is told in flashback:—

Stefan Radetsky (Anton Walbrook) and Mike Carroll (Derrick De Marney) are chosen to fly Polish planes to Roumania just before the fall of Warsaw. Stefan does not realize that his battalion had arranged matters this way so as to insure his escape. Stefan, an accomplished pianist, goes with Mike to New York for a three months' concert tour for Polish Relief. There he marries Carol Peters (Sally Gray), an American heiress, who had adopted journalism for a career; he had met her in Poland during the last days of Warsaw. Stefan's happiness is clouded by his urge to join the newly formed Polish Squadron in England, but Carol induces him to remain in New York. She convinces him that his best service to his country lies in his music. Meanwhile Mike enlists and leaves for England. When the Low Countries and France fall to the Nazi hordes, Stefan asks his manager to cancel the remainder of his tour and informs Carol of his plans to enlist. Carol threatens him with divorce. In England, Mike and Stefan are reunited. Carol, repentant, writes to Mike for Stefan's address. Mike attempts to tell Stefan of Carol's request, but he refuses to listen. Their quarrel takes place just before Mike takes to the air on duty. When Mike is killed in action, Stefan feels that the blame is his. In examining Mike's effects, he finds Carol's note, in which she mentions that she is on her way to England. But before her arrival, Stefan loses his memory as the result of an air crash. One night, while Stefan is strumming idly on the piano, his memory returns and he starts to play his famous "Warsaw Concerto." Carol is happy.

The original story and screen play was written by Terrence Young. Brian Desmond Hurst directed it, and William Siström produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Mad Martindales" with Jane Withers (20th Century-Fox, May 15; time, 64 min.)

This is one of those inoffensive family-comedy farces that appeal mostly to the family trade. The story is far-fetched and the comedy is forced. Although Jane Withers is blossoming into a young woman, she still is at the awkward stage. For this reason the mature role that she plays lacks conviction. Her efforts to adjust her family's financial problems are somewhat artificial, and do not awaken genuine sympathy. Alan Mowbray performs well, but the material he has been given is silly:—

Financial difficulties are what the Martindales have most. The gas, electricity and water are shut off, a mortgage is due, and only Jane Withers is at home to cope with the situation. Alan Mowbray, her father, had gone on vacation to ponder the problem, and Marjorie Weaver, her sister, had left to elope with George Reeves, an Italian bandleader. Marjorie had decided to jilt Byron Barr, her fiance, because she felt him to be unromantic. In order to raise the necessary money, Jane, with the help of Jimmie Lydon, her boy-friend, sells most of the furniture in the house, as well as Mowbray's cherished art treasures. But this complicates matters. Jane learns that Mowbray has borrowed \$8,000, securing the loan with a chattel mortgage on the furnishings. When Charles Lane, an attorney, threatens to arrest her father, Jane sets out to raise the money. Meanwhile Mowbray meets Steve Gercay, wealthy patron of the arts, and persuades him to finance his business in exchange for a famous painting that Mowbray had at his home. Barr, unaware that Marjorie had jilted him, offers to help Jane out of her difficulties by introducing her to Kathleen Howard, his wealthy grandmother. When Grandma mistakes her for Barr's fiancee, Jane acts the part. Grandma likes Jane and agrees to lend her the money. Barr compliments Jane's performance as his fiancee by giving her a friendly kiss, which she apparently enjoys. Jilted by Reeves because of her family's financial status, Marjorie returns home. When Marjorie is greeted by Barr with a longing kiss, Jane jealously tears up the check he had given her from his grandmother. Just then Reeves, who had heard of Mowbray's new business partner, arrives. He is now willing to marry Marjorie. Barr learns of the romance, but takes

it gracefully. In the Martindale home every one goes wild as Mowbray and Gercay arrive, followed by Lane and a policeman. With the painting gone, Gercay dissolves the partnership, while Lane demands Mowbray's arrest. Pandemonium reigns as Grandma enters and takes the situation in hand. She settles Mowbray's debts, agrees to finance his business, and arranges for the marriage of Jane and Barr. Marjorie's romantic worries end as she receives a call from a new suitor.

Francis Edwards Faragoh wrote the screen play, Alfred Werker directed it, and Walter Morosco produced it.

"Grand Central Murder" with Van Heflin and Patricia Dane (MGM, no release date; time, 72 min.)

A good program murder mystery melodrama, with comedy. It is without eerie atmosphere and gruesome situations, yet it should appeal to the avid mystery fans as well as to general audiences. With ten persons suspected, whom all had an apparent motive to commit the crime, the action maintains one's interest throughout, and the mystery remains unsolved until the end. The story is constructed in the main by the alibis of the suspects, with each telling his story in a flashback. Considerable comedy is provoked by Van Heflin and Sam Levene during their grilling of the suspects. The story has its setting in the underground system of New York's Grand Central Terminal:—

Patricia Dane, an actress, is found dead in the private railroad car of Mark Daniels, with whom she was about to elope. With Daniels, when he discovers the body, is Cecilia Parker, his former fiancee. Near the scene, police recapture Horace McNally, who had escaped them while being brought to the city for retrial on a murder indictment. With McNally are Van Heflin, a private detective, and Virginia Grey, Heflin's wife. They are taken to police headquarters, where Inspector Sam Levene had rounded up other suspects. These include Daniels and Miss Parker; George Lynn, Miss Dane's former husband; Tom Conway, producer of her show; Rohman Bohem, her stepfather; Betty Wells, her understudy; and Connie Gilchrist, her maid. Each of the group recites a story tending to incriminate the other. It is revealed that Miss Dane was a "golddigger," and had but one love—money. She had played with men for all she could get. First she had taken up with McNally, and discarded him for Conway. She had discarded him, too, when she met wealthy Daniels. At this point Samuel S. Hinds, Miss Parker's father, arrives, demanding to know why his daughter is held. When questioned, Hinds admits that earlier he had offered Miss Dane \$50,000 to leave Daniels, hoping that Daniels would return to his daughter. But Miss Dane had refused the offer. Police and suspects go to the scene of the crime, where Heflin intercepts a call intended for Levene, and learns from the autopsy surgeon that Miss Dane had died of electrocution. He slips away from the others to investigate further. Upon his return, Heflin proceeds to show how the crime had been committed and uncovers Hinds as the guilty person.

Peter Ruric wrote the screen play, S. Sylvan Simon directed it, and B. F. Ziedman produced it.

"S.O.S. Coast Guard" with Ralph Byrd and Bela Lugosi (Republic, April 16; time, 69 min.)

Produced in 1937 as a serial, the episodes have been edited and put together to make a feature picture. The results are not gratifying; the photography and sound are far below present day standards. Considerably annoying is the jarring musical accompaniment, which, though suitable for the short-running time of thriller episodes, is in a feature ear-splitting and irritating. It is strictly ten-twenty-thirty melodrama, and the situations are for the most part old fashioned. It is doubtful whether average audiences will find it acceptable.

The story revolves around the efforts of Ralph Byrd, a Coast Guard hero, to capture Bela Lugosi, a half-mad munitions inventor, who had contracted to supply a foreign power with his deadly disintegrating gas. There follows a series of episodes in which Byrd narrowly escapes death at the hands of Richard Alexander, a giant man, who is dominated by Lugosi. The climax is reached when Byrd and a regiment of Coast Guard men, faced with death from the deathly fumes of the gas, are saved by Maxine Doyle, his sweetheart, who, spraying a counter-gas from her plane, makes Lugosi's gas ineffectual. Lugosi and Alexander die from the effects of their own gas.

Barry Shipman and Franklyn Adreon wrote the screen play. William Witney and Allan James directed it.

"Tortilla Flat" with Spencer Tracy, Hedy Lamarr and John Garfield

(MGM, no release date; time, 103 min.)

Very good! John Steinbeck's story of the "paisanos" of central California bring to the screen a colorful and happy people, about whom little is known. It is a delightful comedy embodying a fiery romance. The story is developed in the main by dialogue, (which at times is suggestive), instead of by action, but this does not lessen one's interest. But of greater interest than the story are the fine characterizations by the performers; it is these that give the picture its quality. The story deals with the exploits of five wayward but happy-go-lucky "paisanos," dominated by Spencer Tracy, who assumes a benevolent attitude toward his pitiless wisdom and cunning logic. Although their deeds are uncommendable, they are done in an "ignorance is bliss" vein, and one is amused rather than displeased by their antics. Moreover, their doings are tinged with acts of human kindness. The drawing power of the stars, and the popularity of the novel, and its own merits assure the picture's success:—

Pilon (Spencer Tracy) and Pablo (Akim Tamiroff) are lazily thinking up schemes that might provide them with a free dinner. Pilon suggests that Pablo go down to the docks to throw rocks at the fishermen, hoping that they might angrily throw back fish at Pablo. Their plans are interrupted by the appearance of a lawyer looking for Danny (John Garfield). Danny, however, is in jail. Pilon leads the lawyer to Danny, while Pablo goes after the fish. Danny learns that his grandfather had left him two houses on Tortilla Flat and a watch. Pilon convinces Danny that the watch will bring him nothing but grief and induces him to trade it for some wine. Prodded by Pilon, Danny secures a chicken from his next door neighbor and, with the fish brought by Pablo, they settle down for a gay party in one of Danny's houses, accompanied by Danny's jailer. Danny rents his other house to Pilon, who invites his friends, Pablo, Jose (John Qualen) and Portagee Joe (Allen Jenkins) to live with him. As a property owner, Danny feels he can now go courting Dolores (Hedy Lamarr), a newcomer to the Flat. Danny is making fair progress when Pablo comes to inform him that his house had caught fire. Danny shrugs off this disaster. When Dolores refuses his attentions because of his laziness, Danny returns to jail to finish his term; then he secures a job. Meanwhile Pilon and his friends live at Danny's house. A strange figure in town is Pirate (Frank Morgan) and his five dogs. Suspecting that he has money, Pilon cultivates his friendship and invites him to live at Danny's home. Planning to steal Pirate's money, Pilon tells him of the dangers of having his treasure buried. To Pilon's surprise, Pirate trusts his money bag to him. But Pilon guards the money with his life when Pirate informs him that he had saved it to buy a golden candlestick for St. Francis, who answered his prayers when one of his dogs was sick. Pilon deliberately causes Danny and Dolores to quarrel. Danny goes on a drunken spree, culminating in his being seriously injured. Dolores blames Pilon. For the first time in years, Pilon goes to church and prays to St. Francis of Assisi for Danny's recovery. Danny gets well and is married to Dolores at a gay party. A raffle is held which makes enough money to buy Danny a fishing boat, but nobody is aware that the raffle money was earned by Pilon during Danny's illness. After the newlyweds leave, Pilon philosophically reasons that owning houses started all of Danny's troubles. Jose tosses a match behind him. It goes through an open window, and Danny's second house goes up in smoke.

The screen play was written by John Lee Mahin and Benjamin Glazer, from the book by John Steinbeck. Victor Fleming directed it, and Sam Zimbalist produced it. In the cast are Donald Meek, Henry O'Niell, Nina Campana, Connie Gilchrist, Mercedes Ruffino, Sheldon Leonard, Arthur Space, Betty Wells and Harry Burns.

Morally unsuitable for children.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of the fact that the miracle-performing powers of St. Francis of Assisi, a Roman Catholic Saint, are accentuated, the picture should go very well in communities where Catholics predominate.

"Moontide" with Jean Gabin and Ida Lupino

(20th Century-Fox, May 29; time, 94 min.)

A powerful love drama, unfolding in a sombre atmosphere. The background is mostly that of a waterfront, and partly that of a tough "dive," where drinking, and women and fights are a prominent part of the action. Although the hero is presented as a tough man, his love for the heroine is true and respectful. There is human interest in the situations where the hero is shown trying to reawaken the heroine's interest in life. The stalking of the villain by the hero, so as

to avenge the wrong done to the heroine, is gripping. The acting of Gabin, very popular in France, is very good. His accent is hardly noticeable. The direction is skillful:—

After a fight in a saloon, followed by a drinking bout, Bobo (Jean Gabin) awakens in the morning and finds himself in a bait-selling barge wearing the cap of Pop Kelly, a man who had been murdered the night before. Hirota (Chester Gan) and Takeo (Sen Yung), owners of the barge, hire Bobo to sell bait for them. Tiny (Thomas Mitchell), who had been in the habit of obtaining dock jobs for Bobo and collecting part of his wages, objects in vain. Nutsy (Claude Rains), pal of Bobo's, notices the cap and, doubtful of Bobo's guilt of the murder, and feeling concern for him, destroys it. That night Ada (Ida Lupino), a hash waitress, attempts to drown herself, but is rescued by Bobo against her will and given shelter in the barge. While Ada and Bobo are breakfasting the following morning, Tiny shows up. He is chased despite his veiled threats. Bobo and Ada fall madly in love. Ada cleans the barge, hangs curtains, sells bait, and Bobo for the first time in his life is really happy and keeps busy. While Bobo is absent, Tiny intimates to Ada that Bobo had murdered Pop Kelly, threatening to squeal unless she was "nice" to him. She chases him out of the place. Bobo and Ada marry, and their friends and neighbors celebrate. One night while Bobo is out repairing a boat, Tiny enters the barge and demands his "price" for his silence. It dawns on Ada that perhaps Tiny himself is the murderer. When she tells him this he beats her to unconsciousness. Bobo finds her in the locker, where Tiny had left her for dead. While Ada is in the hospital lingering between life and death, Bobo, who had suspected Tiny, goes after him. The chase culminates in Tiny's death through drowning. Ada recovers and she and Bobo resume their happy life.

John O'Hara wrote the screen play, Archie Mayo directed it, and Mark Hellinger produced it.

Not suitable for children.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This picture is suitable chiefly for big-city audiences. Ordinarily it might not do well in small towns, but 20th Century-Fox is exploiting this picture, through the Hal Horne organization, so extensively that in all probability it will fare better in small towns.

"Ship Ahoy" with Eleanor Powell, Red Skelton and Bert Lahr

(MGM, no release date; time, 95 min.)

Tommy Dorsey's music, Eleanor Powell's dancing, and the clowning of Red Skelton and Bert Lahr round out a fairly entertaining musical comedy. Espionage is the theme of the story, which adheres to a "dyed in the wool" pattern, and which for the most part serves as an interlude for the musical and dance numbers, as well as a background for the comedy. Tommy Dorsey's musical tunes should delight the "swingsters" as much as it should those who like their music "pre-swing." The performers, who give generously of their talents, are effective, and their popularity will undoubtedly help the box office:—

On the eve of her departure with Tommy Dorsey's orchestra, Eleanor Powell, a dancing star, is duped by enemy spies who, posing as U. S. Agents, induce her to carry a miniature magnetic mine for delivery to the enemy in Puerto Rico, swearing her to secrecy. Red Skelton, hypochondriac cartoon-comic author, on the verge of a nervous breakdown, is ordered by his doctor to take a cruise and he, too, leaves on the same boat, accompanied by Bert Lahr, his "Man Friday." Miss Powell and Skelton fall in love during the cruise. Among the passengers are two U. S. Agents. They believe that the mine is aboard the ship and secretly search the passengers' staterooms. But Miss Powell had hidden it cleverly in a portable radio. Ready to go ashore, Miss Powell puts the mine in a suitcase, but inadvertently changes bags with Skelton, who takes it to his hotel. After many amusing episodes, she retrieves the suitcase from Skelton and delivers it to the enemy on board the showboat on which she was performing with the band. Miss Powell realizes that she had been duped when Skelton and Lahr, who had followed her to the boat, are apprehended by the spies. Fearing lest the showboat patrons become suspicious if she did not appear, the spies allow Miss Powell to do her dance routine, warning her that she will be shot on the first false move. But she foils them by dance-tapping a message in Morse code, attracting the attention of the U. S. Agents. Through her cleverness and the bravery of Skelton and Lahr, the spies are caught and the mine saved for the United States. Skelton wins Miss Powell, and Lahr wins Virginia O'Brien, Miss Powell's pal.

Harry Clark wrote the screen play, Edward Buzzell directed it, and Jack Cummings produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Shanghai Gesture": Good-Fair.
 "The Jungle Book": Very Good-Fair.
 "To Be Or Not To Be": Very Good-Good.

Thirteen pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 2; Very Good-Fair, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.

Universal

"Flying Cadets": Fair.
 "Appointment for Love": Good-Fair.
 "Moonlight in Hawaii": Fair.
 "Quiet Wedding": Fair-Poor.
 "Keep 'Em Flying": Very Good.
 "Sealed Lips": Fair.
 "The Wolf Man": Good-Poor.
 "Melody Lane": Fair-Poor.
 "Road Agent": Fair-Poor.
 "Hellzapoppin'": Very Good-Good.
 "Don't Get Personal": Fair-Poor.
 "Jail House Blues": Fair-Poor.
 "Paris Calling": Good-Fair.
 "North to the Klondike": Fair.
 "Treat 'Em Rough": Fair.
 "Bombay Clipper": Fair.
 "Ride 'Em Cowboy": Very Good-Good.
 "What's Cookin'": Good-Fair.
 "The Mad Doctor of Market Street": Good-Poor.
 "Ghost of Frankenstein": Good-Fair.
 "Frisco Lil": Fair.

Twenty-one pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good-Fair, 4; Good-Poor, 2; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 5.

Warner-First National

"One Foot in Heaven": Good-Fair.
 "Target for Tonight": Very Good-Fair.
 "Blues in the Night": Good-Fair.
 "The Body Disappears": Fair.
 "Steel Against the Sky": Fair-Poor.
 "You're in the Army Now": Good-Fair.
 "They Died with Their Boots On": Excellent-Good.
 "All Through the Night": Very Good-Fair.
 "The Man Who Came to Dinner": Very Good-Good.
 "Wild Bill Hickok Rides": Good-Fair.
 "Sons of the Sea": Fair-Poor.
 "Dangerously They Live": Good-Fair.
 "Captains of the Clouds": Very Good-Good.
 "Bullet Scars": Good-Poor.
 "Always in My Heart": Good-Fair.

Fifteen pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Excellent-Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Very Good-Fair, 2; Good-Fair, 6; Good-Poor, 1; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 2.

"The Wife Takes a Flyer" with Joan Bennett and Franchot Tone

(Columbia, April 30; time, 86 min.)

This comedy, burlesquing the Nazis is fairly entertaining. In crowded houses, the laughter should be quite hearty. Although the story is silly, the picture should prove to be entertaining for the masses, for the ridicule is to the extreme and in no manner subtle. The story treats the Nazi salute "Heil Hitler" with contemptuous mockery, and derides the Nazi military courts set up in the occupied countries. The performers overplay their parts to a point that makes the derision much more effective:—

Chris Reynolds (Franchot Tone), an R.A.F. flyer shot down in Holland, is given refuge by the Woverman family. Two things prevent his leaving: the pretty daughter-in-law, Anita (Joan Bennett) who seeks a divorce from Hendrick Woverman (Hans Conried), who is in a sanitarium; and Major Zellfritz (Allyn Joslyn), a German officer, who had quartered himself in the house to be near Anita. For reasons of safety, Chris is introduced to the Major as Hendrick, Anita's husband, whom the Major had not met. In divorce court, Chris, posing as Hendrick, protests his love for Anita and the Judge sends them to his chambers alone to effect a reconciliation. Chris seizes this opportunity to contact a British spy; he leaves through the window. Within the hour, Anita informs the court that Chris, in one of his crazy spells, had left her. Just then, Chris returns and acts so completely insane, that Anita's divorce is granted. A "free" woman, Anita leaves the Woverman house and goes to manage an old ladies' home. Chris visits Anita only to find the Major there ahead of him. He induces her to make a date with the Major to get valuable military information.

The scheme works, but Chris' attempt to relay the information to London fails. Meanwhile the real Hendrick escapes from the sanitarium, gets drunk and becomes mixed up in a brawl, but evades arrest. Chris has to assume guilt for the disturbance, and is arrested by the Gestapo for the disfiguring of a picture of the Fuehrer. On trial in military court, Chris has all the old ladies as his witnesses. But the Major makes sure that Chris is convicted and sentenced to be shot at once. Anita wins a delay by persuading the court to allow her to re-marry "Hendrick" before he is executed. This gives the old ladies time to set off the city's air-raid siren control, causing a complete blackout. During the excitement, Chris knocks out the Major, changes clothes with him, and drives to the airport with Anita using the Major's car. Boarding a German plane, they make their escape to England, where they plan to marry in reality.

Gina Kaus and Jay Dratler wrote the screen play, Richard Wallace directed it, and B. P. Schulberg produced it.

There are no objectionable moral situations.

"Tough As They Come" with Billy Hallop

(Universal, no rel. date set yet; 60 min.)

Just a fair action melodrama—not as good as the previous pictures in which these youngsters have appeared. The reason for it is the fact that Billy Hallop is an unsympathetic character because of the work he does. It is true that he becomes regenerated in the end, but his regeneration is not convincing. There is no romance. And this is a blemish even to a program picture:—

To support his mother and himself, young Billy Hallop gets a job with a "gypping" finance corporation, which victimized people, particularly those of his neighborhood in the slums. His work was to compel people to pay up when the installments became due. This earns him the hatred of his pals and of the entire neighborhood. Only Paul Kelly had faith in the young man; he believed that Billy would eventually make a fine man. Little Ann Gillis contracts pneumonia, and John Gallaudet, her father, mortgages his cab to provide hospitalization. Because he is unable to meet the payments when due, the finance company seeks to confiscate the cab. But the "kids" of the neighborhood hide it. But the finance company is eventually able to lay its hands on it. Despondent, Gallaudet runs up to the roof and threatens to commit suicide, but Billy Hallop, at the risk of his own life, prevents him from carrying out his threat. Fed up with the disgraceful work, Billy, helped by Paul Kelly, determines to put an end to the finance company's crooked work. Helped by his former pals, he goes to the office and obtains the records by which the authorities are able to put the company out of business. Thus Billy becomes the hero of the neighborhood again.

The screen play is by Lewis Amster and Brenda Weisberg. Ken Goldsmith produced it, and William Nigh directed it. In the cast are some of the "Dead End" and some of the "Tough" kids.

Not particularly edifying to children.

"Dudes Are Pretty People" with Jimmy Rogers, Noah Beery, Jr. and Marjorie Woodworth

(Roach-United Artists, March 13; time, 45 min.)

To say that this latest of the Hal Roach streamlined comedies is tiresome, it would be putting it mildly. It is downright boring! An extremely silly story is made even sillier by amateurish direction and like performances. Throughout the proceedings, it does not provoke as much as a chuckle.

The story deals with the efforts of Jimmy Rogers, a cowboy, to prevent Noah Beery, Jr., his pal, from taking too seriously his (Beery's) falling in love with Marjorie Woodworth, a fashionable young lady visiting a dude ranch. There follows a series of time-worn and childish situations, such as, Rogers' placing hot coals under Beery's bed to fool him into believing that he is running a temperature. A high spot of the so-called comical dialogue is the query, "Can I say goodbye to my horse?" and the reply, "Send him a letter." Rogers succeeds in breaking up the love affair when he enlists the aid of some cowboys. In the guise of desperadoes, they arrive at the dude ranch and produce an Indian squaw and her child as the wife and daughter of Beery. This has the proper effect on Miss Woodworth, who returns east, while Beery philosophically reasons that it all turned out for the best.

Louis S. Kaye wrote the screen play and Hal Roach, Jr., directed it. It was produced by Hal Roach.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1942

No. 18

HERE AND THERE

AMONG THE BIG CORPORATIONS that have been accused of having retarded the nation's war efforts through their patent affiliations with German firms is General Electric.

In page ads that it inserted in many prominent newspapers last week, General Electric gave to the public a story that is intended to present another picture than that which was presented by Thurman Arnold before the Truman Committee, in Washington. The question concerned the strategic material Carboloy, an alloy second in hardness only to diamond, but even more precious than diamond in the defense program, for it is used in cutting-tools.

The picture that General Electric presented by its story in that advertisement is dignified, clear and, on the face of it, convincing; and since no other ad appeared giving a different story, I venture to say that, despite the hostility of the masses against big corporations, it has won the good will of many persons.

In last week's issue, I spoke about the advertisement that General Motors inserted in many newspapers last week in an effort to acquaint the American public with its war efforts. Other corporations representing different industries, have followed their example. Even unions — the Automobile Workers' Union, a C.I.O. affiliate, for example.

If these corporations, and if even the unions, go to the expense of buying advertising space to tell their story to the public, they must value the public's good will. And yet the motion picture industry has done nothing to acquaint the American public with the assistance it is giving to the Federal Government. Friends of the industry are pained at this lack of vision on the part of the industry, to such an extent that Mr. Eddie Churchill, president of Donahue & Coe, an advertising agency, went to the trouble of preparing an ad and of inserting it in some of the New York papers, and inducing each of eleven movie fan magazines to donate a page for such a purpose.

Are we lacking leaders with vision?

HARRISON'S REPORTS calls upon Mr. Nicholas Schenck, president of MGM, to give Mr. Churchill's offer a serious thought. Mr. Churchill has offered to prepare the advertisement, and to turn back to the industry whatever commissions he will be entitled to for placing the advertisements in the newspapers. HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that if Mr. Schenck should give this matter deep thought, he will be convinced, I am sure, of the necessity of gaining the public's good will so that, after the war, we may not again have every crackpot who wants to gain notoriety attack the industry. He should then have no difficulty in selling the idea to the other industry leaders.

It will not take much more than one hundred thou-

sand dollars for one insertion of a page ad in every daily in the United States. Considering the value of the good will it will get, the cost of three or four insertions is a small price to pay.

* * *

THE ANCIENT GREEKS, particularly the Athenians, were in the habit of exiling their great men, and erecting monuments to honor their memory posthumously. Sometimes they even condemned them to death the hemlock way.

It seems as if we moderns are, in many cases, guilty of analogous injustices.

Only when this war is over and victory is ours will we realize fully how greatly one man, in the service of our government, has contributed toward victory—Mr. Thurman Arnold, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Anti-Trust Division of the Department of Justice. Without Mr. Arnold's intelligent work, the nation's efforts at arming would have been, in a great part, retarded so seriously that victory might be put off for a longer period of time than expected, if not gravely endangered.

No man can be a hero to all people. By the same same token, no man of the intellectual as well as the spiritual honesty of Mr. Arnold can avoid antagonizing people whose interests are affected. When he, for example, attempted to invoke the anti-trust laws to suppress the racketeering activities of certain labor unions, he was hailed to the sky by a great section of the press; but when he made startling disclosures before the Truman Senate Committee about certain unethical, if not illegal, acts of some big corporations, he was attacked by a substantial portion of our press, and denounced. But despite the attacks in each instance, Mr. Arnold struck fearlessly, having at heart only the interests of the great American people.

Most of us applauded his efforts, but have done nothing to show to him our gratitude. Are we going to emulate the ancient Athenians, treating him, in a way, in the manner of the Athenian tradition?

In the motion picture industry there are many whose lot has been improved by Mr. Arnold's work. These should express their feelings to Mr. Arnold by a suitable letter. As a matter of fact, this paper suggests that every theatre owner in the country and every member of the other branches who has benefited by Mr. Arnold's faithful and conscientious work write to Mr. Arnold in care of the Department of Justice, a letter, expressing his gratitude, thereby erecting for him, in a figurative sense, that monument which Mr. Arnold can see present in each writer's letter, to feel the pleasure that was denied to the Great Athenian citizens, philosophers and public servants, during their lifetime.

(Continued on last page)

"Saboteur" with Robert Cummings and Priscilla Lane

(Universal, April 24; time, 108 min.)

A thrilling timely melodrama about the subversive activities of fifth columnists. The picture catches one's interest at the beginning and never loses its hold. Although the melodramatic sequences become far-fetched towards the end to a point where intelligent audiences might find them laughable, they do not lessen its entertainment value for the masses. The story has been handled by Alfred Hitchcock in his well-known manner; it is replete with human appeal, fast and suspensive action and many thrills. The performances are excellent. The picture brings to the attention of the public the methods that saboteurs might use in their attempts to undermine the country's defense effort:—

Robert Cummings and Virgil Summers, his pal, both aircraft workers, collide with Norman Lloyd, a fellow worker, on their way to lunch. Helping to retrieve the scattered contents of Lloyd's wallet, they notice on a letter his name and address. Lloyd seems upset. A fire in the paint shop brings them rushing back. Lloyd hands Cummings an extinguisher. Cummings gives it to Summers, who plays it on the flames. The flames engulf him, burning him to death. At the inquest, Cummings relates the part he had played during the fire, naming Lloyd as one who had helped. Cummings learns from Dorothy Peterson, Summers' mother, that the police had a warrant for his arrest. The extinguisher he had given to Summers contained gasoline, and the plant had no record of Lloyd's employment. Cummings eludes the police, planning to track down Lloyd. Remembering the address he had seen on the letter, Cummings makes his way to the ranch of Otto Kruger, leader of the sabotage ring. Kruger denies knowing Lloyd, but Cummings notices a telegram in which Lloyd informs Kruger that he is on his way to Soda City. Kruger, an influential citizen, has Cummings arrested as a fugitive, despite Cummings' protests to the police that Kruger is a saboteur. When the police car is halted by a traffic jam on a bridge, Cummings escapes by diving into the river below. He reaches the secluded cabin of Vaughan Glaser, a blind composer, who befriends him. Glaser sends Cummings with Priscilla Lane, his niece, to a blacksmith to remove Cummings' handcuffs. Miss Lane feels no sympathy for Cummings and attempts to turn him over to the authorities. But he prevents her from doing so. Cummings convinces her that he is innocent, and induces her to accompany him to Soda City, where they locate a shack belonging to the saboteurs. When two of the gang arrive, Miss Lane hides, while Cummings pretends to be one of them. Miss Lane reports her findings to the Sheriff, just as the saboteurs start for New York with Cummings. In New York, Cummings is escorted to a mansion, where a swank party is in progress. He finds Miss Lane there, a prisoner of Kruger. Cummings attempts to warn the guests that Alma Kruger, the hostess, is involved with the gang, but he is outwitted. Slugged and imprisoned in a basement storeroom, he sets off the sprinkler system and escapes when the first department arrives. Newspaper headlines about a battleship launching at the Brooklyn Navy Yard remind Cummings that the saboteurs planned to wreck the ship. Reaching the Yard, Cummings sees Lloyd inside a newsreel truck. He fights with Lloyd, but he is subdued. His fight, however, so delays the explosion that the ship escapes destruction. Meanwhile Miss Lane succeeds in attracting the attention of some cab drivers, who call the F.B.I. The gang is caught, but Lloyd escapes. He is followed by Miss Lane to the Statue of Liberty. There, he is cornered by Cummings atop the statue, from where he falls to his death, despite Cummings' efforts to save him.

Peter Viertel, Joan Harrison and Dorothy Parker wrote the original screen play. It was directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Frank Lloyd is the producer, and Jack H. Skirball the associate producer.

"The Gold Rush" with Charles Chaplin

(United Artists, re-issue, April 17; time, 72 min.)

When this picture was produced in 1925 HARRISON'S REPORTS said; "The majority of those who will see 'The Gold Rush' will declare that Mr. Chaplin has never done better work in his career." That statement is applicable today. Although seventeen years have elapsed and the mo-

tion picture technique of 1942 is by far different than that of 1925, the film has lost none of its qualities because of age; it is truly a credit to the genius of Mr. Chaplin, for it is as effective now as it was then.

The new generation, to whom the doings of Mr. Chaplin in this picture were something their elders are reminiscent about, should be delighted with his performance. A master at pantomime, his gestures, his facial expression, his every movement, in fact, has a significance.

The picture has been re-edited and is of shorter running time than the original version, but the memorable scenes that made this picture popular have been retained. They include his leisurely stroll along a mountain path followed by a huge bear; his boiling and eating one of his shoes, when faced with starvation, licking the nails as if they were chicken bones, and winding the shoe laces around the fork as if they were spaghetti; the hallucination of Mack Swain, his famished partner, seeing Chaplin as a large chicken, runs amuck with an axe in an attempt to kill him; the "Dance of the Rolls" in which Chaplin, holding in each hand a fork pinned to a roll, dances them, deftly coordinating a toss of the head with each "high kick"; and the cabin that is half on the ground with the other half hanging over the edge of a precipice, tilting and returning to balance as the characters shift about on the inside.

Interspersed with the comedy is drama. Chaplin's eagerness to please the girl he adores is full of pathos.

The picture has been refurbished with music and narrative dialogue written by Mr. Chaplin, who also delivers the narration with good results.

Included in the cast are Tom Murray, Henry Bergman, Malcolm White and Georgia Hale.

"The Panther's Claw" with Sidney Blackmer and Byron Foulger

(Producers Releasing Corp., April 17; time, 72 min.)

As compared with the majority of program murder-mystery melodramas produced recently, "The Panther's Claw" will easily match or surpass them in entertainment value. Although the action is not so fast, able direction and competent performances enables it to maintain one's interest. To the picture's advantage is the fact that Sidney Blackmer, the police head who solves the crime, is depicted as a man endowed with human kindness and restraint, instead of as an arrogant, blundering idiot, who trips all over himself for the sake of comedy—a time-worn characterization generally used in this type of pictures. Commendable also is the performance of Byron Foulger, who plays a sort of "Casper Milque-toast" role. Proper treatment of the story keeps the mystery unsolved until the end:—

Byron Foulger, a timid soul, is taken into custody by the police at midnight when caught prowling near a cemetery. Sidney Blackmer, police commissioner, investigating mysterious notes received by members of an opera troupe, learns that Foulger, too, had received such a note. It demanded that he leave \$1000 on a gravestone in the cemetery, and he had followed instructions. It comes to light that Foulger, a wigmaker, did work for the opera troupe. Among those who had received notes were Gerta Rozen, the star, and Barry Bernard, her manager. A policeman is sent to Foulger's home to get his bankbook to check his story that he had withdrawn \$1000 to give it to the "Panther." He has Foulger type out a receipt on his portable typewriter. The paper and type both correspond with those of the mysterious notes. Blackmer informs Ricki Vallin, his secretary, that it looks as if Foulger had made himself appear a victim of an extortion so that he could later extort money from the others. A sinister aspect is placed on the affair when Miss Rozen is found murdered in her apartment, which was in the same building where Foulger lived. Although Herbert Rawlinson, the district attorney, demands of Blackmer that he arrest Foulger, Blackmer does not think him guilty. Suspicion points at Joaquin Edwards, a baritone, whose ardent attentions Miss Rozen had resented, and Bernard, her manager. Eventually Blackmer proves his deductions correct, solving the murder with the arrest of Bernard.

Anthony Abbott wrote the original story, and Martin Mooney the screen play. It was directed by William Beau-dine, and produced by Lester Cutler and T. R. Williams.

"Hello Annapolis" with Tom Brown and Jean Parker

(Columbia, April 23; time, 62 min.)

Mediocre program farc. The production bears a similarity to "Shipmates Forever," with Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler, a very good picture, produced by First National in 1935. The story is familiar—that of the "cocky" hero, who sneers at Navy life; of the girl who loves him as well as the Navy; of the pal who befriends him; and of the usual ending in which he becomes a hero, ready to do or die. The treatment follows a time-worn pattern in which the upper classmen show their superiority over the plebes, but it has little effect. A considerable number of stock shots about Annapolis have been used:—

Realizing that Jean Parker, his sweetheart and daughter of a late Navy officer, is displeased with his contempt for everything about the Navy, Tom Brown, son of a wealthy shipbuilder, informs her that he intends to enlist in the Navy. Tom's object is to fill out the application, have the recruiting officer shelve it, then take up Jean on her willingness to marry a Navy man. But Jean learns of the scheme and arranges for the enlistment to be given the widest publicity. As a result, the recruiting officer dares not shelve the application. Consequently, Tom finds himself in the Navy. He becomes shipmates with Larry Parks, a boyhood friend. He, too, is in love with Jean. Larry, eager to enter Annapolis, studies hard for the few appointments given to service men each year. He passes the examinations. Tom, too, passes and receives an appointment, but he scorns congratulations. He announces that he is entering the Academy only because he can resign from Annapolis, but not from the Navy. Tom's contemptuous attitude towards the school's traditions makes him unpopular with the student body. When he prepares to submit his resignation, they accuse him of being a quitter. Angered, he tears up his resignation and determines to stick it out. When Larry tries to prevent Tom from breaking a rule, he is seriously injured by a blow from Tom. As a result, the student body ostracizes Tom. When Larry recuperates, Tom seeks his friendship and is forgiven. His attempts to redeem himself with the student body are ignored. An accident in the Academy boiler room, in which Tom saves Larry's life, makes him completely acceptable to his fellows, as well as to Jean.

Donald Davis and Tom Reed wrote the screen play, Charles Barton directed it, and Wallace MacDonald produced it.

Suitable for all.

"The Girl From Alaska" with Ray Middleton and Jean Parker

(Republic, April 16; time, 74 min.)

Supposedly a thrilling melodrama of the far north, this program picture has little to offer in the way of entertainment. The story, which deals with gold and love is not particularly exciting and, since one is not held in suspense, one's interest wanes. Excepting for the scenes in which the ice breaks up as a frozen river is crossed, the action is slow. The love interest is mild, and the performances are unconvincing:—

On the eve of his departure from the Alaskan gold country, Ray Middleton, an unsuccessful prospector, is approached by Jerome Cowan, an aristocratic renegade, who seeks his aid in the robbing of a \$100,000 gold cache held by an old prospector named McCoy, and his son "Pete." Cowan explains that McCoy had sent for Matt Donovan, son of his old partner, to help him move the gold safely to civilization. Donovan had died of exposure before reaching McCoy. Inasmuch as Donovan and McCoy had never met, Cowan suggests that Middleton masquerade as Donovan. But Middleton refuses. During a drinking party that night, a man is murdered under conditions that make it appear as if Middleton were guilty. Under threat of turning him over to the authorities, Cowan compels Middleton to join in the plot. At the McCoy camp, Middleton learns that McCoy had died and that "Pete" was not a son, but a daughter—Jean Parker. With the help of Middleton, whom she believes to be Donovan, Miss Parker and her two Indian servants begin the transport of the gold by dog sled. They are overtaken by Cowan and Robert H. Barrat, another renegade, who had

joined the plot. Middleton informs Miss Parker of the plot, but urges her not to show any suspicion. When the party crosses paths with a gang of gold-mad marauders, Cowan, fearing harm, deserts. Middleton seizes this opportunity to escape from Barrat and orders Miss Parker to go on ahead, while he attempts to hold Barrat at bay. She refuses to leave him, but Middleton, hoping to disillusion her, tells her the truth about himself. Reluctantly, she leaves him. In the ensuing gun fight between Barrat and Middleton, Cowan returns with the Mounted Police, but Middleton eludes them as they arrest Barrat. Middleton hides in a cave, but is found by both Cowan and Miss Parker. Cowan, touched by the show of devotion between the two, reveals that Barrat was guilty of the murder and abandons his quest for the McCoy gold.

Edward T. Lowe and Robert Ormond Case wrote the screen play, Nick Grinde directed it, and Armand Schaefer produced it.

Suitable for all.

"Men of San Quentin" with J. Anthony Hughes and Eleanor Stewart

(Producers Releasing Corp., May 29; time, 78 min.)

Taking into consideration the budgetary limits within which this prison drama was produced, it is a fine picture of its kind, and far superior in quality to some of those made by major studios. Void of the triteness of so many prison stories, it is an effective drama depicting two schools of thought in the disciplinary treatment of convicts by their keepers—the one that is hardened in its handling of criminals, and the other that believes in humanitarianism. It is a story of reform from the old order to the new, imbued with human appeal, and carrying a message in the interests of modern penal methods. The direction, the photography, and the sound are very good:—

J. Anthony Hughes, Sergeant Guard, returns to San Quentin with Eleanor Stewart, his bride, to take up residence and resume his duties. Dick Curtis and Art Miles, two hardened criminals, discuss with Jeffrey Sayre, a newcomer, how George Breakston, his pal, was being framed by Charles Middleton, deputy warden, for the killing of a guard. Hughes sends Drew Demarest, a guard, to supervise some repair work to be done by Curtis and two other convicts. In an attempt to escape, Curtis kills Demarest, as well as the two convicts, but is caught by Hughes. Middleton, jealous of Hughes, frames him with the Gate Guard, by inducing him to testify at the Trial Board hearing on the jail break—that Hughes had ordered Demarest to shoot the prisoners if they made a suspicious move. Middleton then tries to induce Hughes to testify falsely against two convicts whom he, Middleton, disliked, so as to implicate them in the jail break. Hughes refuses. Middleton assigns Sayre to Hughes' cottage as a house-boy to spy on him. On Middleton's promise that he will take him out of solitary confinement, Curtis signs an affidavit that Hughes had shot Demarest and the two convicts. But at the hearing, Curtis is tricked into confessing that he and not Hughes had committed the murders. Meanwhile, Sayre, pleased because of Miss Stewart's kind treatment, informs her of Middleton's plan to frame her husband. When Middleton, at Hughes' home, accuses his wife of giving an expose story about prison conditions to a newspaper friend, Sayre kills him with a gun he had concealed; then he commits suicide. Hughes is appointed Warden by the Board to take the place of the sick warden who had resigned. He quells an attempted jail break by Art Miles, saving Breakston, who had been used by Miles as a hostage. By installing a humanitarian system, he gains the confidence of the criminals, helping them to rehabilitate themselves.

Martin Mooney wrote the original story, and Ernest Booth the screen play. It was directed by William Beaudine, and produced by Martin Mooney and Max M. King.

LOOK OVER YOUR FILES

Now and then your copy of HARRISON'S REPORTS is lost in the mails. Look over your files now and if you find any copies missing let this office know so that we may send you duplicate copies. A sufficient number of copies from each issue is kept in stock to supply your needs.

IN A RELEASE SENT OUT on April 24 by the Washington office of Allied States Association, the following is said under the heading "PROBLEMS MULTIPLY":

"It is now certain that the Board meeting in Chicago on April 30 will be one of the most momentous in the history of Allied. As the war effort grows in intensity, new problems arise and the outlook grows less certain. Exhibitors more than ever are looking to their trade associations for information and guidance concerning the rapid and revolutionary changes that are taking place. Although numerous emergency committees have been created to handle certain phases of the war work, the trade associations are still the main reliance of the exhibitors. In fact, much of the confusion in exhibitor ranks is due to the overlapping authority and duplication of effort of some of the emergency groups. The exhibitors have long been accustomed to look to a single source—their trade associations—for the solution of their problems, and the habits of a lifetime are not easily overcome.

"Therefore, there is a strong insistence on the part of several directors, reflecting a like attitude on the part of their members, that Allied should continue during the emergency to function as far as it appropriately can in the interest of the exhibitors; that with respect to subject matters that have been delegated to or assumed by emergency committees, Allied should at least keep its members informed of all developments and should offer constructive criticism whenever necessary; that Allied should take the lead in straightening out the confusion and duplication into which some of the emergency committees have fallen and, finally, that Allied should do all in its power to promote harmony and cooperation between the new groups and the older trade associations so that they may work more effectively together."

* * *

EVERY ONE OF YOU KNOWS, by this time, I am sure, that Judge Alvin S. Pearson, in a decision he handed down in the Ramsey County district court, in St. Paul, on April 14, declared Paramount, RKO and 20th Century-Fox "Not Guilty!" of the criminal charges that the State had brought against these companies charging them of having violated the law against selling their pictures in any other method but as an entire group consisting of the entire year's output, as the Minnesota Statute decreed.

On the strength of competent legal opinion that I had obtained immediately after the announcement was made that Northwest Allied would introduce the bill in the Legislature of the State of Minnesota, I opposed the bill, advising the exhibitors that a law of that kind would be declared by the courts unconstitutional. I said that the money used for the purpose of pushing the Bill through the Legislature would be a waste.

I was criticised severely by Fred Strom, secretary of the organization, for opposing the bill, particularly when, in an editorial that I published in the May 17, 1941, issue, I pointed out how loosely was the bill drawn, and what little chance it had to be sustained in the courts. Mr. Strom informed me that he, too, had obtained competent legal opinion, but this opinion, was different from the one that I had obtained—it had assured him that the bill was constitutional.

In connection with Judge Pearson's decision, the Allied release of April 24 has this to say:

"A State District Judge in Minnesota has held the anti-blocks-of-five law, sponsored by Allied of the

Northwest to be unconstitutional. Securing the passage of such a controversial law represented a remarkable accomplishment by the Minnesota exhibitors. Under it, they were enabled during the current season to buy full blocks from the consenting companies with a 20% elimination. According to trade paper accounts, this did not solve the question of rentals and the battle against percentages continued. Exhibitors in surrounding States who were planning to obtain passage of a similar law will now be deterred.

"National Allied did not sponsor the legislation because, first, the Board felt that the Consent Decree should have a fair trial and, second, because the General Counsel advised that, in his opinion, the legislation was unconstitutional. However, under the local self-government rule in Allied the Minnesota men were free to do as they pleased, which they did. When a certain distributor refused to sell under the State law, and a serious picture shortage was threatened, Allied was successful in persuading that distributor to resume selling in Minnesota.

"It is not settled at this time whether the decision will be appealed.

"The most disturbing part of the decision from the standpoint of exhibitors outside of Minnesota, is the fact that the Court made damaging findings of fact that may arise to plague the exhibitors and the Government at some later time. Strictly speaking, the findings are binding only on the parties to the record, but they can be used to influence public opinion.

"Some of the findings are all the more remarkable when compared with the findings of a three-judge Federal Court in Fargo, in the decision upholding the constitutionality of the North Dakota theatre divorce-law, made in July, 1938. It is hard to account for the variance in the two sets of findings. A possible explanation, hinted at in the trade papers, is that the independent exhibitors did not testify in any considerable number in the Minnesota trial and the case was allowed to go to the Court largely on the testimony of the general sales managers, branch managers and circuit heads. The findings make it appear that the independent exhibitors have never had a real grievance; some of the findings put the independent exhibitors in a very unfavorable light. Apparently the distributors' attorneys ran roughshod over the opposition and in the matter of findings wrote their own tickets."

* * *

REGARDING THE CORRECTION that was made in the April 11 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS as to the cost of "Klondike Fury," the Monogram picture, which cost was given in "The Hollywood Reporter," as \$33,000, Bill Wilkerson, publisher of that paper, has written the following note to me:

"I repeat 'KLONDIKE FURY' cost was \$33,000 mentioned in the Reporter story, notwithstanding Monogram.

"This was, of course, negative cost, and doesn't include cost of prints or advertising."

I wrote to Mr. Ray Johnston, president of Monogram, to give me the correct figures, and here is what his reply states:

"Just had my auditor audit the books on 'KLONDIKE FURY.'

"The cost is \$50,651.14. This does not include \$13,075.00 for prints and advertising. It also does not include charge for supervision by either of the King Bros.

"We think Bill Howard and the producers did a terrific job for the money."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1942

No. 19

HERE AND THERE

THE NEW SALES PLAN, the provisions of which were given in the April 11 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, was approved by the Board of Directors of Allied States Association at their meeting in Chicago last week with only one dissenting vote—that of the New England organization, of which Nathan Yamins is its board member.

The new plan provides, as said in that issue, that the number of pictures that may be sold by each consenting distributor will be 12—five produced and tradeshown, and seven identified by either book or play or outline of story, or by either featured players or stars.

As to the number of pictures that a contract holder may cancel, the plan provides that the exhibitor who pays \$100 top will have the right to cancel two pictures, but if his average film rental for the twelve pictures he buys from a given distributor is \$101, but does not exceed \$200, he will have the right to cancel only one picture, in each case from the unproduced pictures.

The plan certainly will not please every exhibitor. As Mr. Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of the organization, said recently, the drafting of a sales plan that would be acceptable to all types of exhibitors is difficult, for the reason that, exhibitors with closed situations would want widest selectivity; small-town operators do not care for tradeshowings, preferring to license many pictures at one time, and exhibitors in highly competitive situations should like to tie up as many pictures as possible, so as to keep it away from their competitors. So a middle ground had to be found.

It now remains to be seen whether the Department of Justice will accept the plan or not. It seems, however, as if the Department will accept it since it does not go back to wholesale block-booking, and the majority of the exhibitors insist upon the right to buy more than five pictures at one time.

In view of the experience it acquired during the time it published a forecast of story material announced for production, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels that, through the outline of stories that will be furnished, it will be in a position to help the exhibitors in the purchase of their "Synopsis" pictures by telling them what their possibilities may be.

* * *

IN A RECENT ISSUE of HARRISON'S REPORTS, it was stated that the ban placed upon the sale of tires will so restrict automobile travel that a rearrangement of clearances throughout the land will be necessary.

The rationing of gasoline in the eastern states makes a rearrangement of clearances much more necessary.

That a rearrangement of the clearances is necessary is an opinion that has been expressed also by Judge Van Vetchen Veeder, chairman of the Arbitration Appeals Board of the motion picture industry. Judge Veeder feels that such a rearrangement should, according to the April 30 issue of Motion Picture Daily, simplify the system. He said that, with increased restrictions of the use of automobiles, the competitive conditions on which clearances were based will be outmoded.

This paper hopes that Allied States Association will take the initiative in the readjustment of clearances by instruct-

ing its UMPI Committee members to bring this matter to the Committee's attention for immediate action.

* * *

IN HELPING WIN THE WAR, what should be uppermost in the minds of every person connected with the motion picture industry must be, not how much credit he could get, but how much he could do.

There is a growing resentment among the exhibitors because the distributors ignore them when it comes to determining campaigns for some purpose, on account of the fact that they give credit to prominent persons among the producers and the distributors, ignoring the exhibitors.

In the Allied Bulletin of April 24, which was sent out from the Washington office of the organization, the following was said:

"The doubt and uncertainty concerning the work of the War Activities Committee (WAC), to cite a case in point, is due mainly to the lack of an adequate information service by WAC. When this office inquired relative to a forthcoming WAC drive, we were informed that the project was approved by the appropriate committee of WAC; that the Allied 'representative' on that committee had not taken the trouble to attend. Apparently the person to whom we spoke felt that Allied should rely on its own men for information concerning the activities of WAC.

"This has not worked out in practice; nor will it until the status of exhibitors serving on WAC is clarified. Certainly the Allied men have not understood that they were the representatives of Allied. They were appointed by the self-appointed organizers of WAC (formerly Committee Cooperating for National Defense) without consulting Allied and they quite naturally understood that they were serving as individuals and not in a representative capacity.

"This may seem trifling but nothing is trifling that interferes in any degree with an all-out war effort. Failure to utilize the good will, influence and facilities of the trade associations is a regrettable loss.

"All special committees and volunteers should realize that much of the enthusiasm and driving power of relief campaigns and similar projects are derived from the endorsement and support thereof by the exhibitor associations, the pep meetings held under their auspices, the friendly rivalries that are created, the desire that is kindled that our group shall make a better showing than any other. As matters stand, the influence, good will and facilities of the exhibitor associations are neglected in favor of centering all authority and credit in a comparatively few individuals in New York and Hollywood, functioning by remote control."

HARRISON'S REPORTS is in full sympathy with the remarks made by the writer in the Allied bulletin. But, in addition to the reason he gives for wanting the exhibitor associations recognized, there is this: a person may not want any credit for what he does in the promotion of a worthy cause, but certainly he hates to see the other fellow "steal" his credit. For this reason, the producers will do well to consult the exhibitor associations when they want the exhibitors to endorse a war drive; they will get much better results.

Let the spirit of cooperation prevail in the war activities of the motion picture industry!

"Take a Letter, Darling" with Fred MacMurray and Rosalind Russell

(Paramount, no release date; time, 93 min.)

Excellent! It is one of the most highly amusing sophisticated comedies brought to the screen, the sort that should please the masses, as well as the classes. Even though the story is simple, it is made impressive through expert direction, flawless performances and brilliant dialogue. The sets are lavish. It is a story of a self-sufficient but beautiful woman advertising executive who, for professional reasons, employs a male secretary to provide interest for the jealous wives of the clients she entertains. But her scheme goes wrong when she falls in love with him. He gleefully persists in vexing her by being excessively attentive to a sister of her most important client. Additional comedy is provoked by Robert Benchley, who has a mania for toy games:—

Rosalind Russell, co-owner of a large advertising agency, employs Fred MacMurray as secretary. She informs him that part of his duties is to accompany her to night clubs and to pose as her fiance. She explains that, for business reasons, it is necessary for her to entertain her clients, but frequently they misinterpret her friendliness. Moreover, some of them have jealous wives, whose influence might spoil a deal. Her introducing him as her fiance would cool the ardor of the clients and, by his being attentive to their wives, MacMurray would induce them to influence their husbands to sign contracts. She warns MacMurray that their relationship is based purely on business, and that his first wrong move will cost him his job. MacMurray informs her that he dislikes the job, but will accept it because he needs the money. She admires his frankness. She sends him to the tailors, where he is given a complete outfit of clothes. That evening, MacMurray so ingratiates himself with the wife of a client, that she induces her husband to sign a contract. Miss Russell doubles MacMurray's salary. Robert Benchley, Miss Russell's partner, informs her that MacDonald Carey, a four times divorced tobacco magnate, had arrived from Raleigh. Although he informs her that Carey hates women, Miss Russell determines to get his tobacco company account. She takes MacMurray to her mountain lodge, where she works quietly on some new ideas to present to Carey. When MacMurray takes her in his arms and kisses her, they realize that their association had turned to love. Fearing that this love might interfere with her individualism, she tells MacMurray to forget the incident and remember that he is her employee. MacMurray agrees. Miss Russell visits Carey, but he is so rude that she angrily informs him that she will give her ideas to one of his competitors. This has the proper effect on Carey. He reconsiders, but informs her that Frances Farmer, his sister, will have to approve the plan. Miss Russell arranges for dinner at a night club, at which she introduces MacMurray as her chief idea man. Miss Farmer is so pleased by MacMurray's attentions, that she invites him to accompany her to her home in Raleigh, for further discussions about the contract. Noting Miss Russell's jealous anger, he purposely accepts. MacMurray receives many telegrams from Miss Russell. These he ignores. Meanwhile Carey, now in love with Miss Russell, invites her to accompany him to Raleigh. She accepts. To make Miss Russell yield to him, MacMurray overdoes his attentiveness to Miss Farmer. This so angers her, that she accepts Carey's marriage proposal. MacMurray accuses her of being a "gold-digger," and leaves. On the day of her marriage she receives a portrait of a nude woman, on which Miss Russell's face had been dubbed in by MacMurray cleverly. She resents Carey's remark about her being a worldly woman and leaves him in a huff. MacMurray and Miss Russell come together.

Claude Binyon wrote the screen play, and Mitchell Leisen directed it. Fred Kohlmar produced it.

No objectionable situations.

"Sweater Girl" with Eddie Bracken, June Preisser and Betty Jane Rhodes

(Paramount, no release date; time, 76 min.)

This college campus murder mystery melodrama, with comedy and music, is fairly entertaining program fare. Following the formula set for mystery melodramas, the plot places several persons in a suspicious light, keeping one guessing as to the murderer's identity. The music and the comedy lend relief to an otherwise sordid story, which deals with the murders of two college students. The musical numbers, which are of the popular variety, are pretty good. Audiences will enjoy it, for the action is fast-moving, and the performances are adequate:—

The murder of two students has a telling effect on the student body rehearsing their annual college show. Kenneth Howell, the college "Winchell," had been found dead in his office, from unknown causes, and Johnny Johnston, songwriter for the college show, had been murdered—strangled

with a rope. Although Detective Charles D. Brown had not yet found a definite clue, June Preisser, a co-ed, had reason to suspect several persons. They were Betty Jane Rhodes, singer in the show; Professor Nils Asther, Betty's stepfather; and Professor Phillip Terry, June's brother. June had seen Betty leave Howell's office the day he was murdered, and had been told by Howell that Betty had requested him not to print certain news about her in the college paper. Terry had induced June not to mention that fact at the coroner's inquest since he felt that Betty was innocent, and the notoriety would work a hardship on her family, particularly her mother, Frieda Inescourt, who was an invalid. June had also noticed Betty and Asther having an argument. Eddie Bracken, Howell's close friend, and June discover in Howell's office a letter that proves the cause of his death: The mucilage on the flap had been poisoned, and Howell's licking the envelope had caused his death. It was a self-addressed envelope from an admirer, returned to Howell marked "No such address." June notices that the typewritten letter "e" is imperfect. Detective Brown visits Bracken at his fraternity house and notices a group picture of Bracken, Howell, Johnston, and "Dick Penfield." Brown learns that Penfield had died of heart failure. He says that it is odd that Bracken is the only one of the group alive. Bracken is asked by Betty to stay at her home with her mother, while she reports for rehearsal. When Betty returns home, she finds Bracken almost dead from strangulation. In the basement of Asther's home, June finds a typewriter that had an imperfect "e." She notifies Brown. Meanwhile, Asther visits Bracken and asks him to accompany him to town; he would like to have a talk with him. When they return, Asther tells his wife to prepare to leave on a trip with him. She protests on the ground that she is unable to walk, but he bluntly tells her he knows that she is pretending. He shows her the group picture, telling her that he is aware that "Dick Penfield" had been her son by a former marriage. Miss Inescourt becomes hysterical and tells him that Bracken, Howell and Johnston were responsible for her son's death; he had died while they were hazing him. She dashes from her bedroom and calls for Robert Cherry, the housekeeper's half-wit son, and demands to know if he had followed her instructions. The police enter as he repeats that he had replaced real bullets for blanks in a gun that was to be used in an Apache dance number by June and Bracken. The police save Bracken.

Eve Greene wrote the screen play, and William Clemens directed it. Sol C. Siegel and Joseph Siström produced it.

It is questionable for children because of the murders.

"Night in New Orleans" with Preston Foster, Albert Dekker, Patricia Morison and Charles Butterworth

(Paramount, no release date; time, 75 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. It is a murder mystery comedy-melodrama, done in a style that resembles somewhat the "Thin Man" series, but lacks the quality. The story is that of rivalry between two police Lieutenants, who vyingly try to outsmart each other in their efforts to gain a captaincy appointment. One of the Lieutenants is the logical suspect in a murder, and the other makes the most of his predicament. The wife of the suspected Lieutenant provokes the comedy by her attempts to aid him. Although the outcome is obvious, the action is steady, and the performances fair:—

Police Lieutenant Preston Foster returns to his home and gives Patricia Morison, his wife, a packet of love letters he had obtained from the home of "Phillip Wallace." Wallace, a notorious gambler, had been a childhood sweetheart of Foster's wife, and had used her love letters to prevent Foster from jailing him. That same night Wallace is found murdered in his home. At the scene of the murder, Police Lieutenant Albert Dekker finds a service revolver, which proves to be the same type as that used by the police. Remembering that Foster had been investigating Wallace, Dekker feels that the gun might be Foster's. He goes to Foster's home to question him. Foster produces his revolver, while his wife and Dooley Wilson, his servant, inform Dekker that Foster had been home all evening. Dekker intimates that he is not satisfied with his alibi—he still suspects Foster of the crime. He asks Foster to see him at headquarters on the following morning. Because both are eligible for an appointment to a vacant captaincy, Foster feels that Dekker will do his utmost to incriminate him. The following morning Foster is summoned to the office of Cecil Kellaway, head of the Citizens' Police Committee. Kellaway informs Foster that he is removing him as an investigator of gambling to give him more time to clear himself of the Wallace affair. Foster goes to the office of Charles Butterworth, Wallace's brother, where he meets also William Wright, another brother, and Jean

Phillips, Wright's girl-friend, a singer in the Mississippi Inn, a gambling joint. Foster notes that the brothers show no remorse over Wallace's death. Dissatisfied with Wright's alibi, Foster goes to Jean's apartment. Before he enters, someone attempts to shoot him, but he is saved by the scream of his wife, who had followed him. Foster and his wife go to the Mississippi Inn, where they discover Wright murdered. They are chased from the Inn by three men, one of whom is Kellaway. Foster returns to the Inn and secures the body of Wright. Returning to his apartment, Foster finds Dekker waiting for him. Dekker had secured additional evidence tending to incriminate Foster, and places him under arrest. Meanwhile Sergeant Paul Hurst locates Wright's body in Foster's car and reports it to Dekker. To be able to solve the mystery, Foster makes a deal with Dekker. He turns over to him information that will break up the city's gambling ring, thereby aiding Dekker to get the captaincy. Foster succeeds in trapping Butterworth as the murderer, while Dekker arrests Kellaway as the head of the gambling ring. The case closed, each offers to withdraw from the captaincy race in favor of the other. The problem is solved with the announcement that Sergeant Hurst was made Captain.

Jonathan Latimer wrote the screen play, William Clemens directed it, and Sol C. Siegel produced it.

Nothing objectionable for children except the murders.

"Syncopation" with Jackie Cooper, Bonita Granville and Adolph Menjou

(RKO, May 22; time, 90 min.)

Fairly entertaining. It is a sort of cavalcade of dance music from early in the century to modern times; from the original "Rag Time" music of the South, to the "Jazz" music of the prohibition era, leading up to the modern swing music of today. There is not much to the story, but since it moves at a steady pace and the performances are engaging, it holds one's interest. The picture closes with a hot swing number played by a combination of popular swing band leaders billed as the "All-American Dance Band." Proper exploitation methods of it should draw the "swingsters":—

Intrigued by the promise of big money in Chicago, George Latimer (Adolph Menjou) follows the advice of Steve Porter (George Bancroft), his friend, and moves himself, his daughter, Kit (Peggy McIntyre), and her nurse, Ella (Jessie Grayson), north. They depart reluctantly, for they loved the environment of New Orleans, and the trumpet music of Reggie, Ella's son. Ten years later in Chicago, Kit (Bonita Granville), now a young lady of seventeen, is in love with Paul Porter (Ted North), Porter's son. But Kit is unhappy; the restrictions imposed on a girl of her age, depress her. When everyone goes to a party one night, leaving her alone, Kit, depressed in spirit, leaves the house for a walk. She meets Johnnie (Jackie Cooper), a young boy, who tells her that he plays the trumpet and that he is trying to organize a band. He takes her to a party, where she gives vent to her melancholia by piano-playing the "Blues" rhythm of the South. Those at the party become so enlivened by the music, that the party is raided by the police. At a widely publicized trial, Kit is acquitted. Her type of music is the rage in Chicago. She is offered a job by Rags Jackson (Frank Jenks), a showman, but her father rejects it, and Paul persuades her to give up the idea. Paul goes to war and is killed. Meanwhile Johnnie is taught "Rag Time" music by Reggie, who had come north. Kit and Johnnie fall in love and are married. Johnnie secures a job with a band, but the music he had to play did not allow him to express the music that he and Kit loved. Kit asks Johnnie to quit his job, but he feels that earning a good salary was more important. They quarrel and part. A number of years later, Kit finds Johnnie. He is back with his old band, trying to make a name for himself. She induces Jackson, now a successful manager, as well as her employer, to help Johnnie. His music catches on. Kit and Johnnie are happily re-united.

Philip Yordan and Frank Cavett wrote the screen play. William Dieterle produced and directed it. The "All-American Dance Band" includes Charlie Barnet, Jack Jenny, Benny Goodman, Harry James, Gene Krupa, Alvino Ray and Joe Venuti. The Hall-Johnson colored choir takes part.

"Beyond the Blue Horizon" with Dorothy Lamour

(Paramount, no release date; time, 76 min.)

Mediocre! Despite Dorothy Lamour's sarong, and the technicolor photography, this jungle romance fails to make an impression; it lacks a gripping story. Miss Lamour is depicted as a sort of female "Tarzan" with a ferocious tiger and a playful ape as her pets. Richard Denning, her leading man, plays a counterpart of "Tarzan." Jack Haley furnishes the comedy relief, but it has little effect. The story,—a search

for evidence to prove Miss Lamour's right to an inheritance,—leads them into the depthness of the jungle and to the menace of a mad bull elephant. The animal sequences should please children, as well as the sarong-conscious:—

Jack Haley, press agent for a circus, reads in the newspapers a news item to the effect that Dorothy Lamour, a white girl found in the jungle, is discovered to be the missing granddaughter of Edward Fielding, thereby heiress to millions. Haley suggests a publicity stunt revolving around a romance between Miss Lamour and Richard Denning, a circus lion tamer actually raised in the jungle; he had been taught civilized ways by Helen Gilbert, in love with him. When Denning disputes Miss Lamour's statement to the press that she swam with a tiger, Haley, picturing even greater publicity, telephones Patricia Morison, Fielding's other granddaughter, offering to expose Miss Lamour as a fraud. Miss Morison invites him to bring Denning to her home to meet Miss Lamour. At a family conference, Denning casts doubt on Miss Lamour's authenticity by stating that tigers cannot swim, but Walter Abel, an explorer, who had found her, vouches for her statement. Fielding recalls that he had given Miss Lamour's father two steel boxes containing papers that, if found, would prove her claim. Miss Lamour states that she could find the boxes, resting in "Forbidden Valley," but fears to go there because of Mabok, a huge elephant, who had destroyed her home, and killed her parents when she was only six years old. She relates how she had grown up with Go-Go, the ape, and Nya, the tiger. Denning offers to help her find the boxes. Accompanied by Haley, Abel and Miss Gilbert, they leave for Forbidden Valley. In the jungle, Miss Lamour meets and swims with Nya, the tiger, convincing Denning that it was true. Just as they find the boxes, the party is charged by Mabok, but manage to elude the elephant by seeking safety on a small island in the middle of a river. Together, Miss Lamour and Denning lure the elephant to the edge of a precipice, from which he hurls himself to his death. The two embrace.

Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Alfred Santell directed it, and Monta Bell produced it.

"Dr. Broadway" with Macdonald Carey and Jean Phillips

(Paramount, no rel. date; time, 67 min.)

This comedy-melodrama is fairly good program entertainment. Although the story stretches a point as regards Broadway life, it has the ingredients that should make it acceptable to general run of audiences—colorful characters, human interest, fast action, and situations that hold one in suspense. The direction and the performances are very good. The story revolves around the exploits of a young doctor, popular in Broadway circles because of the many people he had befriended. Newsboys, gamblers, gangsters, and others associated with Broadway seek to protect and aid him. It has all the earmarks of a Damon Runyon tale:—

When Jean Phillips, perched on the ledge of a tall building, threatens to jump, Macdonald Carey, a young physician, rescues her. He learns that she did it as part of a publicity stunt, accepting the job because she was broke. He befriends her and employs her as his receptionist. Carey learns from his Broadway friends that Edward Ciannelli, a gangster whom he had helped convict, had been paroled and was gunning for him. Carey goes to meet him, but Ciannelli is friendly; he seeks a favor. He informs Carey that he had \$100,000 in a safe deposit box, which he had saved for his daughter, "Margie Dove," whom he had not seen for years. He had last heard of her as an actress. Fearing that others may attempt to get the money, he induces Carey to try to find the girl and give her the money. He gives Carey a letter authorizing him to open the deposit box. Later, Ciannelli is found murdered. Carey is lured to a hotel room, knocked unconscious, and robbed of the authorization letter. He recovers, then hurries to the bank, reaching there in time to apprehend Gerald Mohr, his assailant, leaving with the money. Carey saves the money, but Mohr escapes. Joan Woodbury, who claims to be "Margie Dove," comes to see Carey. He discovers her to be a fraud, but says nothing. He instructs Jean to follow her. Jean trails her to the office of J. Carroll Naish, owner of a clothing store, but is captured. Naish telephones Carey to come to his store. He tells Carey that unless the money is brought to him by midnight, Jean will be murdered. Carey pretends to agree. Enlisting the aid of his Broadway friends, Carey foils the plot. Naish is killed, his gang is caught, and Carey once more rescues Jean from a ledge, on which she had crawled to escape the gang.

Art Arthur wrote the screen play, and Anton Mann directed it. Sol C. Siegel and E. D. Leshin produced it.

Not suitable for children.

"Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost" with Lupe Velez, Leon Errol and Charles Rogers

(RKO, June 26; time, 69 min.)

A mildly amusing program farce-comedy, mostly on the slapstick side. Its appeal is limited to the followers of the series, of which this picture is the sixth. Most of the comedy is provoked by Leon Errol who plays a dual role—"Uncle Matt" and "Lord Epping"—complicating matters when as "Uncle Matt," he masquerades as "Lord Epping." But these proceedings are repetitious of the previous efforts and, lacking a freshness in treatment and theme, has little effect. For adults it is silly entertainment, but it is the sort that should please youngsters:—

Because he had to leave on a hunting trip, Lord Epping (Leon Errol) delegates Dennis Lindsey (Charles Rogers) to entertain Percy Fitz-Batten (Donald MacBride) and his sister, Edith (Minna Gombell). The Fitz-Battens are expected on the following day. Dennis and his Aunt Della (Elisabeth Risdon) proceed to the English manor-house where the Fitz-Battens were to be entertained, while his Uncle Matt (Leon Errol) and Carmelita (Lupe Velez), Dennis' wife, plan to follow. On their arrival at the manor, Dennis and Aunt Della learn from the real estate agent that the house is reputedly haunted. Actually the agent is one of a gang of thieves, using the basement of the manor for a hideout. The Fitz-Battens arrive at Lord Epping's town house by mistake. Uncle Matt, posing as a man-servant, and Carmelita, as a maid, take them to the manor. When the Fitz-Battens learn that Lord Epping is away, they indignantly refuse to remain. Uncle Matt assures them that the Lord is expected momentarily and induces them to stay. With the help of Carmelita, Uncle Matt disguises himself as Lord Epping, playing the part so perfectly that he deceives both Aunt Della and Dennis, as well as the Fitz-Battens. But matters become complicated with the arrival of the real Lord Epping. Everyone is confused by his actions since they differ from those of Uncle Matt disguised as Lord Epping. Aunt Della discovers Uncle Matt's deception. When one of the thieves attempts to scare the occupants out of the house by marching around in a suit of armor and making wierd noises, Aunt Della, seeking the protection of Uncle Matt, drags the real Lord Epping into her bedroom, believing him to be Uncle Matt still in disguise. The confusion comes to an end when one of the thieves, in an attempt to sneak out of the house, drops a bottle of nitro-glycerine causing a terrific explosion.

The picture comes to an end showing the characters in grotesque positions.

Charles E. Roberts and Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Leslie Goodwins directed it, and Cliff Reid produced it.

"My Favorite Spy" with Kay Kyser

(RKO, Released June 12; 85 min.)

Fair. It is about the weakest Kay Kyser picture released to date. The interest is held fairly tight, but it fails to hold one in much suspense, and Mr. Kyser's comedy is of the mild sort. The fact that Mr. Kyser is presented as a person who is not smart does not make the comedy situations more laugh-provoking:—

No one is more surprised than Kay Kyser when he is called into the Army as a lieutenant. Having had only one summer's training at a civilian camp, Kay wonders why the Army has such confidence in his ability. To complicate matters, Kay has to leave for active duty a few hours after his marriage to Terry. A few days in the Army prove that Kay is no soldier. But the Government has higher things in mind for Kay: He is discharged, supposedly because of flat feet, and made an agent in the U. S. Secret Service, with instructions to trap a spy ring thought to be operating from New York's Orchid Room, where Kay's band is playing. The confidential nature of Kay's job prohibits his telling anyone, not even his wife. Terry tries to be understanding when Kay walks out on her the first night they are alone. She doesn't know he has a rendezvous with the exotic female spy Connie, or that he and Connie are going to tangle with a cop and spend the rest of the night in jail. But the escapade breaks in the papers the next morning, with front page pictures, and Terry files suit for divorce. The disconsolate Kay would like to explain to Terry, but his superiors have forbidden him to do so. He discovers that a Nazi agent, Robinson, owner of the Orchid Room, plans to send code messages over the air to Germany through Kay's orchestral arrangements. Knowing that Robinson is a spy, Kay deliberately wins his confidence by pretending to be bitter about his discharge from the Army. Robinson arranges a meeting with Kay, to which Connie is supposed to bring the G-Men at the crucial moment. Unfortunately, the jealous Terry ties Connie up in a closet and follows Kay herself. The Nazis, growing sus-

picious, lead Kay and Terry into an empty theater and threaten to kill them. Kay stalls, expecting Connie to arrive with reinforcements. He is horrified to learn from Terry that Connie will not appear. Terry thinks the whole thing is a gag until the Nazis start slapping her around. She screams for help, and Kay, up in the flies, cuts the ropes holding the curtain to the stage, and all remain his prisoners until the cops come and take over.

The screen play is by Sir Hertzog and William Bowers; it was produced by Harold Lloyd and directed by Tay Garnet. In the supporting cast are Ellen Drew, Jane Wyman, Robert Armstrong, William Demarest, Una O'Connor and Kay Kyser's band featuring Harry Babbitt, Ish Kabibble, Sult Mason, Trudy Irwin and Dorothy Dunn.

Good for the family.

"The Falcon Takes Over" with George Sanders and Lynn Bari

(RKO, May 29; time, 62 min.)

Minor program fare. This latest of the "Falcon's" adventures is on a par with the other pictures of the series and at best is suitable for the lower half of a mid-week double bill. Average movie patrons will find it to be indifferent, while the reaction of the more zealous mystery-melodrama fans remains questionable. When a person sees one of the "Falcon" pictures he sees them all; the story, the comedy, and the treatment are repetitious:—

While waiting in front of a night club for George Sanders, his boss, Allen Jenkins is forced by Ward Bond to act as a get-away driver. Bond had just killed the night club proprietor for refusing to divulge the whereabouts of "Velma," Bond's former girl-friend. Jenkins drives Sanders to the address where he had dropped Bond, which is the home of Anne Revere, who knew Velma. Through a telephone number scribbled on a pad, Sanders learns where Miss Revere had sent Bond to find Velma. Sanders is hired by Hans Conried to go with him as a witness, while he pays over \$10,000 for the return of a jade necklace stolen from Helen Gilbert, his fiancée. At the meeting place Conried attempts to shoot Sanders, but is himself shot by an unseen assassin. A witness to the events is Lynn Bari, a girl reporter. On Conried's body, Sanders finds the address of a Hindu swami, which is identical with that to which Miss Revere had sent Bond. He sends Jenkins to the swami's studio. As Jenkins enters the studio, Bond steps from behind a curtain and murders the swami. Jenkins is saved from a like fate by the arrival of Police Inspector James Gleason. Sanders goes back to Miss Revere's house to investigate further, only to find that she had been murdered. He finds a photograph of Velma. At a night club, Sanders learns from Miss Gilbert that Velma sang in a small safe. Her offer to drive him there is overheard by Bond. On the road, Miss Gilbert informs Sanders that she is Velma, draws a gun, and orders him out of the car. Bond who had taken the place of her chauffeur, interferes, but is shot. Miss Bari arrives in time to save Sanders.

Lynn Root and Frank Fenton wrote the screen play. Irving Reis directed it, and Howard Benedict produced it. Not for children.

"Powder Town" with Victor McLaglen Edmund O'Brien and Dorothy Lovett

(RKO, June 19; 79 min.)

By all rules of the game, "Powder Town" should have turned out a good program picture, for the story is by a prominent author (Viki Baum), and has been directed by an experienced director (Rowland V. Lee). Unfortunately, such is not the case, for the action is so silly that one is bored. And the hero (Edmond O'Brien) has been made an annoying, if not irritating, character on account of his absent-mindedness. Victor McLaglen is like a fifth wheel on a carriage. Eddie Foy, Jr., is supposed to be the funny man—he provokes a few laughs. The romance is indifferent. And few of the suspenseful situations really hold one in tense suspense, despite the heroic efforts of the producer:—

The action unfolds in a town whose livelihood depends on a factory that manufactures explosives for defense work; it deals with the struggles of a naive scientist to perfect a formula by which the most highly explosive powder could be manufactured, and of the efforts of enemy agents to steal the formula from him. To attain their object, these agents do not hesitate to resort even to murder; they lock McLaglen into a building where powder had been stored, and set a time bomb. At the last minute, however, he is saved, and the villains are arrested.

The screen play is by David Boehm. Cliff Reid produced it. In the supporting cast are June Havoc, Roy Gordon, John Maguire, Damian O'Flynn, Marten Lamont and others.

Morally there is nothing objectionable in it.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States \$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1942

No. 20

HERE AND THERE

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION was adopted by the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors at the Spring meeting in Chicago, on the first of this month:

"WHEREAS, P. S. Harrison, editor and publisher of HARRISON'S REPORTS, has ever since 1919, the year that he founded his paper, battled for the rights of the independent theatre owners unflinchingly,

"WHEREAS, Mr. Harrison has always proved a staunch and loyal friend of the independent exhibitors,

"WHEREAS, Mr. Harrison has always given the exhibitors a true report on the pictures he reviews,

"WHEREAS, Since HARRISON'S REPORTS does not accept advertising of any kind and depends entirely on subscription fees, many of his old subscribers have proposed to conduct a subscription drive this year, the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of his reviewing career, for new subscribers, therefore, be it

"Resolved, that the Board of Directors of Allied States Association, assembled at its quarterly meeting this, the First day of May, 1942, go on record as endorsing this drive and as recommending to every theatre owner to subscribe to his publication. Be it further

"Resolved, that the Secretary of the Board forward a copy of this Resolution to Mr. Harrison."

The writer is thankful for this endorsement.

Al Steffes, a leading member of Allied States, temporarily in retirement, has accepted the chairmanship of the Drive Committee. The members of the Committee will be announced in a forthcoming issue.

* * *

THE RECENT CAMPAIGN conducted by this paper to induce the industry to resort to institutional advertising for the purpose of gaining the public's good will seems to be bringing results if we are to judge by the following letter, which this office has received from Mr. Wallace B. Blankenship, of Dallas, Texas, who is operating a number of theatres in small towns:

"In a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, I found an article concerning an advertisement that had been used by the Motion Picture Industry entitled, 'Morale is Mightier than the Sword.'

"I think that this was one of the greatest pieces of advertising ever, especially at a time like this. In fact, I thought so much of the idea that I had a quarter-page ad (copies enclosed) run in the local paper of every town where we have a theatre, including that of the home office, and used the same copy in a very effective manner in our 'Reminders,' 2,000 of which we use every week in Levelland alone.

"I believe that, if this idea could be gotten over to the public in general, interpreted as it was meant to be, it would be one of the finest things that the motion picture industry could do to build morale and to keep the public movie-minded during these times.

"Let's keep the ball rolling and try to get this advertisement used more, all over the United States."

* * *

IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORK that the industry is doing to help our Government win the war, allow me to reproduce another letter—from my good friend Joe Shea, of the publicity staff of Twentieth Century-Fox:

"My dear Pete:

"I have just returned from Philadelphia where I attended as a spectator the inspiring Hollywood Caravan show presented for the benefit of the Army and Navy Relief funds. Fifteen thousand people crowded the Convention Hall, and of this number fifteen hundred were above normal seating capacity. At the Boston Gardens, in Boston, the previous night, the Caravan attracted twenty thousand people, and of this number four thousand were standees.

"I understand that the receipts were \$35,000 in Philadelphia, and \$80,000 in Boston, and that the expectations are for a gross of \$600,000 for the tour, which ends in Houston, Texas.

"Newspaper men and general public whose comments I overheard seemed unanimous in their declaration that this show 'is the most thrilling that I have ever seen,' and I feel that every one associated with this venture and, in fact, every one in the motion picture industry, may well be proud of the importance of the Hollywood Caravan in the morale-building department, and of the excellence of the entertainment.

"It is safe to say that there has never been a show like this star-packed Caravan and probably such a group of top industry names could never be assembled again for a tour of this magnitude. The show was professionally expert in every detail. Special material was written for the players who appeared in the various sketches and, in fact, the stars rehearsed on the train and were rehearsing in Philadelphia while I was there last Saturday (May 2) because new material is added whenever another player can finish his picture in Hollywood and fly East to join the Caravan.

"Bob Hope and Cary Grant divided the job of Master of Ceremonies, which was a guarantee of the fitting introduction of each player. Allan Scott, head of the Writers' Committee, was on the train with the stars writing new sketches and adding bits of dialogue to the book. No one receives pay for services except the travelling orchestra, and these men are paid the minimum road scale, which is much less than they normally earn in Hollywood, as they are outstanding musicians in their specialties.

"Starting with the singing of 'The Star Spangled Banner' and closing with the flash finale number of Jimmy Cagney doing his song and dance impersonation of George M. Cohan as 'Yankee Doodle Dandy,' there was a wealth of superior material, which was never, I am sure, exhibited in any theatre previously."

I asked Mr. Shea to give me his impressions in writing to publish them in HARRISON'S REPORTS so that exhibitors in towns where the Caravan will not play may know what the industry is doing for the Army and Navy Relief funds.

* * *

ACCORDING TO THE MAY SIX ISSUE of The Hollywood Reporter, there is a division of opinion between the producers on the one hand, and the distributing heads on the other, of Producers Releasing Corporation, over the question whether attention should be paid more to the story than to name players, or vice versa.

In view of the fact that the PRC budget calls for the expenditure of \$21,000 for each picture, for them to spend money for stars would mean that very little would be left to spend on stories and their treatment. Consequently, quality would suffer. In such an event, the public would be treated unfairly. The exhibitors would naturally play up the star names, and those of the picturegoers who would respond

(Continued on last page)

"Mrs. Miniver" with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon

(MGM, no release date; time, 132 min.)

A great picture. The touchingly human story about a middle-class English family is a vivid and effective portrayal of the hardships endured by the English people who, because of the modern methods of aerial warfare, find their very homes a part of the battlefield. Their quiet fortitude and their faith in ultimate victory is a source of inspiration. The scenes depicting the family in a bomb-proof shelter during an air raid are so realistic, that the spectator is made to feel the terror that strikes in their hearts. It is a powerful drama, with situations that run the gamut of emotions. Its drama is heart-rending; its comedy, laugh-provoking. Brilliantly directed, and skilfully acted by expert performers, it should prove to be one of the finest pictures of the year, from an artistic as well as from the box-office point of view:—

Mrs. Miniver (Greer Garson) guiltily buys an expensive hat in London. Hurrying to her home in the country, she is stopped at the railway station by Mr. Ballard (Henry Travers.) A lover of flowers, he had grown a beautiful rose, and asks permission to name it the "Mrs. Miniver." She agrees with pleasure. Mrs. Miniver hesitates to tell Clem (Walter Pidgeon,) her husband about the hat. He had bought a new car and he, too, hesitates to tell her. They laughingly admit their extravagancies. With their two youngsters, Toby (Christopher Severn) and Judy (Claire Sanders,) the Minivers go to the station to meet Vin (Richard Ney,) their oldest son, returning from Oxford. Carol Beldon (Teresa Wright) comes to the Miniver home to make a plea. She explains that Mr. Ballard had entered the "Mrs. Miniver" rose in the annual flower show, sponsored by Lady Beldon (Dame May Witty,) her grandmother, and feels that Lady Beldon would be upset if the "Mrs. Miniver" should win the prize, for Lady Beldon had always won it. Vin accuses Lady Beldon of perpetuating the feudal system, but Carol deftly puts him in his place. They are attracted to each other and fall in love. One day in Church, the Vicar (Henry Wilcoxon) announces that war had been declared, and Vin decides to join the R.A.F. On the night that Vin and Carol had become engaged, he is called into action. Clem and other men in the village collect every boat available to aid in the rescue of British soldiers from Dunkirk. While Clem is gone, Mr. Miniver encounters a wounded German aviator and turns him over to the police. Vin and Carol are married; they return from their honeymoon in time for the flower show. Lady Beldon wins the award, but she announces Ballard as the winner. An air raid alarm interrupts the show. Mrs. Miniver and Carol drive Vin to his flying field. Returning home, they are caught in the raid and their car is riddled by machine gun bullets from a low flying plane. Carol is wounded. She dies soon after they reach home. The village is in ruins. In church, with its shattered roof, the Vicar gathers his congregation together. He re-affirms their faith in the future.

The plot was taken from the book by Jan Struthers. The screen play was written by Arthur Wimperis, George Froeschel, James Hilton and Claudine West. William Wyler directed it, and Sidney Franklin produced it. In the supporting cast are Tom Conway, Reginald Owen, Brenda Forbes and others.

Suitable for all.

"Broadway" with George Raft and Pat O'Brien

(Universal, May 8; time, 90 min.)

The prohibition era and the gangland doings of its day is the theme of this very good melodrama. Produced once before by Universal (in 1929), the present version is brought up to date by a novel twist—George Raft enters an abandoned cellar on Broadway, recalling the days when it had been a speakeasy, and in retrospect, he re-lives a period in his life, carrying his own name in the picture, instead of a fictitious name. Raft and Janet Blair do a few dance numbers to the accompaniment of music that was popular in those days. Pat O'Brien as the tough, but human detective, is excellent. The performances of the supporting cast are very good, as is the direction:—

George Raft, dancer in a night club, resents the attentions paid by Broderick Crawford, racketeer and bootlegger, to Janet Blair, his dancing partner. Janet naively believes Crawford to be a wealthy man-about-town. When Crawford murders Damian O'Flynn, from whom he had hijacked four truckloads of liquor, the night club becomes the focal point of interest for Detective Pat O'Brien. He questions

everyone, but gets only denials. O'Brien recognizes Anne Gwynne, a chorus girl, as O'Flynn's sweetheart. Meanwhile a gang of visiting Chicago hoodlums, with whom Crawford is doing business, arrives at the night club for an evening's entertainment. The chorus girls and Janet join in a party. Anne learns of O'Flynn's murder, but does not let the gang know of her connection with him. Janet is man-handled at the party and leaves Crawford. Raft fights with him, but Crawford knocks him down, then threatens him with a gun. Informed by one of his henchmen that O'Brien was approaching, Crawford thrusts the gun into Raft's hand to make it appear as if he were staging a holdup. O'Brien is not deceived but, seeing a chance to get Crawford's gun, arrests Raft just the same. At police headquarters, Raft refuses to reveal the cause for the fight. The following day, O'Brien allows Raft to escape him. Raft returns to the night club to settle with Crawford and finds him alone in an office. In the midst of their fight, Anne enters the office with a gun and kills Crawford. O'Brien arrives on the scene and guessing what had happened, gives the murder his blessing by reporting Crawford a suicide.

Felix Jackson and John Bright wrote the screen play, and William S. Seiter directed it. Bruce Manning and Frank Shaw produced it. In the cast are Marjorie Rambeau, Marie Wilson, Edward Brophy, Mack Gray, S. Z. Sakall and others.

Not suitable for children.

"This Above All" with Tyrone Power and Joan Fontaine

(20th Century-Fox, no release date; time, 109 min.)

An interesting and deeply moving romantic drama, with its locale the war-torn England of today. Although it is a class picture, the popularity of the novel from which the plot was adapted, and the drawing power of Joan Fontaine and Tyrone Power, insures the picture's box-office success. It is a romance between a young woman of English nobility, who feels England is worth fighting for, and a young man, a deserter from the Army, although a proved hero, who wants to fight for a better order of living and not for the stuffed shirts who were running the country. It is an extremely somber drama and tends to depress one. The production is lavish, and the direction and performances excellent. Miss Fontaine's portrayal of the heroine is highly impressive:—

Joan Fontaine joins the Women's Auxiliary Air Force as a private, over the objections of her family. They feel that because of their high social standing, Joan should at least get a commission. At the WAAF camp, Queenie Leonard asks Joan to accompany her on a date. She meets Tyrone Power. After several meetings, they both fall in love and Joan agrees to go away with him for a weekend at a seaside resort. There is something about Power that Joan cannot fathom. He wears civilian clothes and his army leave seems to be indefinite, though he is not wounded. Then Thomas Mitchell, Power's friend, visits them at the resort. From him Joan learns that Power, although a Dunkirk hero, had deserted from the Army because he did not believe in fighting for the England he knows. Joan tries to reason with him that England is worth fighting for, and Mitchell tries to induce him to return to his regiment. Leaving a note for Joan, Power quietly slips away. Not having an identification card, he makes several narrow escapes from the police and military guards. A kindly rector of a church takes him in and feeds him, and reasons against Power's anti-war attitude. Power decides to give himself up, but before doing so of his own accord he is picked up immediately after he had telephoned Joan to meet him at a London railway station. He wants to marry her at once. At army headquarters, Power pleads with the Major to allow him to meet Joan, promising to return by midnight. The request granted, Powers hurries to meet her, but is caught in an air raid over London. When he aids in rescuing a woman and child from the cellar of a bombed building, a falling wall injures him seriously and he is taken to a hospital. Meanwhile Joan, worried over his failure to meet her, goes to her father and tells him the whole story. Together, they locate Power in the hospital suffering from a bad skull fracture. Merivale, a physician, operates, but gives him a slim chance of recovering. Joan and Power are married in the hospital, where she keeps a vigil at his bedside, even through an air raid.

The story is based on the book by Eric Knight. R. C. Sheriff wrote the screen play, Darryl F. Zanuck produced it, and Anatole Litvak directed it. In the cast are Henry Stephenson, Nigel Bruce, Gladys Cooper, Mellville Cooper and others.

**"A Desperate Chance for Ellery Queen"
with William Gargan and
Margaret Lindsay**

(Columbia, May 7; time, 70 min.)

If this latest of the "Ellery Queen" program mystery melodramas is an example of what to expect of the subsequent pictures, the producer would do well to discontinue the series. Not only is the story familiar, but there is an overabundance of dialogue, which naturally slows up the action. The plot is incoherent, and the performances unconvincing. But the performers are not to blame; they have been given poor material. Discriminating audiences will certainly find it tiresome. Mark it for the lower half of a mid-week double bill:—

William Gargan is visited by Charlotte Wynters, wife of John Litel, prominent banker, believed dead; he had disappeared at the time there had been an embezzlement at his bank. Miss Wynters informs Gargan that her husband, in her belief, is alive and in San Francisco. He agrees to search for him. Concurrently, Noel Madison, a shady character, and Lillian Bond, a burlesque queen, fly to San Francisco. Madison had in his possession "hot" money. One of the bills he had passed had come to the attention of Police Inspector Charley Grapewin, Gargan's father, who identifies it as money stolen from Litel's bank. In San Francisco, Gargan succeeds in finding Litel by installing Margaret Lindsay, his secretary, in a hotel under the name of Litel's wife, publicizing her arrival. Litel tells Gargan he is innocent, but before finishing his story they are interrupted by the arrival of Grapewin. Gargan hides Litel in a bedroom, but Litel leaves through the fire escape. Gargan learns from his father that the police suspected Litel and Madison of the embezzlement, and that he had flown West to trail them. Returning to his apartment, Litel finds Madison murdered. Gargan learns from Litel that Madison, a former teller in his bank, knew that Litel once had served a prison term. Madison had stolen money from the bank, blackmailing Litel to replace it. Litel had fled to escape the vicious practice. Gargan notifies the police of the murder, but hides Litel in Miss Lindsay's apartment. Gargan learns that Miss Bond, Madison's "widow," is employed at a night club whose proprietor, Morgan Conway, had offered to pass the "hot" money. Meanwhile Litel had been caught by the police and charged with Madison's murder. Gargan succeeds in overpowering and obtaining the money from Conway, then forces Miss Bond to confess as the slayer. Litel is free to return to his family.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play and James Hogan directed it. It was produced by Larry Darmour and Rudolph Flothow.

Unsuitable for children owing to the murder.

**"Meet the Mob" with Zazu Pitts and
Roger Pryor**

(Monogram, April 17; time, 61 min.)

A fair program gangster farce-comedy. The action centers around a bashful small-town spinster, who becomes involved in gangland affairs when she pays a visit to the big city. Zazu Pitts, suspected by the gangsters of being a notorious gunwoman, provokes considerable comedy when, using the uncouth jargon of the underworld, she plays the part to deceive them. It should appeal to the family trade in small towns and neighborhood theaters:—

Zazu Pitts, a shy old maid, visits the "big town" to see a boxing match of which one of the fighters was Bud McTaggart, son of an old fiance, himself formerly a boxing champion. At the arena, Miss Pitts makes the acquaintance of Roger Pryor, a reporter, trying to track down Irving Mitchell, lawyer for Tristram Coffin, a gangster leader—Mitchell had been kidnapped by Douglas Fowley, rival gang leader and McTaggart's manager. After the fight Miss Pitts is mistaken for a notorious gunwoman named "Ma Parker," and suspected by Fowley's henchmen of working in the interests of Coffin. McTaggart is shot during an altercation at Coffin's night club and, suspected of double-crossing Fowley, is later kidnapped from the hospital by his manager's men and taken to a hideout. Anxious to free McTaggart, Miss Pitts decides to pose as the real Ma Parker and, with Gwen Kenyon, Pryor's fiancée, goes to Coffin and convinces him that she can find the kidnapped lawyer. At this moment, Fowley and his gunmen invade the office, killing Coffin and taking the two women to the hideout where McTaggart and Mitchell were imprisoned. Pryor follows the party to the hideout and, with the aid of the

police, apprehends Fowley and his gang and rescues the prisoners. Miss Pitts takes McTaggart to her home in the country, glad that he could pursue his career free from the influence of the underworld.

George Bricker and Edmond Kelso wrote the screen play, Jean Yarbrough directed it, and Lindsley Parsons and Barney Sarecky produced it.

**"The Yukon Patrol" with Allan Lane
and Robert Strange**

(Republic, April 30; time, 66 min.)

This picture was released as a twelve chapter serial on September, 1940, under the title, "King of The Royal Mounted." The chapters have been edited to make a feature-length picture; it has been given the new title, "The Yukon Patrol." The result is a fast-action melodrama, in which the hero barely misses death repeatedly. It is great entertainment for the action-mad fans, who are not fussy about story values, and particularly for the children on Saturday afternoons; but it is hardly the sort of entertainment that intelligent audiences will revel in.

In its favor is a timely story about espionage, the locale of which is the Canadian woods, with the Mounted Police called upon to wipe out the spies. The enemy seeks to insure a steady stream of "Compound X," a substance discovered in a Canadian mine by a scientist, who is supplying it to hospitals for the cure of infantile paralysis. The enemy wants it for magnetic mines to destroy the British fleet. After many hair-raising acts, some of them being death-defying stunts, the Royal Northwest Mounted Police get their men.

Franklyn Adreon and Norman S. Hall wrote the screen play, William Witney and John English directed it, and Hiram S. Brown, Jr. produced it. In the cast are Allan Lane, Robert Strange, Robert Kellard, Lita Conway, Herbert Rawlinson, Bryant Washburn and others.

**"Remember Pearl Harbor" with Alan
Curtis, Donald M. Barry and Fay McKenzie**

(Republic, May 18; time, 75 min.)

Considering the timeliness of the subject and the popularity of the title, this program war-melodrama should prove a good box-office attraction. It is, however, just fair entertainment. Although the action is fast throughout, the story unfolds without much excitement, most of the thrills being concentrated in the closing scenes. It is the usual story that glorifies the cocky hero; it contains nothing new in the way of treatment. The lack of a sincere romance and of an absorbing plot limits its appeal to the action fans:—

Alan Curtis, Maynard Holmes and Donald M. Barry, privates at a Philippines army post, are reprimanded by Captain Ian Keith because of their numerous barroom scrapes. Keith orders them to roam through the district with a radio detector, to search for two-way radio sets by which spies received and transmitted messages. Because of its strategic position, the area is a center of fifth-column activities. These are carried on under the secret leadership of Rhys Williams, owner of a copra plantation and of a popular bar, and Sig Ruman, Nazi spy, who manages Williams' plantation. Barry tires of the job and goes into town to romance with Fay McKenzie, Holmes' sister, who works for Williams. During his absence, Curtis and Holmes locate a transmitter in a cabin occupied by Robert Emmett Keane, one of Ruman's operatives. They attack the cabin, but Keane kills Holmes and escapes. Barry is jailed for being absent from duty. He escapes and goes after Keane, determined to avenge Howell's death. When Williams learns of this, he himself kills Keane, pretending to have done so because of his friendship for Barry. He offers to help Barry escape from the Philippines. At the plantation that night, Barry and Miss McKenzie discover evidence that Williams and Ruman are spies. From Ruman's two-way radio comes a news flash that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. Curtis arrives to search for Barry. Together they capture Ruman. The arrival of two Japanese planes filled with soldiers starts a fight. Using Ruman's two-way radio, Miss McKenzie contacts the army post. Japanese reinforcements make their way to the plantation from an enemy battleship anchored a few miles offshore. Keith leads his soldiers in an attack against the enemy. Flying a Japanese plane, Barry power-dives into the battleship killing those on board, as well as himself. Through his heroism, the first attack on the Philippines fails.

Isabel Dawn and Malcolm Stuart Boylan wrote the screen play. Joseph Stanley directed it and Albert J. Cohen produced it.

Suitable for all.

would find that the pictures were not worth seeing. This would hurt also the reputation of the stars.

Because this is a serious matter, HARRISON'S REPORTS offers its pages to the executives of Producers Releasing Corporation to make their policy clear to the exhibitors.

* * *

IN THE ISSUE OF JUNE 28, 1941, I reviewed "No Greater Sin," a sex picture, thus laying aside a policy of mine that I established when I first founded HARRISON'S REPORTS—of not reviewing out-and-out sex pictures.

The reason for having taken such a step in this particular instance was the fact that this was an exceptional picture, and that its showing would prove beneficial to public welfare, particularly at this time when our armed forces need to be protected from a disease that lost many a war in the past—syphilis. I was influenced to do so also by the fact that the picture had been endorsed by many responsible civic bodies and by Dr. Parran, U. S. Health Commissioner.

That my decision to review this picture was right may be evidenced by the fact that many of the big circuits, independent as well as affiliated, have booked it and in most instances have already shown it, and many more are contemplating booking it, as I have learned that negotiations for the purpose are now going on.

I have not changed my opinion that the showing of this picture is in the interests of public welfare, and since the picture is doing well in all territories, exceptionally well in many of them, no exhibitor need hesitate booking it, particularly if he has the protection of the men in our fighting forces at heart. A diseased soldier helps the enemy. The same is true for a diseased civilian, for this is a war of civilians as well.

* * *

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT Allied States Association will not hold a convention this year because of the war, the officers and directors of Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey have decided to give a national flavor to their annual convention, which they are holding at the Ambassador Hotel, at Atlantic City, N. J., on June 3, 4 and 5. On the occasion, they are giving a testimonial banquet to Col. H. A. Cole, former Allied president.

Mr. Thornton Kelly, convention manager, informs this office that many national leaders will be present, and that Mr. Myers will discuss problems that are of great interest to every independent exhibitor in the land.

HARRISON'S REPORTS recommends that not only Allied members, but also members as well as officers of every organization that is not affiliated with Allied attend the meeting. Mr. Kelly has assured me that they will be received with courtesy and will be given proper consideration.

Reservations may be made either through Mr. Kelly or directly through the hotel manager.

* * *

UNDER THE HEADING, "High Film Rentals," the Board of Directors of Allied States Association issued the following statement on the first of May:

"So numerous and insistent have become the complaints and protests of independent exhibitors in all parts of the country concerning greatly increased film rentals in recent years, and especially for the 1941-1942 product, that the Board of Directors finds it necessary to issue a solemn warning on the subject in the hope that the distributors will heed it and thus avert the measures destructive of industrial unity which the exhibitors are demanding and will insist upon if relief is not promptly forthcoming.

"Allied has just re-affirmed its allegiance to the principles of the unity movement which it sponsored and the Board of Directors is anxious that the United Motion Picture Industry shall function efficiently and effectively to insure unity at least for the duration of the war, if not permanently. Therefore, the Board of Directors submits this statement for the special consideration of U.M.P.I., through which the organized exhibitors of the United States are cooperating with the five consenting distributors. As regards the remaining distributors, this statement is submitted for their respective individual consideration.

"COMPLAINTS WARRANTED

"Film rentals based on 40% of the gross receipts, initiated for a few outstanding productions released as specials, have

become so common that virtually all distributors now demand that figure for all above the run-of-mine pictures conforming to the classification B. Pictures of current or topical interest, including patriotic and morale building subjects, now are being offered at 50% of the gross. Not only has the percentage figure gradually climbed in recent years, but the proportion of percentage pictures to flat rentals has greatly increased.

"The complaint this season not only is that the top figure on individual pictures is still on the rise but particularly that the number of pictures in the top bracket has greatly increased. Consenting distributors by inserting one or more top pictures in each block of five already have, at least several of them, allocated more pictures to the top bracket than during the whole of last year—and the season still has four months to go. The non-consenting distributors, taking advantage of the desire of the exhibitors to secure a back-log of product by buying some on a yearly basis, have followed the lead of the consenting companies in greatly increasing the number of percentage pictures.

"The Board insists that this is not the customary squawk of exhibitors concerning film rentals and should not be dismissed as such. The position of the independent exhibitors in many situations is being adversely affected by other factors in addition to high rentals. Many exhibitors, particularly in small towns, are being affected by shifts in population. Others, particularly those drawing their trade from a distance, are being affected by the tire shortage and their condition will become acute when gas rationing goes into effect. Even in the industrial centers business is disturbed by many new factors, including the around-the-clock operation of factories and the growing competition of rival amusements and dimout regulations.

"With their operating costs and the cost of living on the upgrade, the exhibitors find that as a practical matter their admission prices are frozen and no relief can be obtained by increasing prices. With a ceiling placed by the Government on virtually all items on the family budget, the theatres cannot now raise prices without creating resentment on the ground that, whatever may be their legal rights, they are out of step with the Government's policy as explained by the President and consequently handicapping the war effort.

"EVIDENCE OF INFLATION

"Even a casual reader of the trade papers must be impressed that despite the supposed shrinkage of the foreign market the earnings of the major companies this year are breaking their all time records.

"See page four [omitted. It may be obtained from an Allied account.] for a tabulated statement compiled from published statements, which are the only figures available to us at this time. We can only assume that they are accurate, otherwise they would not have been released to the trade press.

"In the interest of fairness it should be pointed out that the 1939 gross income obviously includes a substantial amount derived from the foreign market which plays a minor part in the figures for 1941, thus emphasizing the tremendous increase in film rentals paid by American exhibitors, which more than offset the foreign losses.

"The claims put forward in justification of the increased film rentals to the effect that production and distribution costs have skyrocketed, are utterly exploded by the attached statement which shows that between 1939 and 1941 the combined operating expenses of the six companies mentioned declined approximately \$15,000,000.

"The astonishing fact disclosed by the tabulation is that despite all claims of foreign losses and of increased operating expense the combined operating profit of the companies in question increased from \$41,365,441 in 1939 to \$61,531,309 in 1941—approximately \$20,000,000.

"As regards the claim offered by the producer-distributors in justification of their huge corporate earnings and individual salaries and bonuses that the sums are greatly reduced by reason of the high taxes they must pay, the Board observes that the Government has not appointed these interests to be official tax collectors and that the exhibitors are entitled to the privilege of paying their taxes directly and thus sharing in one of the important privileges of citizenship."

(To be concluded next week)

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1942

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Mystery of Marie Roget, The—Universal (60 min.)	63	
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Riders of the Northlands—Columbia (58 m.)	not reviewed	
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Shepherd of the Ozarks—Republic (69 min.)	58	
Ship Ahoy—MGM (95 min.)	67	
S.O.S. Coast Guard—Republic (69 min.)	66	
Spoilers, The—Universal (85 min.)	62	
Strange Case of Doctor RX, The—Universal (66 min.)	55	
Suicide Squadron—Republic (81 min.)	66	
Sunday Punch—MGM (75 min.)	64	

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3025 Canal Zone—Morris-Hilliard (79 m.)	Mar. 19
3010 Two Yanks in Trinidad—O'Brien-Terry (83 min.)	Mar. 26
3029 Alias Boston Blackie—Morris-Lane (67 m.)	Apr. 2
3213 North of the Rockies—Starrett (60 m.)	Apr. 2
3018 Blondie's Blessed Event—Singleton-Lake (69 min.)	Apr. 9
3101 The Invaders—Olivier-Howard (104 m.)	Apr. 15
3037 Hello Annapolis—Brown-Parker (62 m.)	Apr. 23
3205 Down Rio Grande Way—Starrett (57 m.)	Apr. 23
3011 The Wife Takes A Flyer—Bennett-Tone (86 min.)	Apr. 30
3032 A Desperate Chance for Ellery Queen— Gargan-Lindsay (70 m.)	May 7
3214 The Devil's Trail—Elliott-Ritter (61 m.)	May 14
3042 Not A Ladies' Man—Kelly-Wray (60 m.)	May 14
3027 Sweetheart of the Fleet—Falkenburg- Woodbury (65 m.)	May 21
3206 Riders of the Northlands—Starrett (58 m.)	June 18
3215 Prairie Gunsmoke—Tex Ritter (54 m.)	July 16

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

233 Rio Rita—Abbott-Costello-Grayson (91 m.)	Apr.
234 Sunday Punch—Lundigan-J. Rogers (76 m.)	May
235 Ship Ahoy—Powell-Skelton-Lahr (93 m.)	May
236 Tortilla Flat—Tracy-Lamarr-Garfield	May
237 Grand Central Murder—Van Heflin-Parker	May
Pacific Rendezvous—Bowman-Rogers	June
I Married An Angel—MacDonald-Eddy	June
Her Cardboard Lover—Shearer-Taylor	June
Maisie Gets Her Man—Sothorn-Skelton	June
Tarzan's New York Adventure—Weissmuller- O'Sullivan	June
Mrs. Miniver—Garson-Pidgeon	No
Once Upon a Thursday—Hunt-Carlson	release
Weidler	date set

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Klondike Fury—Ed. Lowe (68 m.) Mar. 20
- Meet the Mob—Pitts-Pryor (63 m.) Apr. 17
- Boothill Bandits—Range Busters (56 m.) Apr. 24
- Where the Trail Ends—Tom Keene (55 m.) May 1
- The Corpse Vanishes—Lugosi (64 m.) May 8
- She's In the Army—Borg-Talbot May 15
- Let's Get Tough—Brown-Rice May 22
- Down Texas Way—Rough Riders May 29

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4120 Fly By Night—Kelly-Carlson Apr. 24
- 4123 My Favorite Blonde—Hope-Carroll May 1
- 4122 True to the Army—Canova-Jones-Colonna May 15
- 4121 The Great Man's Lady—Stanwyck-McCrea May 29
- 4125 Henry and Dizzy—Lydon-Anderson June 5
- 4124 This Gun For Hire—Lake-Preston June 19
- 4137 Reap The Wild Wind—Milland
Goddard)
- 4126 Take a Letter, Darling—MacMurray
Russell)
- 4127 Night in New Orleans—Foster
Morison-Dekker) No
release
date
set
- 4128 Dr. Broadway—Carey-Phillips)
- 4129 Sweater Girl—Bracken-Preisser)
- 4130 Beyond the Blue Horizon—Lamour
Haley)
- 4140 Undercover Man—Western)

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 217 The Panther's Claw—Blackmer (74 m.) Apr. 17
- 253 Rolling Down the Great Divide—Boyd (62m.) Apr. 24
- 218 Inside the Law—Ford (65 m.) (re.) May 8
- 260 Billy the Kid's Smoking Guns—Crabbe (re.) May 15
- 209 The Mad Monster—Downs-Nagel (78m.) (re.) May 22
- 201 Men of San Quentin—Hughes (80 m.) (re.) May 29
- The Devil's Sister—Anna May Wong
release date postponed

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 155 Sunset on the Desert—Rogers (54 m.) Apr. 1
- 117 Girl From Alaska—Middleton-Parker (75 m.)
(re.) Apr. 16
- 123 S.O.S. Coast Guard—Byrd-Lugosi (69 m.) Apr. 16
- Home in Wyoming—Gene Autry (67 m.) (re.) Apr. 20
- 119 Suicide Squadron—Walbrook (83 m.) Apr. 20
- 166 Westward Ho—Three Mesq. (56 m.) Apr. 24
- 124 The Yukon Patrol—Lane-Strange Apr. 30
- Remember Pearl Harbor—Don Barry May 18
- 156 Romance on the Range—Roy Rogers May 18
- Stardust on the Sage—Gene Autry May 25

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 292 Fantasia—Walt Disney (re) Apr. 10
- 284 Land of Open Range—Tim Holt (60 m.) (re.) Apr. 17
- 221 The Bashful Bachelor—Lum-Abner (re.) Apr. 24
- 222 Tuttle of Tahiti—Laughton-Hall (re.) May 1
- 223 Scattergood Rides High—Kibbee-Moore (re.) May 8
- 224 Mayor of 44th St.—Murphy-Shirley (re.) May 15
- 226 Syncopation—Menjou-Cooper-Granville May 22
- 227 The Falcon Takes Over—Sanders-Bari May 29
- 285 Come On Danger—Tim Holt (58 m.) June 5
- 228 My Favorite Spy—Kyser-Drew June 12
- 229 Powder Town—McLaglen-O'Brien June 19
- 230 Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost—Errol-Velez June 26

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 242 Who is Hope Schuyler?—J. Allen, Jr.-Ryan Apr. 17
- 243 The Man Who Wouldn't Die—Nolan-Weaver May 1
- 244 My Gal Sal—Hayworth-Mature May 8
- 245 The Mad Martindales—Withers-Weaver May 15
- 246 Whispering Ghosts—Berle-Joyce May 22
- 247 Moontide—Gabin-Lupino-Rains May 29

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Ships With Wings—Clements-Banks May 15
- Miss Annie Rooney—Temple-Gargan May 29
- Friendly Enemies—Winner-Ruggles June 26

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6026 Juke Box Jenny—Hilliard-Murray Mar. 27
- 6022 Mystery of Marie Roget—Knowles-Montez Apr. 3
- 6053 Unseen Enemy—Terry-Devine Apr. 10
- 6048 The Spoilers—Dietrich-Scott-Lindsay (re.) Apr. 10
- 6036 The Strange Case of Dr. RX—Atwill (re.) Apr. 17
- 6034 Mississippi Gambler—Taylor-Langford Apr. 17
- 6065 Fighting Bill Fargo—J. M. Brown Apr. 17
- 6047 Saboteur—P. Lane-Cummings-Kruger (re.) Apr. 24
- 6041 You're Telling Me—Herbert-Paige May 1
- Broadway—Raft-Blair May 8
- 6054 Escape From Hong Kong—Carrillo-Devine May 15
- 6024 Almost Married—Paige-Frazer May 22
- Eagle Squadron—Stack-Barrimore-Hall May 29
- 6019 Tough As They Come—Dead End Kids June 5
- Lady in a Jam—Dunne-Bellamy June 19

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 131 Larceny, Inc.—Robinson-Wyman May 2
- 132 In This Our Life—Davis-Brent May 16
- 133 Juke Girl—Sheridan-Reagan May 30
- 134 Lady Gangster—Emerson-Bishop June 6
- 135 The Big Shot—Bogart-Manning June 13

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 3506 Concerto In B Flat Minor—Col. Rap. (8 m.) .Mar. 20
- 3702 Dog Meets Dog—Phantasies (8 m.)Mar. 27
- 3658 Community Sing No. 8 (10 m.)Mar. 27
- 3807 The Wrestling Octopus—Sports(9½m.) (re.) Apr. 3
- 3858 Screen Snapshots No. 8 (10 m.)Apr. 10
- 3754 Wolf Chases Pig—Cartoon (re.)Apr. 30
- 3659 Community Sing No. 9Apr. 30
- 3859 Screen Snapshots No. 9 (10 m.)May 8
- 3808 Fit to Fight—SportsMay 15
- 3704 The Wild and Woozy West—CartoonMay 19
- 3507 Cinderella Goes to a Party—Cartoon (re.) . . .May 22
- 3703 A Battle for a Bottle—Cartoon (re.)May 29

Columbia—Two Reels

- 3143 The Captured Plane—Captain No. 3 (16 m.)Mar. 1
- 3144 Mistaken Identity—Captain No. 4 (18 m.) .Mar. 8
- 3430 Yoo Hoo General—Billy Vine (18 m.)Mar. 12
- 3145 Ambushed Ambulance—Captain No. 5 (18m)Mar. 15
- 3146 Weird Waters—Captain No. 6 (16 m.)Mar. 22
- 3431 What Makes Lizzy Dizzy—All Star (17 m.) .Mar. 26
- 3147 Menacing Fates—Captain No. 7 (16 m.)Mar. 29
- 3148 Shells of Evil—Captain No. 8 (16 m.)Apr. 5
- 3432 Groom and Board—All Star (16 m.)Apr. 9
- 3149 The Drop to Doom—Captain No. 9 (16 m.) .Apr. 12
- 3150 The Hidden Bomb—Captain No. 10 (16 m.) Apr. 19
- 3406 What's the Matador—Stooges (16 m.)Apr. 23
- 3151 Sky Terror—Captain No. 11 (17 m.)Apr. 26
- 3152 Burning Bomber—Captain No. 12 (17 m.) . .May 3
- 3433 How Spry I Am—All Star (18 m.)May 7
- 3153 Death In the Cockpit—Captain No. 13May 10
- 3154 Scourge of Revenge—Captain No. 14May 17
- 3412 A Study In Socks—Gloveslingers (17½m) . .May 21
- 3155 The Fatal Hour—Captain No. 15May 24
- 3181 Perils of the Royal MountedMay 29

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- C-395 Going to Press—Our Gang (11 m.)Mar. 7
- W-345 The First Swallow—Cartoon (8 m.)Mar. 14
- T-319 Land of the Quintuplets—Travel (8 m.) . . .Mar. 14
- M-333 Lady or the Tiger—Miniature (10 m.) . . .Mar. 28
- W-346 The Bear and The Beavers—Cartoon (9m)Mar. 28
- S-366 Acro-Batty—Pete Smith (9 m.)Mar. 28
- C-396 Don't Lie—Our Gang (11 m.)Apr. 4
- T-320 Glacier Park or Waterton Lakes—Travel (9 min.)Apr. 11
- W-347 Dog Trouble—Cartoon (8 m.)Apr. 18
- M-334 Soaring Stars—Miniature (10 m.)Apr. 25
- M-335 Further Prophecies of Nostradamus—Miniature (11 m.)May 9
- S-367 Victory Quiz—Pete Smith (9 m.)May 9
- K-384 The Woman In the House—Passing Parade (11 min.)May 9

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-302 Main Street on the March—Special (20m.) .Jan. 10
- A-303 Don't Talk—Special (22 m.)Feb. 28

Paramount—One Reel

- A1-3 Carnival In Brazil—Headliner (9m) (re.) . . .Mar. 6
- E1-6 Fleets of Stren'th—Popeye (7 m.)Mar. 13
- S1-3 The Witness—Benchley (9 m.)Mar. 20
- R1-8 Timing Is Everything—Sportlight (9m) (re.) .Mar. 20
- W1-5 Superman in the Bulleteers—Superman(8m)Mar. 27
- U1-3 Sky Princess—Madcap Models (8 m.)Mar. 27
- J1-4 Popular Science No. 4 (11 m.)Apr. 3
- FF1-1 The Raven—Cartoon (14 m.)Apr. 3
- E1-7 Pipeye-Pupeye-Poopeye & Peepeye—Popeye (6 min.)Apr. 10
- L1-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4 (11 m.)Apr. 10
- Q1-4 The Quiz Kids No. 4 (10 m.)Apr. 17
- R1-9 Personality Plus—Sportlight (10 m.)Apr. 17
- W1-6 Superman in the Magnetic Telescope—Superman (8 m.)Apr. 24
- A1-4 Nightmare of a Goon—Headliner (11 m.) . . .May 1
- E1-8 Olive Oyl and Water Don't Mix—Popeye (7 min.)May 8
- U1-4 Mr. Strauss Takes a Walk—Madcap Models .May 8
- R1-10 Hero Worship—Sportlight (10 m.)May 15
- Q1-5 The Quiz Kids No. 5May 22
- A1-5 Hands of Victory—Headliner (11 m.)May 22
- Z1-4 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 4May 29
- Y1-4 Speaking of Animals—In the CircusMay 29

RKO—One Reel

- 24101 Symphony Hour (7 m.)Mar. 20
- 24308 Public Sport No. 1—Sportscope (9 m.)Mar. 20
- 24408 Picture People No. 8 (8 m.)Mar. 27
- 24205 Information Please No. 5 (10 m.)Apr. 3
- 24102 Donald's Snow Fight—Disney (7 m.)Apr. 10
- 24309 Cruise Sports—Sportscope (8 m.)Apr. 17
- 24409 Picture People No. 9 (8 m.)Apr. 24
- 24206 Information Please No. 6 (11 m.)Apr. 24
- 24103 Donald Gets Drafted—Disney (9 m.)May 9

RKO—Two Reels

- 23108 March of Time No. 8 (19 m.)Mar. 13
- 23704 Wedded Blitz—Leon Errol (18 m.)Mar. 13
- 23405 Inferior Decorator—E. Kennedy (17 m.) . .Apr. 3
- 23109 March of Time No. 9 (17 m.)Apr. 10
- 23503 Cactus Capers—Ray Whitley (17 m.)Apr. 24
- 23705 Framing Father—Leon Errol (18 m.)May 15

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 2511 The Stork's Mistake—Terry-Toon (7 m.) . . .May 29
- 2405 Courageous Australia—World TodayJune 5
- 2562 All About Dogs—Terry-ToonJune 12
- 2108 India the Golden—Magic CarpetJune 19
- 2512 Willful Willy—Terry-ToonJune 26

Universal—One Reel

- 6379 Pussy Cat Cafe—Stranger Than Fiction....Apr. 20
- 6362 Call of the Sea—Scenic.....May 4
- 6249 Goodbye Mr. Moth—Cartoon (7 m.).....May 11
- 6380 Tom Thumb Church—Stranger Than Fiction. May 18
- 6250 Nutty Pine Cabin—CartoonJune 1

Universal—Two Reels

- 6581 The League of Murdered Men—Gang Busters No. 1 (27 m.) (re.).....Mar. 31
- 6582 The Death Plunge—Gang Busters No. 2 (20 min.)Apr. 1
- 6583 Murder Blockade—Gang Busters No. 3 (21 min.)Apr. 7
- 6111 Menace of the Rising Sun.....Apr. 8
- 6584 Hangman's Noose—Gang Busters No. 4 (18 min.)Apr. 14
- 6229 Gay Nineties—Musical (15 m.)Apr. 15
- 6585 Man Under Cover—Gang Busters No. 5 (19 min.)Apr. 28
- 6586 Under Crumbling Walls—Gang Busters No. 6 (18 min.)May 5
- 6587 The Water Trap—Gang Busters No. 7 (17 min.)May 12
- 6230 Swing Frolic—Musical (15 m.)May 13
- 6588 Murder By Proxy—Gang Busters No. 8 (21 min.)May 19
- 6589 Gang Bait—Gang Busters No. 9 (18 m.)....May 26
- 6590 Mob Vengeance—Gang Busters No. 10 (17 min.)June 2

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- 7713 Crazy Cruise—Mer. Melodies (7 m.) (re.)..Mar. 14
- 7714 Wabbit Who Came to Supper—Mer. Mel. (7 min.)Mar. 28
- 7507 Richard Humber & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10 m.) (re.)Mar. 28
- 7406 Shoot Yourself Some Golf—Sports (10 m.)..Apr. 4
- 7608 Saps In Chaps—Looney Tunes (7 m.) (re.)..Apr. 11
- 7715 Horton Hatches the Egg—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)..Apr. 11
- 7716 Dog Tired—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.).....Apr. 25
- 7508 The Don Cossack Chorus—Mel. Mast. (10m)Apr. 25
- 7717 The Wacky Wabbit—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....May 2
- 7407 Rocky Mountain Big Game—Sports (10 m.)..May 2
- 7609 Daffy's Southern Exposure—Looney Tunes (7 min.) (re.)May 2
- 7718 The Draft Horse—Mer. Mel. (Tent.) (7m)..May 9
- 7306 There Aint No Such Animal—Novelties (10 min.)May 9
- 7509 Emil Coleman & Orch.—Mel. Mast. (10 m.)..May 9
- 7719 Lights Fantastic—Mer. Melodies (10 m.)..May 23
- 7610 Nutty News—Looney Tunes (7 m.).....May 23
- 7720 Hold the Lion, Please—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)...June 6
- 7611 Hobby Horse Laffs—Looney Tunes (7 m.)..June 6
- 7408 Hatteras Honkers—Sports Parade (10 m.)..June 13
- 7721 Double Chaser—Merrie Melody (7 m.).....June 20
- 7612 Gopher Goofy—Looney Tunes (7 m.).....June 20

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- 7109 Calif. Jr. Symphony—Bway. Brev. (20 m.)..Apr. 18
- 7004 March On America—Special (20 m.).....May 16
- 7110 Pacific Frontier—Bway. Brev. (20 m.).....May 30
- 7005 Spanish Fiesta—Special (20 m.).....June 27

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK

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- 288 Thursday ...July 16
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- 290 Thursday ...July 23
- 291 Tuesday ...July 28
- 292 Thursday ...July 30

Universal

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- 84 SaturdayJune 27
- 85 Wednesday ..July 1
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- 88 SaturdayJuly 11
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- 92 SaturdayJuly 25
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Paramount News

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- 83 SaturdayJune 13
- 84 Wednesday ..June 17
- 85 SaturdayJune 20
- 86 Wednesday ..June 24
- 87 SaturdayJune 27
- 88 Wednesday ..July 1
- 89 SaturdayJuly 4
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- 91 SaturdayJuly 11
- 92 Wednesday ..July 15
- 93 SaturdayJuly 18
- 94 Wednesday ..July 22
- 95 SaturdayJuly 25
- 96 Wednesday ..July 29

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1942

No. 21

Republic Sells Two Re-Issues as New Pictures

Republic has just released two feature pictures that were once shown as serials—"S. O. S. Coast Guard," and "The Yukon Patrol."

The title of "S. O. S. Coast Guard" is the same as was that of the serial, but that of "The Yukon Patrol" is different; it was "King of the Royal Mounted."

The synopsis that the publicity department of Republic furnished to the reviewers at the time each picture was shown to them did not contain anything to indicate that the picture was put together from a serial.

Curious to know whether the other publicity matter contained any indication that the pictures were formerly serials, I obtained a one-sheet poster and a press sheet for each picture, but I found nothing in them to indicate what I was looking for. The only statement in the poster of "The Yukon Patrol" is the following, in small letters: "Based on Zane Grey's 'King of the Royal Mounted.'"

I examined the press sheet of each carefully but I did not find anywhere mention of the fact that the picture was formerly a serial, and that it was made into a feature merely by editing. On the contrary, in the case of the one, the headline over a Reader reads as follows: "'The Yukon Patrol' a Thrilling New Film;" in the case of the other, it reads: "New Republic Picture is Hit with Local Audience."

In view of the fact that these Readers are furnished to the exhibitors to be inserted in their local newspapers, were an exhibitor to use the ones mentioned as they are furnished to him by Republic he would mislead his public.

A misleading of this kind might not be serious in a case where a patron had not seen the picture as a serial, but it will be different if he had seen it; he would undoubtedly feel that he had been mistreated, and may demand his money back.

But even if the patron should receive his money back, somewhere in the corner of his mind he would bear a grudge against the industry in general, and against the theatre owner in particular, for resorting to such methods to get money. Does anyone doubt it? Let me cite you an instance:

The following editorial appeared in the January 24, 1920, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, under the heading, "Here Is a Good One for You":

"A few weeks ago an exhibitor of this territory booked "The Beast," a Fox picture featuring George Walsh, as a new release. While playing it, a woman patron stepped up to him and told him that she saw this picture before. The exhibitor was first inclined to think the patron mistaken; but he was eventually convinced.

"He immediately took up the matter with his exchange; but the exchange manager swore up and down that he didn't know it was a re-issue. He stated positively he was never notified.

"What do you think of that?"

At that time, the William Fox Corporation had released other re-issues under new titles.

As a result of this abuse, a complaint was entered with the Federal Trade Commission and sometime afterward the Commission issued a "cease and desist" order to William Fox Corporation.

Certainly James R. Grainger, president of Republic Pictures, knows about this order; or, at least, he ought have been aware of its issuance, because he was connected with the picture business at that time.

HARRISON'S REPORTS calls this abuse to the attention of Allied States Association and suggests that either its president or its general counsel protest against it, demanding that Republic so re-arrange its publicity matter as to make it clear to the exhibitors as well as to the public that the pictures are re-issues.

HERE AND THERE

Although "MRS. MINIVER," the MGM picture, was reviewed in last week's issue extensively, additional remarks about it would not be amiss on account of its import to this country nationally.

There are no "terrific" battle scenes; although severe air raids take place, only once, and at a fleeting moment, are any German planes shown. The effect is attained by indirection. Likewise: the young hero is an aviator, and yet he is not shown in any of the scenes as flying a plane. His presence in the air becomes known to his family, and naturally to the spectators, by a signal burr of his motor.

The scenes that show anything that floats going to Dunkirk to help in the evacuation of the British Army is highly impressive: it seems as if thousands of boats move down the river in one direction, as in a proces-

(Continued on last page)

**"Let's Get Tough" with East Side Kids,
Florence Rice, Tom Brown and
Robert Armstrong**

(Monogram, May 22; time, 62 min.)

Containing the usual brand of comedy and action associated with the East Side Kids, this program comedy-melodrama is moderately entertaining for the juvenile trade. The story is too silly for the adult trade. This time the kids go patriotic and, refused enlistment in the Army, Navy and Marines, make a Japanese spy ring, the object of their none-too-gentle attentions. A mild romance takes place:—

Led by Leo Gorcey, the East Side Kids wreck a Chinese shop, believing it to be that of a Japanese. Later, they find the proprietor murdered. They are taken to the police station for questioning, but prove that they knew nothing of the murder. Tom Brown, brother of one of the Kids, is discharged from the Navy dishonorably when it is found that he had been friendly with some Japanese who were known to be spies. In reality, Tom is a Secret Service agent. Determined to find the murderer, the Kids discover a note bearing Japanese characters. They are unable to read the note, but Florence, former sweetheart of Tom and still in love with him despite her apparent disdain following his discharge, offers to have the note translated. She takes it to the store of Phil Ahn, a Jap, and overhears him inform Gabriel Dell, a Nazi spy, that it is a membership list of the Black Dragon Society. Tom, ostensibly in league with the Black Dragons, arrives at the store, and joins Dell and Ahn in imprisoning Florence. When she fails to come home, the Kids decide to investigate. They break into the store and finally get mixed up in a Black Dragon meeting. A fight ensues. Tom joins the boys in freeing Florence, while one of the boys brings the police to their aid. The members of the Society are apprehended and the spy ring broken. Tom marries Florence, then re-joins the Navy.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, and Wallace Fox directed it. Sam Katzman, Jack Dietz and Barney Sarecky produced it. In the cast are Robert Armstrong, Bobby Jordan, Huntz Hall and others. Suitable for all.

**"Meet the Stewarts"
with William Holden and Frances Dee**

(Columbia, May 28; time, 72 min.)

Tiresome! Supposedly a marital comedy, it fails to amuse. The action centers around a newly married couple's efforts to live on a budget without aid from their respective families. The story is hackneyed, the situations old-fashioned, and the comedy forced. The picture moves along at such a slow pace that it is doubtful whether many picture-goers will have the patience to stay all the way through it. There is no human interest, and none of the characters do anything to arouse sympathy. The acting is listless and unconvincing:—

Frances Dee, daughter of wealthy Grant Mitchell, wants to marry William Holden, a proud young man of moderate means. Holden hesitates to marry her; he feels that he could not support her in the style she is accustomed to, and would resent any financial aid from her family. Frances is willing to live within his means. Mitchell objects to the marriage; he feels that Holden is a fortune hunter. When Mitchell announces that he would disinherit Frances if she marries him, Holden accepts her proposal. They are married and proceed to live on a budget. They give a dinner party for their respective families, but the party winds up in a verbal brawl when Anne Revere, Holden's sister, states that Frances is not the type of girl to make a good wife for Holden. The argument does not affect their marriage. Frances induces Holden to take advantage of a life membership her father had bought her in an exclusive country club. A financial crisis is reached when the manager of the club presents them with a bill for \$300, explaining that Mitchell had cancelled her membership. Eager to help pay the bill, Frances obtains a job, despite Holden's protests. Their work disrupts their home life, and both are on edge. When Holden learns that Frances had used money set aside for a house payment to buy a dress, he scolds her; they quarrel and separate. Several months later, Holden's sister informs him that Frances had rented their home and had been working, using the rent money and her salary to pay off their debts; she also gives him Frances' address. He rushes to the address, only to find a strange man in the apartment that Frances is supposed to occupy. Hoden, misunderstanding the situation, starts a fight in which Frances joins. Both land in jail, but their difficulties are ironed out when both their families come to the rescue.

Karen DeWolf wrote the screen play, Robert Sparks produced it, and Alfred E. Green directed it.

Suitable for all.

**"Pacific Rendezvous"
with Lee Bowman and Jean Rogers**

(MGM, no release date; time, 75 min.)

Balanced with comedy and a light romance, this espionage melodrama is mildly entertaining. It should appeal to patrons who are not concerned about the lack of logic in a plot as long as our side succeeds in outwitting the enemy. Of interest are the scenes that show the methods employed by the Navy in the deciphering of intercepted code messages sent by the enemy. The picture lacks the exciting quality that espionage pictures usually have; the action is leisurely. Moreover, the comedy is stressed and is not particularly effective:—

Lee Bowman meets Jean Rogers at a charity ball in Washington. Jean learns that he is a foreign correspondent who had enlisted in the Navy, and that he is due to leave for active duty on the following day. He informs her that the Navy is searching for him; he had written a book on code deciphering, but the Navy could not find him because he wrote it under a pen name. Bowman wants action, not a desk job. Immediately before leaving, Bowman is ordered to report to Navy Intelligence. There he discovers that Jean is the daughter of Russell Hicks, Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Bowman decodes a message, revealing that enemy agents have a copy of a secret code. As troops had already sailed, the code must be recovered within three days, to keep secret the rendezvous position that is to be relayed to the U. S. Fleet. Commander Paul Cavanaugh, originator of the code, is killed by Mona Maris when he discovers her opening his dispatches. At the funeral, Bowman senses that Miss Maris had been purposely sent there by the spy ring, to be picked up. After questioning her, Bowman takes her to a night club. Carl Esmond, a reporter friend of Bowman's, is deliberately revealed by Miss Maris as a spy, in an attempt to make the Navy believe that the case is closed. Esmond is captured with the code, but Bowman is not fooled. At Miss Maris' apartment, Bowman is captured by the spy ring. Threatening to harm Jean, whom, too, they had captured, they force Bowman to decipher a code message they had intercepted. Bowman fools the spies into sending a message that reveals his predicament, bringing federal agents to the rescue. The spy ring broken, Bowman is allowed to join the fleet.

Harry Kurnitz, P. J. Wolfson and George Oppenheimer wrote the screen play, B. F. Zeidman produced it, and George Sidney directed it.

Suitable for all.

**"She's in the Army" with Veda Ann Borg,
Marie Wilson and Lucille Gleason**

(Monogram, May 15; time, 62 min.)

Ordinary program fare. Since the action unfolds at a Women's Ambulance Corps camp and quite a bit of footage is given to the methods employed in the training of women in the war effort, it may appeal to some women. The theme is timely, but the story is thin and turns out just as the spectator expects. Thus it lacks novelty or surprise. In spite of the fact that the picture has some melodramatic action, a little comedy, and a romance, it fails to impress on any one count:

Veda Ann Borg, debutante songstress in a night club, joins the Women's Ambulance Corps in order to secure publicity. William Lundigan, gossip columnist, bets her \$5000 that she will resign within six weeks. Marie Wilson, hat check girl at the night club, had enlisted previously. The two girls are assigned to a camp where Captain Lyle Talbot and Sergeant Lucille Gleason are in charge of the women. Veda, who does not take her training seriously, is attracted to Talbot, but he does not respond. On visiting day, Talbot notices Veda alone and asks her if she had a date. Veda informs him that she had, then telephones an escort bureau to send her a man dressed in a Navy uniform. Mistaking Navy Lieutenant Robert Lowery, Talbot's brother, for her escort, Veda introduces him to Talbot as her fiance. The two men lead her on, but eventually Talbot reveals that he is aware of her deception. Veda begins to take her work seriously. Although Talbot does not admit it, he had fallen in love with her, but when he learns that she had enlisted for publicity purposes and to win a bet he expels her from the Corps. As Veda prepares to leave, Sergeant Gleason has a heart attack in the barracks. Veda rushes out to get aid. When she returns, she finds the building in flames. Veda rescues the sick woman and, because of her heroism, is reinstated. She is assigned to Dutch Harbor, the post at which Talbot will be in charge. Talbot declares his love for Veda, and Lundigan loses his \$5000 bet, which Veda donates for the purchase of an ambulance.

Sidney Sheldon wrote the screen play, Ted Richmond produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Suitable for all.

"I Married An Angel" with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy

(MGM, no release date; time, 83 min.)

Adapted from the Broadway show of the same title, this musical-comedy is fairly entertaining. Although the production is extremely lavish and musically satisfactory, it cannot cover up a weak story. Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy sing the melodious tunes in their usual fine voice and their performances, as well as those of the supporting cast, are very good. Eddy portrays a gay, irresponsible Count constantly surrounded by beautiful women; he dreams that he had married an angel. Miss MacDonald, as the angel, provokes considerable comedy by her treating with earthly affairs in an angelic manner, then dropping her halo to become an alluring adventuress. It is a bit risqué in spots and should appeal to the sophisticated. Its box-office possibilities might best be judged by the exhibitors' knowledge of the players' popularity in their particular locale:—

Anna Zador (Jeanette MacDonald), a drab stenographer working in a bank, secretly loves Count Willie Pallafi (Nelson Eddy,) her boss, whose only interest in life is wine, women and song. Willie is warned by "Whiskers" (Reginald Owen) that the bank's stockholders are complaining about his lavish spending, but Willie laughs it off and proceeds to plan his birthday party. At Whiskers' request, Marika, Willie's beautiful secretary, invites Anna to the party and maliciously suggests that she come as an angel. Anna's costume amuses the assemblage, but Willie kindly dances with the self-conscious girl. Complaining that his feet hurt him, Willie excuses himself and goes to his room. He falls asleep and dreams as follows: Anna comes through the window as an angel, wearing a beautiful robe, with wings and a halo, and calling herself Briggitta. They marry, but Willie discovers that an angel could be trying. She wanted to leave him the first night to sleep on a cloud but he persuades her to remain, and the following morning she is without wings for having become mortal. Then she ruins all his plans by behaving in an angelic manner: She will not lie, nor will she wear the beautiful clothes he buys for her, because little animals were killed for their fur. When Willie learns that the stockholders are displeased with his marriage, he decides to give a banquet to prove to them that he is married to a wonderful woman. But at the party, Briggitta adheres so strictly to the truth that she insults all the guests, creating the danger of a run on the bank. Briggitta succeeds in halting this by transferring her attentions to Baron Szigethy (Douglass Dumbrille,) the bank's heaviest depositor. Willie awakens and is relieved that it had been only a dream. He returns to the party and asks Anna to marry him. The dream had lasted but a few minutes.

Anita Loos wrote the screen play, Hunt Stromberg produced it, and Major W. S. Van Dyke II directed it. Included in the cast are Binnie Barnes, Edward Everett Horton and others.

Suitable for all.

"Once Upon a Thursday" with Marsha Hunt and Richard Carlson

(MGM, no release date; time, 65 min.)

A delightful farce-comedy. Although it is a program picture and lacks strong box-office names, it could hold its own as the upper half of a double bill. The performances are particularly good, with that of Marsha Hunt's outstanding. The story pokes fun at a typical swank Long Island colony, whose families go into a dither for fear that one of their maids—possibly their own—may bring hidden family skeletons to light. In spite of the fact that it is a completely nonsensical farce, there are enough humorous situations to keep the audience chuckling throughout:—

A gossip column revealing that a maid was writing a book about her employers upsets the socialite colony of Rock Bay. Each household suspects its own maid of writing the expose. Virginia Weidler informs Spring Byington and Melville Cooper, her parents, that she suspected their two servants, Marsha Hunt and Marjorie Main, of writing the book, but her parents scoff at the thought. Richard Carlson, their eldest son, returns home for a visit, bringing with him Frances Drake, his fiancée. Carlson is upset to find that Marsha still worked for the family. Worried about the gossip item, Marsha hurries to meet Allyn Joslyn, prominent book publisher. He promises Marsha that there would be no more publicity about her book until it is published.

Marsha and Carlson quarrel. Their conversation reveals that they had been married secretly while on a party and that Carlson had instructed her to get a divorce during his absence. She had not yet obtained the divorce. When Carlson learns of the expose story, he accuses Marsha of being the author with intent to blackmail. Angry with Carlson, Marsha accepts a date with Joslyn. Carlson jealously waits up for her. When she returns home, Carlson argues with her, but she falls asleep while listening to him. Frances, aroused by the noise, sees him carry Marsha to her bedroom, and the next morning sets the wedding date for the following week. Carlson realizes that he is in love with Marsha and pleads with Frances to postpone the wedding. Frances ignores his plea and arranges for an announcement party. Joslyn visits Marsha the evening of the party and is mistaken for one of the guests. When the socialites learn that he is a publisher, they question him about the secret book. Joslyn reveals that Marsha is the author. Everything turns out for the best when Carlson admits that he and Marsha are married and both confess that they love each other more than ever.

Isobel Lennart and Lee Gold wrote the screen play, Irving Starr produced it, and Jules Dassin directed it.

Suitable for all.

*Released as
AFFAIRS OF MARTHA

"Escape from Hong Kong" with Marjorie Lord, Andy Devine, Leo Carrillo and Don Terry

(Universal, May 15; time, 60 min.)

A moderately entertaining espionage melodrama, of program grade. As in other pictures of this type, plots and counter-plots amongst spies make up the theme. This time the action centers around a modern "Mata Hari" working for the British Intelligence, and three American vaudevillians who aid her. The action moves at a steady pace, becoming wildly melodramatic in the final sequence when, from a speeding motor boat, a Japanese airplane is shot down with rifles. Intelligent audiences will snicker at this, but it will probably keep the children on the edge of their seats:—

During a vaudeville performance at a Hong Kong theatre, Marjorie Lord enters and sits beside Paul Dubov, Nazi Agent, who is shot by Leland Hodgson, British Intelligence officer, during the show. Marjorie runs backstage and hides in the dressing room of Don Terry, Leo Carrillo and Andy Devine, an American vaudeville team. She convinces them that she had nothing to do with the shooting, but she is found by Hodgson, who arrests her as a Nazi spy. Hodgson turns her over to Colonel Gilbert Emery, the only person in Hong Kong who knew that Marjorie is a British agent masquerading as a Nazi spy. He permits her to bind and gag him, then escape. He is found in this condition by Hodgson, really a Nazi spy. Hodgson kills the Colonel and makes it appear as if Marjorie killed him. The vaudevillians trail Marjorie to the home of Frank Puglia, a Japanese spy. They try to capture the two, but instead they themselves are captured. They are puzzled when Marjorie frees them during the night. When the vaudevillians learn that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, they apprehend Marjorie and turn her over to Hodgson. Unknown to her that he is a Nazi spy, Marjorie informs Hodgson of her identity. He pretends to disbelieve her and orders her executed for the Colonel's murder. Marjorie escapes from her guard during an air raid. She goes to a warehouse to meet Puglia, who was to deliver secret plans to her. When Hodgson joins them, Marjorie learns the truth. Meanwhile the vaudevillians had followed Puglia to the warehouse and had seen Marjorie enter, followed by Hodgson. They save Marjorie and capture the two spies. With their two prisoners, the vaudevillians and Marjorie board a motor boat to flee to China to deliver the plans to the Chinese.

Roy Chanslor wrote the story, Marshall Grant produced it, and William Nigh directed it.

Suitable for all.

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sion. Although not a single scene of Dunkirk is shown, the effect upon one's emotions is just as deep as if actual scenes of the evacuation were shown. It required deep thinking and high courage to get away from the beaten path of producing to adopt indirection. Happily the courageous producers have been rewarded with highly satisfactory results.

The American people could not have had a better document to make them wake up to the realization of what bombing actually means. When they see this picture, they will realize what the British people have gone and still are going through, and what we ourselves may go through unless we exert our biggest effort to win the war. Thus "Mrs. Miniver" may be classed, not only as first-rate entertainment, but also to an equal extent as a beneficial medium for our war efforts. Every theatre in the country should play it and re-play it.

* * *

LAST WEEK WILLIAM F. RODGERS, vice-president in charge of distribution of MGM, announced that he would hold a district managers meeting on Tuesday this week for the purpose of discussing means and ways whereby the small exhibitor may be helped on account of the upset of their box office receipts as a result of the conditions of the war. Mr. Rodgers had decided to hold this meeting after a survey he had made.

Because of the fact that the object for which he had decided to call this meeting was of importance to every distributor, he had invited the attendance of every industry leader.

By the time the meeting will be over, the editorial section of HARRISON'S REPORTS will have been printed. For this reason the results of the meeting will be announced in next week's issue. At this time, HARRISON'S REPORTS is content to say that Mr. Rodgers' move is unprecedented, and that it hopes it will prove of great benefit to the small exhibitor.

* * *

LAST WEEK CARL W. ACKERMAN, Dean of the School of Journalism of Columbia University, announced that Twentieth Century-Fox has given a six-month contract to three graduates who had taken a script-writing course in his School.

Twentieth Century-Fox is to be congratulated for giving three young graduates a chance to show what they can do. None of them may prove an outstanding script writer. On the other hand, it is possible that, in time, all three may turn out top-notch writers. Only time can tell. In either case, one may say that they were given their chance.

A greater effort should be made by the producers at bringing into Hollywood new faces, not only as writers but also as players. The writers they may obtain either from schools of journalism or from schools of experience — newspaper editorial rooms; the players they don't have to go out of their way to get, for Hollywood is full of them.

* * *

THE UMPI HEADQUARTERS has made the following announcement on May 15:

The Committee of the Whole of the United Motion Picture Industry is pleased to announce:

1. There has been worked out at the request of exhibitors as a proposed amendment to the Consent Decree a substitute sales plan to take the place of the selling plan now provided for in the Consent Decree. This plan will be submitted to the Department of Justice for their approval. All five consenting companies, Metro, Paramount, Fox, RKO and Warner have indicated their willingness to accept this plan as an amendment to the Consent Decree if the Department of Justice will accept it as such.

2. All five consenting companies have reaffirmed their policy against the forcing of shorts and at the exhibitors' suggestions have communicated their attitudes on this question to the exhibitors direct.

3. Discussions on the present method of arbitration under the Consent Decree will continue and such modifications of such method as may be deemed advisable will similarly be submitted to the Department of Justice.

4. A method of conciliation, not in substitution of but as a supplement to the present Consent Decree arbitration has been worked out for the settlement of territorial and individual complaints. Metro, Fox and RKO have subscribed to this method. Paramount and Warner have not. However, Paramount has stated it will study the possibility of accomplishing relief through arbitration. Warner has declared its willingness to conciliate directly with its customers any and all complaints which they may have against Warner arising out of their dealings with Warner and accordingly, Warner has invited all exhibitors who believe themselves entitled to any relief from Warner, to tell their story to Warner at its home office either in person or in writing and Warner assures all such exhibitors that their matters will be given prompt attention and that they will receive whatever relief their claim merits.

The necessary steps to communicate with the Department of Justice are now in progress.

HIGH FILM RENTALS

(Concluded from last week)

"KEEPING THE POWDER DRY"

"The Board of Directors calls upon the producer-distributors to consider and act upon this statement in the spirit of unity and cooperation in which it is issued and in the spirit of the recent utterances of the President of the United States. The demand for action by the exhibitors is such that neither the Allied leadership nor any other can quiet it if relief is not forthcoming. In response to the clamor for action Allied has inaugurated a preparedness campaign and is making a careful study of the steps taken in Canada with respect to film rentals and the effects thereof on both the exhibitors and the distributors. This is not cited as a threat but merely as an indication of the extent to which the pressure for action must necessarily affect existing satisfactory intro-industry relations if the problem of high film rentals cannot be solved in accordance with the principles sponsored by Allied."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia	17.50
35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1942

No. 22

HERE AND THERE

THE GREATEST VICTORY THAT ALLIED has so far won is that which concerns the postponement of the Government's suit against the Schine Theatre Circuit, agreed to between the Government's and the Schine Circuit's lawyers.

The agreement provides that the circuit will not acquire theatres for two years in specified localities; and that it will get rid of the sixteen theatres that it acquired after the filing of the suit in 1939.

If any one thinks that to compel a circuit to stop buying theatres and to dispose of theatres that it acquired is not a victory, a great victory, he has another guess coming. And all this has been effected by the tireless work of the Allied States organization.

The Government brought the suit against the Schine Circuit and major film companies on the ground that they had conspired to violate the anti-trust laws.

In view of the fact that the Government is opposing the producer-distributor practice of operating picture theatres, many exhibitor leaders feel that the Government's victory in this case is the beginning of the materialization of its program of compelling producer-distributors to divest themselves of their theatre holdings and to cease operating theatres even indirectly.

* * *

ONE POINT ON WHICH the producers could economize and thus help the nation's defense work is the scenes of girls dancing, where such scenes are not part and parcel of the action, but are dragged in by the ear for no other purpose than to "dress up" the picture and thus make it impressive, not to the public so much, but to the exhibitors, so as to exact higher rentals from them. No one would miss such scenes, because they do not add anything to the picture's entertainment values. If the picture is entertaining, it is entertaining despite such scenes; if it is boring, such scenes will not make it less so.

Another point of economy is the parading of the names of the supporting cast in the introductory title. Foot after foot of film is wasted in presenting these names to the public, which in nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand they do not remember a single name, unless they are interested in a certain person.

Still another point is the one discussed in these columns before—the names of persons of the technical staff, such as, dress designers, hair dressers, and the like. There should be no place for such names on the introductory title during these times.

Still another point where economies could be effected—a very important point—is the dialogue. Most of the talk is

superfluous and could be eliminated to the picture's advantage. When one remembers that a scene, when it includes dialogue, is taken anywhere from five to twenty times until the director gets it "just right," he will realize how much may be saved by the elimination of two-thirds of the dialogue.

If the producers will not eliminate such waste willingly, this paper feels sure that the Government will compel them to do so eventually, by restricting the use of material.

* * *

AS SAID IN LAST WEEK'S ISSUE, the district and division managers of the MGM forces met in Chicago last week for the purpose of considering the small exhibitor's condition as a result of the shifting of population, caused by the war activities of the nation. Mr. W. F. Rodgers announced that each exhibitor's situation will be examined and relief offered where relief is needed, disregarding all precedents.

Mr. Rodgers said that it would not be possible to approach the subject of relief for these exhibitors on the basis of a general formula. He informed the trade that he has instructed his field forces to examine all situations with an open mind and to make the proper recommendations.

MGM has taken the lead in this matter, but so far no other distributor has followed it. It is necessary that every other distributor, too, examine the facts of each exhibitor's case and grant the exhibitor the relief that he must have; otherwise many of them may go out of business. And it will not benefit the distributors at all if any theatres should be compelled to shut down because through short-sightedness they failed either to lower an exhibitor's film rentals or to readjust his clearance.

* * *

THEY COULDN'T TAKE IT! I am referring to the New England Allied unit which, having disagreed with all the other Allied units on the Unity plan, quit the organization rather than stay and fight it out in the ranks until their views prevailed.

The Allied organization is founded on democratic principles, where the will of the majority prevails. For twelve years such has been the attitude of the different units—the majority prevailed, regardless of how much some units might have been opposed to certain policies of the majority. But the New England unit felt differently: "If we can't make you see it our way, we quit."

The Allied organization knows who is to blame for the withdrawal of the New England unit. They know that because this person could not rule, he sought to ruin.

But Allied has come out stronger for having gone through the "fire."

"Miss Annie Rooney" with Shirley Temple

(United Artists, May 29; time, 84 min.)

Although this picture stars Shirley Temple, it does not rise above the level of ordinary program entertainment. With the exception of a few jitterbug dance numbers, in which Shirley dances very well, the action is slow because of an overabundance of dialogue. The story of the little girl, who meets the rich little boy, thereby relieving her family's financial distress, is not novel and unfolds in a familiar manner. Moreover, the characterizations of Shirley's young friends are unnatural; their mannerisms are not those of normal teenage children. Shirley Temple's talent is wasted in a picture of this sort:—

Shirley Temple, a jitterbug addict with a weakness for good literature, lives with William Gargan, her father, and Guy Kibbee, her grandfather. Kibbee gets a police pension and is the main support of the family; her father sells insurance, but his earnings go into get-rich-quick schemes, the latest being a formula for making rubber out of milkweeds. On her way to a party one night, Shirley meets Dickie Moore, scion of a socially prominent family. Dickie is attracted by Shirley's beauty, and Shirley is impressed with Dickie's knowledge of literature. Dickie invites her to his sixteenth birthday party, in spite of the fact that it upsets previous plans made by Gloria Holden, his mother. Kibbee borrows money on his pension to buy Shirley a gown; Gargan had just been fired from his job. At the party, Shirley is treated coolly because of her background, but soon ingratiates herself with everyone when she leads the youngsters in a jitterbug dance. Meanwhile at Shirley's home, matters are complicated. Gargan had borrowed \$300 on the household furniture and the loan company was demanding payment or the furniture. In desperation, Gargan, who had learned that Jonathan Hale, Dickie's father, was the president of a rubber company, decides to go to him for help. He breaks in on the party and demonstrates his rubber formula. The formula explodes on the table, and Shirley, broken-hearted, leaves with her father. The following morning, Dickie and his father call at Shirley's home, just as the loan company begins to move the furniture. Hale tells Gargan that he admires his aggressiveness and offers him a job. Gargan refuses the job; he believes his rubber formula will yet prove to be a success. The situation is relieved when a chemist working for Hale arrives with the information that, at Dickie's insistence, he had analyzed the formula and discovered it to be a composition better than rubber. Hale decides to form a new company with Gargan as president. The family worries over, Dickie and Shirley resume their romance.

George Bruce wrote the screen play, Edward Small produced it, and Edwin L. Marin directed it.

"Her Cardboard Lover" with Norma Shearer and Robert Taylor

(MGM, no release date; time, 91 min.)

A mediocre sophisticated comedy. The picture is a remake of MGM's 1928 production titled, "The Cardboard Lover," with Marion Davies. But that was an hilarious comedy. The story about a woman who employs a man, in love with her, to keep her away from a man that she loves, is substantially the same excepting that, in the old version, it was the man who did the employing—he employed a woman. As is usual in pictures of this type, the production is lavish. But this is of little help since the story is silly, is slow, and lacks human appeal. An unpleasant feature is the spineless behavior of Miss Shearer. One does not enjoy seeing a woman grovel at the feet of a man. Moreover, the performers act like "nit-wits," but since they were handicapped by trite material and silly dialogue they could hardly perform otherwise:—

Robert Taylor, a songwriter, is infatuated with Norma Shearer, a habitue of a gambling casino. He approaches her and boldly tells her that he loves her, but she, replying that he is annoying, goes into the gambling room. Taylor overhears George Sanders inquire for Miss Shearer, and offers to take a note to her. Sanders, not dressed in dinner clothes, cannot enter the main room. Taylor tears up the note, enters the gambling room, and inadvertently loses \$3200 to Miss Shearer. Taylor confesses that he cannot pay, and admits tearing up Sanders' note. Miss Shearer informs him that she loves Sanders, but wants to get away from him, and employs him for ten weeks to work out his indebtedness, instructing him to act as her fiance, and to prevent her from going back to Sanders. When Sanders calls at Miss Shearer's apartment, Taylor acts the part. Sanders leaves indignantly. Miss Shearer tries every possible ruse to see Sanders, but Taylor

always prevents her. Sanders and Taylor meet in a hotel and fight. Both are jailed. The following day, both are freed, but Taylor is infuriated by Miss Shearer's loving manner to Sanders. For the first time Miss Shearer's feelings are mixed. Alone with Sanders, she discovers that his caresses have no longer any effect on her. As Taylor prepares to leave Palm Beach, he is arrested on a charge of grand larceny. In court, Miss Shearer admits that the charges are false, and that she had filed them only to prevent his leaving, so as to tell him that she loves him.

Jacques Deval and John Collier wrote the screen play, J. Walter Ruben produced it, and George Cukor directed it. In the cast are Frank McHugh, Elizabeth Patterson, Chill Wills and others.

Morally objectionable for children.

"Sweetheart of the Fleet" with Joan Davis, Jinx Falkenburg and Joan Woodbury

(Columbia, May 21; time, 65 min.)

Just a program comedy with music, suitable for a double bill when something light is needed for a second feature. The story is silly, and the action, which on occasion goes slapstick, is more to the taste of juveniles than of adults. Joan Davis plays a straight comedy role, minus her familiar song and dance routine. The comedy at best evokes no more than a slight grin. Discriminating audiences may be considerably bored with it. The cast includes "Brenda" and "Cobina," radio comedienne, made famous on the Bob Hope radio show:—

Joan Davis, secretary to Tim Ryan, advertising counsellor, loves Ryan although he does not know it. To attract his attention, she puts into effect what she believes to be a great advertising stunt. Communicating with the Navy, Joan offers to "unmask," at a recruiting rally the two mystery girls who sing on the "Blind Date With Romance" radio program. The Navy accepts and gives the plan wide publicity. Joan, who had never met the mystery girls, learns from Riley that they are homely and, should they be unmasked, their commercial value will be destroyed. Joan induces Jinx Falkenburg and Joan Woodbury, advertising models, to pose as Brenda and Cobina, the mystery girls, while they (the mystery girls) do the actual singing from behind the curtain. The models are taken to an officers' club to be introduced. The mystery girls go along, supposedly as their singing teachers, and manage to sign the contract without being detected. Commander Charles Trowbridge assigns two sailors to entertain the mystery girls. When the sailors visit the studio where the models are rehearsing, they see the mystery girls doing the actual singing in an adjacent studio. Realizing the truth, the sailors see their chance to marry into money, and become over-romantic with the mystery girls. They elope with them on the night of the rally. When the rally starts, everything is upset owing to the absence of the mystery girls. Joan confesses the hoax to Trowbridge, who insists upon explaining to the audience. Joan talks him out of it and, locating the mystery girls by telephone, arranges with them to do their singing from an out of town radio station. The rally is a huge success, but the commander confesses to the audience that the models were not the mystery girls. The recruits voice their approval of the models, and Riley, impressed by the success of the stunt, takes Joan in his arms.

Albert Duffy and Maurice Tombragel wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Charles Barton directed it. Suitable for all.

"Thru Different Eyes" with Frank Craven and June Walker

(20th Century-Fox, no release date; time, 64 min.)

When this picture was produced by Fox in 1929, HARRISON'S REPORTS reviewed it as an indifferent picture. The present version is on about the same level. Although the story has been altered, the theme—a discussion of circumstantial evidence—remains the same. To illustrate his lecture, a district attorney tells in retrospect the story of a famous murder case, in which a woman's intuition saves the life of an innocent man, convicted on circumstantial evidence. But it is such a hodge-podge of nonsense, that it is doubtful whether average audiences will find it entertaining:—

Invited by a law school to discuss circumstantial evidence, Frank Craven, district attorney, refers to the Jerome Cowan murder case, in which George Holmes had been convicted and sentenced to die. Mary Howard, Cowan's wife, had asked him for a divorce so that she could marry Donald Woods. Both were at Cowan's hunting lodge when he had been murdered, as was Holmes, Cowan's secretary. Miss

Howard and Woods had confessed to the crime to shield each other; both believed each other to be guilty. But both were released when ballistic tests proved that the bullet had not been fired from Cowan's gun, the one they claimed to have used. The only suspect was Holmes, who had disappeared. Apprehended by the police, Holmes maintained that after driving Miss Howard to town, he had returned to the lodge and found Cowan in a drunken stupor. Cowan attacked him and, while they grappled, Cowan's gun exploded. At that moment, he had heard another shot and had seen a man run into the woods. Feeling that nobody would believe his story, Holmes had gone into hiding. At the trial, Holmes had been convicted on circumstantial evidence. One hour before the execution, Craven was induced by June Walker, his wife, to ask for a stay of the execution. He did this on the basis of evidence that she gave him, implicating Woods. But it had turned out that it was something she had concocted because of her intuition that Woods was guilty. That night, Craven learned that his wife and Vivian Blaine, Holmes sweetheart, were at the lodge putting Woods through a third degree. With two of his aides, he arrived at the lodge in time to stop it. But a gun found in Wood's car by Craven's wife proved that Woods was the murderer.

Samuel G. Engel wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Thomas Z. Loring directed it.

Objectionable for children.

"It Happened in Flatbush" with Lloyd Nolan and Carole Landis

(20th Century-Fox, no release date; time, 79 min.)

Being in a large degree biographical of the Brooklyn "Dodgers" baseball team's rise to league leadership, this baseball comedy-melodrama is fairly good program entertainment. Although it will undoubtedly satisfy the male trade and the children, the fact that it is a baseball picture it may exert little appeal to many women. Moving along at a snappy pace, the picture portrays realistically the fervent admiration of the oft-publicized Brooklyn fans for their team. The combination of baseball, comedy and romance hold one's interest fairly well. The direction and the performances are very good:—

Lloyd Nolan is made manager of the Brooklyn baseball team by Sara Allgood, owner of the team, in spite of the fact that seven years previously he had been "crucified" by the fans and the press because of an error of his that cost Brooklyn the pennant. When Miss Allgood dies, Nolan's plans are upset. He needs money to purchase new players. Learning that the heirs to the club are mostly relatives, and that Carole Landis, a niece, is the major stockholder, Nolan orders a meeting of the stockholders. They ignore his plea for support, and inform him of their desire to sell the team. Desperate for players, Nolan wages a campaign to break down Carole's resistance, and arouses her interest in the team, as well as in himself. With the aid of the new players, particularly George Holmes, a rookie pitcher, Nolan leads the team within reach of first place. When the team returns to town for a crucial series with St. Louis, Brooklyn declares a holiday. The day before the first game, Robert Armstrong, baseball columnist, who had led Nolan's "crucifixion" seven years previously, advises Nolan not to let Holmes pitch because of his inexperience. Holmes reads the column and becomes jittery, but Nolan reassures him. Armstrong's prophecy comes true, and he makes the most of it in his column, reminding the fans of Nolan's past. When Brooklyn loses the second game, Nolan, furious, reprimands the team. Some of the players resent this, and sign a petition asking for his removal. Nolan resigns. Carole begs him to return. The following day, he faces the players and asks them to take him back as manager, telling them that Brooklyn wants a pennant. The players, sorry for what had happened, gladly accept him. In a surprise move, Nolan selects Holmes as the pitcher; his masterful pitching wins the game and the pennant.

Harold Buchman and Lee Loeb wrote the screen play, Walter Morosco produced it, and Ray McCarey directed it.

"Maisie Gets Her Man" with Ann Sothorn and Red Skelton

(MGM, no release date; time, 84 min.)

Continuing her struggle for an existence, Ann Sothorn is teamed with Red Skelton in the best comedy yet made in the "Maisie" series. It is good program entertainment, suitable for either end of a double bill. Miss Sothorn gives her usual good performance as the "hard-boiled" heroine, with a heart of gold. This time her adventures take place in an

office building inhabited by petty swindlers, where she meets and becomes vaudeville partners with a stage-struck country boy. The comedy situations are pretty good, both in dialogue and action:—

Ann Sothorn, out of a job after the dissolving of a knife-throwing act, goes to the Larsen Building in search of work. The building is a "hang-out" for dubious characters. While waiting in an agent's office, Ann meets Red Skelton, a country boy with vaudeville aspirations. Ann discovers that the agent is a fake, and is about to leave when she meets Allen Jenkins, rental agent for the building. She gets a job as his assistant, and impresses him by renting a large suite of rooms to Lloyd Corrigan, head of a health-water business. Ann loses the job when Donald Meek reveals that he is in charge, and that Jenkins had no authority to hire her. Ann and Skelton join as a vaudeville team, and secure a tryout at a small theatre. On the opening night, Skelton gets stage fright and both are booed off the stage. Unaware that Corrigan is a swindler, Ann and Skelton accept employment from him. They realize their love for each other, but Skelton admits that he is engaged to another girl back home. Although he informs her that he will break the engagement, Ann leaves him. Shortly afterward, detectives arrive and arrest Skelton; Corrigan had disappeared with the corporation's money, leaving Skelton to suffer the consequences. Modeling in a style show, Ann meets up with Corrigan. She learns that he is a fraud, and that Skelton had been arrested. Through clever stalling, Ann calls the police, exposes Corrigan, and frees Skelton. Still under the impression that Skelton is in love with his childhood sweetheart, Ann avoids him. She joins a girl show to entertain at army camps. At one of the camps, she finds Skelton as a soldier. He explains that his sweetheart had deserted him when he had been arrested. Ann promises to wait for him until after the war.

Betty Reinhardt and Mary C. McCall, Jr., wrote the screen play, J. Walter Ruben produced it, and Roy del Ruth directed it. In the cast are Leo Gorcey, Walter Catlett, Frank Jenks, Fritz Feld, "Rags" Raglund and others.

Suitable for all.

"Not a Ladies' Man" with Paul Kelly, Fay Wray and Douglas Croft

(Columbia, May 14; time, 60 min.)

A moderately entertaining program picture. The action revolves around a young boy who takes a dislike to women because of the misery caused to his father by a divorce. The story, although simple, combines human interest, some comedy, and a mild romance. It is neither novel nor exciting, but the characters are appealing and their actions praiseworthy. It is a wholesome type of picture, suitable mostly for the family trade:—

When his wife divorces him, Paul Kelly, district attorney, is broken up. He loses interest in his work and neglects Douglas Croft, his young son. Affected by his father's lack of interest in him, Douglas, a good student, falls down in his grades and even plays hookey. The boy becomes a confirmed woman-hater. Fay Wray, Douglas' school teacher, visits the boy's home to discuss with Kelly the boy's wayward habits. Kelly and Miss Wray become fast friends and he takes on a new attitude towards life. But Douglas refuses to change his views about women and despises Miss Wray for winning his Dad's affections. Kelly orders the arrest of "Malvern," a notorious racketeer. Kelly's associates assure him that he will become the next Governor if he secures Malvern's conviction. The picture changes when Kelly learns from Ruth Lee, his secretary, that his former wife was now Mrs. Malvern. Fearing that he would be accused of having convicted Malvern out of jealousy, and that the resulting publicity might have an effect on his son, Kelly decides to drop the case. Unable to explain his actions to the press, Kelly goes into hiding at his summer cottage. Meanwhile Douglas' schoolmates make life miserable for him by accusing his Dad of fearing Malvern. He runs away from school and joins his father. Miss Wray follows him to the cottage and tells Douglas the whole story. He assures his father that he would not mind the publicity, and tells him to prosecute Malvern regardless of the consequences. Miss Wray, too, reasons with Kelly, pointing out that, by not prosecuting Malvern, he is hurting the boy much more. Convinced, Kelly returns to the city.

The picture ends showing Kelly, Miss Wray (now his wife), and Douglas as one happy family.

Rian James wrote the screen play, Leon Barsha produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

"Bambi"

(RKO, no release date; time, 69 min.)

One of the most delightful feature-length cartoons Walt Disney has brought to the screen. It is undoubtedly his finest achievement both in color work and musical accompaniment. So fine is the color work, that it gives an uncanny depth to the forest in which all the action takes place. Combining comedy with human appeal, the story itself is pleasing. But the production as a whole is on the sweet and tranquil side and is not the sort to cause hilarious laughter amongst children, although it should undoubtedly entertain them, and it is hardly a picture for the masses.

The action centers around "Bambi," a baby deer, who grows up in the forest surrounded by many little animal friends. As in his other pictures, Disney has given expression to the faces and movements of the animals in so ingenious a manner, that the spectator is impressed deeply. Even the animals' voices change as they grow up. All the characters are lovable and one is sympathetic to their fear of hunters, who are constantly disrupting their peaceful lives. An unpleasant feature is the killing of Bambi's mother by a hunter. Although this is done by indirection, it nevertheless gives the film a sorrowful note, for her "mother love" had endeared her to the audience.

The story opens in a quiet forest, which slowly comes to life as little animals dash about and announce the birth of Bambi. Within a few days, Bambi, now strong enough to walk, romps about with the little animals, completely bewildered by all that he sees. His mother warns him of the dangers the animals face from hunters. One day while out in the meadow with a herd of deer, Bambi's mother is killed by hunters while attempting to save Bambi. Forlorn, Bambi is taken in hand by an old buck deer, who because of his age and his wisdom, was respected by the animals and called Prince of the Forest. Winter passes and Spring finds Bambi a handsome young buck. He returns to his friends and they, too, have grown. A wise old owl cautions them against allowing Spring to change their thoughts to love, but they tell him that such a thing would not happen to them. But it does happen. Bambi falls in love with a young doe. Challenged by another buck for her love, Bambi bests him in a fierce fight. The courtship is disrupted when hunters send their dogs into the woods in search of game. When the dogs attack the doe, Bambi courageously beats them off, but is wounded by one of the hunters. Owing to the hunter's carelessness, the forest catches fire. The animals flee and make their way to an island on a lake. The old Prince guides Bambi through the burning forest to the island, where he is reunited with his doe. When the fire dies down, the scene shows the quiet of a scorched forest, which comes to life once again when the little animals dash about and announce the birth of twin deer. From a hilltop, Bambi and the old Prince gaze proudly upon the scene.

Excellent for the entire family.

"Ships With Wings" with an English cast

(United Artists, May 15; time, 89 min.)

With the exception of the battle scenes that take place at the end of the picture, this British-made naval drama is dull. For the most part it deals with the private lives of the characters, including a romance, but all this is acted with typical British restraint of emotions, the result being boredom. The interest is awakened at the finish when a squadron of enemy planes attack an aircraft carrier. The combat scenes and the heroism of the pilots who land and take off from a shattered deck are full of action and suspense. The picture was produced with the cooperation of the Fleet Air Arm of the British Navy, and many of the sequences were filmed on the "Ark Royal":—

Vice-Admiral Leslie Banks and Captain Basil Sydney witness the launching of H.M.S. Invincible, the first specially designed aircraft carrier. Jane Baxter, Bank's daughter, and Hugh Burden, his son, a sub-lieutenant in the Navy, are introduced to John Clements, Michael Wilding and Michael Rennie, three young lieutenants. Jane recognizes Clements as the dashing pilot on whom she had a schoolgirl crush at Malta. At a night club later Clements tells Ann Todd, a cabaret singer, that he had fallen in love with Jane. Ann is very much in love with him, but takes the news gracefully. Clements takes Burden up in a fighter plane and, when something goes wrong with the wings, he shouts to Burden to bail out. Believing that Burden had followed his in-

structions, Clements bails out. But Burden is still in the plane, and when it crashes he is killed. With no one to verify Clements' story, he is court-martialed and dismissed from the service for cowardice. Clements obtains employment piloting a one-plane airline on a small Greek island. He is visited by Ann, who arrives with Hugh Williams and Frank Pettingell, English tourists. When Williams molests Ann, Clements gives him a beating. Just as the war begins, Williams and Pettingell are revealed as Nazi spies. With a squadron of Nazi soldiers, they plan to seize the island as a base. Clements foils the plot in a pitched battle, in which Ann is killed. Making for the mainland, Clements is shot down by an enemy plane, but is rescued by a boat from the Invincible. Banks, aboard the Invincible, asks Clements to join Wilding and Rennie in an attack on the enemy. The trio set out to bomb a dam adjacent to the enemy's air base. When their bombs miss the objective, Clements deliberately rams a fully loaded Italian bomber-plane, and together they crash onto the ledge of the dam. The explosion releases the water, and German planes, tanks, and troops are engulfed in the swirling waters. Clements dies a hero.

Patrick Kirwan, Diana Morgan, Austin Melford and Sergei Nolbandov wrote the screen play, Michael Belcon produced it, and Sergei Nolbandov directed it.

Suitable for all.

"Ten Gentlemen From West Point" with George Montgomery, Maureen O'Hara and John Sutton

(20th Century-Fox, no release date; time, 102 min.)

A timely and virile historical drama of West Point, the kind that should appeal to all types of audiences. Swerving away from the beaten path that military school pictures usually follow, this one is based on the true history of West Point. It is a story of the birth of the Academy, and of ten stalwart cadets, who courageously withstand the brutal treatment of a ruthless superintendent, determined to force their resignations so as to prove to Congress the cadets' ineptitude, and the futility of continuing the Academy. Produced lavishly, the picture's setting is the West Point of about 1800, with its barren buildings and ill-clad cadets, far different from the West Point of today. Able direction and a competent cast make this blend of action, romance, and comedy, a good entertainment:—

After a hot debate, Congress approves an appropriation for the establishment of a military academy at West Point, for a trial period of one year. Among the cadets are John Sutton, of a fine Washington family, and George Montgomery, a Kentucky backwoodsman. Maureen O'Hara, Sutton's fiancée, had come to West Point with Esther Dale, her housekeeper, to provide good food and drink for the cadets in a neighboring tavern that she owned. Laird Cregar arrives at the Academy to assume his duties as superintendent. He bluntly informs the cadets that he does not believe army officers can be made under this new plan, and warns them that their training will be severe. The cadets are assigned to a group of Bombardiers, who treat them roughly. In due time, many of the cadets resign because of the unbearable treatment. A letter of complaint is sent to Washington. Refusing to confess authorship, the cadets are punished cruelly. Only ten cadets remain; these include Sutton and Montgomery, who were now rivals for the love of Miss O'Hara. On orders from Washington, all available men at West Point, including the cadets are transferred to Indiana to combat a tribe of troublesome Indians, led by Chief Tecumseh. While on sentry duty, Sutton and Montgomery leave their posts when they discover Indians lurking near the fort. Leaving the fort to search for them, Cregar is captured by the Indians. When the two cadets return, they are jailed. Tecumseh demands that the fort surrender, threatening Cregar with death. Led by Montgomery, the cadets, employing a trick taught them at the Academy by Victor Francen, a kindly professor, demoralize and beat the Indians in a pitched battle, and rescue Cregar. Having become lame because of a wound, Montgomery refuses to accept a commission; he feels that he is not physically fit to be an Academy officer. At graduation exercises, Cregar highly praises the cadets and recommends that the Academy be continued.

Richard Maibaum wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Henry Hathaway directed it.

Suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
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Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher
P. S. HARRISON, Editor
Established July 1, 1919
Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1942

No. 23

PICTURES THAT DISTORT LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

In the May 27 issue of *Variety*, there was said partly the following under the heading, "Don't Distort U. S. in Pix":

"Unrealistic' pictures of American life that Hollywood films continue to give the average Briton is disturbing high officials of both the United States and England. So much so, and with the subject considered of such great importance, that a huddle of key officials of the two countries was held in the U. S. Embassy in London less than two weeks ago on means of getting the word subtly across to Hollywood...."

For years this paper has been pleading with the Hollywood producers to stop presenting the people of the United States as bloodthirsty, dishonest and as leading a loose and easy life, but it could not make the slightest impression on them. Only when foreign governments protested against the presentation of their nationals as villains did they modify their tactics; but they took no steps to modify them so far as American nationals are concerned.

One of the pictures that this paper criticized most severely in an editorial has been Frank Capra's picture, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." After commenting on the right of an American citizen to express his opinion freely, I dealt with his obligation to exercise that right with discretion when it concerns the feelings of other citizens, or "if he should present the United States of America abroad in a bad light. He is not compelled to restrain himself by law," I said; "he must do so as a result of his ability to discern when his words, his criticisms, may hurt the nation itself—lower it in the estimation of people, abroad as well as at home, particularly abroad.

"In producing 'Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,' " I said, "Mr. Frank Capra has not exercised such a discretion; he has presented the United States Senate as a body the members of which are elected to their office by the support of crooked politicians, to whom they remain subservient during their term of office."

I was criticized severely for my stand, not only by some exhibitors, but also by some fellow-publishers; such as, for instance, Red Kann, of Boxoffice. Mr. Kann could not see the logic of my attitude.

Several months later Mr. Nelson D. Rockefeller, coordinator of cultural relations with South American countries, returned from South America and issued a statement to the effect that the Nazis had used "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" in an attempt to injure the prestige of this country by inducing as many theatre owners as possible to show it on their screens.

I have it on the authority of a prominent former cabinet minister of one of the European nations that the Nazis employed every means possible to facilitate the showing of this picture. Some people, he said, thought that the picture had been produced by the Nazis themselves, just to malign the people of the United States.

On similar grounds I criticized "Roxie Hart," for presenting the judiciary of this country as fools.

In this week's issue, you will find a review of "Spy

Ship," an espionage picture the villains of which are Nazis. In it the heroine, citizen of this country, is shown heartlessly selling her country for money, with her confederates, all American citizens.

As said in the extract from the editorial on "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," the right of freedom of the press and of the screen imposes upon those who employ such freedom the obligation of using it with discretion. When a producer makes a picture that presents the nationals of this country as villains, he is not using that privilege with discretion. The producers should, therefore, take steps to put an end to such "indiscretions." If they don't do it voluntarily, I fear that the Government will make them do it, for it is unlikely that the nation will permit the producers to destroy the good will that our government has gained and is still trying to gain for the nation during these trying times.

ABOUT DOUBLE FEATURES

An exhibitor who wishes that his name be withheld, writes me as follows:

"Hollywood is faced with the possibility of shortage of materials with which to build sets.

"Coupled with this is the possibility of a film shortage, for ingredients needed in the manufacture of gunpowder are basically the same ingredients that are required in the manufacture of film.

"It is conceivable that with such shortages in the offing, as well as other rulings yet to emanate from Washington, the producers might be compelled to curtail their production schedules. Consequently, the reduction in output will compel the exhibitor to run single features instead of double bills because of the lack of product.

"Such a condition should prove to be a blessing to the industry. War conditions have geared the public into accepting innovations, and that portion of the movie-going public that demands double-feature programs will accept the change in policy with good grace. But their acceptance depends on the improvement of picture quality. Hence, the burden lies with the producer to keep alive the public's interest in the movies.

"In reducing their production schedules let them eliminate first those mediocre stereotyped program pictures that not only fail to draw the public, but frequently prevents them from entering the theater even though the co-feature may be a good one. Let them instead use the money that would have been spent on these poor pictures in the making of longer and better pictures that the public, and not the advertisements, will shout about.

"The public seeks relief from the depressing news of the times, and motion pictures is a form of entertainment that is highly desirable to them. But just as they make it their business to see good pictures, they likewise stay away from the poor ones.

"If, and when, material shortages create the aforementioned conditions, the producers and the exhibitors would do well to make the most of an opportunity that would rid the industry of one of its worse evils—double features."

"The Gay Sisters" with Barbara Stanwyck and George Brent

(Warner Bros., release date not set; time, 108 min.)

This drama should entertain all types of audiences; the story is interesting, the direction competent, and the performances good. The action revolves around three sisters, whose complicated problems and suppressed emotions are the cause of much unhappiness in their lives. But more so than the story, it is the characters that maintain one's interest; more stress is placed on their personalities than on the story. Although the story is one of hate and revenge, one is sympathetic to the characters, with the exception of one sister, a designing woman. The sacrifice made by the heroine in order to spare her sisters further unhappiness is the outstanding act. The child is played by Larry Sims, who speaks his lines like a veteran and acts with ease; he is adorable:—

When Penn Gaylord (Donald Woods) is killed in the war in France, his three daughters inherit the estate; they had promised their father never to sell the land. After twenty-three years of litigation, the estate is still unsettled. Together the three sisters, Fiona (Barbara Stanwyck), Evelyn (Geraldine Fitzgerald), and Suzanna (Nancy Coleman), arrive in court, where Gibbon (Gene Lockhardt), their lawyer, explains to the judge that a charity organization to whom ten percent of the estate had been left was the cause of the litigation. Against her lawyer's advice, Fiona angrily accuses Charles Barclay (George Brent), head of the charity organization, as being the person responsible for the litigation, asserting that he refused to settle unless the Gaylord home was sold to him so that he could tear it down and erect a large office building. The three sisters storm out of court. Saskia (Helene Thimig), their only servant, had brought with her from the country Austin (Larry Sims), a six-year old youngster. Suzanna cannot marry a young artist named Gig Young (himself), because her husband would not consent to an annulment without a big settlement. Suzanna is upset because Evelyn, herself married to an English Lord, has designs on Gig. Fiona takes Gibbon off the case and hires a new lawyer, Ralph Pedloch (Donald Crisp). When Pedloch attempts a settlement with Barclay, he learns that seven years previously, when the sisters were in need of money, Fiona had inherited \$100,000 from an Aunt. One of the provisions were that she had to be married. She had met and married Barclay, but had left him the day after their marriage, leaving him \$25,000. He used the money to build up a huge fortune. He now threatens to expose her as the mother of Austin. Although he does not know the boy is his son, Barclay bargains for his custody. When Fiona refuses to deal with him, Barclay wins custody of the boy in court. Beaten, Fiona settles the estate. Evelyn returns to England, leaving Gig for Suzanna, while Fiona and Barclay discover that they really love each other.

Lenore Coffey wrote the screen play, Henry Blanke produced it, and Irving Rapper directed it.

Morally objectionable for children.

"The Magnificent Dope" with Henry Fonda, Don Ameche and Lynn Bari

(20th Century-Fox, June 12; time, 82 min.)

This farce-comedy, which pokes fun at schools that teach one how to become a success, is good entertainment. Aided by the popularity of the stars, it should do well at the box office. Although on occasion the action lags because of too much dialogue, one's interest is sustained. The action revolves around a country boy who, though unalterably opposed to the modern idea of success, takes the course in order to win a girl. But his success both in business and in love are the result of his own simple mannerisms. A comical highlight is the change-over of the school's "go-getter" policy to that of relaxation—the country's boy's policy. The direction and the performances are good:—

Don Ameche, owner of the Dawson Institute, a "success" school, is faced with bankruptcy. Lynn Bari, Ameche's sweetheart and secretary, suggests that as an exploitation stunt they start a contest to pick the man least likely to succeed, to award him a prize of five hundred dollars and a free course at the Institute. The winner is Henry Fonda, whose life's work consisted of loafing around his home in the Vermont backwoods and of entering prize contests in the hope of winning enough money to buy the fire engine his town needs. Although Fonda is opposed to becoming a success, he takes the course only because he had fallen in love with Lynn, who was unaware of his feelings. Fonda confides to Ameche his love for Lynn, but Ameche covers up the fact that she is his fiancée. Neither does he tell her of Fonda's love. Ameche plans to use Fonda's love as a means of exploiting him for the Institute's benefit. He induces Fonda to study hard, then sees to it that an insurance company gives

him a job, arranging with the head of the company to allow Fonda to believe that his new personality got him the job. As a result, the Institute receives much publicity. To keep Fonda happy, Ameche arranges for him to meet a prospect, who takes a \$250,000 policy. But Fonda does not know that this man had been turned down by four companies on account of high blood pressure. With the commission he expects from the policy, Fonda buys a fire engine, and invites Lynn to inspect it. When he confesses his love for her, she tells him that she is Ameche's fiancée. Furious at being tricked, he leaves her. Learning that his insurance prospect was a bad risk, Fonda gets the man to relax, while he talks soothingly to him of peaceful things. By the time the examining doctor arrives, the prospect's blood pressure goes down so much that he passes the examination. When Fonda goes to the Institute to have it out with Ameche, he overhears Lynn arguing with him and asserting that she loved Fonda. With his fire engine and Lynn, Fonda returns home.

George Seaton wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Walter Lang directed it. In the cast are Edward Everett Horton, George Barbier and others.

Suitable for all.

"Wings for the Eagle" with Ann Sheridan, Dennis Morgan, Jack Carson and George Tobias

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 83 min.)

The masses, particularly the defense workers, should find this comedy-drama a fairly good entertainment. The subject matter is timely, for it shows the part that is played by aircraft workers in the defense program. The picture's appealing part centers around George Tobias. His interest in his work, and the love and admiration that he has for his son, are heart warming. It is through him that the picture delivers its message of patriotism. The human interest is weakened by the usual hokum of misunderstanding between husband and wife as a result of another man. The direction and the performances are good, with most of the action taking place at the Lockheed Aircraft plant in Burbank:—

Dennis Morgan, a "cocky" young man, arrives in Burbank and secures employment at the Lockheed airplane factory. Jack Carson, his pal, invites Morgan to live with him. Carson is studying engineering, hoping to get one of the better jobs at Lockheed, but Ann Sheridan, his wife, learns that the school he had been attending is a fake, and that the much-needed money he had spent for his course had been wasted. Carson broods over this, and his moodiness causes him to break with Morgan. Finally Ann, too, leaves him. Morgan goes to live with George Tobias and Russell Arms, Tobias' son, both workers at Lockheed. As a foreman at the plant, Tobias is extremely valuable to the company for the inspiration he imparts to the workers. When Ann gets a job at the plant, Morgan becomes attentive to her, but Ann's love for Carson lingers. Carson, too, obtains employment at the plant, and attempts to win Ann back. This results in many spats between Morgan and Carson. An order forbidding aliens to work in defense plants causes Tobias to lose his job. Pending receipt of his final citizenship papers, he opens a lunchroom near the factory. When his son joins the Army Air Force, Tobias is proud of him. He is prouder still when he, after becoming a citizen, is re-hired by the plant. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Tobias urges his men to work harder in an effort to get the 2,000th bomber off the assembly line ahead of schedule. Morgan and Carson join the others in trying to speed up production. When Morgan fails to appear at the plant, he is taken for a quitter. On the day that the 2,000th bomber is finished, Tobias receives a telegram from the War Department informing him of his son's death. Just then, Morgan arrives dressed in an Army Air Force uniform. Brushing back his tears, Tobias courageously urges the workers to double their efforts. Tobias, together with Carson and Ann, now re-united, wish Morgan luck as he departs for Australia.

Byron Morgan and B. H. Orkow wrote the screen play, Robert Lord produced it, and Lloyd Bacon directed it.

Suitable for all.

"Spy Ship" with Craig Stevens and Irene Manning

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 61 min.)

A moderately entertaining program melodrama dealing with fifth-column activities, suitable for the lower half of a mid-week double bill. The story has undoubtedly been inspired by recent news items, for the action centers around a noted aviatrix, who uses her isolationist status to cover up her traitorous doings. The story unfolds in a familiar manner with most of the excitement concentrated towards the end,

where the hero outwits and traps the espionage gang on board a ship. The direction and the performances are adequate:—

Irene Manning, an aviatrix, active in the affairs of an isolationist organization, is actually a fifth-columnist. She is engaged to Michael Ames, an insurance man. She learns from him the sailing dates of ships and transmits the information to Nazi submarines, coding it in her radio speeches. Craig Stevens, a newspaper columnist, suspects her activities, but he lacks proof. He enlists the aid of Maris Wrixon, Irene's half-sister; she agrees to watch her. When William Forrest, head of an interventionist organization, arrives from Honolulu, George Irving, Irene's father, asks him to persuade Irene to change her views. Irving is unaware that Forrest is the head of a Nazi espionage ring, and that Irene is madly in love with him. Forrest asks Irene to return his love letters and informs her of his love for another girl. Irene refuses, hoping to keep a hold on him. When Irene fails to come home that evening, Maris notifies Stevens. He discovers Irene's body in the trunk of her car, but does not inform Maris. Learning that Irene had broken her engagement to Ames, Stevens suspects him of the murder. At Ames' apartment, Stevens finds him a suicide. Meanwhile Maris receives a telegram purportedly sent by Irene, asking her to bring an envelope Irene had entrusted to her and to meet her at a designated address. The envelope contained Forrest's love letters. Not realizing that the body is in the trunk, Maris hurriedly takes Irene's car. She is met by Martin and members of the spy ring. When Stevens learns that Maris had taken Irene's car, he gets the address from the butler, but arrives after Martin and the Nazis had cleared out, taking Maris with them. He leaves for the docks, guessing that they planned to leave the country on a Danish ship, to which he had trailed Forrest and Irene on the previous night. Aided by the police, Stevens subdues the crew, captures the spy ring, and saves Maris.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, and B. Reaves Eason directed it.

"Escape From Crime" with Julie Bishop and Richard Travis

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 50 min.)

Just a mediocre program melodrama. There is nothing outstanding about it either in story, production values, or treatment, but it will probably get by in secondary theatres with audiences that like action pictures centering around gangster activities. The picture is a rehash of the familiar theme regarding the reformed gangster and the difficulties he meets with in his pursuit of an honest living. The story has considerable human appeal, and the leading characters are sympathetic:—

Richard Travis is paroled from prison and is met at the gate by Rex Williams, his pal and member of Paul Fix's gang. Travis had been sent to prison, a victim of a frame-up by Fix. As Travis leaves the prison, he meets Wade Boteler, detective, who had secured his conviction. Boteler warns him to behave. Travis is disturbed by the fact that Julie Bishop, his wife, had not communicated with him while he was in prison. He fears that she had deserted him. Williams leads him to her apartment where Travis finds her and his year-old baby, whom he had never seen. Travis determines to earn an honest living. He tries to get a job as a photographer—a trade he had learned in prison—but is unsuccessful, because of his record. While passing a bank that was being robbed, Travis, at the risk of being shot, takes pictures of the robbery. The sensational pictures get him a job with a newspaper, but they help also to convict Williams, who had participated in the robbery. The editor asks Travis to take a picture of William's execution, offering him a salary increase and a bonus. When Travis declines, he threatens to discharge him. Travis manages to take the picture, but the camera, which he had strapped to his leg, falls off as he leaves. After a chase, Travis is apprehended and ordered back to prison. As Travis and Boteler drive back to the prison, a call comes over the radio that Paul Fix had been cornered in an automobile. Travis tells Boteler that the information is false, and offers to lead him to Fix's hiding place. In the battle that follows between the gunmen and the police, Boteler is captured by Fix. Travis, in handcuffs, makes his way into the building on the pretense that he is rejoining the gang, gets the handcuffs removed and is given a gun by Fix. He turns on Fix, ending the battle. Travis is pardoned by the Governor for helping capture the gang.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, and D. Ross Lederman directed it.

Not suitable for children.

"The Corpse Vanishes" with Bela Lugosi

(Monogram, May 8; time, 64 min.)

This is another "dish" of program horror in the Lugosi manner, but only mildly terrifying. This time Lugosi murders young brides and kidnaps their bodies from which he extracts a fluid that helps to keep his seventy-year old wife young. There is enough suspense and weird doings to satisfy the horror-seeking fans, but other audiences may find it to be more amusing than spine-chilling. There is little comedy relief. There is a romance but it is of no importance.

On different occasions, brides had suddenly collapsed at their wedding ceremonies and apparently died, and their bodies mysteriously disappeared. Luana Walters, a girl reporter, discovers that each of the brides had been wearing a peculiar orchid, sent to her by an unknown person. She traces the flowers to Bela Lugosi, a mad scientist. Lugosi had been able, through the perfumed orchids, to place the brides in a death-like trance, steal their bodies, and draw from them a fluid, which he injected into his wife, in order to keep his wife young. Luana visits Lugosi with Tristram Coffin, a young physician, and because of bad weather is forced to spend the night at Lugosi's house. She manages to find a secret panel, and discovers a laboratory and mortuary, where she sees the brides apparently dead. The following morning Lugosi tries to convince her that what she had seen was a dream. Luana returns to her paper and reports her discovery. Coffin arrives soon afterwards and confirms her story. In order to trap Lugosi, a fake wedding is staged. But instead of abducting the bride, Lugosi kidnaps Luana. Minerva Urecal, Lugosi's servant, had a demented son, whom Lugosi had killed. When he places Luana on the operating table, Minerva avenges herself by stabbing Lugosi. He manages, however, to kill her before dying. Elizabeth Russell, Lugosi's wife, tries to subdue Luana, but with the arrival of the police, she, too, dies. The former brides are restored to health.

Harvey Gates, Sam Robbins and Gerald Schnitzer wrote the screen play. Sam Katzman, Jack Dietz, and Barney Sarecky produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it.

Not suitable for children.

"The Postman Didn't Ring" with Richard Travis and Brenda Joyce

(20th Century-Fox, July 3; time, 67 min.)

The discovery of a fifty-year old stolen mail sack and the changes wrought in the lives of those to whom the letters are delivered is the basis of this thoroughly enjoyable program comedy-drama. The events that take place are replete with touches of human interest, comedy and pathos. It is wholesome entertainment, the sort that should please all types of audiences. The direction is good, as are the performances of the competent cast. A pleasant romance takes place:—

A government mail sack, missing for fifty years, is recovered by the authorities. Post Office Inspector Stanley Andrews undertakes to deliver the letters to their intended recipients or their heirs. He is accompanied on his tour across the country by Brenda Joyce, a stamp collector, who hopes to buy some of the rare stamps for her philatelist customers. Among the letters are one to the Governor of a state sent to his parents by the school principal scolding him for throwing spit-balls; another brings love and heart-warmth to a lonely school-teacher, a spinster, from her sweetheart, who had been lost in the shuffle of a war of another day; still another letter is delivered to Richard Travis, who is a friend of the indigent farmers in his rural community. Travis experiments with the latest scientific methods to better their marginal crops. As the owner of the village supply store, he extends them unlimited credit and, as a result, is on the verge of foreclosure himself by the ruthless Harwood banking family. Brenda and Andrews arrive at Travis' home, just after the Harwood bank had refused him a new loan and had threatened to call in all his old notes. But the letter they bear changes everything. It had been mailed by his grandfather, who had left to prospect for gold, to Travis' late father. It contains 500 shares of the Harwood Bank, then of only nominal value, but now worth a veritable fortune. The bank fights back by charging Travis with fraud. But with the aid of Judge Spencer Charters, an old family friend, and the testimony of Brenda and Andrews, Travis wins out in court. He becomes president of the bank, the younger Harwoods become his friends, and he puts the resources of the bank at the disposal of his needy neighbors. Travis and Brenda celebrate with their marriage.

Mortimer Braus wrote the screen play, Ralph Dietrich produced it, and Harold Schuster directed it.

Suitable for all.

"Yankee Doodle Dandy" with James Cagney

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 124 min.)

Excellent! Audiences should find this musical comedy, which is based on the life of George M. Cohan, one of the most sparkling and delightful musical pictures that have ever been brought to the screen. Much of its entertainment value is due to the exceptionally fine performance of James Cagney, whose impersonation of Mr. Cohan is uncanny—his gestures, his talk, and his dancing, are done to perfection. The picture gayly weaves its way through the period from 1880 to the present day, tracing the rise of Mr. Cohan from vaudeville, as one of the Four Cohans, to his greater triumphs as producer, writer, composer and star of many musical shows, excerpts of which are reproduced in the film. An added thrill will be the impersonation of President Roosevelt, to whom Cagney, as Cohan, tells in retrospect the story of his theatrical career. Though the comedy, is gay, the drama is tender; it shows the love and devotion the family show for each other. The performances of the supporting cast are excellent. So skilfully has the director blended the music, the comedy, and the drama, that not for one moment does one's interest lag in its more than two hours running time. The picture is studded with popular Cohan tunes, including, "Over There," "Mary is a Grand Old Name," "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway," "I Think I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby," "Give My Regards to Broadway" and "Yankee Doodle Boy"—

Jerry Cohan (Walter Huston), and Nellie (Rosemary DeCamp), his wife, name their new born son George Michael Cohan. It is Independence Day—July 4, 1878. At the age of seven, George joins his father and mother in vaudeville, and his theatrical career begins. Five years afterwards they are billed as the Four Cohans, for Josie (Patsy Lee Parsons), George's sister, has joined the act. George (Douglas Croft) does "violin tricks and novel dancing." As the Four Cohans, the act becomes famous in the decade that follows. And George's (James Cagney's) reputation is even wider and better known, although not always favorable among stage folk. While the Cohans are in Buffalo, Mary (Joan Leslie), a young girl, stage struck and eager, approached George after the performance. George takes an immediate interest in her, and offers to help her towards her career. More time passes. Young George, who is now writing songs, sketches, and musical shows, calls upon Dietz (George Tobias) and Goff (Chester Clute), a theatrical firm, in an attempt to sell them one of his plays. His effort fails. Through Sam Harris (Richard Whorf), Cohan meets Lawrence Schwab (S. Z. Sakall), and induces him to back the new firm of Cohan and Harris in the production of Cohan's "Yankee Doodle Dandy." From then on it is nothing but successes for George and Sam. "George Washington, Jr." is specially written to bring the Four Cohans together for a final smash hit. After this family triumph, Nellie and Jerry retire, and Josie (Jeanne Cagney) becomes engaged to be married. Events move swiftly for George. First his mother, then his father, dies. Cohan and Harris produce a play called "Popularity," their only failure. When war is declared, Cohan tries to enlist, but is turned down as being too "old" to go over there. The words give him an idea and he writes the song "Over There." Frances Langford introduces it at Camp Merrit. After the war, the firm of Cohan and Harris dissolves. George and Mary, man and wife for years, take an around-the-world honeymoon trip. Upon their return, Sam Harris asks Cohan to play the lead in a new Broadway musical called, "I'd Rather Be Right," in which Cohan is to impersonate the President. Cohan accepts. Then, on May 1, 1940, Cohan receives a telegram from President Roosevelt bidding him to appear at the White House. He is apprehensive lest the President is displeased because of his impersonation. The President (Capt. Jack Young), however, bestows on him the Congressional Medal of Honor, voted by Congress, in recognition of Cohan's having written "Over There" and "It's a Grand Old Flag."

Robert Buckner and Edmund Joseph wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis and James Cagney produced it, and Michael Curtiz directed it. In the cast are Eddie Foy, Jr., Irene Manning, George Barbier, Walter Catlett and others.

"The Mad Monster" with George Zucco and Johnny Downs

(Producers Releasing Corp., May 15; time, 75 min.)

As entertainment, this melodrama should please only the most avid followers of horror pictures; discriminating audiences will be considerably bored with its triteness. Containing all the ingredients familiar to this type of horror

picture, in which a human being is made to act like a beast through injection of animal blood, it unfolds in just the manner the spectator expects. The action drags and the picture's seventy-five minutes running time is too long. It is best suited for the lower half of a horror double bill:—

In an old mansion on the edge of a swamp, George Zucco, a scientist, injects the blood of a wolf into Glenn Strange, a dim-witted country boy. As Strange slumbers, his facial features change. He awakens, snarling and baring his teeth like a wolf. Zucco allows Strange to roam through the swamp, where he kills a child in a shack nearby. The countryside is in terror when a farmer reports having been chased by a wolf-like creature. When Strange returns to the laboratory, Zucco injects an antidote. This brings him back to normal. As Strange awakens, he believes that he had been sleeping. Zucco plans to use Strange to avenge himself on four brother-scientists who had caused him to resign from a college faculty because of his fantastic theories on blood transfusions from beast to man. Zucco takes the docile Strange to Professor Blaine (Robert Strange), and tricks him into giving Strange the injection that turned him into a wolf-man. Blaine is murdered. Anne Nagel, Zucco's daughter, is worried about her father's secret laboratory experiments, but believes them to be a new discovery to help mankind. She is visited by Johnny Downs, her fiance, who is a reporter checking on the swamp murder. Zucco becomes alarmed when Strange shows signs of slipping back from man to beast without the injection, and realizes that he must watch him constantly to prevent harm to his daughter and himself. When another murder is committed in the swamp, Downs arrives and joins a posse searching for the killer. That night, lightning ignites chemicals in the laboratory. As the old mansion goes up in flames, the Wolf-man tries to kill Miss Nagel and Downs, but they both escape. The Wolf-man turns on Zucco, kills him, and himself dies in the flames.

Fred Myton wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Not suitable for children.

"The Big Shot" with Humphrey Bogart

(Warner Bros., June 13; time, 81 min.)

This gangster melodrama shapes up as no better than fairly entertaining program fare, despite Humphrey Bogart's portrayal of the gangster. There is little that is novel in either the story or the treatment. As in most gangster pictures, the story lacks human appeal, since there is not a character that the spectator feels sympathy for. But where gangster pictures are liked, it should go over, for there is plentiful action and suspense. As entertainment, it is harrowing because of the ruthless killings. Aside from the story, the production values are good, and the acting competent:—

Humphrey Bogart, gangster, once a "big-shot," is down on his luck and unable to follow a life of crime, for his next offense means a life sentence. He meets Roland Drew and Joseph Downing, former members of his gang. They propose a partnership in the hold-up of an armored car, promising the protection of Stanley Ridges, a criminal lawyer. Bogart calls on Ridges and learns the Irene Manning, his old sweetheart, was now Ridges' wife. The night of the robbery, Irene visits Bogart. She protests her love for him and induces him to abandon the hold-up. Bogart's two pals make an unsuccessful attempt to stage the robbery, but escape. The police suspect Bogart and have a woman who had witnessed the robbery identify his photo. Richard Travis, a car salesman in need of money, is hired by Ridges as an alibi witness for Bogart. But in court, Susan Peters, Travis' fiancée, spoils his story by saying that Travis was with her at the time of the crime. Bogart is jailed for life, and Travis is imprisoned for perjury. Bogart and Chick Chandler, another convict, attempt a jail break. Chandler kills a guard, but is killed himself. Bogart escapes. Travis, who had tried to stop the break, is indicted for the murder of the guard. Bogart and Irene hide out in a mountain lodge. Ridges learns from Downing of their whereabouts, and notifies the police. Meanwhile, Bogart learns from a radio broadcast that Travis had been sentenced to die. He decides to return and clear the boy. The police reach the lodge as Bogart and Irene prepare to leave. In a desperate chase, Bogart escapes, but Irene is killed. Feeling that Ridges was responsible for her death because he had notified the police, Bogart goes to his apartment. In a gun fight, Bogart is mortally wounded, but he kills Ridges. He then telephones the prison. As he lies dying in the prison hospital, Bogart wishes Travis, now a free man, and Susan, a happy marriage.

Bertram Millhauser, Abem Finkel and Daniel Fuchs wrote the screen play, and Lewis Seiler directed it.

Not suitable for children.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain.... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1942

No. 24

AN UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICE

There have been released lately two pictures, each one with two titles. They are, "So's Your Aunt Emma," known also as "Meet the Mob," released by Monogram, and "Dawn Express," known also as "Nazi Spy Ring," released by Producers Releasing Corporation.

"Meet the Mob" is the title under which this picture has been released in New York State, and it is also the title under which it must be shown. In other States the picture has been released under the title of "So's Your Aunt Emma," with the exhibitor given the option of showing the picture under either title.

"Nazi Spy Ring" is the title under which this picture has been released only in New York State; in other States the title "Dawn Express" is used.

Because of shifting populations, and of the fact that many persons visit other towns either for business or for pleasure, this practice is detrimental to the interests of the exhibitors. Few picture patrons stop to examine carefully the posters, stills, or other advertising matter on the outside of a theatre before entering to find out whether or not they had seen a picture. Most patrons rely for this information on the title. Consequently, a person who had seen a picture under one title in another town feels cheated and deliberately tricked when he finds out that it is the same picture under another title. Meanwhile the exhibitors, most of whom are not aware that the picture had been shown elsewhere under a different title, become innocent victims of an unfair practice. Moreover, owing to the fact that they are given the option of using different titles, they unwittingly become accomplices to this abuse.

The reason that the distributors give for the use of two titles on one picture is their belief that certain titles draw better in one locality than in another, and they want to help the exhibitor by sending him the picture under the title that would draw the most patrons for him. But whatever the reasons, the harm that is done to the industry by the loss of public confidence more than outweighs the gain.

Not being a lawyer, I cannot say whether the distributor who resorts to such a practice violates the law, nor do I know whether the exhibitor, too, violates it, even though innocently; but I do know that the practice is detrimental to the business, because it is unfair to the public.

The discontinuance of this abuse should not be an

issue for the law to decide; it should be a voluntary act on the part of the distributors.

Pictures should be released only under one title.

HERE AND THERE

FOLLOWING THE SUGGESTION of Donahue & Coe, many exhibitors in different cities have inserted in their local newspapers advertisements informing the public of what the picture theatres, or the motion picture industry, are doing towards helping win the war.

The latest recruits are the exhibitors of Baltimore, members of Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Maryland. They prepared, and have already inserted, in their local papers two advertisements: The one, headed by "War Tonic," and showing a picture of Uncle Sam holding in his hands President Roosevelt's proclamation defining entertainment as being necessary for the winning of the war, contains the following reading matter under the title, "You Get It At the Movies":

"The Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Maryland is doing its part to meet the ever-increasing need for wholesome entertainment in this teeming industrial center.

"War workers, housewives, business men, soldiers, marines, the merchant marine and every part of the public that makes up this vital victory area are relaxing in between periods of intensive work at the movies.

"Tired minds and bodies are invigorated. Then the next day's work is attacked with a fresh outlook and a new willingness to get in there and pitch for the war effort.

"Uncle Sam, as well as his English cousins, knows the importance of relaxation . . . that is as much a vital need for the supreme war effort as food and drink, sleep and exercise. The movie calendar on Page C-6 will help you select the picture for which you've been waiting. Your favorite neighborhood movie is listed there and below."

The other copy, headed by a different make-up, contains the following message to the public:

"The Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Maryland is serving the war effort now and is ready to increase its service momentarily.

(Continued on last page)

**"Private Buckaroo" with Harry James,
the Andrews Sisters, Dick Foran
and Joe E. Lewis**

(Universal, June 12; time, 68 min.)

This program musical should go over with the "swing" fans, since it is a continual round of "jive" music, dancing, and singing, interspersed with comedy bits. The story—if it is a story—merely serves as an interlude for the sixty-eight minute "jam" session. The action unfolds in somewhat the same manner as a variety show, with each of the performers given ample opportunity to display his individual talents, of which they give generously. Although the background is an army camp, army life is shown very little. The music is played by Harry James and His Music Masters, the vocalizing is by the Andrews Sisters, and the dancing by the Jivin' Jacks and Jills. Dick Foran, too, sings a few songs. Shemp Howard, as the tough army sergeant, and Mary Wickes, as his girl-friend, provoke the comedy. Additional comedy is furnished by Joe E. Lewis, but his brand of fun, though famous on the stage, does not seem to register on the screen. The popularity of the players among the "jitterbugs" should be of considerable help to the box-office.

The fragmentary story begins with Harry James receiving his army draft summons while playing at a swank night club. The boys in his band enlist so that they could be with him, while Helen Forrest, his vocalist, and the Andrews Sisters, a singing trio, join the USO at the army camp, thus keeping the combination together. The boys enjoy life in the army, except Dick Foran, who complains of the hard work. This makes him unpopular with the others. But when he falls in love with Jennifer Holt, a lieutenant's sister, Foran changes his ways and becomes a first-class soldier. While the troupe is putting on a big show at the camp, an order is received to embark immediately for the battlefield. Singing and playing, they march out of the camp.

Edmund Kelso and Edward James wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Edward F. Cline directed it.

Nothing objectionable in it.

**"Parachute Nurse" with Marguerite
Chapman, William Wright
and Kay Harris**

(Columbia, June 18; time, 63 min.)

The best that can be said of this picture is that its title is attractive, and it deals with a timely subject. Beyond that it is quite ordinary program fare. Except for the fact that the action revolves around women, the picture is a carbon copy of other pictures treating on life in army training camps. There is some comedy; but it is forced:—

With a group of other nurses, Marguerite Chapman and Kay Harris join the "Paranurse Corps," which the government is training for war service. Lieutenant William Wright, instructor at the camp, and Sergeant Frank Sully, his aide, attempt to get acquainted with the girls at the camp canteen, but are snubbed. To spite Marguerite, Wright makes a date with Louise Allbriton, with whom Marguerite was at odds. Marguerite becomes friendly with Evelyn Wahl, a "paranurse," who is shunned by the others because of her German parentage. After a few meetings, Marguerite and Wright take a liking for each other, much to Louise's consternation. Seeking to discredit her, Louise deliberately tangles Marguerite's parachute, just before inspection. As a result, Marguerite is ordered to pack many parachutes, causing her to miss the dance that night. The camp is saddened by the death of Evelyn, who had deliberately jumped from a plane, without making an effort to use her parachute. Shortly afterwards, Marguerite's company makes its first flight. All jump safely but Marguerite; at the last moment she loses her nerve. Heartbroken, Marguerite prepares to resign from the corps. Meanwhile, Louise is asked to resign when it is found out that she had tampered with Marguerite's parachute. Just before Marguerite leaves camp, news comes that a plane piloted by Wright had crashed in the mountains, and that Kay was going to jump to bring him first-aid. Marguerite's plea that she be allowed to bring him first-aid is granted. She jumps, landing safely, only to find Wright grinning near a broken up plane, used for bombing practice. The ruse had made her jump.

Rian James wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally not objectionable.

**"You're Telling Me" with Hugh Herbert,
Anne Gwynne and Robert Paige**

(Universal, May 1; time, 60 min.)

If prizes were given for tiresome pictures, this so-called comedy should win the award hands down. Seldom does a picture prove to be so boring; it is doubtful whether audiences of even small town theatres will have the patience to see it through. The story is inane; it serves as a framework for Hugh Herbert's familiar antics, and is a mixture of time-worn situations and silly dialogue, none of which provokes as much as a grin. The performers do their best, but they are up against hopeless story material:—

Ernest Truex is induced by Esther Dale, his domineering wife, to give Hugh Herbert, her nephew, employment with his radio advertising firm. Herbert, an eccentric fellow, upsets the office routine by his idiosyncrasies. He is sent to sign up Edward Ashley, celebrated big game hunter, for a radio program. To escape involvement in a divorce suit, Ashley informs reporters that the only girl he loves is Anne Gwynne. Actually she is the fiancée of Robert Paige, Ashley's associate. Paige insists that Ashley go to Anne and explain. Herbert and his aunt go with them. Furious at Paige for allowing Ashley to call her his fiancée, Anne deliberately becomes attentive to Ashley, hoping to arouse Paige's jealousy. After a series of vagaries, Herbert induces Ashley to sign the contract. But neither one realizes that Ashley had signed a paper other than the contract. To help Paige avenge himself on Anne, Herbert has Linda Brent pose as a heartbroken native girl, who had ostensibly followed Paige from Africa. When Ashley feigns illness to get Anne's sympathy, Herbert attempts to aid him. His treatment causes Ashley to become feverish and, while in this condition, he reveals to Anne that not he, but Paige, was the hero of their jungle exploits. When Anne exposes Ashley, the advertising firm is furious at Herbert for having signed him. But Herbert becomes a hero when it is found out that Ashley had absentmindedly signed the wrong paper. Paige obtains the radio contract and wins Anne back. Herbert becomes an executive with the advertising firm.

Frances Hyland and Brenda Weisberg wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Suitable for all.

**"Almost Married" with Eugene Pallette,
Jane Frazee and Robert Paige**

(Universal, May 22; time, 64 min.)

Where something light is needed to round out a double bill, this farce-comedy, with music, should suit the purpose. Although neither novel in situations, nor hilarious in comedy, the picture is pleasantly entertaining. It is a story revolving around a mock marriage, resulting in the usual bedroom situations when the father of the girl pays a visit to the supposed-to-be bride and groom. The production values are adequate:—

Jane Frazee, a singer, cannot obtain a job in a night club because she lacks a reputation. When her trunk is delivered by mistake to socialite Robert Paige, she inadvertently is given a chance to acquire a "name." She arrives at Paige's home just as Elisabeth Patterson, his aunt, endeavors to arrange his marriage to a girl he does not love. To aid him, Jane agrees to pose as his secret bride. When the newspapers publicize the "secret marriage," Jane secures a night club job, because of her social status. Paige's aunt orders him to put a stop to his bride's singing. More complications arise when Eugene Pallette, Jane's father, arrives to live with the "bride and groom." Paige's attorneys advise him that the only way out of his predicament is an actual secret marriage and, later, a divorce. Accompanied by Pallette, the couple leave on what they infer is a honeymoon. They seek and find a small town where their marriage would not receive publicity, and manage to evade Pallette long enough to become married. Jane falls in love with Paige, but he asks her to arrange for a divorce, offering her a settlement. Humiliated, she defiantly obtains another cabaret job. Paige spoils her chances of recognition by buying up all the club's reservations. Gloria then sets out for Reno, determined to divorce him. When she leaves, Paige comes to the realization that he loves her. With Pallette, he takes a plane and intercepts the train, then woos her back with a series of singing telegrams.

Hugh Wedlock, Jr. and Howard Snyder wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Not objectionable morally.

"In Old California" with John Wayne, Binnie Barnes and Albert Dekker

(Republic, May 31; time, 87 min.)

Although it fails to reach the epic-like proportions intended, this western drama is fairly entertaining. As can be seen from the cast, it is one of Republic's better-than-average productions. With its locale early Sacramento of about 1849, the story follows a usual pattern in that a polished but tough Easterner comes West, dares to defy the villain and his henchmen, and ultimately wins the villain's dance-hall girl-friend. But it is a colorful portrayal of pioneer days, and contains all the ingredients that western fans enjoy—horseback riding, fist fights, shooting, comedy and romance. The picture should hold its own on either end of a double bill:—

John Wayne, a Bostonian, migrates westward to set up business in Sacramento as a pharmacist. He meets Binnie Barnes, a dance-hall singer, who is engaged to Albert Dekker, a burly overlord of Sacramento politics. Enraged because Binnie is attracted to Wayne, Dekker forbids anyone to lease store space to him. But Binnie, attracted to Wayne's polished manners, leases to him a store that she owned, becoming his partner. Dekker resents this, but she deftly convinces him that she had made the arrangement solely for her personal profit. Wayne remains aloof from Binnie because of her engagement to Dekker, and is smitten by Helen Parrish, a visitor from San Francisco. Realizing that Helen is cold and selfish, Binnie tries to keep them apart. But her efforts are in vain; Wayne proposes to Helen. When Wayne learns that the source of Dekker's wealth is a forced tribute from the neighboring ranchers, he leads the ranchers to a successful revolt. Dekker is unable to avenge himself, however, because Binnie threatens to break their engagement if any harm should befall Wayne. Planning to discredit Wayne, he puts poison into a tonic that Wayne prescribes to the townspeople. When the poison kills a man, Dekker incites the townspeople to lynch Wayne. But Wayne is saved by the news that gold had been found in the hills; everyone rushes to stake a claim. Depressed because the townspeople ignore his attempts to prove Dekker guilty of the poisoning, Wayne prepares to leave Sacramento. Binnie breaks her engagement to Dekker, and joins the gold rush. Arriving at one of the camps, she finds that an epidemic had broken out, and that there was a shortage of medical supplies. She sends for Wayne, then volunteers as a nurse until help arrives. Because of Wayne's desire to deliver medical supplies to the stricken miners, Helen breaks their engagement. Dekker attempts to hold up the supply wagon, planning to kill Wayne, and to sell the badly needed supplies at fabulous price, but Wayne outwits him. Dekker is wounded mortally by Dick Purcell, his brother. Just before he dies, Dekker absolves Wayne of blame for the poisoning. Binnie and Wayne embrace.

Gertrude Purcell and Frances Hyland wrote the screen play, Robert North produced it, and William McGann directed it.

"They All Kissed the Bride" with Joan Crawford and Melvyn Douglas

(Columbia, June 11; time, 85 min.)

Good! It is acted by the players with zest. Although a sophisticated comedy, it should appeal to all types of adult audiences. An amusing story, witty dialogue, and uproariously funny situations make it a delightful entertainment, although hardly one to be recommended for children, because of its risqué moments. The action centers around a hard-boiled business-woman executive, who falls in love with a writer trying to expose her company's cruel treatment of its employees. A highlight is a jitterbug sequence with Miss Crawford and Allen Jenkins. Because of the players' popularity, and the picture's own merits, it should do good business:—

Learning that Melvyn Douglas is writing an uncomplimentary story about the Drew Transportation Co., Joan Crawford, who had inherited the company, demands of her lawyers that Douglas be found and brought to her. Douglas, stealing a ride on a Drew truck driven by Allen Jenkins, learns that traffic is being diverted because of a wedding at Joan's home. Indignant, he forces his way into the mansion, where Helen Parrish, Joan's sister, is marrying Roger Clark. Never having met Douglas, Joan, suspecting him to be an unwelcome ex-suitor of Helen's, orders his arrest. The following day, she learns from Roland Young, her attorney, that she is faced with a libel suit for false arrest. Convinced that Joan is not as "hard-

boiled" as she pretends, Douglas offers to cancel the suit if she will dine with him. He takes her to a Drew Company employees' dance, where her identity is unknown, and where she wins the jitterbug dance contest, much to her consternation. After a night of excessive drinking, Joan and Douglas realize their love for each other. The following morning, Douglas awakes in Joan's home. Jenkins visits him and informs him that he and other truck drivers had been dismissed for giving rides to strangers. As Douglas angrily leaves for Joan's office, Billie Burke, her mother, mistakes him for a wealthy man. She asks him to lend Clark \$30,000 to free him and his bride from economic dependence on Joan. Douglas agrees. He goes to Joan, and offers to settle his libel suit for \$30,000. Although she had rescinded the order dismissing the drivers, Joan gives Douglas a check. Later she learns from her mother the reason for Douglas' anger, and why he wanted the money. She goes to the truck drivers, re-hires them at increased salary, promises to do away with her arbitrary regulations, and then demands to know Douglas' whereabouts. Hiding in one of the trucks, Douglas makes his presence known. Joan joins him in the rear of the truck as the grinning drivers close the doors.

P. J. Wolfson wrote the screen play, Edward Kaufman produced it, and Alexander Hall directed it.

Morally unsuitable for children.

"Submarine Raider" with John Howard and Marguerite Chapman

(Columbia, June 4; time, 64 min.)

There is a flavor of actuality in this fairly entertaining program war melodrama. The action centers around an American submarine's efforts to warn its naval base of impending danger when, just prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the submarine is deliberately attacked by a plane from a Japanese aircraft carrier. Void of cocky heroes, wild melodramatics and unnecessary romance, the picture depicts in an intelligent manner the methods employed by the Japanese carrier, and the counter measures employed by the submarine. Stock shots of the Pearl Harbor destruction have been used to good advantage. The direction and the performances are good:—

On the afternoon of Dec. 6, 1941, the Hiranuma, a Japanese aircraft carrier hovering quietly in the south Pacific, receives a radio message from Tokyo to proceed to Pearl Harbor. In the same waters, Roger Clark entertains friends on the yacht Vayu, and the Sea Serpent, an American submarine, commanded by John Howard, is taking a routine cruise. When the watch on the Hiranuma spies the Vayu, Captain Nino Pipitone informs his aides that there must be no witnesses to the carrier's presence in these waters, and orders the yacht sunk. Only Marguerite Chapman and two men survive. Huddling in a rowboat, they are attacked by a Japanese plane. The two men are killed, but Marguerite escapes by slipping over the side of the boat and is later picked up by the submarine. When the Hiranuma intercepts the submarine's attempts to radio Marguerite's story to its base, Pipitone orders his radio operator to "jam" the air waves. He sends up a plane to attack the submarine, but the Sea Serpent wins the battle, shooting down the plane. At Pearl Harbor, Warren Ashe, Howard's brother, is worried because the Sea Serpent had not been in contact with its base. Ashe, a government agent, senses an impending calamity. At a cafe that night, he notices a Japanese waiter signaling to ships off-shore. He is struck from behind when he attempts to telephone his superiors. On the morning of December 7th, the Sea Serpent receives by radio news of the Pearl Harbor attack. Knowing that the Hiranuma was somewhere ahead, Howard conceives a plan: he lets his position be known, then draws away from it. As he expected, the Hiranuma comes to the announced position and begins to unload depth bombs. The Sea Serpent hurls its torpedoes into the carrier, sinking it. To that extent, Pearl Harbor is avenged.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Suitable for all.

"Meet the Mob" with Zazu Pitts and Roger Pryor

(Monogram, April 17; time, 61 min.)

This picture was reviewed in the May 16, 1942 issue. It is known also as "So's Your Aunt Emma." It is being shown in New York State only as "Meet the Mob," while in other states the exhibitor is given the option of using either title.

"Vital public information is presented to the public dramatically and forcibly.

"Important appeals both from official and civilian sources receive valuable time on the screens of your neighborhood movies.

"Public Morale is boosted by bringing together in an informal and friendly manner, the men heading our war effort and the workers fighting for more production in our Victory plants.

"Entertainment, inspiration and relaxation, which are as necessary to the public good as food, sleep or clothing, are brought to you through the motion picture screen.

"Here for a few care-free hours you can forget the turmoil outside and give your mind a chance to rest and then return to your work tomorrow with renewed vigor.

"If your favorite neighborhood movie is listed below and in the Movie Calendar on Page 24, it is a member of the M.P.T.O.M. Work hard for Victory today. RELAX tonight at the movies."

Each of these copies contains the names of the theatres that sponsored the advertisement. The second copy contains, in addition, the following wording:

"War Bonds & Stamps Now On Sale At All Motion Picture Theatres."

Other cities, too, should follow the example of the Baltimore and other exhibitors.

Where community advertising is resorted to, and is inserted in the newspapers of distribution-centre cities, the exhibitors should ask the exchanges to bear part of the cost.

* * *

JAMES R. GRAINGER, that hard-working president of Republic Pictures Corporation, has given instructions to the studio to have the title of each of the two pictures, "S. O. S. Coast Guard" and "Yukon Patrol," indicate on the introductory title that it had been compiled from the former serial, in the case of "Yukon Patrol" further stating that the former title was "King of the Royal Mounted." He has also ordered strips be pasted on the one-sheets, three-sheets, and other posters giving the same facts.

It is evident that the omission has been inadvertent; probably his subordinates, thinking that the inclusion of some additional scenes in the feature versions of the former serials took them out of the re-issue class, believed that it was not necessary to make the matter clear in the advertising and the publicity matter.

This paper wishes to congratulate Mr. Grainger on his fairness in this matter.

* * *

NEIL AGNEW, vice-president in charge of distribution of Paramount, has informed the War Activities Committee that his company has decided to charge one dollar a day for each of the four Government shorts that it is distributing.

Since Mr. Agnew did not say that the Paramount theatres will pay a higher rental than the other theatres, we assume that they too, will pay one dollar a day.

The generosity of the Paramount organization

seems to have no bounds. You may imagine what it is when you figure out that the Paramount Theatre, on Broadway, this city, with a seating capacity of more than 3,000, will pay no more per day than the theatre of a small exhibitor in "Honky Tonk," with a seating capacity of only 250.

Some of the Paramount executives are putting a substantial part of their salaries into a pension fund. Though this is legal in every respect, the Government loses a great deal of money in supertaxes. They might at least do the Government a favor by paying a little more per day for these shorts, particularly since it does not come out of their own pockets.

* * *

SHOWMEN'S TRADE REVIEW, the Charles E. (Chick) Lewis trade paper, is celebrating its Ninth Anniversary.

Putting a magazine on a paying basis is not a small matter; it requires faith, patience, and much hard work.

HARRISON'S REPORTS takes this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Lewis and to wish him continued prosperity.

* * *

EVERY ONE OF YOU KNOWS, I believe, that Warner Bros., Twentieth Century-Fox and Universal have announced that, like MGM, they will offer relief to any exhibitor whose business has been affected by the war.

Although the other companies have not announced such a policy, this paper feels sure that they, too, will offer relief to such exhibitors.

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES OF THE NEW SEASON'S PICTURES

(The previous box office performances were printed in the issue of April 18 and April 25, 1942.)

Columbia

"Shut My Big Mouth": Fair-Poor
 "Adventures of Martin Eden": Fair
 "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp": Poor
 "Canal Zone": Fair
 "Two Yanks in Trinidad": Good
 "Alias Boston Blackie": Fair
 "Blondie's Blessed Event": Fair-Poor
 "The Invaders": Very Good-Good
 "Hello Annapolis": Fair
 "The Wife Takes a Flyer": Good-Fair
 "A Desperate Chance for Ellery Queen": Fair
 "Not A Ladies' Man": Fair-Poor

Twelve pictures, excluding four westerns, have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"We Were Dancing": Fair-Poor
 "Born to Sing": Fair
 "Nazi Agent": Fair
 "This Time for Keeps": Fair
 "The Courtship of Andy Hardy": Very Good-Good
 "Kid Glove Killer": Good-Fair
 "Mokey": Poor
 "Fingers at the Window": Good-Fair
 "Rio Rita": Very Good-Good
 "Sunday Punch": Fair
 "Ship Ahoy": Good
 "Tortilla Flat": Good
 "Grand Central Murder": Good-Fair

Thirteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 1.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

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Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1942

No. 25

THINGS TO COME!

Recent news items indicate that Canadian exhibitors face drastic changes in the operation of their theatres. Ordered abolished are increased prices for holiday shows except for selected dates to be arranged with the approval of the War-time Board. Also abolished are all future prize schemes or giveaways other than those in effect as of May 1, and present arrangements for such premiums cannot be renewed on expiration.

To protect theatres in the chance game ban, the Dominion government will effectuate legislation to include religious and fraternal organizations within the Federal amusement tax. A move was also made to enforce a single-feature policy. Because of the need for cellulose for war purposes, Canada proposes a cut in the number of prints in circulation by a ban on double features in the near future. Owing to the power shortage, theatres will be required to run also shorter programs starting in the Fall, and there is a probability that unprofitable operations will be eliminated to conserve electricity. Summer theatres will be allowed to reopen where they do not compete with houses that operate all year. Moreover, exhibitors must continue to buy film from the exchanges with which they were doing business during the basic period from September 15 to October 11, and that freezing of contract conditions in effect during that period will work both ways, because the exchanges are required to supply product to the customers on their books at that time.

That similar conditions may be imposed on American exhibitors in the near future is quite possible. Recent orders emanating from Washington point the way. The curtailment of the use of materials required in the making of motion pictures, the conservation of electric power in areas serving war industries, the shortage of film—all these are indications of things to come.

Of interest will be the effect a ban on double bills will have on that portion of the public that prefers them. This has been a controversial issue within the industry for a long time, and those who are against the practice could ask for no better opportunity to prove that their elimination will be beneficial to both the producers and the exhibitors. The set-up is in their favor. The war conditions of today have geared the public into accepting innovations and a change in policy will probably be taken with good grace, particularly when such a change is made by government order. But continued patronage depends on the quality of the single features made. Though willing to accept a change, the public would soon lose interest because of mediocre product.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has always maintained that double bills is a matter of necessity with those who have resorted to them. In almost every case an exhibitor resorts to double-billing as the only means by which he could conduct his theatre profitably; his competitor either started double-billing, or kept the choice product away from him, with the result that nothing except double-billing could save his business. The exhibitor who could operate his theatre profitably with single features would discard the double bill.

HARRISON'S REPORTS makes no attempt to find a solution, other than to say that the producers must get out of the state of mind by which they felt that the "B," "C" and "D" pictures were necessary either to cover part of the distribu-

tion cost, or to keep stock players that they had under contract busy.

War is certainly hell. But, following the logic of the ancient Greeks that there is no evil but is mixed with some good, the elimination of the double feature by Government order may result in the elimination of the meritless pictures, in which case the problem of the small-town exhibitor is solved automatically: with a greater number of box office pictures, the necessity for double-billing will no longer exist for him.

HERE AND THERE

A MIDDLE-WEST EXHIBITOR has written me the following letter:

"Many recent factors have had and are having a decided effect—some good, some bad—on the box-office returns throughout the country. Sections that contain war industries are, for the most part, doing good business. The populace in these areas are earning good wages and in general have money over and above what they need in their normal way of life. Moreover, the influx of additional labor has helped to swell the population. These people seek relief from the grim realities of war, and seeing a picture—even a bad one—is the type of relaxation they like best.

"The rationing of gas, the dim-out regulations, the practice blackouts, and the "staggering" of working hours because of transportation problems and extra shifts may have some effect on the box-office, but these are too new to determine to what extent.

"The flood of business that overflows the industrial areas, however, is the result of the trickling away of business from small towns, whose workers flow to the centers of activity. The small-town exhibitor has been hit hard by this migration. Moreover, the drafting of young men, the pre-occupation of others with defense duties, and the curtailment of passenger car travel, further aggravates the already decreased box-office returns. Many small-town exhibitors are being and will be forced to close their doors.

"The industry can ill afford to allow such a condition to prevail. The time and money expended by the exhibitors, as well as the producer-distributors, to make the public movie-conscious is wasted every time a theatre closes its doors. It would hardly be in line with the morale-uplifting policy of the industry to deprive small-town patrons of entertainment, so vital in these trying times.

"Everything possible should be done for bona-fide exhibitors in towns where such conditions exist, to enable them to continue operating their theatres. The adjustment of clearances and film rentals in a manner that will allow the exhibitor to hold on for the duration may be the solution.

"I am glad to see that the big companies have recognized all these factors and are offering relief. Mr. William Rodgers, of MGM, deserves credit for having started the ball rolling. I only hope that this time they mean business."

* * *

MGM ANNOUNCES THAT IT WILL produce "Kismet," Edward Knoblauch's play about a Bagdad beggar, a role which the late Otis Skinner made famous on the stage.

(Continued on last page)

"Pierre of the Plains" with John Carroll, Ruth Hussey and Bruce Cabot

(MGM, no release date set; time, 65 min.)

Ordinary program fare. A competent cast of featured players has been wasted in this melodrama of the Canadian Northwest. Combining comedy, murder mystery, and romance, the action flounders about helplessly, failing to concentrate on any one of these angles. The uninteresting story lacks originality of treatment and is, for the most part, tiresome. The picture is best suited for small-town theatres as the lower half of a mid-week double bill:—

John Carroll, swashbuckling Canadian guide, loves Ruth Hussey, who operates a village barroom. When he finds Sheldon Leonard, a trader, selling whiskey to the Indians, he wrecks the man's stock and is arrested by Sergeant Pat McVey of the Mounties. Inspector Frederick Worlock releases him, but orders him to leave the district. Carroll learns that Ruth was about to marry Bruce Cabot, who had a bad reputation. To break up the marriage, he arranges with an Indian squaw to claim Cabot as her husband. He goes to the barroom, where he has trouble with Cabot and Leonard before the ceremony. The squaw arrives in time to protest the marriage. Cabot leaves angrily. When Phil Brown, Ruth's brother, attempts to eject Leonard, who had become very drunk, Leonard's gun is accidentally discharged, killing him. Cabot, the only witness to the struggle, charges Brown with murder. Brown is arrested. To raise money for a lawyer, Carroll acts as a guide for Henry Travers, a wealthy "tenderfoot," and Evelyn Ankers, his daughter. Travers, however, cheats at cards as a hobby, and Carroll loses his wages to him. Planning to free Brown from jail, Carroll takes Reginald Owen, a drunken lawyer, to visit Brown. Brown exchanges clothes with Owen, gets out of jail, then escapes over the border. The Mounties search for Carroll. When Carroll goes to the aid of Travers, who had been hurt in the woods, Cabot trails him. A desperate fight ensues when they meet. Cabot is shot dead by an unseen person in the woods. McVey arrests Carroll for the murder. He insists that he is innocent. At the trial it is proved that there were no powder marks on the body. Carroll is freed. With Cabot dead, there is no longer a murder case against Brown. Carroll is again ordered out of the district—but this time Ruth goes with him.

Lawrence Kimble and Bertram Millhauser wrote the screen play, Edgar Selwyn produced it, and George B. Seitz directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Jackass Mail" with Wallace Beery, Marjorie Main, J. Carrol Naish and Darryl Hickman

(MGM, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

Mildly entertaining program fare. Where Marjorie Main and Wallace Beery are liked as a comedy team, this picture will undoubtedly please. The story, however, is weak, and hardly substantial enough for a feature, with the result that the action drags somewhat. Beery plays his usual role of a lazy, hard-drinking scamp; but his antics are familiar, and so one is only fairly amused. As entertainment, it is suitable for the family trade in small towns and neighborhood theaters:—

Wallace Beery drifts into a saloon where he cadges free drinks from J. Carrol Naish, a Spanish bartender. Intimating that he has a map for a hidden gold mine, Beery arouses Naish's interest. He aids Beery's getaway when the townspeople threaten to lynch him for stealing a horse. Although the map is worthless, Naish and Beery become partners. The pair are about to rob the Jackass Mail, owned by Marjorie Main, when William Haade, an outlaw, beats them to it. Haade shoots the driver of the wagon, but is chased away by Beery. Beery accepts Marjorie's offer to become the mail driver. In a saloon owned by Marjorie, Beery meets up with Haade. They argue, and Beery kills him. Darryl Hickman, Haade's young son, presents quite a problem. Beery loves the youngster and decides to take care of him. When it appears that lack of funds will prevent the completion of a railroad leading into town, the townspeople offer to help. Against Beery's wishes, Marjorie contributes his salary. While transporting the money, the Jackass Mail is held up by Dick Curtis. Darryl saves the money by shooting at Curtis, but he gets away. Determined to make Beery a decent citizen, Marjorie forces him to become the leader of a reform group. There is a celebration occasioning the railroad's opening day. The town's name is changed to that of Beery's, in honor of his many unintentionally good deeds. The occasion is marred, however, when Beery smuggles liquor into town. Naish and Beery decide to leave for the

border. Inadvertently they meet up with Curtis and his outlaws who try to hold up the train. Beery foils the attempt, and captures Curtis. Marjorie and Beery head for the altar, and Darryl goes to live with them.

Lawrence Hazard wrote the screen play, John W. Con-sidine, Jr. produced it, and Norman Z. McLeod directed it.

"Are Husbands Necessary?" with Ray Milland and Betty Field

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

A mildly entertaining domestic comedy of program grade. The story is of the typical newlywed variety, following a formula; it has not been given any novel twists. The action lags considerably, some of the situations being dragged out to a point where they become tiresome. At times the comedy borders on the slapstick, with some of the situations fairly amusing, but a good deal of it is old-fashioned stuff and fails to impress. Betty Field, as the well-intentioned meddling wife, does well with her part, but Ray Milland, as her husband, seems to be miscast in his comedy role:—

Betty Field and Ray Milland, a young couple celebrating their second year of marriage, are upset. Betty had selected a baby for adoption, but Milland fears the financial responsibility. Unknown to Milland, who is at home with a cold, Betty visits Charles Dingle, president of the bank where Milland works, and informs him that Milland's illness was more mental than physical, because of the pending adoption. She suggests that Dingle make him a vice-president. Betty returns home only to find Milland pouring cocktails for Lief Ericson, Richard Hadyn, and Patricia Morison, a divorcee and old sweetheart of Milland's. Betty resents the attentions Patricia pays to Milland and, to get him away from her, she deliberately lies that they have been invited to spend the weekend at Dingle's country estate, where Eugene Pallette, an important customer of the bank, was a guest. Although surprised at their arrival, Dingle accepts them. Betty ingratiates herself with Pallette, but not so with Dingle when she inadvertently damages his automobile. Furious, Dingle asks them to leave. The following morning at the bank, Milland is saved from dismissal when Pallette enters and requests that he be assigned to handle his account. Through Milland, Pallette meets Patricia, and the two fall in love. Dingle, in a good mood because of Milland's handling of Pallette's account, makes him a vice-president. To complete their happiness, Betty learns that she is to be the mother of twins.

Tess Slesinger and Frank Davis wrote the screen play, Fred Kohlmar produced it, and Norman Taurog directed it. In the cast are, Phil Terry, Cecil Kellaway, Elizabeth Risdon, Charlotte Wynters and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"I Live On Danger" with Chester Morris and Jean Parker

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 71 min.)

This reporter-crook melodrama is fairly entertaining program fare. It is a rehash of an old theme, in that the reporter helps convict the brother of the girl he loves, then digs up evidence that proves him innocent. The only new twist is that the reporter is a radio news broadcaster; but since the action is steady, and there is some excitement and suspense, one's interest is held fairly well. The picture has a fair share of human interest and comedy. The direction and the performances are competent. Ginger Palmer, a four year old girl, performs very well in the few scenes in which she appears:—

Chester Morris and Dick Purcell, radio news broadcasters, are friendly rivals for a special assignment to London. Purcell's latest news item was that Edward Norris, a gambler, had been released from prison. Norris is met by Douglas Fowley, a former gangster associate, who tells him to visit Edwin Maxwell, the gang leader, to collect some money held for him. First Morris goes home where he is greeted by Jean Parker, his sister. Later he goes to Maxwell's office. Meanwhile Purcell, learning that Maxwell was quitting gambling, decides to visit him. Norris receives the money, but just as he leaves, Maxwell is shot dead by someone on the fire-escape. Norris dashes out, bumping into Purcell. Purcell recognizes him and immediately broadcasts the news. Norris is hunted as the murderer. While broadcasting an account of a large ship afire off-shore, Norris recognizes Jean among the survivors. Knowing that through her he might catch Norris, thereby stealing Purcell's story, Morris takes Jean to his home where his mother cares for her. Both fall in love, but when Morris informs her that he knows about her, she disappears. Through the personal column of a newspaper, Morris learns that she was to meet Norris that night. He notifies the police, who capture Norris, while he broad-

casts the event. Morris first realizes that Norris was Jean's brother. He refuses the London assignment, planning to clear Morris. Investigating clues given to him by Purcell, Morris succeeds in trapping Fowley as the murderer by goading him to confess. The confession is broadcast through a hidden microphone that Morris had under his clothing. Her brother cleared, Jean and Morris marry.

Maxwell Shane, Richard Murphy, and Lewis R. Foster wrote the screen play. William H. Pine and William C. Thomas produced it, and Sam White directed it. In the cast are Elizabeth Risdon, Ralph Sanford, Roger Pryor and others.

Objectionable for children owing to the murders.

"Holiday Inn" with Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 139 min.)

The combination of Bing Crosby's singing, Fred Astaire's dancing, and Irving Berlin's songs, makes this musical, with comedy, a most delightful entertainment. The action centers around a country night club, open on holidays only, on which days a lavish floor show is given. Through clever treatment, the music and lyrics, as well as the settings, are in accordance with the mood of the holiday celebrated. The story at no time becomes serious; the whole thing is treated in a comedy vein. The performances of the leading players are very good, particularly those of Marjorie Reynolds and Virginia Dale; both dance with Astaire. The star names and the popularity of Irving Berlin's music, should assure good box-office returns for this skillfully handled picture.—

Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, and Virginia Dale, a song-and-dance trio, break up the combination when Crosby plans to marry Virginia, then retire and live on a farm. But Crosby's plans are upset when Astaire persuades Virginia to marry him instead, and continue the dance team. Crosby goes to the farm alone. He soon tires of the hard work, and returns to his pals with a new idea: He means to turn his farmhouse into an inn that will be open only on holidays; the rest of the year he plans to rest. When Walter Abel, Astaire's manager, is approached by Marjorie Reynolds for a show job, to get rid of her, he suggests that she go to Crosby's inn. Crosby offers her a job in his New Year's Eve show. On the night of the show, Astaire learns that Virginia had jilted him. He gets drunk and goes to Crosby's inn, where he staggers onto the dance floor and begins to dance with Marjorie. The pair prove to be sensational, although Astaire finishes the dance by falling unconscious. Sensing that Astaire might steal Marjorie, as he had stolen Virginia, Crosby rushes her out of the inn. When Astaire revives, he cannot remember what she looked like, but he and Abel resolve to find her. Despite Crosby's efforts to keep Marjorie away from him, Astaire finds her and offers her a chance to become his partner. She declines, preferring to stay with Crosby at the inn. Planning to lure Marjorie away, Astaire returns to the inn and confides to Crosby that he, too, wants to live on the farm. Marjorie persuades Crosby to let him stay. On the eve of a holiday show, Crosby learns that Abel and Astaire had arranged for a Hollywood producer to watch Astaire and Marjorie do their dance routine, hoping that a screen offer would change her mind. Crosby attempts to keep Marjorie from appearing fail. She accuses him of trying to thwart her career, and leaves for Hollywood with Astaire. Crosby follows her and induces her to return. Virginia returns to Astaire.

Claude Binyon wrote the screen play, and Mark Sandrich produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Calling Dr. Gillespie" with Lionel Barrymore, Philip Dorn and Donna Reed

(MGM, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

Moderately entertaining. Originally intended to be another in the "Dr. Kildare" series, this combination hospital and murder melodrama lacks the quality associated with that series. This time the subject matter deals with insanity, but the story is thin and almost any picture-goer should guess in advance each twist the action takes. A most unpleasant feature is the killing of a pet dog by a young man, in order that his oncoming insanity may be shown. Lionel Barrymore plays his usual role of the blustering but kindly chief doctor. His new assistant, Philip Dorn, has taken the place of Lew Ayres; he performs well. Audiences, after they become accustomed to him, may like him as much, and perhaps more:—

Marcia Bradburn (Donna Reed) is engaged to Roy

Todwell (Phil Brown), to all appearances a personable young man. But when she tells him that she cannot marry him for a year he flies into a rage and kills his pet dog. Worried, Marcia seeks the advice of Emma Hope (Mary Nash), her teacher, who informs Dr. Gillespie (Lionel Barrymore) of the occurrence. Dr. Gillespie and Dr. Gerniede (Philip Dorn), his assistant, decide that Roy may be a case of incipient insanity, curable but dangerous if not treated immediately. They confide their fears to the boy's parents, who, with their family doctor, scoff at such a thought. Roy's second strange outburst of smashing a store window adds to everyone's fears. He disappears, leaving a threatening note for Dr. Gillespie, who he believes is trying to fasten insanity on him. Roy goes to Detroit, frequents a dance hall and there meets a girl whose boy friend had an elaborate automobile. Roy induces two auto salesmen to bring a similar car to a vacant house. There he murders them and steals the car. The police catch up with him, but he evades them. When Roy telephones Marcia, Dr. Gerniede fears for Dr. Gillespie's safety. A police guard is installed at the hospital, and word is passed to Roy that Marcia is there. By masquerading as a doctor, Roy enters the hospital. He locates Marcia and tells her that he must kill Dr. Gillespie to save his own sanity. She urges him to see Gillespie and let the doctor cure him. Instead Roy tries to shoot Dr. Gillespie but is prevented by Wayman (Nat Pendleton), an ambulance driver. Roy is arrested and committed to prison. Drs. Gillespie and Gerniede plan to treat him in prison to bring about a cure.

Willis Goldbeck and Harry Ruskin wrote the screen play, and Harold S. Bucquet directed it.

Objectionable for children because of the murders.

"Tombstone, The Town Too Tough to Die" with Richard Dix

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

This is a very well produced western melodrama. It should appeal to general audiences, as well as to the western fans. Despite the familiarity of the story, one's interest is held throughout owing to the expert direction and to the exceptionally good performances. The restraint with which Richard Dix portrays a fearless U. S. Marshal makes his heroics doubly effective. There is considerable human interest in his efforts to rehabilitate Don Castle, a wayward but pleasant cowboy. The action is fast and thrilling, with the closing scenes, in which Dix traps the gang of bandits, most exciting. Pleasant comedy, romance, and music are interwoven in the plot:—

Richard Dix, Rex Bell, and Harvey Stephens, three brothers, ride into Tombstone as Edgar Buchanan and his gang terrorize the peace officers and citizens with their wild shooting pranks. Dix chides Charles Middleton, the Mayor, for being unable to cope with Buchanan, whereupon Middleton makes him a Sheriff and sneeringly orders him to arrest Buchanan. Dix accepts the challenge. Aware of Dix's prowess with a gun, Buchanan submits to arrest. The townspeople request Dix to become permanent Sheriff, but he declines. Because of his control of Tombstone politics, Buchanan is let off with a small fine. A few minutes later Buchanan's gang resume their wild shooting, accidentally killing a child. Enraged, Dix accepts the job of Sheriff. Buchanan and the Mayor plot to eliminate Dix. They hire Don Castle to pose as a tax appraiser and to accompany Dix on a tax collecting tour. The plan is for Victor Jory, an outlaw, to kill Dix when he forces him to pay taxes, while Castle returns the money to Buchanan. Meanwhile Kent Taylor, a gambler and friend of Dix's comes to town and joins Dix's brothers as a deputy. During the tour, Dix takes a liking to Castle. He learns that he had come to Tombstone because of a disappointed love affair with Frances Gifford, a girl he still loved. Despite various attempts on his life, Dix succeeds in collecting the taxes. Bluntly he tells Castle that he was aware of his intentions and sends him back to Buchanan. To get back in the good graces of the outlaws, because of his failure, Castle arranges for a successful hold-up of a stagecoach carrying silver. Through Frances, Dix induces Castle to quit the outlaws and go straight. One day in town, Dix is compelled to kill an outlaw in self defense. Claiming it to be murder, the Mayor dismisses Dix as Sheriff. When one of the outlaws deliberately kills one of his brothers, Dix manages to become a U. S. Marshal, vowing to square matters. His opportunity comes when Buchanan and his gang hold up a stagecoach carrying U. S. Mail. Dix and his deputies wipe out the gang. Castle becomes the new Marshal, as Dix sets out for California to raise oranges.

Based on an original story by Dean Franklin and Charles Reisner, Harry Sherman produced it, and William McGann directed it.

"Kismet" was first produced by Robertson-Cole in 1920, and although it turned out a beautiful picture it made a box office failure except in a few large towns, where followers of the stage were attracted to see their favorite actor, Otis Skinner.

The second time it was produced by First National, in 1930, also with Mr. Skinner. The following was said in the review:

"If 'The Thief of Bagdad,' which was one of the most artistic pictures that have ever been produced, made a failure at the box office, when none of those who saw the picture expressed an adverse opinion as to its quality, what chance has 'Kismet,' which also is an oriental story? At least we have the facts to guide us—the facts of the silent version, which was produced by Robertson-Cole . . . ; it made a success in New York and in some other large cities, but a dismal failure in the smaller cities and towns, particularly in the middle-west. It is the kind of story that appeals to cultured picture-goers, particularly to those who follow the stage; but the rank and file will go to sleep on it. . . ."

Evidently First National remade "Kismet" with the belief that sound, which was new in pictures in 1930, would put it over; but it made just as dismal a failure.

MGM may plan to make it in natural colors. If so, its heads may think that they will thus make it acceptable to the picture-goers of all tastes. There is no question that they can make a highly artistic picture of it, particularly if they should make it into a musical, but in the belief of this paper it will be the kind of picture that will appeal mostly to cultured picture-goers, unless, of course, the story is changed radically. But because the chances of making a box-office "flop" are out of proportion to the chances of making it a picture with universal appeal, this paper feels that MGM should not take the chance. Hasn't it had enough out of "I Married an Angel," and "The Chocolate Soldier"?

* * *

A LETTER PROTESTING AGAINST the adoption of the new sales system was sent June 1st by the members of Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers to Mr. Thurman Arnold, U. S. Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Anti-Trust Division in the Department of Justice. It is signed by Messrs. Lloyd Wright, president of the Association, John C. Flinn, executive secretary, and the following members of the Executive Committee: Roy Disney, Samuel Goldwin, David O. Selznick, Walter Wanger, and Lloyd Wright.

The Society takes the position that approval of the new sales system will prove detrimental to the interests of its members in that they will not have access to as many open play-dates as they are having now. They protest even against the group-of-five sales system, in that they consider also this system "block-booking."

Theoretically, their position is logical and correct; but in view of the fact that the producers have used the group-of-five system to impose upon the exhibitor prices that are out of proportion to the prices paid when block-booking and blind-selling was in effect, their position is not so logical from a practical point of view. The block-of-twelve sales system,—five to be trade-shown and seven to be identified—make the exhibitors feel as if they will have a better chance of obtaining their pictures at more reasonable prices.

The Society takes also the position that, with pictures sold singly, the quality of the pictures will be bettered—the producers will be compelled to make better pictures. This position, too, seems logical, and HARRISON'S REPORTS supported the blocks-of-five sales system because it believed in that theory. But in practice the system has proved bankrupt; the proportion of worthless pictures to box-office pictures has not changed in the least.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES FOR 1941-42 SEASON'S PICTURES

Paramount

"Pacific Blackout": Fair
 "No Hands on the Clock": Fair
 "Mr. Bug Goes to Town": Fair-Poor
 "Torpedo Boat": Fair-Poor

"The Lady Has Plans": Good-Fair
 "The Fleet's In": Very Good
 "The Remarkable Andrew": Good-Fair
 "Fly by Night": Fair-Poor
 "My Favorite Blonde": Excellent-Very Good
 "True to the Army": Good-Fair
 "The Great Man's Lady": Good
 "Henry and Dizzy": Fair
 "This Gun for Hire": Very Good-Good
 "Reap the Wild Wind": Excellent-Very Good

Fourteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 3.

RKO

"Sing Your Worries Away": Fair-Poor
 "Mexican Spitfire at Sea": Fair-Poor
 "Fantasia": Good-Fair
 "The Bashful Bachelor": Fair-Poor
 "Tuttles of Tahiti": Good-Fair
 "Scattergood Rides High": Fair-Poor
 "Mayor of 44th Street": Fair
 "Syncopation": Fair

Eight pictures, excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:

Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 4.

Twentieth Century-Fox

"Castle in the Desert": Fair
 "The Night Before the Divorce": Fair-Poor
 "Song of the Islands": Very Good-Good
 "Rings on Her Fingers": Good-Fair
 "Lone Star Ranger": Fair
 "H. G. Wells' Kippis": Poor
 "Sundown Jim": Fair-Poor
 "Secret Agent of Japan": Good-Fair
 "To the Shores of Tripoli": Excellent-Very Good
 "Who is Hope Schuyler?": Fair-Poor
 "The Man Who Wouldn't Die": Fair
 "My Gal Sal": Excellent-Very Good
 "The Mad Martindales": Fair
 "Whispering Ghosts": Fair-Poor
 "Moontide": Good-Fair

Fifteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 1.

United Artists

"A Gentleman After Dark": Fair
 "Mister V": Good-Fair
 "About Face": Fair
 "Ships with Wings": Fair-Poor

Four pictures have been checked with the following results:

Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

Universal

"Swing it Soldier": Fair
 "Butch Minds the Baby": Good-Fair
 "Juke Box Jenny": Fair
 "Mystery of Marie Roget": Fair
 "Unseen Enemy": Fair-Poor
 "The Spoilers": Good
 "The Strange Case of Dr. RX": Fair-Poor
 "Mississippi Gambler": Fair
 "Saboteur": Very Good-Good

Nine pictures excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 2.

Warner-First National

"This Was Paris": Fair-Poor
 "The Male Animal": Good-Fair
 "Murder in the Big House": Fair
 "Kings Row": Excellent-Good
 "I Was Framed": Fair
 "Larceny, Inc.": Good-Fair
 "In This Our Life": Very Good

Seven pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 1942

No. 26

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BAD PICTURES?

This paper has often stated in these columns that the one responsible for the production of bad pictures is the producer.

Recently I have had a talk with a conscientious Hollywood producer and here is the gist of what he said to me, taken from notes and memory:

"The producers can't 'duck' responsibility for bad pictures. Without mentioning either names or pictures, there isn't one producer nor one sales head who won't hang his head in shame for his carelessness in delivering certain bad pictures that exhibitors are forced to unload on the public.

"And the crying shame is that 50% of bad pictures could have been avoided by correction of script before production; or by destroying the script with its comparative few thousand dollars investment before it caused a half million dollar failure.

"And the exhibitor knows it, too, because, in the final analysis, it's the exhibitor who loses money during the exhibition of that bad picture, and it is the exhibitor who must answer to his patrons and re-appeal for their continued patronage after cheating them with a bad picture.

"The producer would only have to sit in the gallery with high school kids and listen to their expressions of disgust and disappointment for bad entertainment. The same flaw that those kids sense could, in most cases, be traced right back to the script before the picture was produced. And therein lies the responsibility of the producer who approved that script for production.

"Many times the cutter or script girl will sense the bad parts of a carelessly written script before the picture is produced, but in too many cases they are forced to be silent, to assure themselves of future work on the pay-roll of that same producer. They will wait until the picture is finished, and then grieve and groan in condolence with the producer when the reviewers condemn the picture.

"The trouble is that, while the producer belatedly realizes his error, he just had failed to face the facts during conception and treatment of story or in the final screen play, in the wild hope that a miracle would happen before the dead-line of production. No miracle will happen unless the producer has a miracle-writer and the responsibility rests right in the lap of the producer to have that script adjusted to prevent it from being produced into a bad picture.

"The solution would be to give such producers more backbone so they would have the courage, when facing the irate studio head, to insist that the script still 'smells,' and that in the form presented it would only result in a bad picture.

"It is to avoid bad pictures that we hear so often of

top-flight directors—who want to stay on top—declining to produce certain pictures unless the scripts are adjusted to their satisfaction. Maybe that's why they are top-flight directors; they know that you can't get a good picture out of a bad script. All a top-flight director can do is to hide some of the flaws.

"How many times we have read reviews on a bad picture that it was well directed and that the actors struggled with poor material! What the reviewer meant in raw language was that the producer had handed the director a bad script. Consequently the distributor delivered to his sales forces, and the sales force handed the exhibitor, a bad picture and the exhibitor is left holding the bag, trying to apologize to his patrons for a bad picture.

"That bad script was just as obvious to a trained producer as the resulting bad picture was obvious to the sales force, to the exhibitor, and to the public.

"I say that, if the blame for bad pictures is placed where it belongs, back to the producer who guided the script, the producer will become more alert and will therefore face facts in his judgment of scripts before authorizing their production."

HERE AND THERE

ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO, the Film Conservation Committee recommended that credits on the introductory title of the film, such as, the name of the cutter, the wardrobe man, hair dresser and the like, be eliminated altogether to save film.

The Screen Directors Guild had a meeting on June 14 and by an overwhelming vote it opposed the elimination of such credits.

So heated was the discussion, according to the Hollywood trade papers, that the resolution was tabled to await the action of other Guilds on the question.

A prominent producer now comes forward to express in HARRISON'S REPORTS his views on the question, presenting arguments for the retention of such credits, but from a new point of view entirely. Says he:

"To eliminate credit titles (producer, director, wardrobe, cutter, writer, etc.) from pictures, is as silly a way to conserve materials as it would be to suggest eliminating the sets in pictures, and show the actors performing in front of a black velvet—for all scenes. Don't laugh—it could be done—that is, it could be done if we appealed to the public to imagine the black velvet as the appropriate setting.

"If we want to lose our heads and go to the extremes to conserve materials we could even ask all restaurants and homes to give up their metal table-ware for scrap

(Continued on last page)

**"Friendly Enemies" with
Charles Winninger and Charles Ruggles**

(United Artists, June 26; time, 93 min.)

Owing to the excellent performances of Charles Winninger and Charles Ruggles, this comedy-drama, based on the stage play produced in 1918, is a good entertainment. Their fine portrayals of two naturalized Germans, one who believes implicitly in his adopted country and the other who still feels a loyalty to his fatherland, is replete with human interest and hilarious comedy. Through skillful handling, the characterization portrayed by Winninger is not offensive; instead, one feels sympathetic towards him. Although the action takes place during the last war, the picture's emotional scenes are pertinent to the present conflict. The production values are good. There is a pleasant romance:—

Having come together to the United States from Germany many years before, Charles Winninger, wealthy brewery owner, and Charles Ruggles, a banker, are close friends. The outbreak of the World War causes many verbal battles between the two. Winninger still thinks of Germany with nostalgia and sympathizes with her, while Ruggles is a 100% American, and tries to convince Winninger that he cannot be both German and American. Winninger meets Otto Kruger, a German emissary, supposedly trying to stop the "persecution" of Germans in America. To this cause Winninger pledges \$50,000. Actually, Kruger is the head of a German sabotage ring. James Craig, Winninger's son, and Nancy Kelly, Ruggles' daughter, plan to marry. Craig had joined the Army without his father's knowledge, and was expected home that evening. Winninger believed his son to be at college. When Craig arrives, he announces that he and Nancy must be married at once; he must leave for France on the following day. Winninger is despondent at the thought that his son would kill other Germans. He tries to convince Craig to desert the army, but fails. Angry, he refuses to go to the wedding, or to see Craig sail. Kruger visits Winninger to collect the \$50,000, promising great results. Later Kruger phones with the "great news" that the money had been used for blowing up a transport ship. Winninger learns that it is the ship on which his son had sailed. For the first time Winninger realizes the horror of Germany's vicious war of aggression. He tells Ruggles about his contribution to Kruger and the purpose for which it was used. Winninger expects a visit from Kruger and intends to kill him, but Ruggles has a better idea. When Kruger arrives, Ruggles pretends that he, too, wishes to contribute, but demands proof of Kruger's authority. As Kruger produces the proof, he corners him at the point of a gun, then turns him over to the police. Their happiness is complete when Craig walks in; he had been rescued by a fishing boat.

Adelaide Heilbron wrote the screen play, Edward Small produced it, and Allan Dwan directed it. In the cast are Ilka Gruning and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Apache Trail" with Lloyd Nolan,
William Lundigan and Donna Reed**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

A fair entertainment. Except for the fact that it contains a good cast of featured players, who perform well, there is nothing unusual about this western, which differs little from those produced by the independents. The story deals with the enmity between two brothers, one an outlaw, and the other a manager of a stagecoach station. Although the picture is one of characterizations, it offers the followers of this type of entertainment a sufficient amount of action familiar to westerns. Most of the excitement is concentrated

towards the end, where a band of Apache Indians attack the outpost. There is some romance:—

William Lundigan, released from jail after serving a sentence on a framed robbery charge, is met by Lloyd Nolan, his brother, who involved him in the holdup. Nolan tries to pay him his share of the loot, but Lundigan refuses and warns him that the next time their paths cross it will mean bloodshed. Lundigan attempts to get back his job as guard of the stagecoach, but the manager of the line gives him command of the Tonto Valley stage station, one constantly menaced by marauding Apaches. Resolving to make the station the best on the line, Lundigan is met at the outpost by Connie Gilchrist, the caretaker, and Donna Reed, her daughter. A stage loaded with passengers arrives at the station, as Apache smoke signals rise on the horizon. The stage carries an express box containing gold. Later, Nolan rides into the post. Suspecting that he was after the gold, Lundigan disarms him, but allows him the protection of the fort. Lundigan leaves the outpost to investigate the smoke signals. While he is gone, Nolan seizes command of the station. When Lundigan returns, however, he outdraws Nolan in a gun duel, shooting him through both hands. The Apaches attack, trying to avenge the robbery of their ceremonial pipe, which Nolan had stolen. During a lull in the fighting, the Apache chief sends word that he wants only Nolan. Lundigan elects to continue fighting, not for his brother's sake, but for the principle of establishing frontier prestige for the stage stations by a last ditch fight that would reduce the temptations of Indians for future attacks. Nolan solves the problem by heroically giving himself up to save the lives of those within the station. He is killed by the Indians in an attempted escape. Their trouble with the Indians over, Lundigan and Donna plan to marry.

Maurice Geraghty wrote the screen play, Samuel Marx produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. In the cast are Chill Wills, Ann Ayars, Gloria Holden, Fuzzy Knight, Grant Withers and others.

**"Moonlight Masquerade" with Dennis
O'Keefe, Jane Frazee, Betty Kean
and Eddie Foy, Jr.**

(Republic, June 10; time, 67 min.)

This comedy with music is cheerful entertainment, suitable for a second feature where something light is needed to round out a double bill. Although it lacks novelty in plot construction, it manages to keep one amused throughout by its farcical situations, and musical interludes. The comedy is provoked by the hero's and heroine's efforts to conceal their identity from one another, because of a contract made by their fathers requiring their marriage. The music is tuneful, and there are some dance numbers by Betty Kean and Eddie Foy, Jr.; both provoke considerable laughter. Jane Frazee and Dennis O'Keefe perform very well:—

Under the terms of a contract signed by their fathers, partners in an oil company, Dennis O'Keefe and Jane Frazee are required to marry on her twenty-first birthday, the couple to receive a one-third interest in the company. If either of the two should refuse to go through with the marriage, the one-third interest will be awarded to the other. Having never met, neither wishes to go through with the marriage. Jane was already engaged to Count Erno Verbes, while Dennis did not believe in marriage and felt her to be an empty-headed heiress. Both plan to trick the other into forfeiting their claim. Jane employs Betty Kean, a dancer, to impersonate her, hoping that Dennis will sign away his claim to escape marrying her. With Jane posing as Betty's secretary, they entrain for Havana, the city in which Jane and Dennis must meet on a certain date. Dennis, too, is on the train, traveling under an assumed name. They meet and fall in love, but he avoids Betty, believing her to be Jane.

In Havana, Dennis employs Eddie Foy, Jr., a bogus nobleman, to romance with Betty. But he makes the mistake of revealing his identity to Jane, informing her that he had engineered the romance in order to win the one-third interest for himself. Thus forewarned, Jane instructs Betty to accept Dennis when he proposes. To save himself, Dennis immediately signs away his claim. When Jane informs Dennis of her identity, he believes that she had been romancing with him only to trick him into signing the release, and prepares to leave Havana. Before his departure, however, he learns that Jane had destroyed the release. Betty and Foy arrange a reconciliation between the two, and Jane agrees to become his wife.

Lawrence Kimble wrote the screen play, and John H. Auer produced and directed it. In the cast are Jed Prouty, Paul Harvey, Franklyn Pangborn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Eagle Squadron" with Robert Stack, Diana Barrymore and John Loder

(Universal, May 29; time, 107 min.)

An exceptionally good war drama. Despite an ordinary story, the picture is replete with spectacular action, the sort that makes for a thrilling entertainment. Air battles, a commando raid, London bombed, fliers rescued from the English Channel—all these sequences have been handled skillfully and portrayed vividly. Highly interesting is the method employed by RAF headquarters in the guidance of its various subdivisions; it gives each battle an air of authenticity, and brings the spectator to the realization that the success of each skirmish and the safety of the fliers are to a high degree dependent on the proper coordination of a vast organization both on the ground and in the air. The picture begins with a commentary by Quentin Reynolds, who, through his stirring address, deftly puts the audience in a mood for the events to follow. Of minor importance is the story revolving around an American flyer, who becomes embittered at the calm manner of the British, but whose views are changed when he falls in love with a WAAF member. The direction is fine, and the performances uniformly good:—

Robert Stack, Lief Erickson and Edgar Barrier, Americans, join the RAF. They receive final instructions from Nigel Bruce and are sent to join the Eagle Squadron. On the way to their base they meet Squadron Leader John Loder, and Diana Barrymore, a WAAF member, assigned to radio operations at the Eagle field. The Eagles soon get action in a daylight sweep across occupied France. But soon after their raid they are attacked by a squad of new German "Leopard" planes and several Eagles are shot down, among them Erickson. Shocked by the loss of his best friend, Stack becomes angry at the calm way the Britishers take death, and rebuffs Diana's attempt to explain why the British have schooled themselves to this code of behavior. But during an air raid on London, Stack is impressed by the conduct of the people and understands them better. He and Diana become warm friends. The RAF command decide that they must get a Leopard plane intact, at any cost. Preparations for a commando raid on an air field in occupied France is ordered. Stack and Barrier are selected to steal the planes, and get them back to England. Ordered to London for special training, Stack goes to bid Diana goodbye. He learns that she had mysteriously gone there herself, in company with Loder. He arrives in London during an air raid, and makes his way to a hospital where he is told he would find her. Amidst the flaming wreckage of the hospital, Diana emerges with a wounded man, her father. He dies in her arms. Stack pleads with Diana to marry him, but she insists that she cannot until after the war. They quarrel and part. On the night of the commando raid,

Stack, Barrier and Loder form the spearhead of the attack. But Barrier, in his flaming anger at all Germans because of the rape of Poland, the land of his forefathers, upsets the carefully timed plans by trying to engage a German night patrol. He is killed. Although the men are ordered back to the barges, Stack and Loder remain behind. Loder loses his life covering Stack with a machine gun, while he steals a Leopard plane. Cheered by Diana's voice over the radio, Stack succeeds in bringing the plane back to England, shooting down three German planes attempting to intercept him.

Norman Reilly Raine wrote the screen play, Walter Wanger produced it, and Arthur Lubin directed it. In the cast are Jon Hall, Evelyn Ankers, Eddie Albert, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Crossroads" with William Powell and Hedy Lamarr

(MGM, no release date set; time, 82 min.)

There is considerable suspense and intrigue in this fairly interesting drama. The story centers around an attempted blackmail of a prominent French diplomat, who, because of an accident when a young man, remembers nothing of his early life. Falsely accused of once being a notorious underworld character, he becomes baffled to such an extent that he does not know which is his true identity. The story is weakened somewhat towards the end, where the outcome becomes obvious to the spectator. William Powell's role of the diplomat is a departure from his usual debonair characterizations; he performs well, as does the rest of the cast. The story is developed entirely by dialogue; there is little action. The background is pre-war France:—

On the eve of his appointment as Ambassador to Brazil, William Powell, a French diplomat, receives a threatening note demanding payment of a million franc debt, of which he knew nothing. Vladimar Sokoloff, the extortionist, is brought to trial and bases his defense on the claim that the debt is a just one and that Powell was really "Jean Pelletier," a notorious criminal, who had borrowed money from him in 1919, and then disappeared. Dr. Felix Bressart, Powell's friend, testifies that Powell had been injured many years ago, causing him to remember nothing of his life previously to the accident. Through Claire Trevor, a cabaret singer, the defense substantiates its claim, that he was Pelletier. She intimates that Powell was her long-lost lover. But the surprise testimony of Basil Rathbone puts a stop to the trial when he testifies that he had been with Pelletier the night he died. Sokoloff is pronounced guilty, and Powell's name is cleared. Rathbone visits Powell, reveals that his testimony was false, declares that Powell is actually Pelletier, and that he, Rathbone, was his accomplice in the old days. He further reveals that he is the blackmailer and that the million francs demanded is due him from a robbery both had committed, in which the victim was murdered. Through a series of blackmailing attempts engineered by Rathbone and Miss Trevor, Powell begins to believe their story. He is further shaken when Miss Trevor shows him a photo of himself in an intimate pose with her. Powell does not inform Hedy Lamarr, his wife, of his troubles, but sensing his danger she persuades Dr. Bressart to speak with him. Powell learns from the doctor that the injury he suffered was on the right side of the head, the side on which his hair was parted. Because of the stitches, his hair was now parted on the left side. Recalling that the picture Miss Trevor had shown him had his hair parted on the left side, Powell realizes that it a recent photo of him, and that it was a fake. With the aid of the police, he cleverly traps the blackmailers.

Guy Trosper wrote the screen play, Edwin Knopf produced it, and Jack Conway directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

to war industries because when you come right down to it we could all eat our food with our fingers.

"The mistake that is made in discussing elimination of credit titles is to ignore what the ear is hearing while the eye is reading the credits.

"I admit that the credit wording is unnecessary, but the music that comes from the sound track during the unfolding of the credit footage is as essential to creating an audience mood and as vital in emotional effect as any other 85 feet of film in the whole picture. Just try to follow a newsreel scene of President Roosevelt laying a wreath on a war-hero's grave and then suddenly open cold with the first joke of an Abbott and Costello comedy without hearing the carefully planned transitional mood music on the sound track of that credit-title-footage! A picture cannot open without that music any more than you can jump into a torrid kissing scene without preparation through progression of the romance.

"We are in the entertainment business, and good entertainment is a matter of emotional moods, and music is our basic instrument for that purpose. Consequently, that 85 feet just before opening the first scene of the picture is necessary to the musical director to prepare the mood of the audience.

"Before cutting out that 85 feet, each producer had better go into a huddle with his musical director to learn the value of music.

"I am not carrying a torch for printed credits, but if credits are not on the screen then you will have to put blank film or something else up there,—something which will not divert the audience's mind while the musical director is getting in his 'licks' with music to emotionally prepare the mind and mood of the audience."

* * *

IN MGM's "CALLING DR. GILLESPIE," a sequence shows a young man, enraged by the refusal of his sweetheart to elope with him, throwing a rock at his pet dog, killing it. The dog had neither attacked him, nor committed an act to incur his wrath. The purpose of this sequence was to convey to the audience incipient insanity in this young man.

By employing this method to convey such a thought to the audience, the director has shown lack of good taste.

There are undoubtedly many other ways by which traces of insanity could be shown. Even if it were necessary to show the young man's unbalanced state of mind through his unwarranted attack on a dog, the killing was unnecessary. Had the dog been shown scampering away, the effect on the audience with regard to the young man's unstable mind would have been the same.

Dogs are man's most faithful friend. To show them treated on the screen in a brutal manner, is to invite the resentment of the public.

The producers should exercise greater care in situations of this kind.

* * *

REGARDING THE PRODUCTION of films discrediting this nation abroad, treated in a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, let me present a letter from Mrs. Cornelia Gibbs, of The Citizen's League of Maryland for Better Motion Pictures.

"Dear Mr. Harrison:

"Your concern about the wrong kind of films discrediting this country is more than justified, for we have been told for years by those who have lived in the orient that they have broken down the prestige of the white race, and when President Hoover came

back from the 'good-will' tour of South America he said that he found everywhere that many of the films were detrimental to cordial relations, and were deplored by those who wanted cooperation with this country. These enclosures show an added concern about this matter.

"We know that for years you and the exhibitors have been disregarded by the producing companies, but now with the critical condition of the world I think that they should listen to you, and I suggest that you forward my letter and data with a copy of your Reports for June 6 to Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, whose work with South America should make him alive to this situation."

One of the enclosures to which Mrs. Gibbs refers is a newspaper clipping stating that, on March 16, Mr. R. B. Mensies, former attorney-general of the Australian Commonwealth, stated that the American films did not portray a true picture of American life. He referred to those films that presented Americans as being either "dreadfully" poor, living in the slums, or fabulously rich, living in dreamy palaces.

The other enclosure is the following resolution:

"WHEREAS: Motion Pictures speak a universal language that reaches every part of the world: and

"WHEREAS: American Pictures appear to represent American standards to those who see them: and

"WHEREAS: Many pictures are being exhibited that deal with activities of the Armed Forces of the United States. Some of these pictures depict both officers and men as being drunk, disorderly, reckless and abusive. Such exhibitions tend to discredit the Service, at home and abroad; discourages public support of the Service in this country; misrepresents our National Ideals and Culture; and creates an unfavorable impression of the United States of America throughout the world; which, in this time of National Emergency, is not only highly reprehensible, but lends Aid and Comfort to the enemy:—

"THEREFORE: be it

"RESOLVED: That this Organization go on record as being opposed to production and exhibition of all such pictures; and that Congress be urged to promptly establish proper supervision of the Motion Picture Industry, at the point of production, that will effectively prevent this dangerous exploitation of the Armed Forces of the United States by the Picture Industry; and be it further

"RESOLVED: That the Federal Government, through proper agencies to be set up by Congress, allow only such films to be transported in inter-state and foreign commerce that conform to, and will uphold and protect, our American Christian Standards of manners, morals and patriotic integrity throughout the world."

* * *

THE DISCUSSION ABOUT old pictures released under new titles has brought complaints that one of Disney's Donald Duck cartoons, sold as a new cartoon, is a re-issue—"Orphan's Benefit."

I took the matter up with the Disney office and have been informed that this cartoon was produced originally in black and white, whereas the present version is in colors. The story, too, has been altered somewhat, I have been told.

Because of the fact that some picture-goers have recognized the old story in the new dress, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels that it will be a mistake for Mr. Disney to remake old stories again.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, If It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1942

No. 27

LET WAR PICTURES HAVE A MESSAGE!

An excellent suggestion regarding the importance of "message carrying" films was made to the industry by Nelson B. Poynter, Assistant Co-Ordinator for Government films.

In an address to the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, Mr. Poynter stated that those who make pictures are paying too much attention to the spectacular side of the war, through their glorification of the Air Force or other branches of the armed services, which allow them to show the more photogenic phases of the conflict. He declared that little attention was given to the more deeper problems of the war.

He said, "It is easier to glorify the Air Corps than the Infantry. It is easier to portray on the screen Great Britain's struggle than that of the Chinese or the Russians, who are on the front line of this war. Hollywood should give us a 'Mrs. Miniver' of China or Russia, making clear to our people our common interests with the Russians and Chinese in this struggle."

Mr. Poynter suggested that Hollywood use its ingenuity in the making of films that would carry to the nation a message. What are we fighting for? Who are our Allies? What sacrifices must our citizens make to help win the war? He further stated that it might be a wise idea to show to the American public the terrible suffering they may go through if the war is lost.

Emphasizing that the purpose of his office is purely advisory, Mr. Poynter said: "Washington is placing a great bet that Hollywood can bring home to the people the intangible factors of war."

That Hollywood can achieve this aim has been proved by two of the more recent war films, each carrying a different message. "Mrs. Miniver" brought to the public the realization of what the British people have gone and still are going through, and what we ourselves may go through unless we exert our biggest effort to win the war. "Eagle Squadron," though primarily an Air Force drama glorifying a group of American fliers, has a documentary quality; it succeeds in driving across much more than the usual heroics. It shows intelligently the devastating effects of air raids on London, and the great sufferings of the English. The picture takes one behind the scenes and gives one intimate glimpses of the methods employed by the RAF to assure the success of a defensive or offensive action. It shows the important part played by the heretofore little publicized subdivisions of the RAF. It makes the spectator feel that each person is an important cog of a vast machine. Moreover, the film does not treat of the Germans' ability in a light fashion.

Taking into consideration that the percentage of war films that carry an intelligent message is indeed small, and that most of these films emphasize the more spectacular branches of the armed services, Mr. Poynter's remarks are well taken.

In its depiction of the more glamorous side of the war, Hollywood is obscuring the less dramatic forces, both military and civilian, whose part in the war effort is all-important. Be they military or civilian, organization or individual, Hollywood has the means by which their activities may be shown with proper effect, and without loss of entertainment value or audience appeal.

The world-wide struggle of the United Nations gives script writers a wealth of material from which to choose their ideas. The depiction of the trials and tribulations suffered by the peoples of countries other than the United States and Great Britain would do much to awaken us from our complacency to the grim realities of war.

The motion picture is the greatest medium by which the nation can be impressed, as well as a most powerful force in the moulding of public opinion. The industry can do much to drive home the many little known factors in the war, be they favorable or unfavorable. The public would then get a true perspective of what, how, and why we are fighting.

But by the same token, much harm is done by war films that contain Hollywood heroics, and treat of the enemy derisively, when he has long since proved himself to be a formidable foe. Our war effort is something more than thrilling air battles, breaking up espionage rings, and "cocky" heroes. Such films impress people that, come what may, we are invincible—nothing can happen to us.

HARRISON'S REPORTS trusts that the industry will heed the suggestion made by Mr. Poynter.

BAD PICTURES THE RESULT OF BAD SCRIPTS

Almost any experienced exhibitor, or any sales head, can tell whether the picture he had seen in a projection room is good or bad entertainment, and what are its chances at the box office.

At times a picture is so bad that the exhibitors wonder why a production executive should have approved the script for production.

If the trained exhibitor possesses a keenness of perception that enables him to tell whether the picture will or will not entertain the public, why should not the trained producer possess the same degree of keenness to know that the script that has been sub-

(Continued on last page)

**"Prisoner of Japan" with Alan Baxter,
Gertrude Michael and Ernest Dorian**

(Producers Releasing Corp., July 22; time, 64 min.)

This is a mildly entertaining espionage melodrama, suitable as a second feature in small-town theatres. The routine plot, which unfolds in a tropical Pacific island, is not particularly pleasant; it moves along at a slow pace and, except in the closing scenes, it lacks excitement. Towards the end, one is held in suspense, for the hero and the heroine request that a battleship shell them, knowing that they would lose their lives. A bad feature is the sound; at times it reaches a pitch loud enough to drive one to distraction:—

Alan Baxter, an astronomer living on a Pacific island, is virtually a prisoner in his own home under the domination of Ernest Dorian, a Japanese agent, who lives there with Corinna Mura, his Eurasian wife. Dorian operates a secret radio station, hidden underground, by which he sends messages about the movements of American convoys. When a group of U. S. Naval investigators visit Baxter in search of the hidden radio, Ensign Tommy Seidel inadvertently discloses information about the movement of his destroyer. Dorian overhears this and relays the information to a Jap bomber base. The destroyer is sunk. Gertrude Michael, a dance-hall hostess, visits Baxter, whom she had met previously in a cafe on a distant island. Understanding the Japanese language, Gertrude soon learns of Dorian's activities, and believes that Baxter, too, is a Jap agent. Billy Moya, a Malaysian boy, loved by Baxter and Miss Mura, offers to help Baxter escape from the island by leading him to a hidden boat. But the boy's plans are found out by the Jap guards, who strangle him. Baxter finds the body and realizes that Dorian will stop at nothing to serve his country. In a rage, he returns to the house and wounds Dorian mortally. Miss Mura, grieved by the boy's murder, helps Baxter open the steel doors that lead to the radio station. He kills the operators, stopping them from radioing the position of a convoy guarded by a battleship. Meanwhile Dorian, although near death, manages to direct his guards. He orders his wife shot, and directs the men to break down the steel doors, behind which Baxter and Gertrude had barricaded themselves. Baxter radios the battleship to bomb the radio station, giving its position. The ship's guns destroy the station and the Japanese, while Baxter and Gertrude sacrifice their lives for their country.

Robert Chapin and Arthur Ripley wrote the screen play, Seymour Nebenzahl produced it, and Arthur Ripley directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Lady In A Jam" with Irene Dunne,
Patric Knowles and Ralph Bellamy**

(Universal, June 26; time, 81 min.)

Like the proverbial fly that gets stuck in the jam, "Lady In A Jam" does not succeed in extricating itself from the level of moderately entertaining program fare. It is an extremely talkative comedy, and is artificial and silly to the point of annoyance. Dealing with a young psychiatrist who is assigned to study the mental status of a scatterbrain spendthrift heiress, the story is completely lacking in human appeal. There are a few laughs, but for the most part the silly action tires one and the comedy falls flat. The press sheet of this picture boasts that sequences were shot without benefit of script, the situations being planned from day to day. It certainly looks like it:—

Irene Dunne, an eccentric heiress, squanders her fortune. Eugene Pallette, her attorney, asks Patric Knowles, a psychiatrist, to study her case so as to evolve a cure. Knowles secures employment as her chauffeur. She becomes bankrupt because of her spending, but blames Pallette for her financial

difficulties, vowing to get revenge. Irene believes that Queenie Vassar, her grandmother, is fabulously wealthy; that she owns a gold mine and a city in Arizona. Accompanied by Knowles, who had admitted to her that he was a psychiatrist, she drives from New York to Arizona in an old car, only to find the gold mine abandoned and the city virtually a ghost town. Her grandmother invites her to work the mine in which Irene had an interest. For the first time in her life she goes to work. Meanwhile Knowles pursues his psychiatric study of her. Ralph Bellamy, a cowboy, with whom Irene was in love since she was eight years old, attempts to renew the courtship. But Irene doesn't love Bellamy; she loves Knowles, who has no romantic notions. In an attempt to make Knowles jealous, she attaches herself to Bellamy, but that does not impress him. Hoping that Knowles' interest in Irene would be aroused if she were wealthy, her grandmother "salts" the mine, leading Irene to believe that she had struck gold. To the utter delight of Irene, a gold rush starts and the town becomes alive with prospectors. Seeing that the new wealth had made Irene as "daffy" as ever, Knowles gives up his study of her and returns to New York. She follows and, with the aid of Pallette, finds him. While Knowles protests "It can't happen to me," Irene holds him in her arms and tells him that they are going to be married.

Eugene Thackrey, Frank Cockrell and Otho Lovering wrote the screen play. Gregory La Cava produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Atlantic Convoy" with Bruce Bennett,
Virginia Field and John Beal**

(Columbia, July 2; time, 66 min.)

A fair program melodrama. Although the story is not unusual, following a formula, it manages to hold one's interest to some degree, mainly because of the timely subject and the capable performances. The title does not convey a true impression, since the story is not one of convoys, but of a flying patrol based in Iceland for the protection of convoys. Espionage is its theme. The picture has a fair share of thrilling action, suspense, and human interest. One is sympathetic to the hero, who is suspected of espionage activities unjustly. There is a mild attempt at a romance:—

Bruce Bennett, commander of the U. S. Marine flying patrol in Iceland, is puzzled by the source of information that is leaking to enemy submarines about supply ships. John Beal, an American living in Iceland in obscurity, furnishes the patrol with weather reports. Larry Parks, a flier, suspects Beal to be an enemy agent, but Bennett does not agree with him. When planes are sent to rescue survivors of a sinking freighter, Beal asks to go along and is assigned to Parks' plane. They rescue Virginia Field, a nurse; Clifford Severn, a cabin boy; and five refugee English children. But before the plane can take off, a raft damages the landing gear and Parks is knocked unconscious. Beal takes the controls and succeeds in bringing the plane back to its base. This feat makes Bennett suspicious; he contrives to get Beal's fingerprints. Unknown to all, Severn visits Victor Kilian, captain of a local fishing boat. Both are enemy agents. Later, Beal becomes suspicious of Severn when the boy ejaculates in German. Bennett learns from Washington that Beal had deserted the Marines when he was about to be court-martialed for unwittingly delivering blueprints of a remote control plan to an enemy agent. Beal eludes Bennett, but is found by Severn, who takes him to Kilian. Aware that Beal was a remote control expert, Kilian compels him to rig up the fishing boat's controls so that it could be guided by a Nazi submarine into an ammunition ship that had just arrived in port. Knowing that Bennett would make

a routine inspection of the boat before it leaves the harbor, Beal marks the hatch leading to the dynamite with a secret marine symbol that indicates live ammunition. Noticing the symbol, Bennett returns to the base and orders the planes to attack the boat. During the attack, Beal and Kilian fight, with both men plunging overboard as the ship blows up. Beal's name is cleared, and Kilian is captured.

Robert Lee Johnson wrote the screen play, Colbert Clark produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"United We Stand"

(20th Century-Fox, release date not set; time, 69 min.)

"United We Stand" is a compilation of newsreel shots from 1919 to the present day, edited into sixty-nine minutes of historical highlights of the past twenty-five years of every important nation. Designed to show how disunity at home and abroad led each of the free countries to the brink of disaster, the film begins with the bickerings that marked the signing of the peace treaty of Versailles, and ends with a ringing note of triumphant unity. The rise of Hitler and Mussolini, the failure of the League of Nations, the Spanish Civil War, the Japanese aggression against Manchuria, the Munich pact, and the invasion of the smaller countries—all these are but a few of the sequences shown. It is a continual parade of royalty and other leaders of many governments, both aggressor and appeaser.

Owing to the order in which the events are presented, the commentary by Lowell Thomas is in many instances inaccurate and may give the spectator a different impression than that intended.

As a whole, however, the picture should prove interesting and educational. Through its depiction of the different events that led to the present conflict, many people who in years past paid little attention to the news about Europe will understand the situation better.

"Rubber Racketeers" with Ricardo Cortez, Rochelle Hudson and Bill Henry

(Monogram, June 26; time, 61 min.)

Hijacking, bootlegging, coercion, and murder—all these phases of crime reminiscent of the prohibition era are depicted in this timely and fairly entertaining program melodrama, the subject of which is based on the current automobile tire shortage. The action deals with the efforts of a group of factory defense workers to expose the new "racket" brought about by the government's rationing of tires. Action fans should enjoy it, for there is plentiful action, suspense, and excitement. There is a pleasant romance:—

Just released from prison, Ricardo Cortez decides to go in the tire stealing and reselling "racket." Driving home, his car runs into that of Bill Henry and Barbara Reade, defense workers, wrecking two of their tires. Rochelle Hudson, Cortez's girl-friend, persuades the latter to settle Bill's claim by giving him the old car belonging to Kam Tong, Cortez's Chinese servant, who was about to enter the army. Cortez sets up auto lots all over town, where he sells used cars equipped with new tires stolen by his gang. He sells also synthetic tires of poor quality. Sam Edwards, Barbara's brother, is killed when one of those tires blows out on his car. Bill and a group of fellow defense workers try to trace the tire by the treads, and finally succeed in locating one of Cortez's car lots as the place where Sam bought it. Realizing that Bill was on his trail, Cortez orders Rochelle to invite him to call, so that he may be done away with by the gang. When Rochelle pretends that she is unable to get in touch with Bill, Cortez sends his men after the youth, but Rochelle warns Bill through Barbara. Feeling that Rochelle knew who was selling the "hot rubber," Bill goes to see her at Cortez's apartment. There the gangster

knocks Bill unconscious. The Chinese boy, in army uniform, is there on leave, and when he learns that Cortez is hijacking tires he pleads with him to give up the unpatriotic racket. Cortez shoots him, and accompanied by Rochelle, flees to the gang's warehouse. The injured Chinese revives Bill, and tells him where Cortez had gone. Bill contacts his gang of defense workers, and they assist the police in rounding up the gangsters. Cortez is killed by one of his own men when the latter learns that he had shot a soldier. Rochelle joins Bill and Barbara as a worker in a defense plant.

Henry Blankfort wrote the screen play, Maurice and Franklin King produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Objectionable for children because of the murders.

"The Magnificent Ambersons" with Tim Holt, Dolores Costello, Joseph Cotten and Agnes Moorehead

(RKO, no release date; time, 87 min.)

As in "Citizen Kane," Orson Welles has given this powerful drama a fine treatment. Though it will undoubtedly please class audiences, its appeal for the masses is questionable. It is an artistic achievement, excelling in every department—that of direction, acting, production, and photography. The story, adapted from Booth Tarkington's Pulitzer Prize novel, is extremely sombre and tends to depress one; it deals with the havoc wrought by an arrogant son, who tramples the lives of those around him, and sends his devoted mother to an unhappy grave. Tim Holt, as the young man, gives an outstanding performance. The background is that of a mid-western town during the era that ushered in the automobile. The picture cleverly depicts the changes that took place with the advent of the machine age. Orson Welles does not appear in the picture:—

Isabel (Dolores Costello), daughter of Major Amberson (Richard Bennett), wealthiest citizen of a mid-western city, surprises the town when she marries Wilbur Minafer (Don Dillaway) instead of Eugene Morgan (Joseph Cotten). While serenading her, Morgan had fallen through a bass viol, thus revealing that he had been drinking, as had Jack (Ray Collins), her brother. Morgan leaves town. In the ensuing years, George (Tim Holt), Isabel's son, becomes a spoiled and arrogant young man. After eighteen years Morgan returns, and with him is Lucy (Anne Baxter), his daughter. Morgan frequently calls at the Amberson home, and takes Isabel and Fanny (Agnes Moorehead), her sister-in-law, for a drive in the "horseless" carriage he is manufacturing. George resents his mother's friendship for Morgan, and frequently insults him. Despite his arrogance, however, Lucy loves George. Shortly after the death of Wilbur, Fanny, jealous, informs George that there is gossip about Morgan and Isabel. Infuriated, George calls on one of the neighbors and demands that she cease talking about his mother. He then refuses to allow Morgan to see Isabel. George takes his mother to Europe, but they return when she becomes very ill. Morgan again calls and, although his mother is on her deathbed, George will not allow Morgan to see her. When Isabel dies, it becomes apparent that the Amberson fortune is no more. Driven by pride to support his aunt, George refuses positions with slow advancement and becomes a laborer in a chemical plant. The bitter blows of life—Anne's refusal to marry him, his mother's death, his responsibility for her unhappiness, and his own poverty—are superseded by a more direct catastrophe. George is struck down by an automobile and his legs broken. Lucy rushes to the hospital to assure him of her love, and Morgan, seeing in this circumstance an opportunity to serve the only woman he had ever loved, forgives George and takes him under his protection.

The screen play, production, and direction is by Orson Welles.

Morally suitable for all.

mitted to him will make a poor picture and refuse to authorize production of it until it has been so altered, or even radically changed, so as to insure an entertaining picture?

Poor pictures are the result of poor scripts, which again are in most cases the result of poor treatment of the story. Recently a minor producer asked me, as a personal favor to him, to pass upon a story. After reading it I felt he should never have asked me to read such a story; the main character was so bad that any schoolboy could have told him that the story could not make a good picture.

Yet stories as poor as that story are approved for production every day, even in the first-rank studios.

In many cases it is not the fault of the unit producer, who in most cases is, after all, the one responsible for the final outcome of the script; the release schedule places so great a demand upon the studio that many times the studio head knows, when he hands the script to the unit producer, that there isn't the slightest chance that it will make an entertaining picture, but it must be produced just the same so as to satisfy the demands of the release schedule.

When production is decentralized, as it will be some day, and sufficient time is allowed each producer to work on the script so as to make it as perfect as the subject matter allows before starting production of it, then and only then will the percentage of meritorious pictures increase. In the meantime the exhibitor will be condemned to exhibit pictures that should not have been made in the first place.

Perhaps conservation, necessitated by the war, will benefit production; when the producers are compelled by the government to reduce the number of negative feet used still further, they may reduce the number of pictures that they produce. In such an event, more time will undoubtedly be granted for the working out of each script with a view to bettering the quality of the pictures so as to offset the reduced number of prints.

PUBLICITY AND EXPLOITATION KNOWLEDGE COMING INTO ITS OWN

Six months or so from now it will be a miracle if a theatre will have a picture starring a popular male player. Almost every day we learn that another of our male stars has joined the armed forces of the nation. And every time this happens we know that the resources of our theatre marquee attractions are drained.

When Jimmy Stewart joined the air corps it meant that three box office attractions were lost to the theatres each year. With Clark Gable's going we lose at least two more. When Cary Grant goes there will be another three box office pictures lost. Add the losses of at least ten others and you will realize that approximately forty box office pictures will be lost to the theatres a year. Adding to this the pictures that were produced by such top-notch directors as Frank Capra and Jack Ford and you will realize, I am sure, the seriousness of the situation.

And this is not all: Mickey Rooney and all other young stars not yet of age will soon be called into the armed forces to serve our country.

What is the industry planning to do to offset the loss of these box office values?

Since it requires time to create new stars, there is only one way out—exploitation: ingenious exploitation must come to the rescue in order to sell the pictures to the public long before they reach the theatres.

This calls for specialists in advertising, publicity and exploitation.

Heretofore, this type of specialists were to the industry just what the air force was to the armed forces before the present war—merely a secondary aid. But now they must be given the preference that they are entitled to: they must be considered of equal importance to the writer, unit producer, director and star.

The producers will do well to ransack the country in search of such talent in addition to giving the existing talent the importance that it deserves by placing it on the board of strategy to act as councils in the selection of story material. If the exploitation experts should be given the prominence that they deserve, the industry will be able to offset in a great measure the loss of male stars, for they will be able to advise the studio heads what stories lend themselves to exploitation and what do not.

This paper predicts that publicity and exploitation brains will soon be at a premium.

A THEORIST'S SUGGESTION

Hollywood was disturbed by an editorial that appeared in the June 19 issue of *The Hollywood Reporter* in which Bill Wilkerson, editor of that paper, accused the producers of not doing real conservation, criticizing their present efforts to save waste of film raw stock, negative as well as positive, in the "shooting" as being merely "back door conservation." He pointed out that, according to his opinion, real conservation of such material can be effected only by the elimination of the "B" class and down the line.

"You know and we know," said Mr. Wilkerson partly, "there is less demand for mass production today than ever before. You know and we know that good pictures are running two, three, five and even ten weeks in houses that formerly gave a maximum play of a single week. . . ."

Arthur Ungar, the editor and publisher of *Daily Variety*, in his June 22 issue, replies to Mr. Wilkerson without mentioning his name that his indictment of the production end of the industry was uninformed, and that he made such an indictment either because he was inspired by some selfish persons, or to satisfy his vanity.

That Mr. Wilkerson went off "half-cocked," as Mr. Ungar said, will be evident to any one who will resort to simple mathematics. It takes approximately 200 "A" feature pictures to supply the needs of four metropolitan first-run theatres, but this number of features cannot suffice four competitive theatres that change bill three times a week, even if they used only single features; such situations need almost 500 features.

And this figuring does not take into consideration of situations of this type that use two features on the same bill.

Of course, Mr. Wilkerson advocates the elimination of double features. And so do we all. As a matter of fact, there is not a single exhibitor in the country who would show two features on the same bill if he could conduct his theatre profitably on single features. But what can any theorist suggest to an exhibitor who loses money on single features but makes a good profit on double features? It is easy for such persons to suggest a single-feature bill to these exhibitors, because the loss does not come out of their pockets.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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Under Fiesta Stars—Republic (66 min.)	not reviewed
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What A Man—Universal (See "Never Give a Sucker an Even Break")	172
What's Cookin'—Universal (67 min.)	35
Where the Trail Ends—Monogram	not reviewed
Whispering Ghosts—20th Century-Fox (72½ min.)	62
Who is Hope Schuyler?—20th Century-Fox (57 min.)	43
Wife Takes a Flyer, The—Columbia (86 min.)	68
Wings for the Eagle—Warner Bros. (83 min.)	90
Woman of the Year—MGM (112 min.)	10
Yankee Doodle Dandy—Warner Bros. (124 min.)	92
Yank on the Burma Road, A—MGM (65 min.)	11
Yokel Boy—Republic (67 min.)	50
Young America—20th Century-Fox (72 min.)	6
You're Telling Me—Universal (60 min.)	94
Yukon Patrol, The—Republic (66 min.)	79

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 3027 Sweetheart of the Fleet—Falkenburg-Woodbury
(65 min.) May 21
- 3014 Meet the Stewarts—Holden-Dee (72 m.)... May 28
- 3043 Submarine Raider—Howard-Chapman(64m). June 4
They All Kissed the Bride—Douglas-
Crawford (85 m.) June 11
- 3044 Parachute Nurse—Chapman-Harris (63 m.) . June 18
- 3206 Raiders of the Northlands—Starrett (58 m.) . June 18
- 3045 Atlantic Convoy—Beal-Field (66 m.)..... July 2
Flight Lieutenant—O'Brien-Ford-Keyes July 9
- 3215 Prairie Gunsmoke—Tex Ritter (54 m.)..... July 16

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 237 Grand Central Murder—Van Heflin-Parker..... May
- 238 I Married An Angel—MacDonald-Eddy..... June
- 239 Pacific Rendezvous—Bowman-Rogers June
- 240 Maisie Gets Her Man—Sothorn-Skelton..... June
- 241 Her Cardboard Lover—Shearer-Taylor..... June
- 242 Tarzan's New York Adventure—Weissmuller-
O'Sullivan June
- 243 Jackass Mail—Beery-Main August
- 244 Crossroads—Powell-Lamarr August
- 245 The Affairs of Martha—Hunt-Carlson..... August
- 246 Pierre of the Plains—Carroll-Hussey..... August
- 247 Calling Dr. Gillespie—Lionel Barrymore..... August
Mrs. Miniver—Garson-Pidgeon..... No release date

Mongram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- She's In the Army—Borg-Talbot (63 m.)..... May 15
- Let's Get Tough—Brown-Rice (62 m.)..... May 22
- Down Texas Way—Rough Riders (57 m.)..... May 29
- Texas Trouble Shooter—Range Busters (55 m.).. June 12
- Rubber Racketeers—Cortez-Hudson (61 m.)..... June 26
- Lure of the Islands—Margie Hart July 3
- Smart Alecks—East Side Kids..... Aug. 7
- Hillbilly Blitzkrieg—Duncan-Kennedy Aug. 14

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4137 Reap The Wild Wind—Milland-Goddard... July 2
- 4126 Take A Letter, Darling—MacMurray-Russell. July 3
- 4127 Night in New Orleans—Poster-Morison-
Dekker)
- 4128 Dr. Broadway—Carey-Phillips)
- 4129 Sweater Girl—Bracken-Preisser) No
4130 Beyond the Blue Horizon—Lamour-Haley) release
4140 Undercover Man—Western) date
Holiday Inn—Astaire-Crosby) set
Are Husbands Necessary?—Milland-Field)
Tombstone—The Town Too Tough to Die—
Richard Dix)
I Live On Danger—Morris-Parker)

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 218 Inside the Law—Ford (65 m.)..... May 8
- 209 The Mad Monster—Downs-Nagel (78 m.)... May 22
- 260 Billy the Kid's Smoking Guns—Crabbe
(63 m.) (re.) May 29
- 201 Men of San Quentin—Hughes (80 m.)..... May 29
- 219 Gallant Lady—Hobart-Blackmer (70 m.)... May 29
- 208 Bombs Over Burma—Wong-Madison (re.)
(68 m.) June 5
- 265 The Lone Rider in Texas Justice—Houston
(60 m.) June 12
- 212 They Raid by Night—Talbot-Neise (72 m.) . June 26
- 254 Tumbleweed Trail—Bill Boyd July 10
- 204 Prisoner of Japan—Baxter-Michael July 22
- 203 Jungle Siren—Corio-Crabbe Aug. 14
- 220 A Yank in Libya—King-Woodbury..... Aug. 21

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 124 The Yukon Patrol—Lane-Strange (68 m.)... Apr. 30
- 134 Remember Pearl Harbor—Don Barry (75 m.) . May 18
- 156 Romance on the Range—Roy Rogers (64 m.) . May 18
- 147 Stardust on the Sage—Gene Autry (66 m.)... May 25
- 177 The Cyclone Kid—Red Barry (56 m.)..... May 31
- 103 In Old California—Wayne-Barnes (89 m.)... May 31
- 120 Moonlight Masquerade—O'Keefe-Frazee
(69 m.) June 10
- 167 The Phantom Plainsmen—Bob Steele (56 m.) . June 16
- 157 Sons of the Pioneers—Roy Rogers (61 m.)... July 2

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 230 Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost—Errol-Velez. . June 26

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 247 Moontide—Gabin-Lupino-Rains May 29
- 248 It Happened In Flatbush—Nolan-Landis... June 5
- 249 The Magnificent Dope—Fonda-Ameche-Bari. June 12
- 250 Thru Different Eyes—Howard-Blaine June 19
- 251 Ten Gentlemen From West Point—Montgomery-
O'Hara-Cregar June 26

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Friendly Enemies—Wininger-Ruggles June 26

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6009 Broadway—Raft-Blair May 8
- 6054 Escape From Hong Kong—Carrillo-Devine.. May 15
- 6024 Almost Married—Paige-Frazee May 22
- Eagle Squadron—Stack-Barrymore-Hall May 29
- 6019 Tough As They Come—Dead End Kids..... June 5
- 6011 Private Buckaroo—Andrews Sisters-J. Lewis. June 12
- 6055 Top Sergeant—Carrillo-Devine June 12
- 6043 There's One Born Every Minute—Herbert... June 26
- Lady In A Jam—Dunne-Bellamy (re.)..... June 26
- Deep In The Heart of Texas—Stack-Gwynne. July 3
- 6056 Danger In the Pacific—Don Terry..... July 12
- 6040 Drums of the Congo—Erwin-Munson..... July 17
- Invisible Agent—Massey-Hall July 31

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 135 The Big Shot—Bogart-Manning June 13
- 134 Sergeant York—Cooper-Leslie July 4
- 136 Wings For The Eagle—Sheridan-Morgan... July 18
- 137 Escape From Crime—Travis-Bishop..... July 25

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 3754 Wolf Chases Pig—Cartoon (re.) (7 m.).... Apr. 30
- 3659 Community Sing No. 9 (10 m.) Apr. 30
- 3704 The Wild and Wooly West—Cartoon (re.)
(7 m.) Apr. 30
- 3859 Screen Snapshots No. 9 (10 m.)..... May 8
- 3808 Fit to Fight—Sports (10 m.)..... May 22
- 3507 Cinderella Goes to a Party—Cartoon (7 m.) . May 22
- 3703 A Battle for a Bottle—Cartoon (re.) (7 m.) . May 29
- 3660 Community Sing No. 10 (10 m.)..... June 5
- 3860 Screen Snapshots No. 10 (9 m.) June 19
- 3508 Woodman Spare That Tree—Col. Rap. (8m) . June 19
- 3809 Tennis Rhythm with Bobby Riggs—Sports
(10 m.) June 26
- 3755 The Bulldog and the Baby—Cartoon..... July 3

Columbia—Two Reels

- 3153 Death In the Cockpit—Captain No. 13
(16 m.) May 10
- 3154 Scourge of Revenge—Captain No. 14 (18m.) May 17
- 3181 The Totem Talks—Perils of the Royal
Mounted No. 1 (29 m.)..... May 20
- 3412 A Study In Socks—Gloveslingers (17½m.).. May 21
- 3155 The Fatal Hour—Captain No. 15 (17 m.)... May 24
- 3182 The Night Raiders—Mounted No. 2 (20m.).. May 27
- 3183 The Water God's Revenge—Mounted No. 3
(18 m.) June 3
- 3434 Tire Man, Spare My Tires—All Star (18m.).. June 4
- 3184 Beware, The Vigilantes—Mounted No. 4
(18 m.) June 10
- 3185 The Masked Mountie—Mounted No. 5
(18 m.) June 17
- 3435 Olaf Laughs Last—All Star (16½ m.)..... June 18
- 3407 Matri-Phony—Stooges July 2

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- K-384 The Woman In the House—Passing Parade
(11 m.) May 9
- W-348 Little Gravel Voice—Cartoon (8 m.)..... May 16
- T-321 Picturesque Patycuaro—Travel (9 m.).... May 23
- S-368 Pete Smith's Scrapbook—P. Smith (9 m.).. May 23
- S-369 Barbee-cues—Pete Smith (9 m.) May 30
- W-349 Puss 'N Toots—Cartoon (7 m.)..... May 30
- C-397 Surprised Parties—Our Gang (11 m.)..... May 30
- T-322 Exotic Mexico—Travel (9 m.)..... June 13
- K-385 The Incredible Stranger—Passing Parade
(11 m.) June 20
- W-350 Bats In the Belfry—Cartoon (7 m.)..... July 4

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-303 Don't Talk—Special (22 min.).....Feb. 28
- A-304 For the Common Defense (21 m.)..... June 20

Paramount—One Reel

- UI-4 Mr. Straus Takes a Walk—Mad. Mod.(9m.) May 8
- R1-10 Hero Worship—Sportlight (10 m.) May 15
- Q1-5 The Quiz Kids No. 5 (10 m.)..... May 22
- AI-5 Hands of Victory—Headliner (11 m.)..... May 22
- YI-4 Speaking of Animals—In the Circus (9 m.)... May 29
- W1-7 Superman in the Electric Earthquake—
Superman (9 m.) June 5
- E1-9 Many Tanks—Popeye (7 m.) June 5
- S1-4 Keeping in Shape—Benchley (9 m.)..... June 12
- J1-5 Popular Science No. 5 (11 m.)..... June 12
- R1-11 Parachute Athletes—Sportlight (10 m.)... June 19
- Z1-4 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 4 (10 m.)
(re.) June 19

RKO—One Reel

- 24103 Donald Gets Drafted—Disney (9 m.)..... May 9
- 24310 Byron Nelson—Sportscope (8 m.)..... May 15
- 24410 Picture People No. 10 (8 m.)..... May 22
- 24207 Information Please No. 7 (11 m.)..... May 22
- 24104 The Army Mascot—Disney (7 m.)..... May 22
- 24105 Donald's Garden—Disney (7 m.)..... June 12

RKO—Two Reels

- 23503 Cactus Capers—Ray Whitley (17 m.)..... Apr. 24
- 23110 March of Time No. 10 (20 m.) May 8
- 23705 Framing Father—Leon Errol (18 m.)..... May 15
- 23111 March of Time No. 11 (17 m.)..... June 5
- 23406 Cooks and Crooks—Edgar Kennedy (17m.) June 5

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 2512 The Stork's Mistake—Terry-Toon (7 m.)... May 29
- 2405 Courageous Australia—World Today (10m.) June 5
- 2562 All About Dogs—Terry-Toon (7 m.)..... June 12
- 2108 India The Golden—Magic Carpet (8 m.)... June 19
- 2512 Wilful Willie—Terry-Toon (7 m.)..... June 26
- 2406 Men of West Point—World Today (9 m.).. July 3
- 2513 Gandy Goose In The Outpost—Terry-Toon
(7 m.) July 10
- 2206 Guardians Of The Sea—Cameraman (9 m.).. July 17
- 2514 Gandy Goose In Tire Trouble—Terry-Toon
(7 m.) July 24

Universal—One Reel

- 6379 Pussy Cat Cafe—Stranger Than Fiction
(8½ m.) Apr. 20
- 6362 Call of the Sea—Scenic (9 m.)..... May 4
- 6249 Goodbye Mr. Moth—Cartoon (7 m.)..... May 11
- 6380 Tom Thumb Church—Stranger Than Fiction
(9 m.) May 18
- 6250 Nutty Pine Cabin—Cartoon (7 m.)..... June 1
- 6363 Wings For Freedom—Scenic (10 m.)..... June 8
- 6381 Mysterious Fountain of Health—Stranger Than
Fiction (9 m.) June 15
- 6251 Ace In the Hole—Cartoon (7 m.)..... June 22
- 6382 Master Carver—Stranger Than Fiction (9m) July 6
- 6364 Antarctic Outpost—Scenic (10 m.) July 13
- 6383 Women at the Plough—Stranger Than Fic... July 20
- 6252 Juke Box Jamboree—Cartoon (7 m.)..... July 27

Universal—Two Reels

- 6590 Mob Vengeance—Gang Busters No. 10
(17 m.) June 2
- 6591 Wanted at Headquarters—Gang Busters
No. 11 (18 m.)..... June 9
- 6233 Rainbow Rhythm—Musical (15 m.)..... June 10
- 6592 The Long Chance—Gang Busters No. 12
(18 m.) June 16
- 6593 Law and Order—Gang Busters No. 13
(19 m.) June 23
- 7881 Wings Aflame—Junior G-Men of the Air
No. 1 (26 m.) June 30
- 7882 The Plunge of Peril—Junior G-Men No. 2
(20 m.) July 7
- 7883 Hidden Danger—Junior G-Men No. 3 (21m) July 14
- 6232 Merry Madcaps—Musical (16 m.)..... July 15
- 7884 Tunnel of Terror—Junior G-Men No. 4
(17 m.) July 21
- 7885 The Black Dragon Strikes—Junior G-Men
No. 5 (18 m.)..... July 28

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 7611 Hobby Horse Laffs—Looney Tunes (7 m.)... June 6
- 7408 Hatteras Honkers—Sports Parade (10 m.)
(re.) June 6
- 7721 Double Chaser—Merrie Melody (7 m.)..... June 20
- 7612 Gopher Goofy—Looney Tunes (7 m.)..... June 20
- 7613 Wacky Blackout—Looney Tunes (7 m.)... July 4
- 7722 Bugs Bunny Gets The Bird—Mer. Mel. (7m) July 4
- 7409 Hunter's Paradise—Sports Parade (10 m.).. July 18
- 7723 Foney Fables—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) July 18
- 7724 The Squawkin' Hawk—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).. Aug. 1
- 7614 The Duckator—Looney Tunes (7 m.)..... Aug. 1
- 7410 Argentine Horses—Sports Parade (10 m.).. Aug. 8
- 7510 Glen Gray and Band—Mel. Mast. (10 m.).. Aug. 8
- '615 Eatin' On The Cuff—Looney Tunes (7 m.).. Aug. 15
- 7125 Fresh Hare—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) Aug. 15
- 7616 The Impatient Patient—Looney Tunes (7m) Aug. 29
- 7726 Fox Pop—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)..... Aug. 29

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 7109 Calif. Jr. Symphony—Bway. Brev. (20 m.).. Apr. 18
- 7110 Pacific Frontier—Bway. Brev. (20 m.)..... May 30
- 7004 March On America—Special (20 m.)..... June 20
- 7005 Spanish Fiesta—Special (20 m.)..... June 27
- 7111 Daughter of Rosie O'Grady (20 m.)..... July 4
- 7006 Men of the Sky—Special (20 m.)..... July 25
- 7112 West Point On Parade—Special (20 m.)... Aug. 22

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES**

Pathe News

- 25197 Sat. (O.) Aug. 1
 - 25298 Wed. (E.) Aug. 5
 - 25199 Sat. (O.) Aug. 8
 - 252100 Wed.(E.) Aug. 12
 - 251101 Sat.(O.) Aug. 15
 - 251102 Wed.(E.) Aug. 19
 - 251103 Sat.(O.) Aug. 22
 - 251104 Wed.(E.) Aug. 26
- (End of 1941-42 Season)

Universal

- 107 Wednesday Aug. 5
- 108 Friday Aug. 7
- 109 Wednesday Aug. 12
- 110 Friday Aug. 14
- 111 Wednesday Aug. 19
- 112 Friday Aug. 21
- 113 Wednesday Aug. 26
- 114 Friday Aug. 28

Paramount News

- 97 Saturday ... Aug. 1
 - 98 Wednesday Aug. 5
 - 99 Saturday ... Aug. 8
 - 100 Wednesday Aug. 12
 - 101 Saturday ... Aug. 15
 - 102 Wednesday Aug. 19
 - 103 Saturday ... Aug. 22
 - 104 Wednesday Aug. 26
- (End of 1941-42 Season)

Metrotone News

- 293 Tuesday ... Aug. 4
 - 294 Thursday .. Aug. 6
 - 295 Tuesday ... Aug. 11
 - 296 Thursday .. Aug. 13
 - 297 Tuesday ... Aug. 18
 - 298 Thursday ... Aug. 20
 - 299 Tuesday ... Aug. 25
 - 300 Thursday .. Aug. 27
 - 301 Tuesday ... Sept. 1
 - 302 Thursday .. Sept. 3
 - 303 Tuesday ... Sept. 8
- (End of 1941-42 Season)

Fox Movietone

- 94 Saturday ... Aug. 1
 - 95 Wednesday Aug. 5
 - 96 Saturday ... Aug. 8
 - 97 Wednesday Aug. 12
 - 98 Saturday ... Aug. 15
 - 99 Wednesday Aug. 19
 - 100 Saturday ... Aug. 22
 - 101 Wednesday Aug. 26
 - 102 Saturday ... Aug. 29
 - 103 Wednesday Sept. 2
 - 104 Saturday ... Sept. 5
- (End of 1941-42 Season)

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Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.
A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
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Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher
P. S. HARRISON, Editor
Established July 1, 1919
Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 1942

No. 28

Let There Be No More "Sissy" Stuff in War Pictures!

This is a tough war, and only tough fighting and rough-neck tactics will win it.

We, in the picture industry, have the greatest weapon in the world with which we can help to toughen every fiber in our fighting men and our civilian workers, as well as in their mothers, wives or sweethearts.

I am going to recommend dirty tactics, contrary to the policy of my paper. But this is a dirty war and the "turn the other cheek" theory is out for the duration.

Our President and the British Prime Minister have said that we'll have to face "blood and sweat and tears" before we reach the time when we'll face the joys of victory. So why not feed our nation with pictures that deal with "blood and sweat and tears" in which the men of our forces employ the tactics that the enemy is employing, tactics that, in the language of the wrestling mat, bar no holds in our battle to win the war.

Our Government is trying to persuade the mothers, wives and daughters not to write sad, depressing letters to their loved ones at the front, because such letters destroy their morale. Why not, then, use this powerful medium of ours to sell them the idea that a sad letter weakens the fighting spirit of our fighting men and endangers their lives, and that a letter inciting them against the treacherous enemy heightens their brave spirit and fills them with a desire to finish the nasty job as quickly as possible. We can do it through this medium of ours, the motion pictures, because the motion picture speaks a language that they can all understand.

This is a tough war, and requires rough fighting and knock-down, drag out tactics. We are dealing with a formidable foe, employing foul tactics, and we can "lick" him only by employing similar tactics. So let us use our war pictures to present these facts to our people back of the lines. Let's stop telling the mothers, wives, sweethearts that our boys are fed well, and that they are leading the "life of Reilly." Surely they are fed well—when they can get food; but in a battle such as that of Bataan, that of Corregidor, our boys no doubt face starvation. In Japan our boys, prisoners of war, if we are to accept unconfirmed rumors, are dragged through the streets of Tokyo and other cities before Japanese mobs in order that the gullible Japanese civilians may be falsely impressed with the superiority of the Japanese race.

If our war pictures should reflect the tough-fighting idea, I am sure that the mothers, wives, sweethearts

of our fighting men will change their viewpoint and, instead of saying to themselves, "I hope my boy will not get hurt," or "I hope he is not lonesome," they will be inspired with courage and transmit that courage to the men at the front so that these men might go into battle with the determination to cut the "guts" out of the enemy soldiers. If we should use our war pictures to preach that idea, stiffening our civil population, we will render to our nation the greatest possible service. Thus we shall win the gratitude of our Army and Navy officers.

Let us turn this assignment over to such "gutsy" writers as Ben Hecht, Gene Fowler, Dudley Nichols, W. R. Burnett, Jim Tully, Rowland Brown and to others of similar gift, and the job will be done well; and if any censor should interpose his prewar rules he should be told to climb up a tree and stay there for the duration—any official of this type who should interfere in the effort to present the war in this manner should be considered unfit to serve the nation. Let the war censorship board determine what is right or wrong in pictures for the duration.

After the stories are prepared, they should be given such "gutsy" directors as Howard Hawks, Henry Hathaway, DeMille, George Seitz, Sam Wood, or other directors of similar gift, with instructions to forget that they are gentlemen, because this is not a gentlemen's war.

And let us not allow some Senator to raise the question of "propaganda." Certainly it is propaganda; it is propaganda intended to help our government win the war. This is our only duty just now. If we don't do it, we'll not have a free nation in which to live as free men.

HERE AND THERE

THE SOLDIER WITH HIGH MORALE makes a better soldier than the one with low morale, even if all other factors are equal.

One of the toughest problems facing the high command of our armed forces is how to discourage people back home from writing to the soldiers depressing letters, for these destroy morale.

The other day I was told that the Gem Razor Company, in a desire to help keep the morale of the soldiers high, resorted to an ingenious idea: Equipping a truck with a sound recording outfit, it sent it to a town to record messages from a few relatives to men in the training camps.

(Continued on last page)

"The Pied Piper" with Monty Woolley, Roddy McDowall and Anne Baxter

(20th Century-Fox, August 21; time, 86 min.)

Excellent! This comedy drama may well be held up as a model war film, one that delivers a solid message, and yet is highly entertaining. It is the sort of entertainment that should delight all types of audiences. The action centers around an elderly Englishman's attempt to reach London from France after the fall of Dunkerque, taking with him two English children. Before his mission is completed, he finds himself with six children on his hands, and suspected of being a British spy. Its comedy is both subtle and hilarious, its drama is heart rendering. Extremely amusing is the sequence in which a German officer makes a deal with Woolley to take his niece to England. The child's father was an Aryan, and her mother a Jewess, thus Germany considered the child half-Aryan, and her uncle feared for her safety. Brilliantly directed, the picture intelligently depicts the havoc wrought in the lives of the French people at the time Germany occupied France. The German occupation army is shown as a polite but stern force, under which the French live in a constant state of subjugation. The performances are uniformly excellent, with that of Monty Woolley's outstanding. It is a meritorious picture, and word of mouth advertising should assure its success at the box office:—

Vacationing at a hotel in the French Alps, Monty Woolley, an Englishman, announces that he will return to England, when news of Dunkerque comes over the radio. Lester Matthews, a League of Nations official, and Jill Esmond, his wife, must return to Geneva. They beg Woolley to take with him their two children, Roddy McDowall and Peggy Ann Garner. He agrees grumpily, for he dislikes Roddy. Earlier that day they had argued. Roddy insists that Rochester is a city in the United States; Woolley, that it is a state. At Joigny, the Paris train ends its run, so swift had been the advance of the Germans. The three settle down for the night in a corner of the crowded station. Roddy awakens Woolley with the news that a bus was leaving for Chartres. Once settled inside the bus, Woolley discovers that there are now three children with him. Roddy explains, quite innocently, that he had offered to take Fleurette Zama, a little French girl, to her father, a London hotel waiter. Woolley shows his dissatisfaction. When German planes swoop down on them, Woolley and the children take safety in a field. The bus is blown up. Seeking refuge in a barn that night, Woolley finds that Maurice Tauzin, a little French boy, had joined the group. Roddy explains that Maurice's parents were killed in a bus explosion. Woolley's antipathy breaks completely and he becomes very much the fond father. Touched by his kindness, Roddy admits that Rochester is a state, and apologizes for arguing about it. The Germans take over Chartres just as they arrive. They seek refuge in the home of Odette Myrtle and Anne Baxter, her daughter. Woolley discovers that Merrill Rodin, a little Dutch boy, had somehow joined the group. Anne takes them to Landerneau where J. Carroll Naish, her uncle, finds Marcel Dalio, a fisherman, who agrees to sail them across the channel. As they board the boat, the Germans capture them. Major Otto Preminger thinks Woolley is a spy, masquerading as a "pied piper," but he finally becomes convinced that Woolley is just what he claims to be. He proposes to let him sail for England, provided Woolley take along his five-year-old niece, who was half-Aryan, and put her on a ship to the United States, where he had a brother living in the city of Rochester. Woolley agrees. The Major intends to hold Anne as hostage until he hears from his brother that the child had arrived safely. On the boat crossing the channel, Woolley apologizes to Roddy about Rochester.

Based on the novel by Nevil Shute, Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it. Irving Pichel directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Loves of Edgar Allan Poe" with John Sheppard and Linda Darnell

(20th Century-Fox, August 28; time, 66 min.)

This "fictionalized" biography of the life of Edgar Allan Poe, the poet, is a slow-moving program drama, mostly on the sombre side, and limited in its appeal. It is the story of a man unhappy in his life and wretched in his death. Contrary to what the title suggests, Poe's love is for but one woman, his wife, who inspires him to write many of his greatest works, some of which are incorporated in the film. His fight for copyright legislation is the cause of his downfall. It is doubtful whether general audiences will take more than a mild interest in it, even though the production values are good:—

Brought up by foster parents, Edgar Allan Poe (John

Sheppard) grows up as a strong headed young man, with a desire to become an author. Poe loves Frances Allan (Mary Howard), his foster mother, but not so John Allan (Frank Conroy), his foster father, a thrifty Scotsman with whom he had always been at odds. Because of the meager allowance he received from Allan, Poe incurs many debts while at college. Allan refuses to further finance his writing career, and insists that he go to West Point. Poe is dismissed from the Academy when he pays more attention to his writing than to military strategy. He makes his way to Baltimore, and at the home of Maria Clemm (Jane Darwell), his aunt, he meets Virginia (Linda Darnell), her daughter. They live in poverty, but invite Poe to stay with them. Virginia helps him forget Elmira Royster (Virginia Gilmore), who had jilted him. Poe writes many stories, one of which wins a \$50 prize. Two publishers, one in Philadelphia and another in Richmond, offer him a job as editor of their magazines. He chooses Richmond to be near his mother, but she dies before he arrives. Poe and Virginia marry. He wages a campaign for a copyright law and the publisher, displeased, discharges him. Poe becomes editor for the Philadelphia publisher. Charles Dickens (Morton Lowry), on a visit to the United States, upbraids Poe for dropping his copyright fight. When Poe informs his new publisher that he was going to resume his copyright fight, he, too, discharges him. Ostracized by publishers, Poe is reduced to the direst poverty. Virginia takes ill with a lingering disease. When she dies, his world falls from under him. He takes to drink. He disappears and some time later, unkempt, haggard, and an old man at 40, he dies in a Baltimore hospital.

Samuel Hoffenstein and Tom Reed wrote the screen play, Byron Foy produced it, and Harry Lachman directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Footlight Serenade" with Betty Grable, Victor Mature and John Payne

(20th Century-Fox, August 1; time, 80 min.)

Offering comedy, romance, music, and dancing of the type to appeal to most picture-goers, this picture shapes up as fairly good mass entertainment, the sort that puts one in a good mood and takes one's mind away from the cares of the day. Most of the action unfolds backstage during rehearsals for a show, and deals with the amorous antics of a conceited prizefighter champion—the star of the show—and his unwitting advances to a talented chorus girl, who was the secret bride of his sparring partner. This leads to many complex situations, some of which are highly amusing. The production is good, and the direction and acting satisfactory:—

Phil Silvers, a comedian, induces James Gleason, Broadway producer, to sign Victor Mature, heavyweight boxing champion, as the star of a musical show. Mature compels Gleason to sign Cobina Wright, Jr., a society blues singer, as his leading lady. While Gleason is interviewing chorus girls, Mature is attracted to Betty Grable. Through his influence, Betty and Jane Wyman, her pal, are selected. John Payne, Betty's boy-friend, comes to the theater to bid her goodbye. Unemployed and discouraged, he had decided to return to his home town. Wayne finds himself in a crowd of fighters applying for a job as Mature's sparring partner in the show. He is chosen for the job. Mature grows fonder of Betty, and induces Gleason to appoint her as Cobina's understudy. Payne and Betty marry secretly. Mature deliberately quarrels with Cobina, who promptly quits the show. Gleason has no alternative but to give the lead to Betty. Payne considers this news as a nice "wedding present." But Gleason pleads with him to keep the marriage secret; he fears that Mature would quit the show if he learned that Betty was married. Payne reluctantly agrees to say nothing. On the eve of the opening, Mature insists that Betty go out with him. She consents, but only if Payne and Jane come along. Payne finds it difficult to restrain himself when Mature becomes attentive to Betty, but he is held in check by Jane. After taking the girls home, Payne and Mature leave together, but Payne returns. He and Betty decide to spend the night at a hotel. Cobina sees them enter the hotel. On opening night, Cobina visits Mature backstage and informs him that Betty and Payne were "two-timing" him. Angered, Mature tells Payne that he will square matters with him during their fight on the stage. Payne takes a terrific beating. When Mature asks him if he wants more, Payne replies that he intends to pay him back for molesting his wife. Realizing the truth, Mature apologizes saying that he never "made a pass at another guy's wife." All become friends.

Robert Ellis, Helen Logan and Lynn Starling wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Gregory Ratoff directed.

Some of the scenes are morally objectionable for children.

"A-Haunting We Will Go" with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy

(20th Century-Fox, August 7; time, 67 min.)

For those movie patrons who see humor in Oliver Hardy slapping down Stan Laurel at the slightest provocation, this mediocre slap-stick comedy is recommended; others will certainly find it boring. The Laurel and Hardy style of comedy seems to have become outmoded, and it is doubtful whether the spectator will manifest any interest in their doings. The story is inane, and its comedy should prove more entertaining to children than to adults. Its sixty-seven minutes running time is much too long:—

Released from jail for vagrancy, Laurel and Hardy accept employment to accompany a corpse on a train trip to Dayton, Ohio, where they were to turn over the coffin to an undertaker who would meet them. Unknown to them, the "corpse" was Henry Morgan, a gangster, who chose this method to evade the police so that he could claim an inheritance, which had been left to him by an uncle. Aiding Morgan in this scheme were Elisha Cook, Jr., Lou Lubin, and Don Costello, members of his gang; all of whom mistrusted each other. Dante, a famous magician, and his troupe, board the same train as Laurel and Hardy and, inadvertently, the coffin is mixed with one used in Dante's act. Having delivered the wrong coffin in Dayton, Laurel and Hardy follow Dante to the theater in which he was appearing. Dante employs them in his act. When the gangsters discover the coffin switch, they trace Laurel and Hardy to the theater and threaten them. They are trapped, however, when Edward Gargan, a detective comes backstage. The gangsters think he is after them, but actually, he is watching John Shelton, Dante's stage manager, who had once been involved in a crime. Laurel and Hardy try to help the gangsters escape, but innocently lead them to fall through a trap door, from which they cannot escape. The show goes on and in time comes the trick in which the coffin is a vital prop. Dante opens the lid and inside finds the body of Costello, shot and killed. Gargan investigates and learns the story from Laurel and Hardy, who tell him that the gangsters are trapped in the basement of the theater. While Gargan arrests the gangsters, Laurel discovers Morgan hiding on a catwalk and captures him. Morgan confesses to Costello's murder. Addison Richards arrives at the theater and reveals himself to be a G-Man who had created a fictional inheritance to trap Morgan.

Lou Breslow wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Alfred Werker directed it.

"Flight Lieutenant" with Pat O'Brien, Glenn Ford and Evelyn Keyes

(Columbia, July 9; time, 80 min.)

This melodrama, which combines aviation with a "father and son" theme, is fairly good program entertainment. Although based on an oft-told tale, the timeliness of the theme, the expert direction, and the good performances maintain one's interest to a fair degree. The picture has many dramatic moments and one feels sympathy for the main characters. The action, though slow at the start, gains momentum as the picture unfolds. The most thrilling sequence is at the finish where the father sacrifices his life for his son while testing a plane. There is a pleasant romance:—

Pat O'Brien, World War ace and successful commercial pilot, crashes one night after drinking too much. His copilot is killed. O'Brien makes restitution by arranging for Jonathan Hale, a lawyer, to administer all his money in behalf of the dead man's wife and child. O'Brien's flying license is revoked, and Lieutenant Minor Watson, the dead man's brother, vows to obtain revenge. O'Brien sails for South America, leaving his small son in the care of Hale. In Dutch Guiana, O'Brien works for a wildcat airline and continuously drinks to forget his past. For ten years he sends money home to his son, and letters in which he paints himself as an important official. Glenn Ford, O'Brien's son, attends an aviation school, where he is instructed by Watson. He falls in love with Evelyn Keyes, Watson's niece, but does not know that she is the daughter of the man his father killed. Only when O'Brien comes to attend the graduation exercises does Ford learn the truth. On the eve of his solo flight, Ford reveals his identity to Evelyn and Watson. Watson makes the test so tough, that Ford thinks he had failed. Without awaiting the result, he follows O'Brien to South America, unaware that he had passed the test and that Evelyn loved him despite her uncle's bitterness. In South America, Ford's illusions about his father are shattered. When the radio announces the news of Pearl Harbor,

Ford returns home and joins the air force. O'Brien, too, enlists, and is transferred to the air field at which Ford was stationed. He learns that Ford was to test-pilot a new plane designed by Watson. Discovering that the high-speed plane had a faulty tail assembly, O'Brien pleads with Watson to cancel the flight, but to no avail. O'Brien knocks the boy unconscious and takes the plane up himself. The tail gives way and the plane crashes, but O'Brien's radio reports reveal the essential information. By his heroic work, O'Brien had regained his honor. Evelyn and Ford are reunited.

Michael Blamfont wrote the screen play, B. P. Schulberg produced it, and Sidney Salkow directed it. In the cast are Frank Puglia, Larry Parks, Douglas Croft and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Little Tokyo, U.S.A." with Preston Foster, Brenda Joyce and Harold Huber

(20th Century-Fox, August 14; time, 63 min.)

Just another program espionage melodrama. The story is familiar and, as is in most pictures of this type, slightly far-fetched. Yet it has the ingredients to satisfy the average picture-goer. There is fast action and suspense, as well as an incidental romance. With its locale the Japanese sector of Los Angeles, prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the picture follows a typical "cops and robbers" routine in which the hero, a detective, breaks up the espionage ring. The main thing in its favor is its timeliness:—

Harold Huber, an American-born Jap importer, heads a Japanese spy ring in the Japanese section of Los Angeles, made up of merchants. Preston Foster, a detective, is suspicious of many activities within the district. When Foster stops a street fight between Edward Soho, a Japanese boy, and an American boy, Edward unwittingly reveals that his father talks to Tokio via shortwave radio every night. Foster visits James B. Leong, a loyal American Jap. Leong agrees to help him investigate Abner Biberman, Edward's father. They arrange to meet later that evening at a restaurant. Foster arrives at the restaurant accompanied by Brenda Joyce, his girl-friend. Brenda, a radio commentator, broadcasts the woman's angle on the news. When Leong fails to appear, Foster and Brenda go to his home only to find that he had moved. Foster decides to investigate Biberman immediately. Although he finds nothing, Foster is suspicious. Later he learns that Leong had been beheaded. Unknown to Brenda, Don Douglas, owner of the radio station, is a German spy in league with Huber. June Duprez, who poses as Biberman's daughter, is Douglas' girl-friend. To eliminate Foster, June lures him to her apartment where she drugs him. Douglas enters, pours whiskey over Foster, then cold-bloodedly shoots June to make it appear as if Foster had murdered her during a drunken brawl. Foster is jailed, but he escapes by changing clothes with a pickpocket he had once befriended. Foster finds refuge with a friend in the county morgue. He trails Huber to the spies' headquarters where the radio was hidden. Foster telephones Brenda at the radio station to meet him at the morgue, disclosing that Douglas, too, is a spy. Douglas overhears the conversation and abducts Brenda. He and the other spies go to the morgue where they locate Foster. At a given signal, police rush into the room and capture the gang. Foster's call to Brenda had been a bait to trap the spies.

George Bricker wrote the screen play, Byron Foy produced it, and Otto Brower directed it. In the cast are George E. Stone, J. Farrell MacDonald and others.

"Tower of Terror" with Wilfred Lawson, Movita and Michael Rennie

(Monogram, April 1; time, 62 min.)

Michael Rennie, a British secret agent, becomes assistant to a lighthouse keeper off the German-occupied coast, from which he hopes to make his escape with valuable documents. There he finds Wilfred Lawson, a half-mad keeper, and Movita, a girl he had rescued from drowning. Lawson believes the girl to be his dead wife, reincarnated. Rennie learns that the girl is a refugee from a Nazi concentration camp, and arouses Lawson's jealousy by his attentions to her. The two men fight. Meanwhile the Gestapo discovers Rennie's identity and shell the lighthouse. A British boat rescues Rennie and Movita, while Lawson dies amidst the lighthouse ruins.

John Reinhardt wrote the screen play, John Argyle produced it, and Lawrence Huntington directed it.

Objectionable for children.

The effect was so electric that the razor company equipped more trucks, sent them to different towns, and broadcast an invitation to relatives of soldiers to record messages for their loved ones.

You may rest assured that the razor company's representatives discouraged these relatives from sending sad, depressing messages; it impressed them with necessity of sending cheerful messages.

The success of this experiment induced the razor company to expand the idea by recording messages from the soldiers to their loved ones at home. This, too, has proved highly successful.

The motion picture theatres have a chance to do similar missionary work. They could show a trailer, appealing to the people to refrain from writing sad letters to the men in uniform, and to write the cheerful kind. They might even provide desks with writing materials to encourage mothers, wives, sweethearts or other relatives for writing a letter then and there. Such a service would be invaluable to the nation.

Some enterprising producing company might attach a trailer of this kind to every one of the features it releases.

This thought is offered to the industry for consideration.

* * *

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ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, Harry Sherman, producer of the Hopalong Cassidy series of westerns, wrote a large number of important motion picture editors of daily newspapers complaining to them for using the term, "horse opera" in reference to western pictures.

After stating how difficult it is to produce good pictures, and how hard his organization worked to make the Hopalong Cassidy's worthy of public support, Mr. Sherman said:

"What I'm writing to you about is the prevailing custom of referring to western pictures as 'horse operas.' Many great artists in the various branches of writing, acting and production pour their talents into making these highly entertaining films and to pass them off so slightly is to discount the intelligence of the vast audiences they entertain.

"Let me pass on a few interesting bits of information:

"The fact is that western pictures have been from the beginning of the industry, and still are, for a majority of the theatres in the United States the so-called bread and butter pictures and the profit pictures. Many community theatres make no profit at all on society dramas and 'artistic' pictures, but depend upon the family trade which comes to see westerns to pay their rent of the theatre and make the living expenses of the exhibitor."

After giving the titles of a number of western pictures that made a great box-office success, Mr. Sherman added:

"The three highest paid actors the industry has ever known were William Farnum, Tom Mix and William S. Hart. They were western stars. They brought thousands upon thousands of new fans to moving pictures, starting with the youngsters who were four and five years of age. . . ."

Mr. Sherman closed his letter as follows:

"Would it be asking too much to solicit your personal interest in this problem and to ask that as much credit be given western pictures as is given any other kind of photoplay? The thousands of people engaged

in producing, distributing and exhibiting western pictures will be grateful to you for your support, not overlooking the millions of western fans who genuinely like their entertainment in this form."

Mr. Sherman's letter received wide publicity. More than one hundred photoplay editors commented on it favorably. A few of them accused him in a friendly and tolerant spirit that his letter was a "plug" for his own westerns; nevertheless they reproduced either his entire letter or liberal portions of it, most of them assuring him as well as their readers that, in employing the term "horse opera," they meant to show no disrespect, but merely to "type" the picture.

The publicity that Mr. Sherman has received did much good to the industry as a whole, even though it helped his own pictures particularly. And he received this favorable publicity only because his letter handled the matter in a delicate and dignified manner, and not arrogantly.

Incidentally, the term "horse opera" is employed derogatorily only by people in Hollywood—mostly by those who make the "superior" type, as they think, of pictures. It is about time that they abandoned the term, for its use does harm to a type of pictures that have so wide a following.

ACCORDING TO A STATEMENT issued by Mr. Nicholas M. Schenck, president of Loew's, Inc., the exhibitors, customers of MGM, will not be required to increase their admission prices when they play "Mrs. Miniver."

HARRISON'S REPORTS feels sure that this announcement will please the exhibitors. At a time when the Government is doing all that there is in its power to put a ceiling on prices of commodities, it is not so easy for the exhibitors to explain to their patrons satisfactorily an increase of admission prices on outstanding pictures.

There is no question that many picture-goers are glad to pay a higher price for something they want. On the other hand, many of them will say that they have been paying regular admission prices on pictures that did not deserve an admission price at all, and naturally they are displeased when the price is increased when something good comes along.

No doubt Bill Rodgers, the MGM sales head, took a great responsibility on his shoulders in recommending to Mr. Schenck a "no admission increase." And so did Mr. Schenck, in accepting Mr. Rodgers' recommendation. This paper feels, however, that their decision will bring them no regrets; "Mrs. Miniver" is the type of picture that may be seen over and over again by the same patron, without a feeling of fatigue. And there will be as large a percentage of people who will see it more than once as any other picture that has been released in the history of motion pictures.

* * *

NOW AND THEN your copy of HARRISON'S REPORTS is lost in the mails, but you don't know that it is missing until you look up for some information you want. In such a case you are greatly inconvenienced.

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1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1942

No. 29

MOBILIZE OUR "KID" POWER

From exhibitors throughout the country comes glowing accounts of the many successes they have had in the various drives to aid the war effort. Bond sales, the Red Cross, the U.S.O., the War Relief organizations, scrap rubber—in all these drives the exhibitors have given their all, and for it they deserve the nation's thanks.

Unquestionably the most important of these drives is the one concerning scrap rubber. Of the materials required in the war effort, rubber is the most vital, because we have been cut off from our source of supply. The production of synthetic rubber will not be able to replace this source until 1945.

Statistics state that in the past ten years approximately ten million tons of rubber was imported by our country. Some of it has been exported throughout the world in the form of commercial goods, but most of it still remains within our borders, and a good deal of it is in the form of discarded articles reposing in attics, basements, garages, and even in the very rooms we live and work in.

Our country must have that rubber.

The approximate 350,000 tons collected in the national rubber drive just ended is far below the amount expected, and it is altogether unsatisfactory; it represents less than three percent of the amount of rubber believed to be available as scrap.

The scrap rubber drive conducted by the exhibitors has not been a unified drive in a national sense. It has been a voluntary effort on the part of independent exhibitors here and there, and of some of the smaller and larger circuits. In Wisconsin, theatres throughout the state conducted a unified drive. Some exhibitors have placed bins in the lobby for the deposit of rubber articles by their patrons, but this method has met with little success. By far the most successful method has been the "rubber matinees," in which those bringing a specified amount of rubber were admitted free. In every case the drive was a "howling" success, and practically the entire audience was made up of youngsters.

Some exhibitors sponsored their shows solely for the children; they had no trouble in packing the house. Invariably, the rubber was sold by the exhibitor and the receipts turned over to a worthy cause.

School is out and millions of children are now on their summer vacations. Contrary to the adage "it's a man's job," when it comes to collecting junk, just leave it to the "kids." Offer them a show, preferably a couple of good westerns, with the price of admission a specified amount of rubber, and you have a sure-fire guarantee to be deluged with rubber. Don't ask them where or how they will get it—get it they will, even if they have to strip their homes clean.

True, there may be some repercussions when the

"old man" looks in his garage for that tire he intended to re-tread, or when he looks for his rubbers on a rainy day, but, after all, this is war.

Although the national rubber drive has ended, the war still goes on, and rubber is needed urgently.

The nation's exhibitors, under a unified drive, and with their remarkable gift for ingenious dramatization of the facts, can do much to aid in the relief of a serious shortage of rubber. Moreover, the mobilization of the country's "kid power" will help to make the children conscious of the important part that each of us must play in the war effort, and will undoubtedly give them a sense of responsibility.

But the brunt of this drive should not be borne solely by the exhibitor. It should be an industry drive, with all concerned participating. A good example is the method under which the Fox-West Coast Theatres conducted their rubber drive. Old pictures suitable for juveniles, and out of general circulation, were donated by many film exchanges. Employees of the theatres, including the projectionist, gave their services free for the extra shows. Care was taken that the features shown would not affect subsequent run houses in the locality.

Statements made by a number of exhibitors show that the "rubber matinees" have not affected their normal "kid" business, and that the good-will derived from the community was of inestimable value.

Once we have this "kid power" mobilized, let us not stop after the scrap rubber drive; let us utilize their power for the sale of war stamps and bonds, the collection of musical records, books, and other articles, for the boys in camp, and even to influence their mothers to save the waste kitchen fat that the country needs to increase glycerin stocks, used in explosives.

Let the industry appoint a national committee of "Pied Pipers" to organize the drives in which the kids can be of invaluable aid. Exhibitors are anxious to contribute to the successful prosecution of the war, and under the guidance of such a committee the kids in their communities will come through with amazing results.

A "SLEEPER" PICTURE IS NOT AN ACCIDENT

If you trace a "sleeper" back to its source, you'll usually find that it was inspired by a new writer or a new director, as in the case of "The Great McGinty," or that it came from the brain of a creator who was staging a "comeback," and for that reason the story just had to possess unique substance and treatment, because the re-establishment of his career was at stake.

Just imagine what it would mean if theatres could get one "sleeper" miracle box-office picture every
(Continued on last page)

"The Pride of the Yankees" with Gary Cooper and Teresa Wright

(RKO-Goldwyn, no release date set; time, 127 min.)

Excellent! It is a deeply moving biographical drama of the life of Lou Gehrig, one of the few figures in American sports to have gained the idolatry of the American people as a whole. The picture is a grand tribute to a grand sportsman. But make no mistake about this picture—it is not just a baseball drama, limited in its appeal to the lovers of our national pastime. One needn't have the remotest idea about baseball to feel what this picture has to offer; had Lou Gehrig's life work been anything else but baseball, the emotional effect on the spectator would be just as great. Under Sam Wood's masterful direction the touching story has resulted in entertainment that should delight all types of audiences. In its running time of more than two hours the picture does not for one moment lose its grip. The action places little stress on Gehrig's prowess as a baseball player, concerning itself mostly with his private life. Although he rose from humble surroundings, his life is not depicted as one of hardships or struggle, but one in which he had found much joy. It is the utter simplicity and modesty of the man, and the tender devotion that he, his wife, and his parents had for each other that lends this picture its beauty and charm. There are many gay moments. He so endears himself to the audience that his tragic illness is all the more heart-breaking. A stirring scene is the closing sequence where tribute is paid Gehrig by fans and players alike—it brings a lump to the throat. Gary Cooper, as Lou Gehrig, and Teresa Wright, as his wife, are excellent. Babe Ruth gives the proceedings a note of authenticity and is surprisingly good in the few scenes that he appears. As for the rest of the cast, no better choice could be desired. Its an inspiring film, and there should be no question of its box-office success:—

Lou Gehrig (Douglas Croft), an eleven year old boy, hopes to become a big league baseball star. "Mom" Gehrig (Elsa Janssen) and "Pop" Gehrig (Ludwig Stossel), his parents, want him to become an engineer. "Mom" works as a cook and manages to send Lou through High School and to Columbia University where Lou (Gary Cooper) works his way through as a waiter at a fraternity house. Gehrig is a star athlete. Sam Blake (Walter Brennan), a sports-writer, observes Gehrig's ability on the baseball field, and tries to induce him to join the New York Yankees. Gehrig refuses to alter his decision to become an engineer, until his mother is discovered to be in need of an immediate operation. Confronted with hospital bills, Gehrig accepts the Yankees' offer. He is sent to the Hartford club to gain experience. His mother, however, thinks he is going to Harvard to study engineering. After a few years Gehrig joins the Yankee team, and "Mom" learns the truth from the newspaper headlines. She is heartbroken, but later is reconciled, and becomes a rabid baseball fan. In his first game with the team at Chicago, Gehrig trips over a pile of bats. Eleanor Twitchell (Teresa Wright), a girl in the stands, yells "Tanglefoot," and the entire stands take up the cry. That night Gehrig meets Eleanor and falls in love with her. The Yankees win the World Series that year, beating St. Louis, when Gehrig hits two home runs—a feat he had promised to a crippled boy in a hospital. After the game he rushes to Chicago and asks Eleanor to marry him. She accepts. At first "Mom" doesn't approve of Eleanor, but she soon learns to love her. Many years pass in which Gehrig becomes a famous player, dubbed "The Iron Man," because he had never missed a game. He and Eleanor are ecstatically happy. Gloom comes over the Gehrigs and the Yankees when Lou goes into a "slump" during spring training. In mid-season he resigns from the team. The doctors inform him that he had a rare case of infantile paralysis, and that he had but a few years to live. Lou tries to keep the news from Eleanor, but she learns the truth. "Lou Gehrig Appreciation Day" is proclaimed, and a vast crowd assembles in the Yankee Stadium to bid Gehrig farewell. With tears in his eyes he tells them, "Some people say I've had a bad break, but today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth." He walks off the field with the roar of the crowd ringing in his ears.

Jo Swerling and Herman J. Mankiewicz wrote the screen play from an original story by Paul Gallico. Samuel Goldwyn produced it, and Sam Wood directed it. In the cast are Dan Duryea, Virginia Gilmore, Bill Dickey, Ernie Adams, Bob Meusel, Pierre Watkin, Mark Koenig, Bill Stern, Addison Richards and others.

"Smart Alecks" with The East Side Kids, Roger Pryor, Maxie Rosenbloom and Gale Storm

(Monogram, August 7; time, 66 min.)

Where the East Side Kids have a following, this latest of their adventures is sure to please; it is their best effort to date. What makes the picture different is that their doings have been given a more serious touch and, although it contains their usual brand of antics, the slap-stick has been minimized. There is nothing novel about the story, but it has much more human interest than the Kids' previous pictures, and allows the boys to display their dramatic talents to good advantage. There is plenty of comedy, providing the usual quota of laughs, and a romance of no importance:

Seeking to earn enough money to buy themselves baseball uniforms, Leo Gorcey, Huntz Hall, Bobby Jordan and the other members of the East Side Kids gang sing and dance in the streets. When Gabriel Dell, another member of the gang, aids Maxie Rosenbloom and Joe Kirk, gangsters, in a bank robbery, he is recognized by Gale Storm, Bobby's sister. She informs Policeman Roger Pryor, her fiance, where Gabriel might be hidden. Pryor traps him in the Kids' clubhouse. Gabriel is sent to jail, but he does not "squeal" on the two gangsters. Bobby unwittingly aids in the capture of Maxie when the latter refuses to return a baseball that had hit him. Bobby receives a \$200 reward and intends to surprise the Kids by buying baseball uniforms, but the Kids misunderstand his withholding the money and claim a share in the reward. Although he gives them their share, Bobby is voted out of the gang. The Kids buy a car. Gabriel and Maxie escape jail. Gabriel manages to reach the Kids, but too late to warn them that Maxie was after Bobby. The Kids trail Maxie to a warehouse where they find Bobby beaten into unconsciousness. Rushing him to a hospital, they are told that Bobby will need an immediate operation. They plead with Dr. Walter Woolf King, who agrees to help Bobby. Still at large, Maxie makes his way to Gale's apartment, where he is trapped by Pryor outside the door. The Kids break through a fire-escape window and Gabriel manages to subdue him. When Bobby recovers, the boys offer to pay Dr. King with money they had received from the sale of their car. Dr. King refuses payment, telling the Kids to buy uniforms. Gabriel is paroled.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman, Jack Dietz and Barney A. Sarecky produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tower of Terror" with Wilfred Lawson, Movita and Michael Rennie

(Monogram, April 1; time, 62 min.)

There is little to recommend in this British-made semi-horror melodrama. The story is dull, and is further handicapped by a poor sound track, which, in addition to the "thick" English accents, results in incoherent dialogue. Consequently, it is difficult for the spectator to understand the plot. Moreover, the players tend to over-act their parts. All in all, the proceedings are pretty tedious:—

The story takes place on a lighthouse of the German-occupied coast, the keeper of which is Wilfred Lawson, a half-mad German. Years previously his wife had drowned near this spot, and her loss had left him so moody that he rarely spoke to his helper. When the helper refuses to stay with Lawson another day, the harbor master offers the job to Michael Rennie, unaware that he was a British agent. Rennie is surprised to find Movita, a beautiful girl living at the lighthouse. He learns that she had been rescued from drowning by Lawson. When she later finds out that Rennie is a British agent, she reveals to him that she is an escaped refugee from a Nazi concentration camp. Lawson becomes insanely jealous of Rennie's attentions to her. He believes Movita to be his wife, reincarnated. He attempts to kill Rennie, but is himself subdued and chained. He breaks his bounds, knocks Rennie unconscious, then drags Movita to an underground chamber, where his wife was buried. He plans to bury Movita alive. Meanwhile the Germans discover Rennie's identity, and their patrol boat begins shelling the lighthouse. Rennie recovers consciousness, rescues Movita, and both make their escape to England in a British boat that arrives in the nick of time. The German shells destroy the lighthouse, and the falling debris kills Lawson.

John Reinhardt wrote the screen play, John Argyle produced it, and Lawrence Huntington directed it.

Objectionable for children.

"Bombs Over Burma" with Anna May Wong

(Producers Releasing Corp., June 5; time, 65 min.)

A mild program offering, suitable for secondary theatres. The formula story is one of espionage, with a smattering of mystery. The action revolves around a bus load of passengers travelling the Burma Road, each suspecting the other of espionage. Since the identity of the enemy agents is not disclosed until towards the end, there is some suspense. Stock shots of truck caravans on the Burma Road and Japanese bombings of Chinese cities have been used liberally. The treatment is routine, and the performances ordinary:—

Anna May Wong, a Chinese school teacher, is sent to Lashio by the Chinese Intelligence Bureau to investigate the method by which the Japanese learned of truck movements on the Burma Road. Anna joins a group of passengers journeying to Chungking on a bus driven by Nedrick Young, an American. The other passengers are Leslie Denison, a British diplomat and Frank Lackteen, his Indian servant; Judith Gibson, daughter of an American doctor in Chungking; Dennis Morre, an American traffic expert; and Dan Seymour, a half-caste Portuguese mechanic. Because of a destroyed bridge, the party is compelled to stop off at a monastery where Noel Madison, a kindly monk, welcomes them. Later, Madison informs Anna that he, too, is a secret Chinese agent, and that he had sent a message over his secret radio set arranging for a decoy truck transport to arrive at dawn. Suspecting that one of the group was a spy, Madison tells Anna to speak of the trucks arriving in the morning so that he could observe the subsequent actions of his guests. When Seymour learns that Denison's servant had stolen a motor part from Young's bus so that the party would remain stalled, he demands that Denison pay him for his silence. Denison orders Lackteen to murder him. Denison discovers Madison sending a radio message, and realizes his danger. He makes it appear to the others as if Anna and Madison were enemy spies, notifying the Japs about truck movements. Anna pleads with Young that she is innocent and that Denison is the spy. Confused, Young searches Denison and finds an electric razor gadget with which Denison had sent radio messages. Anna offers to meet the trucks and drive in with them, if Denison would do the same. Denison agrees. As planes approach he jumps from the truck, but is killed by Chinese coolies waiting on Anna's instructions. The "bombers" were American planes, part of the plan to catch the spies.

Milton Raison and Joseph H. Lewis wrote the screen play, Alfred Stern and Arthur Alexander produced it and Joseph H. Lewis directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"They Raid by Night" with Lyle Talbot and George Neise

(Producers Releasing Corp., June 26; time, 70 min.)

This is far-fetched stuff, but where patrons demand action above all else, this low budget program melodrama should satisfy their desire. The liberation of a Norwegian General from a Nazi concentration camp in Norway serves as the excuse for some wild heroics—Hollywood style—by a trio of British Commandos. Stock shots of actual Commando raids on Norway have been used to good advantage. The direction and the performances are average. At best, it's for the lower half of a double bill:—

Captain Lyle Talbot, an American with the British Commandos, George Neise, a Free Norwegian Lieutenant, and Sergeant Charles Rogers, a cockney, are sent to Norway to liberate Paul Baratoff, Norwegian General, held prisoner by the Nazis in a concentration camp. The three arrive by parachute in the Norwegian forest, but a German sentry notices their landing, and the countryside is combed by the Nazis. The three men make their way to the village of Falken where the prison camp was located. There, Neise is recognized by June Duprez to whom he was once engaged. She betrays their hiding place to Nazi Commander Victor Varconi and Sven Hugo Borg, a "Quisling." Three Gestapo agents are sent to capture them, but the Commandos kill the three Germans, then don their uniforms. Posing as the Gestapo, they walk into the prison camp and liberate the General. Using the Nazi camp radio, they notify British headquarters to send a Commando expedition to meet them.

The ruse is discovered as they leave, and the General is shot as they make their escape into the woods. Unaware that June was in league with the Nazis, Neise returns to town and requests that she get him a doctor. She instead notifies the Nazis who capture and torture him, forcing him to reveal where the others were hidden. Talbot is captured, but Rogers and the General remain free. On the eve of their execution, Borg reveals himself as loyal to Norway when he allows Talbot and Neise to escape. The Commandos arrive before dawn with destroyers and planes, and Talbot and Rogers set fire to a huge coal bunker to guide them. Varconi reaches the four men before the Commandos and managers to kill Neise who dies to save the General. The party is rescued by the Commandos, and Varconi and his guards taken back to England as prisoners.

Jack Natteford wrote the screen play, Dixon R. Harwin and Bartlett Carre produced it, and Spencer Gordon Bennett directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Men of Texas" with Robert Stack, Broderick Crawford, Jackie Cooper and Anne Gwynne

(Universal, July 3; time, 81 min.)

The Reconstruction period immediately following the Civil War, in which the patriots of the state of Texas attempted to set up their own Republic, serves as the background for this fairly good semi-historical outdoor melodrama. The story deals with the resentment shown at the establishment of martial law by the Union troops, and of the efforts of a newspaper reporter to uncover the activities of a conceited Texas bandit, who pictured himself as another Sam Houston, and who, under the guise of patriotism, pillaged the countryside. Its fast action is of the type that should please western fans, while the historical story provides the ingredients that should make it acceptable to average audiences. It is a better-than-average outdoor production, capably directed, and with good performances by the cast:—

At the close of the civil war, Robert Stack a Chicago newspaper reporter, and Leo Carrillo, his photographer pal, are assigned to cover the causes of unrest in the state of Texas. On the stagecoach to Huntsville, the two men become acquainted with Anne Gwynne, a passenger. En route, they pass the smoking ruins of a covered wagon, near which Kay Linaker is sitting. Raiders had killed her husband and she was about to bear a child. Anne directs the stagecoach to a cabin in the hills nearby, where she helps Kay bear her child. As Stack prepares to leave the cabin he discovers packing cases full of guns stocked in a corner. His questioning of Kay about the guns is interrupted by the arrival of a band of horsemen, led by Broderick Crawford, a Texas patriot and Anne's fiance. In Huntsville, Stack works on his assignment, aided by Major Ralph Bellamy, military governor of the district. Although he is a guest in Anne's home, Stack is treated coldly by John Litel, Anne's father and a Confederate Army Colonel, Jane Darwell, her aunt, and the rest of the community, who all are violent Yankee-haters. After a series of robberies in the district, at which Crawford was always on hand to drive off the raiders, Stack begins to suspect him of complicity. When he confronts Crawford with evidence of his guilt, he and Carrillo are kidnapped. Crawford compels Stack to write glowing accounts of his deeds to make it appear as if he were a heroic champion. Realizing that Crawford's true intent was to plunder, Jackie Cooper, Anne's brother and a devoted admirer of Crawford, helps Stack and Carrillo escape. Cooper is killed by Crawford. The bandit rides into town, with the body of Cooper slung across the saddle, claiming that Stack had killed the boy. Major Bellamy arrests Crawford, but the bandit is confident that he will be released. The evidence presented by Stack is overwhelming, and Crawford is sentenced to hang. Crawford's henchmen incite the townspeople to riot, but Anne's father intervenes, calling on them to work for Texas, and to be done with fighting and killing. Crawford dies on the gallows. Anne and Stack look forward to a new life.

Harold Shumate wrote the screen play, George Waggener produced it, and Ray Enright directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

week!—and it could be done. It requires that some special executive be assigned in each producing organization, to constantly study and analyze all story material that is presently thrown on the "assembly line," each picture emerging as just another "B."

You can't be in Hollywood very long, talking to the sincere picture makers, without getting the feel that, underneath those run-of-the-mill stories that are now prepared, there is now and then a "sleeper" story that has all the earmarks of a "sleeper" miracle. Every writer in the "B" producing units knows what I am talking about. But it takes the suggested "special executive," with the proper sympathetic viewpoint, to have an "open door" through which men with ideas may enter, to find in them ideas in their formative writing stage, so that the story and screen play may be specially nurtured into "sleeper" successes, thus preventing their being thrown into that run-of-the-mill assembly line, where each idea may end up as another "B" picture, one that had "just missed."

But that special executive must have a creative imagination and be a trained craftsman to enable him to visualize the potentialities of that "sleeper" story material.

Then suppose that that special executive started to create "sleeper" story material instead of just letting them happen. He would find plenty of worthy material in the minds of the so-called "derelict" writers and directors who are walking the streets of Hollywood, and who have been "between pictures" for several years—"derelicts" who have records of brilliant accomplishments.

Suppose he found that only ten percent of them had ideas worthy of "sleeper" possibilities! It would be worth while holding one hundred discussions to get ten good ideas.

Not all these "derelicts" are wild dreamers; many of them have practical showmanship ideas, worthy of serious consideration, if only the door were left open for them by such executives! All they need is a sympathetic ear—someone to remove from them that stigma of "derelict."

ENDANGERING VALUABLE ASSETS

Imagine the disastrous results to the popularity of Coca Cola or Camel cigarettes and their \$20,000,000 trade mark and good-will if, the bottlers of Coca Cola or the makers of Camel cigarettes should put a distasteful ingredient into them. The public would shy away from them and Coca Cola, and Camel cigarettes, would rot on the shelves. And their former famous trade marks and good will would die.

The motion picture public seems to have greater tolerance for the carelessness of producers of motion pictures. Dorothy Lamour's potential value to the industry in the next ten years is at least \$20,000,000. But she is tossed off in a picture with a carelessly prepared story and fed to the public without regard to the preservation of that precious value.

I say "carelessly," because I don't believe that any producer in Paramount would want to admit that they put Dorothy in "Beyond the Blue Horizon" with any thought that it was a good story. It must have been carelessness to permit the story to go into production before it was worthy of the great value of Dorothy Lamour, and worthy of Paramount's responsibility to the public, which has showered her with its idolatry in sufficient votes to make every Dorothy Lamour picture a box-office success.

How long can this go on before the picture-going public will feel that they have been duped? At the

present writing it seems as if the public continues to want to see Miss Lamour, even in a picture that was made from a story not worthy of her.

When a star of Dorothy Lamour's box-office value appears on the horizon, it behoves the studio to select the best craftsmen, possessing the greatest ingenuity and showmanship, to create stories of interest and entertainment, tailored to suit her particular personality, as a show-window for her proper presentation.

But the reverse seems to be the policy. The story of "Beyond the Blue Horizon" seems to have been tossed off with the carelessness of thought that implies "What the hell!—anything will do, because the pictures with Dorothy Lamour will always draw the crowds."

I refer such thinkers to the fable of "WOLF-WOLF!": some day the public won't believe them, and then we will all wonder what has happened to the Dorothy Lamour \$20,000,000 trade mark.

Unfortunately it will be the theatres that will first feel the attack of the public "wrath," in the form of vacant seats. The public that is quick to idolize the Dorothy Lamours is just as quick to become indifferent to them.

Let the producers beware!

LET US NOT COMPLAIN AGAINST THE "TOO MANY" DRIVES

On occasion there is a "beef" by a theaterman, or by group of theatermen, against the "excessive" number of drives in which they are asked to cooperate. They feel that too many drives are resented by their patrons, and that eventually these drives may affect their box offices.

There can be no doubt that war is, as a rule, unpopular, but the complainants can rest assured that any drive that will in some way help the effort of the present war is decidedly popular with the majority of their patrons, most of whom have a loved one serving in the armed forces. If there is anything that they can do to bring the war to a speedy close, they're all for it.

The exhibitor who measures his contribution to the war effort in terms of how it may hurt his business is not deserving of the privileges that he enjoys—privileges that have been taken away from many other men in business. Through the essential rating given to the industry by the Government, the exhibitors have been able to conduct their theaters on practically a "business as usual" policy although future conditions may cause a change in this policy.

Recently, Arthur Mayer, assistant coordinator of the War Activities Committee, had this to say:

"There is nothing necessarily permanent about the honor paid the industry for its efforts in cooperating with the Government. We will only be regarded as essential by the Government so long as we make the sacrifices and perform the services inherent in that designation.

"If we fail to make those sacrifices or perform those services; if the American people decide we are not necessary, our studios and our theaters will suffer, and deserve to suffer, the same severe restrictions and the same drastic limitations which have come to other industries."

He further stated that the industry's activities in aiding the war effort should not be taken as a duty but as an opportunity and a privilege.

Those are wise words. Let those who place their own selfish interests before that of winning the war, mark them, and mark them well.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
Australia, New Zealand, India, Europe, Asia	17.50
	35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 1942

No. 30

THE FUTURE OF UNITY

By the time a copy of this issue reaches you, The Allied Board of Directors will have met in Pittsburgh (on the 22nd) and will have considered, among other matters, the future of the unity movement. This is of more than passing importance since Allied is the father of that movement.

That the question should be raised now may seem strange considering the fine progress made on the new selling plan. We must look beneath the surface for the real reason: UMPI was launched as an all-industry organization. It gave evenly-balanced representation to all groups and factions. Its purpose was to function in regard to all matters affecting the industry as a whole. It had sub-committees on priorities, public relations and numerous other functions. The distributors seem to have ignored these committees. They have dealt with the Government in regard to priorities and transportation without consulting UMPI or the exhibitors, although the latter were vitally interested. The distributors have also formed, through the Hays Association, Public Relations Committees in various parts of the country without consulting either UMPI or the exhibitor associations. These thoughtless acts have bred lack of confidence among the exhibitors.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has supported the unity movement perhaps more than any other trade paper. It still hopes that the movement can be rescued from the misunderstanding and distrust into which it has fallen. It is up to Bill Rodgers and other far-sighted leaders among the distributors to see to it that confidence is re-established. If the movement, however, fails, and the industry enters into the dark war years torn by internal dissention, it will not be hard to place the blame. The exhibitors, especially Allied, have been accused of wrecking similar attempts at unity in the past. This time the blame will rest squarely upon the shoulders of the distributors.

THE UMPI SELLING PLAN

Reports of the favorable reception by the Department of Justice of the new UMPI selling plan are most encouraging. It now seems probable that the plan will be approved in time to be put into effect on August 1.

Whatever may be one's views about the five-picture plan, one must bear in mind that it was opposed by a majority of the independent exhibitors. An earnest group of exhibitors and distributors labored for many weeks to devise a better method. In this effort they were necessarily restricted by the well known views of the Government officials. The plan had, therefore, to conform in principle to the Consent Decree plan. Thus it was necessary to place some restriction on the size of the blocks, and to provide for the trade-showing of some of the pictures.

For the convenience of our readers, the plan may be summarized as follows:

Outline of plan. If the plan goes through without substantial alteration, exhibitors will buy pictures from Paramount, Metro, 20th Century, Warner Bros. and RKO next season in groups of from 9 to 13 pictures, pursuant to announcements made three or four times a year. A company releasing 52 pictures probably will make four offerings of 13 pictures each. A company releasing 36 pictures may make three offerings of 12 pictures each rather than four offerings of 9 pictures. It is unlikely that any company, with the possible exception of RKO, will release fewer than 36 pictures.

Each group will contain five trade-shown pictures. The remaining pictures will be identified in the announcements and in the contracts: (1) by the star, (2) or by the featured players, or (3) (a) by a brief outline of the story (if an original), or (b) by a reference to a play, to a published book, or to a published story, if the feature is to be based upon, suggested by or adapted from such play, book or story. Substantial deviation from the identification will constitute the picture a substitution entitling the exhibitor to resort to its cancellation.

As many as six Westerns may be offered at one time, identified only by the star or series, without a trade-showing. The protective provisions of the Consent Decree against conditioning the licensing of one group of features upon the licensing of another group of features, and against the forcing of shorts, are retained.

Cancellation privilege. Exhibitors whose average rental per picture during the 1939-1940 season was \$100 or less will be permitted to cancel two of the identified pictures. We hope this will be done.

To protect the cancellation privilege, the distributors have agreed to allocate pictures, where they have the right to do so, on giving notice of availability or on booking, whichever is earlier, and such allocation can not thereafter be changed without the consent of the exhibitor.

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that the plan is a fair compromise between the extremes of compulsory block-booking and the five-picture plan, prescribed by the Consent Decree; it certainly affords the exhibitors relief from the necessity of buying at frequent intervals under the Consent Decree plan. A late buyer may be able to buy from a distributor as many as 18 or 24 pictures at one time.

There is reasonable protection against blind-selling, reinforced by the right to cancel for substitution. The general cancellation privilege increases the right of selection of an exhibitor over the pictures he plays.

The new plan can be put into effect for only one year. It is, therefore, like the five-picture plan, in the

(Continued on last page)

"Panama Hattie" with Ann Sothern and Red Skelton

(MGM, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

With the "high jinks" of Red Skelton, Ben Blue, and "Rags" Raglund, aided and abetted by Ann Sothern's familiar "Maisie" antics, there's never a dull moment in this mirthful program comedy with music and dancing. In crowded houses it should provoke considerable laughter. Based on the Broadway stage success of the same name, the story, if such it be, is of no consequence; it serves merely as a background for the comedy, and as an interlude for the music and dancing. The Berry Brothers, colored dancers, and Lena Horne, colored songstress, give good accounts of themselves. Three of the original Cole Porter tunes have been retained, but the hit song is a Walter Donaldson tune, "At the Savoy," as sung by Virginia O'Brien, who performs exceptionally well. Set it down as good light entertainment, suitable for either end of a double bill:—

Ann Sothern, a night club entertainer in Panama, is loved by Dan Dailey, Jr., an Army Sergeant and wealthy socialite. Red Skelton, "Rags" Raglund, and Ben Blue, three sailors, whose main hobby is searching for spies, are Ann's close friends. They approve of Dailey even though he is a soldier. Ann dresses up in her gaudiest clothes to greet Jackie Horner, Dailey's seven-year-old daughter, who, accompanied by Alan Mowbray, a butler, had come from Philadelphia to see her father. Ann is peeved when the child laughs at her clothes, but both become good friends when Dailey persuades Jackie that Ann is really worth-while. Ann is disturbed by the arrival of Marsha Hunt, Dailey's former sweetheart. Marsha hints to Ann indiscreetly that she does not belong in the same social class as Dailey. The three sailors resent Marsha's interference. Planning to compromise Marsha, Skelton sends her a note to meet him. But the waiter, a secret Nazi agent, inadvertently hands Marsha a note intended for another spy, revealing the spies' hangout to be a lonely shack. The sailors do not catch the spies, but they discover a quantity of explosive chemicals. Deciding that she and Dailey are mismatched, Ann plans to leave Panama. As she bids everyone goodbye, Carl Esmond, head of the spy ring, makes an uncomplimentary remark about her. The three sailors take exception to the remark and start a brawl. Military police stop the fight and jail the combatants. But all are released when it is learned that some of the men captured belonged to the spy ring. The three sailors become heroes, and Ann marries Dailey.

Jack McGowan and Wilkie Mahoney wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Norman Z. McLeod directed it. In the cast are Virginia O'Brien, Lena Horne, The Berry Brothers and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tish" with Marjorie Main, Zazu Pitts and Lee Bowman

(MGM, no release date; time, 83 min.)

This mild program comedy is hardly worthy of an MGM label. As entertainment it might appeal to the family trade in the smaller houses, since the action revolves around a small town and its characters. The fact that the main character, "Tish," has been taken from the widely read Mary Roberts Rinehart stories may add to the picture's value at the box office. The story, which deals with the scrapes of three middle-aged spinsters, is somewhat dragged out and too talky. Consequently the action is slowed down. There are two pleasant romances:—

Marjorie Main, an eccentric, rather domineering but kindly, spinster, lives in a small town with Lee Bowman, her nephew and editor of the local newspaper. Her two

cronies, Zazu Pitts and Aline MacMahon, live in a women's boarding house nearby. Susan Peters, an eighteen-year-old girl who lives at the same boarding house, is in love with Bowman. But Bowman loves Virginia Grey, daughter of Judge Guy Kibbee. Richard Quine, Virginia's brother, loves Susan. Marjorie and her cronies endeavor to match Susan and Bowman, but Susan soon realizes that it is Quine that she loves. When Quine goes to Toronto to learn how to ferry planes to England, he and Susan are secretly married. Meanwhile, Virginia and Bowman are married. Complications arise when Virginia takes over management of the household. Marjorie decides that it would be best for her to live at the boarding house. Eager to join Quine, Susan "borrows" money from the church organ fund, which is in Marjorie's keeping, and leaves. Marjorie assumes the blame for the shortage, declaring that she had lost the money gambling. Bowman makes up the shortage, but Marjorie refuses to explain. In Toronto, Susan learns from the Canadian officials that Quine was lost at sea, and faints. At a hospital she gives birth to a baby boy, and dies. The only clew to her identity is a letter to Marjorie, who is informed of the facts. Believing that the baby was Bowman's son, Marjorie returns home and declares that she is the baby's mother! As a result Bowman is compelled to place her in an insane asylum. He and Virginia plan to send the baby to an orphanage. All turns out well when Quine, who had been rescued at sea, returns home and explains everything. Marjorie re-establishes herself as boss in Bowman's home.

Harry Ruskin wrote the screen play, Orville O. Dull produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Flying with Music" with Marjorie Woodworth and George Givot

(United Artists, June 1; time, 46 min.)

Despite the lavish production that Hal Roach has given to this latest of his streamlined features, it is no more than fair entertainment and, at that, limited in its appeal to the lovers of Latin-American music and dance ensembles, which are the picture's chief points of interest. What there is of the inane story merely serves as an interlude for the musical numbers, and as a basis for the comedy, most of which falls flat. The music, singing, and dancing, are pleasant:—

Marjorie Woodworth, wealthy American girl, who had fallen in love with the photograph of a Caribbean Island troubadour, inveigles her father into permitting her to make a clipper trip to the West Indies. Accompanying Marjorie are four girl friends and a chaperone. Awaiting them at their first port of call is Byron Foulger, who is to conduct the tour. Foulger, afraid of air travel, meets George Givot, an American, who is being pursued by Edward Gargan, a Brooklyn detective. Seeing a means of eluding the law, Givot takes over Foulger's credentials and assumes the role of guide for the girls. Bored with Givot's descriptions of the tropical beauties, Marjorie readily accepts an invitation from William Marshall, the pilot, to go to a night club; Marjorie hopes to find her dream-lover there. She learns from the club manager that the man she is looking for was singing at an island not on their itinerary. They fly to the island. Marjorie hurries to the cafe where her dream-man was performing, only to find that he was a married man. Marjorie realizes that it is Marshall whom she really loves, and goes to him. At a carnival that night, Givot learns that the detective had been trying all the while to tell him that he had won a huge lottery prize.

M. Coates Webster and Louis S. Kaye wrote the screen play, Hal Roach produced it, and George Archainbaud directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"One Thrilling Night" with John Beal and Wanda McKay

(Monogram, August 28; time, 67 min.)

An exceptionally good program comedy. Had it been produced by any of the major studios, it would do them proud. Based on a mistaken identity theme the story deals with the one-night honeymoon of a pair of newlyweds who, because of gangland activities and of the draft board, do not get around to the consummation of their marriage. It is a bedroom farce, replete with highly amusing situations and witty dialogue. And yet at no time is it risqué. Credit is due William Beaudine for his capable direction of a clever screen play. John Beal, as the naive spouse, adds much to the hilarity, while the remainder of the cast make the most of their parts:—

John Beal and Wanda McKay, newlyweds, arrive in New York from a small town for a one-night honeymoon. Beal is scheduled to leave for the Army the next morning at six. The hotel clerk assigns them to a room that had been used by Jerome Sheldon, a gangster, in which to hide \$50,000. Double-crossed by two of his pals, Sheldon had been slugged and brought to the room where he is found by the newlyweds, who believe him to be dead. As they rush out to call Warren Hymer, the hotel detective, the gangsters enter the room and lock Sheldon in a trunk. Hymer is annoyed with the newlyweds when he does not find a body. When Beal discovers Sheldon in the trunk, once again they rush out for Hymer. Meanwhile Sheldon regains consciousness and escapes. When Beal demonstrates to Hymer how Sheldon had been concealed in the trunk, Wanda inadvertently locks him in, only to learn that he had the key in his pocket. While Wanda and Hymer are out searching for a skeleton key, the gangsters, thinking that Sheldon was still in the trunk, take it to Tom Neal the opposition gang leader. Beal is mistaken for Sheldon, but manages to escape. In the ensuing chase, both he and Wanda are captured, but Neal, learning that Beal was not Sheldon, orders them tied up. Meanwhile Sheldon is killed by one of the gang when he returns to the hotel room, but before he dies he slips the \$50,000 into the pocket of Beal's dressing gown. The newlyweds manage to escape and return to their room. After Beal discovers the dead man in the closet, Hymer is detailed to remain with them. Just as Beal discovers the money in his pocket, Neal and his gang enter the room. A melee ensues, and the gang is captured. As the newlyweds prepare for bed, the room clerk informs Beal that it was six o'clock in the morning—time to leave for the Army. "Darn those Japs," ejaculates Wanda.

Joseph Hoffman wrote the screen play, A. W. Hackel produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. In the cast are J. Farrell MacDonald, Ernie Adams, Barbara Pepper, Lynton Brent and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Joan of Ozark" with Joe E. Brown and Judy Canova

(Republic, August 1; time, 80 min.)

Aside from a few scenes in which Joe E. Brown burlesques the Nazis, there is little to laugh at in this unimaginative slap-stick comedy with music; it should appeal mostly to the patrons of small-town and neighborhood theatres as the minor half of a double bill. In spite of the fact that the action is fast moving, it is difficult for one to remain interested in the proceedings for the story is silly and tiresome. The production is well suited to the particular brand of humor expounded by Judy Canova and Joe E. Brown; it should satisfy their followers:—

When Judy Canova, an Ozark Mountain girl, inadvertently shoots a pigeon bearing a message from a secret Nazi

spy ring, she becomes a national heroine. Jerome Cowan, head of the spy ring, with headquarters at a night club he operates, decides to "liquidate" Judy as an object lesson to all Americans who might try to emulate her. When Joe E. Brown and Eddie Foy, Jr., theatrical agents, attempt to sell Cowan an act, he tells them that if they should get Judy as an entertainer, he would be interested. Learning that Judy was averse to capitalizing on her fame Brown, plays on her patriotism by representing himself as a "G-Man." He offers to make her a "G-Woman," so that she could ferret out spies that lurk in the night club. Brown was unaware that the night club actually was a spy headquarters. On her arrival in the city, two real G-Men are assigned to guard her when an unsuccessful attempt is made on her life. She learns from them that Brown was not a G-Man. Disillusioned, Judy prepares to return home, but Brown informs her that even the G-Men did not know his identity. In order to convince her that spies visited the club, Brown masquerades as one that evening. He is so effective that even Cowan is fooled. He takes Brown into his confidence, revealing the innermost operations of his ring. He also divulges that Judy was on her way to christen a bomber, and that the champagne bottle was filled with explosives. As Brown leaves, Foy unwittingly exposes his disguise. The two G-Men save them from the Nazis. Brown and Foy arrive at the airport just as Judy swings the bottle. She misses, and the bomber flies aloft with the bottle dangling from it. Judy, Brown, and Foy follow in another plane. Judy retrieves the bottle, then drops it into the ocean, where it conveniently hits a Jap submarine blowing it to bits.

Robert Harari, Eve Greene and Jack Townley wrote the screen play, Harriet Parsons produced it, and Joseph Stanley directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"'Kukan' The Battle Cry of China"

(United Artists, August 7; time, 61 min.)

The heroism of the Chinese people in their struggle to resist at all costs the invading Japanese is the story that this documentary film tells.

The film was originally shown during 1941 in a number of theatres throughout the country under the title, "Kukan." It was in 16 millimeter form, and ran approximately 90 minutes. It has now been re-edited, made into a 35 millimeter film, and its running time has been shortened. But even this shorter running time is much too long for general consumption. Consequently it may fare better amongst class audiences, unless shortened more.

Photographed by Rey Scott, who spent two years in making the picture, the film is a pictorial record of China today,—of her countless millions, whose epic struggle goes on dauntlessly in spite of tremendous odds. The patient, hard-working Chinese—Manchus, Hans, Mongols, Tibetans, and Mohammedans—are depicted as engaged in the titanic fight for freedom and existence, as well as to rebuild their ancient, backward country into a modern democratic nation.

The importance of the Burma Road and its maintenance by the Chinese; the eagerness of the farmers to join in guerilla warfare; the relentless bombing of Chungking; the vastness of China itself; the primitive ways of the people—all these are vividly and dramatically portrayed.

Despite a superior foe, and the many hardships endured, her people are shown remaining unconquered. United under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek, the Chinese are determined to survive as a democratic and progressive nation.

It is a thrilling film, and one is made to feel the will of a strong-hearted people.

It was produced by Herbert T. Edwards.

nature of an experiment. Next year the entire Consent Decree will be up for reconsideration by the Department of Justice, and the way will be open to negotiate for changes in the selling plan, if desired.

We believe that the exhibitors will like the plan, although no plan will seem satisfactory if the distributors continue increasing film rentals.

An Allied bulletin asserts that, to the extent that the plan is an improvement over blocks-of-five plan, it is an Allied Accomplishment. The assertion is justified.

LET US NOT "CASH IN" ON PATRIOTISM

The daily trade papers report that two upstate New York theatres will increase their admission prices for the engagement of "Mrs. Miniver."

Questioned about this, William F. Rodgers, general sales manager of MGM, stated that an increase in admission prices is not in conflict with the statement made by Nicholas M. Schenck two weeks ago. The company's policy, with regard to "Mrs. Miniver," applies only to the distribution terms, under which no exhibitor will be asked to advance his admission prices. Theatres, however, are at liberty to set their own price policy on the picture.

In announcing his company's policy, Mr. Schenck said, "Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer desires this film to be played to the greatest number of people in the shortest possible space of time. This picture really belongs to the public. For this reason we have decided to offer 'Mrs. Miniver' to our customers without any provision for increased admission prices to the public."

Considering the magnitude of "Mrs. Miniver," MGM has been most generous in its attitude. This company saw more to this picture than dollars and cents. Its executives realized the telling effect that this picture would have on public morale and wisely decided to have it shown to the greatest number of people in the shortest possible time, instead of making it a long drawn-out affair, with one eye on the box office.

Other producers who are at present offering their "smash" hits, which in some way deal with the war, at advanced admission prices, may well take a lesson in wisdom and dignity from MGM.

In a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS the opinion was expressed that MGM's policy should please the exhibitors, particularly since it comes at a time when the government is doing all there is in its power to put a ceiling on prices of commodities; therefore it is not easy for exhibitors to explain to their patrons satisfactorily an increase of admission prices on outstanding pictures.

Although there is no doubt that many picture-goers are glad to pay a higher price for a picture they want to see, for exhibitors to raise their admission prices during the engagement of "Mrs. Miniver" is contrary to the spirit in which this picture has been offered by MGM. Moreover, it detracts from the goodwill and patriotism that our industry is endeavoring to show to the public.

The wise exhibitor should take the same stance with his patrons as MGM has taken with him. Most of his customers will know fully well that they are going to see a great picture before entering the theatre. Why not then exploit the angle of "no increase" in admissions? Not only will this please his patrons, but will also gain their good-will.

Out of much mediocre product dealing with the war, now and then the producers come forward with a superlative picture that is hailed by critics and public alike as outstanding. Such pictures are a credit to the

industry, because the message they carry and the patriotism they impart are invaluable in the lifting of public morale. Let us not then penalize the public.

This is no time for us to be mercenary. Regardless of what branch of the movie industry we represent, let us not "cash in" on patriotism.

ARE DOUBLE FEATURES HERE TO STAY?

An exhibitor writes the following interesting letter: "Who is it within the industry who starts this agitation about double features? And why?"

"It is true that a few people complain about them, but we don't hear many complaints from the real movie-fan who keeps us in business from year to year.

"I'm talking about our real family patron who gives us our great week-end business—the father and mother with two children, who buy two-dollars worth of entertainment from our theatres every week. When they go into the movie theatre on Friday or Saturday night at 6:30 or 7 o'clock, they don't want to come out at 8:30 or 9 o'clock.

"Where are they going to go at 8:30 or 9 o'clock? Not home, because this is their night of entertainment, and they want to kill the whole evening with movie entertainment for the price of the two-dollars.

"If you don't believe that is what they want, just try the experiment in a competitive situation of two theatres. Let one theatre run a single feature with shorts, and the other a double feature, then watch who gets the family man's two-dollars. It will be the double featuring theatre. When the vote is taken by that family, the two children will win the point, aided and abetted by the mother.

"I'll admit that the so-called sophisticated or selective audience 'up on the hill' will sit around the bridge table to discuss the case of double features and its possible harmful effect on the eyes, etc., but while they are discussing it, our real movie fan is casting his opinion at the theatre box-office, the only place it means anything to us.

"And who in the industry is advocating the cutting out of double features? I don't hear any hue and cry from the theatre men who are dependent upon the box-office. If theatre men really wanted it, they'd simply run single features—if they learned that that was what the public wanted.

"But one theatre can't start the policy of single features because he's afraid that his competitor with double features will get all the business. That is the only real proof that the public wants double features.

"Oh yes!—it's true that you will find a few isolated selected theatres where a single feature policy is successful, but if you'll study the neighborhood you'll find it to be in that selected 'silk stocking' section. If single features are profitable in such neighborhoods, a single feature policy in that isolated spot is correct.

"This matter of injury to the eyes from prolonged concentration on the screen has about as much value as the opinion of the horse-and-buggy advocates when they said that it would take your breath away to travel in automobiles faster than thirty miles an hour.

"When the real motion picture-going public doesn't want double features, they'll express their opinion in vacant seats.

"I'm still wondering who it is in the industry who continually agitates this question of cutting out double features, and what is his purpose! It seems to be a one-man campaign, and it does not come from the theatre men—the only men in this industry capable of determining such a matter."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

**1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.**

**A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors**

**Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.**

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1942

No. 31

MAKE YOUR THEATRE A COMMUNITY CENTER!

The Skouras Theatres Corporation, operating 65 houses in New York and vicinity, has announced the establishment of a "War Effort Department."

In creating this department, the purpose of this corporation is to bring about closer cooperation with various governmental agencies whereby Skouras Theatres can be of still greater aid in the total war effort. Programs of morale and of greater community participation in the war effort with the theatre as community center are now being worked out in detail; they will be put into effect in the very near future.

Executives of the company stated: "There is a lot more that we of the theatre industry must do and accomplish in assisting our government in the successful prosecution of the war. We have not yet scratched the surface of what our theatres can really do and contribute in this crisis. For the duration of the war, each theatre, if not already, must become the community center in our war effort."

Not included in the company's statement, but reported by Variety, is the fact that some of the Skouras Theatres have offered the use of their houses to handle draftees who are ordered to report early in the morning to Governor's Island for induction. The first theatre so used opened its doors at 4 A.M. to receive a group of draftees last week. The offer was made when it was learned that the draft boards had limited space in which to receive the men. The manager set up a victrola in the lobby to cheer the boys at that hour, while the American Women's Volunteer Corps set up a canteen, serving sandwiches and coffee.

At a time when exhibitors throughout the country are receiving, almost daily, requests for their participation in various drives, the voluntary move on the part of the Skouras circuit to extend further their already vast war effort program is a demonstration of as fine a spirit of patriotism as has ever been shown. It is a spirit that redounds, not only to their credit, but to the rest of the industry as well.

Making your theatre the community center for war activities is an excellent idea.

AN UNPATRIOTIC ACT OF SAM GOLDWYN'S

Mr. John Hobart, film critic of the San Francisco Chronicle, has taken to task the management of the United Artists theater, in that city, for its revival showing of "The Real Glory." Says Mr. Hobart:

"Somebody at the United Artists theatre is apparently confused about who is on what side in this war.

"To capitalize on the current interest in the Philippines, the theatre is reviving a Samuel Goldwyn film of 1939, 'The Real Glory.' It is a routine blood-and-thunder fiction laid in the Philippines at the end of the Spanish-American war, which presents the Moros as a tribe of despicable villains who terrorize a small outpost, slit the throats of unwary civilians and are finally quelled by a band of American army officers led by Gary Cooper.

"In 1939 maybe it didn't matter that the Moros were portrayed in the worst possible light, although that point is open to debate. At any rate, today it does matter. The Moros are our allies. They are the brave fighters who aided General Douglas MacArthur in the defense of the Philippines, and last March 10,000 Moros of Mindanao solemnly pledged themselves to 'Fight together as one people for a greater purpose, to destroy the enemy of good government.'

"At that time, General MacArthur had these words to say about the Moros: 'Please tell the Lanso Moros that no more inspiring or significant incident has occurred in the mighty struggle that now engulfs the world than the magnificent stand they have taken. It covers them with immortal

glory and elevates the Moro race to the highest pinnacle of spiritual grandeur.'

"For the sake of a few extra pennies at the boxoffice, these same Moros are being grossly slandered in a film of no merit whatsoever. The revival showing of 'The Real Glory' is an act of callous showmanship."

While we may differ with Mr. Hobart on the merit of this film, we concur, emphatically, with his remarks. The revival of "The Real Glory" at this time is in bad taste.

This paper believes that, in re-issuing "The Real Glory," Mr. Goldwyn has committed an unpatriotic act.

A POWERFUL WEAPON THAT BACKFIRES

Propaganda in pictures in the interest of our war effort is secondary to the danger of thoughtless incidents we allow to creep into our regular pictures—incidents that do much harm by ridiculing the American man in uniform.

I shall use as an example four Hollywood pictures. They are, "Great Guns," "Tanks A Million," "Call Out the Marines," and "Buck Privates." They were all very funny pictures; that is, funny to American audiences. But in foreign countries, particularly in South America, where the American sense of humor is more than in any other region a curious thing, the ridicule of our American officers by American soldiers is difficult to explain.

To get the full significance of this danger, just try to imagine yourself, an American citizen, sitting in a theatre among a South American audience and, after that audience sees any of these pictures, consider the viewpoint of the South American citizen who is asked to join in war with our kind of American soldiers, depicted to them as Laurel and Hardy, or Lowe and McLaglen, or Abbott and Costello. Don't laugh! for that is what our uniformed men look like to the rest of the world. Pictures have tremendous power and influence; we make them for international consumption.

It is, of course, disappointing to us that foreign lands do not understand our brand of humor, for we all know that our soldiers are not like the characters portrayed by Laurel, Hardy, Lowe, McLaglen, Abbott, or Costello, but that is how such pictures present our uniformed men to the rest of the world.

Never mind pointing out to me that radio tells them the same thing; radio broadcasts do not reach these foreign lands to the same extent that do pictures. Besides, radio lacks the power and influence of pictorial vision. And you must keep in mind that the language of our pictures is translated into foreign tongues for non-English audiences.

After all our mistakes in abusing this power of our medium, we should be very grateful to our government for having the faith in us as an industry, to allow us to correct our faults ourselves, in our own way. Only in a democracy would a government be as tolerant of such thoughtlessness.

As evidence of our thoughtlessness, and of the necessity of using better judgment, let me call your attention to the fact that one of the aforementioned pictures, "Call Out the Marines," was produced at the RKO Studios under the regime of Joseph I. Breen, a man who had served as Chief of our Code Administration for several years previously. In that position he literally breathed censorship every minute of every day; but he forgot all about self-criticism when he became a producer. This proves that even the censor must be censored and censured for such thoughtlessness.

I repeat that we have in our hands a very powerful medium of helpfulness, which is at the same time a dangerous weapon. Let us not then put it in the hands of people who might abuse its power in a manner to have it backfire.

We fear government interference with our picture making, but unless we show that we are capable of using the power of our screen judiciously, we might compel our government to interfere, making us pay for our carelessness.

**"The Talk of the Town" with
Ronald Colman, Jean Arthur
and Cary Grant**

(Columbia, August 20; time, 117 min.)

Very good entertainment. There should be no question of its box-office success for, in addition to the drawing power of the stars, the story is a grand combination of comedy and human interest, the sort that should appeal to all types of audiences. The story centers around a stuffy, scholarly law school dean, who unwittingly harbors a fugitive from justice, thereby endangering his pending appointment to the U. S. Supreme Court. Ronald Colman, as the dean who believes in the letter of the law; Cary Grant, as the innocent fugitive who believes that the law recognizes only the upper classes; and Jean Arthur, as the housekeeper-secretary who becomes romantically attached to both men, make a fine trio; they play their parts to perfection. Most of the comedy is provoked by Miss Arthur's efforts to keep Grant's identity from Colman. Despite its length, the picture is consistently interesting. Credit George Stevens with a fine directorial job:—

Cary Grant, small-town factory worker, is falsely imprisoned when Tom Tyler his foreman, apparently dies in the fire. Grant is accused of arson and murder. Escaping from jail, Grant hides in a house owned by Jean Arthur, who believes in his innocence. To Ronald Colman, bearded law school dean who had rented the house for the summer, Jean pretends that Grant is the gardener. She telephones Edgar Buchanan, Grant's lawyer and Colman's friend, who tries to enlist the dean's support for Grant. But Colman refuses to meddle in local affairs. Colman and Grant become fast friends; their conversational encounters provide Colman with a keener understanding of the law. In time, his wanderings about town lead him to believe that an injustice was done the hunted man, because of the connivings of Charles Dingle, the factory owner, who controlled the local police and courts. Listening to their debates with interest, Jean, who acted as housekeeper and secretary to Colman, grows romantically attached to both men, and they with her. Shortly after Colman learns that he is slated for a Supreme Court post, he discovers Grant's identity. Influenced by Jean's protestations of Grant's innocence, Colman shaves his beard and investigates the case. From Glenda Farrell, Tyler's girl-friend, he learns that the man was still alive, in Boston. Colman promises to do everything possible to help if Grant will first surrender to the police. But he changes his plans when he learns that Dingle had incited a lynching mob. The two men journey to Boston and capture Tyler, but he escapes them when they return. Grant is caught by the police. With mob violence threatening, Colman again goes after Tyler, capturing him at gun-point. Grant is freed; Tyler and Dingle are indicted. Realizing that Jean really loves Grant, Colman, on the day he ascends to the bench, tells her to go to Grant, who really needs her.

Based on a story by Sidney Harmon, the screen play was written by Irwin Shaw and Sidney Buchman. George Stevens produced and directed it. Fred Guiol is the assistant producer.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Priorities on Parade" with Ann Miller,
Jerry Colonna, Johnny Johnstone and
Betty Rhodes**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

Discounting the awkward attempt to deliver a patriotic message, this comedy, with music, dancing, and romance, shapes up as fairly good program entertainment, with an appeal directed mainly at the "Jitterbugs." The film's background is that of an airplane factory, while the story is one of a starving "swing" band that gains national fame inspiring the aircraft workers with their music. It's a new twist to an old formula. Jerry Colonna and Vera Vague make an effective comedy team, while Ann Miller does her usual good job with the dancing routines. The music is tuneful. Johnny Johnstone and Betty Rhodes are impressive as a singing duet:—

Johnny Johnstone and his band, and Ann Miller who sings with them, give an impromptu performance for Arthur Loft, personnel manager of the Eagle Aircraft Company, hoping to convince him that music will help speed up

production. Loft informs Johnny that he can give them regular employment as aircraft workers, but their music would have to be played on their own time. All agree, except Ann. She decides to accept employment in a local night club. Johnny is made an assistant welder and assigned to work with Betty Rhodes, a woman welder. She loses patience with his clumsiness. During lunch hour, the band plays for the workers who enjoy the music. This gains them an appointment as the official company band, to play during the night shift to furnish relaxation for the workers. Betty attends one of the night shift dances, but Johnny does not recognize her dressed in feminine garb. After the dance she offers to drive Johnny into town. He learns who she is and both become fast friends. They stop at the night club where Ann entertains. Ann attempts to embarrass Betty by announcing that a woman welder was present, but Betty takes a bow and then sings the same song that Ann had sung, only much better. Johnny's band soon becomes famous. He plans a gala show for the defense workers, with Betty as the singing star. The show is successful and the band and Betty receive offers to appear on Broadway. Betty declines; she felt that she was more useful as a welder in time of war. The others, including Ann, feel the same patriotic fervor. They forego their Broadway appearance and become defense musicians at night, and defense workers by day.

Art Arthur and Frank Loesser wrote the screen play, Sol C. Siegel and Burt Kelly produced it, and Albert S. Rogell directed it. Included in the cast are Jerry Colonna, Vera Vague, Eddie Quinlan and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Hi, Neighbor" with Jean Parker
and John Archer**

(Republic, July 27; time, 71 min.)

Suitable program entertainment for the family trade, with an appeal for the "swing" fans. A good part of the supporting cast are well known radio performers identified with the "Grand Ole Opry" radio show; their proper exploitation should be of help to the box-office. The picture is a pleasant comedy, replete with "catchy" musical numbers. The action deals with the efforts of a student body and of the faculty to maintain their backwoods college, despite the opposition of the founder. The conversion of their school into a summer resort, with members of a "Lonely Hearts" club as their guests, make for many amusing situations. The story is thin, but it is good fun:—

Janet Beecher, endower of Greenfield College, an institution founded for the education of young people living in the backwoods regions, is outraged when she hears a group of students poking sly fun at her in song. She retracts an offer she had made to finance new buildings. Determined to earn the necessary funds for these buildings, the students, headed by Professor Harry Cheshire and Dr. John Archer, convert the college into a summer resort. Their prospective trade, however, is diverted by a rival resort. To pep up business, the students write to the members of a "Lonely Hearts" club inviting them to meet their life's mate at the resort. The place is soon deluged with vacationists matrimonially inclined. Learning of the "shocking" situation, Miss Beecher returns to the college accompanied by Barbara Jo Allen, her sister, Jean Parker, her niece, and Don Wilson, her lawyer and Jean's fiance. She demands that the premises be cleared, in spite of the pleas made by Cheshire who had once been her sweetheart. To foil her plan, the students infect Wilson with poison ivy and, making him believe that he had the measles, quarantine the resort. During the quarantine Jean loses her love for Wilson and falls in love with Archer. When the measles hoax is exposed, Miss Beecher demands that everyone vacate immediately. Realizing that Miss Beecher was displeased with his courtship of Jean, Archer offers to give her up if Miss Beecher will allow the resort to continue. She agrees. But when the students learn of the bargain, they picket Miss Beecher's home and prevent Jean's marriage to Wilson. Miss Beecher relents, and Jean and Archer are re-united.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it. Included in the cast are Marilyn Hare, Bill Shirley, Lulu-belle and Scotty, and Roy Acuff and his Smokey Mountain Boys and Girls.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Drums of the Congo" with Ona Munson,
Don Terry and Stuart Erwin**

(Universal, July 17; time, 59 min.)

The cool comfort of an air-conditioned theatre on a sweltering day, or a teeming rainstorm on the outside, should be the only reason why your patrons should stay to see this dull program melodrama throughout. Completely lacking in originality, the story is silly, even irritating, and there is little that the performers can do with the material. Dealing with the adventures of international spies in the depths of the jungle, there are the usual hackneyed situations resulting from encounters with African tribes and wild animals. Although the action is fast, it is doubtful if any but the children will manifest any interest in the doings:—

Don Terry, U. S. Army Intelligence officer, is detailed to negotiate for the acquisition of a large meteorite, the "Vio Mezzi," a substance of high carbon content, valuable in the manufacture of armaments. Terry is flown to Africa where he meets Dr. Ona Munson daughter of the Vio Mezzi's discoverer, and Stuart Erwin, her aide. Erwin was to guide Terry to the Vio Mezzi, known to be located at the village of the Taroka tribe in the interior. At the river town of Bangali, Peggy Moran, an enemy spy, induces Terry to allow her and Richard Lane, her companion, to join the expedition. Ona tries to hide her jealousy of Peggy. Taking a piece of the Vio Mezzi, which would serve as a passport talisman among the ferocious Tarokas, the party sets out with a safari organized by Jules Bledsoe, a Tiganda warrior who had been befriended by Ona's father. Arriving at Bledsoe's village, Lane apparently kills a native and places the blame on Terry and his friends. Ona, however, restores the native back to consciousness. Their identities exposed, Peggy and Lane steal the Vio Mezzi talisman and flee to the Taroka village where they bring about the capture of Terry and his friends. To save his white friends, Bledsoe leads a war party of Tigandas against the Tarokas. The latter are vanquished and the Vio Mezzi is claimed for the United States. With Peggy and Lane their prisoners, Terry and Ona plan to marry.

Paul Huston and Roy Chanslor wrote the screen play, Henry MacRae produced it, and Christy Cabbane directed it. Morally suitable for all.

**"Danger in the Pacific" with Leo Carrillo,
Andy Devine and Don Terry**

(Universal, July 12; time, 59 min.)

The action fans who care nothing about the plausibility of a story should find this program melodrama to their taste. It's the sort of stuff that will keep the kids on the edge of their seats, but discriminating audiences will certainly find it tiresome. Revolving around a trek into the jungle in search of a secret enemy munitions dump, the action is strictly in the ten-twenty-thirty style—our heroes face death numerous times from vicious animals, a firing squad, and even head hunters. But with the aid of Leo Carrillo's jiu-jitsu skill and Hollywood's genius, they escape these dangers and our side wins once again:—

Don Terry, scientist-explorer, returns from an African expedition with Andy Devine, his cameraman, finally to set the date, many times postponed, of his wedding to Louise Allbritton, a wealthy sportswoman and aviatrix. The wedding is delayed, however, when Leo Carrillo, British Intelligence Officer, urges Terry to accompany him on a mission to a Pacific island. Ostensibly heading an expedition to the island's interior in search of a rare drug plant, Terry and Devine accompany Carrillo to the river town of Copenga. There, the party's arrangements are hampered by Edgar Barrier, a mysterious jungle trader. Unknowingly, Terry hires Turhan Bey, Barrier's henchman, to lead their native porters. Barrier is actually an enemy agent in charge of a secret munitions compound in the jungle. Carrillo's assignment is to uncover this compound. When the porters are scared off by Bey, Terry, Devine, and Carrillo are captured by Barrier's natives. The three are about to be beheaded when Carrillo overpowers their captors. Barrier is then forced to take them to the compound. Using the compound's radio, Carrillo short-waves the position to a British air fighter squadron, but Barrier, through a trick has the message picked up by his Copenga agent. Louise too, who had followed Terry to the island, gets the message and relays it to the fighter squadron over her plane's radio. The compound is destroyed, and the three men escape to Copenga. This time, Terry vows that nothing will prevent his oft postponed marriage to Louise.

Walter Doniger and Maurice Tombragel wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Lewis D. Collins directed it. Morally suitable for all.

A. R. BOYD ENTERPRISES, INC.

1601 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa.

July 22, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
HARRISON'S REPORTS
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

Your various editorials and especially the one in the July 18th issue titled "Mobilize the Kids" was read with much interest by the writer, kids really want to lend their help in the war effort, especially in the scrap rubber drive and our theatres are a means to that end.

Yes, give rubber matinees, but give them in all of the theatres of the country, not only one matinee, but several and you will find the "Kids" right up in front whether it be with rubber or any other scrap.

Our theatres in Bethlehem, Pa., in conjunction with the other first runs and second runs, six in all, recently held such a matinee admitting anyone who brought with them five pounds or more of rubber, when the matinee was over a total of 3250 pounds of rubber was the net result for a single matinee.

This rubber was piled outside the theatre on the sidewalk until after the matinee, a suggestion to all who passed to help in this drive, after which it was hauled away to a service station.

The various trade papers in this industry should fall in line with the suggestion as made in HARRISON'S REPORTS on this particular subject and boost the scrap collections at scrap matinees to the limit and I am sure of the result.

By tying up with the "Kids" along will come the parents, the brothers and sisters in one vast army of assistance, functioning through the various theatres of the country, by so doing we can get not only rubber and other scrap metals, but we can get almost anything that the government needs and really wants.

With best wishes for your continued success, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. R. BOYD ENTERPRISES, INC.

By: A. R. Boyd

WAR ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

1701 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

July 20, 1942

Mr. Pete Harrison
HARRISON'S REPORTS
New York City

Dear Pete:

Thanks for your kind comments on my remarks relative to the necessity of sacrifices if we are to deserve the designation of "essential." With your customary skill you have put your finger on the gist of what I have been trying to say to exhibitors at meetings all over the country.

Relative to industry participation in the various drives for essential war materials, I wrote to all exhibitor field chairmen about two weeks ago calling this to their attention and emphasizing the importance of our participation in these drives. I am happy to report that I am hearing from all parts of the country that the exhibitors are prepared to cooperate.

I think the "kid" angle of these drives which you wisely emphasize is being widely used, but I am sorry that I was not sufficiently on my toes to emphasize it in my letter to the field. If any further bulletins of this nature are issued, I will surely refer to it.

With many thanks for your fine cooperation, believe me

Sincerely yours,

Arthur Mayer

A RESOLUTION AGAINST HIGH FILM RENTALS

The following resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors at a meeting held at the William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, July 23rd, 1942:

"WHEREAS, the Board of Directors on May 1st 1942, issued a solemn warning in the matter of high film rentals which was addressed to the 'United Motion Picture Industry' (an industry body known as 'U.M.P.I.') and to the distributors not represented in that body; and

"WHEREAS, Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors was informed by 'U.M.P.I.' that the subject of film rentals, and the policies and terms of individual companies could not be considered on a national basis through that organization; and

"WHEREAS, demands for higher and still higher film rentals with attendant evils such as demands for more and more pictures on percentage, higher percentages, preferred playing time, forced increases in the admission prices charged the public, and extended runs, have continued since that date; and

"WHEREAS, as a result of the ruthless policy of the distributors the net earnings of the producing and distributing companies have grown steadily during the past year, notwithstanding greatly increased federal taxes, whilst during the same period the earnings of many of the theatres, especially the subsequent run and small town houses, have fallen off alarmingly; and

"WHEREAS, the profiteering policy of the producer-distributors runs counter to the public policy of the United States and is a scandalous abuse of the special consideration granted the industry by Congress in exempting motion pictures from the 'Price Control Act'; and

"WHEREAS, the high film rentals, terms and conditions being demanded and imposed by the producer-distributors not only are a burden under present conditions but will inevitably result in higher admission prices to the public and spell ruination for the exhibitors if carried over into the depression period which certainly will follow the end of the war; and

"WHEREAS, exhibitors are demanding action by their national and regional associations and, if need be, by the Government to curb the relentless demands of the producer-distributors for an unfair and unwarranted proportion of the box-office receipts and for control over the operating policies, including admission prices, of the theatres; now therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors shall issue an appeal to the independent exhibitors of the United States to resist in all legal and effective ways the demands of the producer-distributors for excessive film rentals and also their demands that the theatres increase their admission prices.

KILLING THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGG

Theatres are doing the greatest boom business since the advent of sound. Reports have it that national theatre business is ahead by twenty percent. The defense workers' payroll is providing plenty of ready cash, and a liberal portion of it is coming into the box-offices of our theatres. The public seeks entertainment, and motion pictures is the type they like best.

But the danger is that we are killing this desire for entertainment by feeding the public with too many bad, or just ordinary, pictures. And some day this lush crowd is going to get "hep" to the idea that we are taking their money without giving them a fair return in entertainment values.

We are making the same mistake as was made by many exhibitors when Bank Night was first resorted to as a box-office tonic for certain bad days in the week. Only a few wise theatre men would show their best pictures on bank nights. Most of the exhibitors gave the crowds their poor pictures, because they felt that the crowd came for the prize and not for the pictures.

One of the wise theatre men told me that he always saved his best available pictures for bank night, because he felt that it gave him the greatest opportunity to advertise his best entertainment to a large audience, with the hope that

it would convert many of those bank night gamblers into steady customers.

Now comes a similar condition—people flock to the picture theatres. This time, however, we have done nothing to attract them. They are coming because they have plenty of money and they want entertainment. We not only have done nothing to attract them, but we are doing nothing special to hold them or to convert them into steady customers in preparation for the day when the "horn of plenty" may run dry.

We are making enough money at the box-office to more than pay us to put every bad picture back into dry-dock for repairs and improvement before it is shown in its bad form to this public that is eager for good entertainment, so that we may make regular customers out of them.

Of course, many of these bad pictures could be avoided if they were "killed-off" in their formative writing stages by a trained producer-executive who should stop living in the hope that a story founded on an unsound theory may, by some miracle, turn out to be a good picture.

A RESOLUTION AGAINST DOUBLE FEATURES

The following resolution was adopted by the Board of Directors, Allied Theatres of Ill., Inc., July 21st, 1942.

"WHEREAS, The Allied Theatres of Illinois, Inc., have relentlessly campaigned for the abolishment of double features in the City of Chicago, and

"WHEREAS, it is the firm belief of the directors of this association that the motion picture industry can render a great patriotic service to our country by discontinuing the practice of showing double features in all motion picture theatres in the United States, thus conserving on vital materials which can be used in the war effort, and

"WHEREAS, we feel that the logical source through which such a move can be initiated would be the United Motion Picture Industry otherwise known as U.M.P.I., now therefore be it

"RESOLVED: that the President of this association be directed to request the cooperation of all of the state units affiliated with Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors as well as all unaffiliated exhibitor associations to adopt similar resolutions in the nature of an appeal to U.M.P.I. as the representative group of all branches of the motion picture industry urging them to immediately consider this problem and take quick steps for its ultimate elimination."

LEGION THEATRE COMPANY
Mayfield, Ky.

July 6, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
HARRISON'S REPORTS
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I have just read with much interest your comments on Publicity and Exploitation in your issue of July 4.

Advertising is a subject, which, from what I can observe, read and hear, no one knows very much about. We should all, it seems, like to know the answer to the three "Ws"—where, when and what. I am just an average small town exhibitor who spends more on advertising than I should but am afraid to quit any of the things that we are doing.

There is one suggestion that if the producers will adopt will give hundreds of small town exhibitors a break. I refer to a sidewalk stencil on all big pictures. There are not many of us who can print but anybody can daub a stencil. Think what it will mean to the exhibitor who uses two one-sheets in front of his theatre. With a stencil he can cover a hundred spots in his town at no cost except the stencil, 40c, chalk water, 10c and his time. It is only fair to tell you that this suggestion was turned down by one of the major companies because they thought it would hurt their paper sales.

Very truly yours,
Ned Greene, Manager

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
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35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 1942

No. 32

THE MOTION PICTURE HAS BECOME A MONGREL

Your motion picture theatre screen is getting to be like a gabby old dame, prattling incessantly to the point of distraction.

When sound first came into pictures, our motion picture screen writers complained bitterly about what they called, the invading "dumb playwrights from the stage," people who knew "nothing about the art of motion pictures," and who were "ruining our pictures by writing them like stage plays." Well, that is exactly what has happened, for we no longer see a motion picture without suffering the agony of being talked to death.

But the deplorable fact is that, instead of being the playwrights, it is our own screen writers who are now committing the crime. Screen writers have gone so far astray from their basic profession that they have forgotten that the fundamental art of writing for the screen is to show the story on the screen in a series of pictorial scenes, instead of photographing actors telling the story with dialogue.

The only remaining pure breed of motion pictures is the down-to-earth westerns like Harry Sherman's Hop-a-long Cassidy, or the top bracket Westerns made by Republic. They are the only examples we have left to show the new generation of moviegoers what is meant by "pure breed" of motion pictures.

Our current crop of screen writers have so adulterated the art of screen writing with the technique of radio, as well as stage writing that a projectionist can shut off the picture and the audience will understand the story by listening to the sound track alone.

If this condition keeps up, we had better close our studios and let our cameramen photograph stage plays on Broadway; it will be less expensive.

Why won't screen writers remember that a motion picture is something to look at? Why won't they remember to write their stories in action to be looked at? The eye remembers what it sees long after the ear has forgotten what it had heard. A perfect example is a radio program. Take the finest radio show produced on the air: how many people do you think will be able to recount what they had heard? You'll find them few in number. But not so with a motion picture—that is, a good motion picture; it make an indelible impression.

If a motion picture has to depend on the dialogue for the conveyance of the thought, it is not constructed properly.

There are approximately thirty-four languages throughout the world for conveying thought. The motion picture is the only medium that can convey thought to all the people who speak these languages by sight; it is an international language. In a well constructed motion picture, the sound track may be shut off entirely and the spectator will lose little of the thought.

We have a medium that is exclusive to our business. Why mongrelize it?

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES

(The previous box office performances were printed in the issues of June 13 and June 20, 1942.)

Columbia

"Sweetheart of the Fleet": Fair
"Meet the Stewarts": Fair
"Submarine Raider": Good-Fair
"They All Kissed the Bride": Very Good-Good
"Parachute Nurse": Fair-Poor

Five pictures have been checked, with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"I Married an Angel": Fair
"Pacific Rendezvous": Fair-Poor
"Maisie Gets Her Man": Good-Fair
"Her Cardboard Lover": Fair-Poor
"Tarzan's New York Adventure": Good-Fair
"Jackass Mail": Fair
"Crossroads": Very Good-Good
"The Affairs of Martha": Fair
"Pierre of the Plains": Fair
"Calling Dr. Gillespie": Fair
"Mrs. Miniver": Excellent

Eleven pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 2.

Paramount

"Take a Letter, Darling": Very Good
"Night in New Orleans": Fair
"Dr. Broadway": Fair
"Sweater Girl": Fair
"Beyond the Blue Horizon": Good
"Holiday Inn": Excellent-Very Good
"Are Husbands Necessary?": Good-Fair

Seven pictures have been checked, excluding one western, with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 3.

RKO

"The Falcon Takes Over": Fair
"My Favorite Spy": Fair
"Powder Town": Fair
"Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost": Fair

Four pictures, excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:

Fair, 4.

Twentieth Century-Fox

"It Happened in Flatbush": Fair
"The Magnificent Dope": Good
"Thru Different Eyes": Fair
"Ten Gentlemen from West Point": Good

Four pictures have been checked with the following results:

Good, 2; Fair, 2.

"Pardon My Sarong" with Abbott and Costello

(Universal, August 7; time, 83 min.)

If the antics of Abbott and Costello please your patrons, this comedy will be to their taste. It is slapstick in its broadest form, and at no time does it pretend to be otherwise. The picture is so completely non-sensical, that one finds it difficult to remain consistently bored with it. Whatever there is of the story is not worth mentioning, for it merely serves as a background for the usual Abbott and Costello skits, most of which lack freshness, and for a few dance and musical numbers, none of which is outstanding. The children will love this picture, but discriminating audiences will probably shy away from it. It is two-reeler stuff stretched into feature length:—

Lou Costello and Bud Abbott, Chicago bus drivers, accept an offer from Robert Paige, a playboy to drive him and some chorus girls to Los Angeles where Paige had entered his yacht in a boat race. William Demarest, a detective, follows them, seeking their arrest for the theft of the bus. They evade him and seek refuge on Paige's yacht. Paige immediately engages the boys to help sail the yacht, as his crew had left him. Responsible for the crew's walkout was Virginia Bruce. She felt that Paige had stolen the crew from her brother, who likewise was an entrant in the race. When Virginia comes aboard, Paige locks her in the cabin and sets sail. A hurricane blows the ship off its course and they drift ashore on an uncharted island. They become friendly with the natives, and Costello accidentally becomes a hero when he rings a sacred bell. Legend had it that whoever rang the bell would deliver the islanders from the spell of a tabu. This tabu was used by Lionel Atwill, the only other white man on the island, as a means of extortion. He informs the natives that, unless they delivered gold and jewels to the haunted temple of the volcano gods, the volcano, which rises above the village, would erupt and destroy the village. Costello is selected to carry the jewels to the temple. Upon reaching the temple he finds it haunted, not by spirits, but by a gang of thieves in Atwill's employ. With the aid of Paige and Abbott, Costello overpowers the gang.

True Boardman, Nat Perrin, and John Grant wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it. Included in the cast are Lief Erickson, Nan Wynn, The Four Ink Spots, "Tip Tap Toe," and others.

"Somewhere I'll Find You" with Clark Gable and Lana Turner

(MGM, no release date set; time, 107 min.)

As a love team, Clark Gable and Lana Turner should undoubtedly draw at the box-office, but picture-goers will find this war drama, with comedy, to be no more than a fair entertainment, and a ribald one at that. Much of the dialogue is suggestive, and many of the situations are quite risqué. At such times as the lovers manage to keep apart, the film concerns itself with the adventures of three war correspondents, two brothers and a girl, who form the inevitable love triangle. The disappearance of the girl in Indo-China brings the brothers to that locale just prior to the Japanese invasion. There is a little human interest, and a fair share of comedy and fast action. Exciting are the closing scenes where a small group of American soldiers on Bataan sacrifice their lives in an attempt to repel a Jap landing party:—

Displeased with the isolationist views of Charles Dingle, their editor, Clark Gable and Robert Sterling, brothers and war correspondents, quit their jobs when they return from Europe. Returning to his boarding house after an absence of three years, Gable learns that his room had been rented to Lana Turner, a girl reporter with whom he had failed to keep a date on the day he left for Europe. She embraces Gable. When Sterling arrives and informs him that Lana is the girl he intends to marry, Gable suspects her motives. He does not realize that Lana had tried to fall in love with Sterling to forget him. When Lana acknowledges that she and Gable were having dates and that she loved him, Sterling quarrels with Gable. Dingle assigns Lana to cover the news in Indo-China. Thinking that Gable will ask her to remain with him she is disappointed when he merely says goodbye and informs her that their love could not have a lasting quality. The brothers are reunited when Dingle appeals to them to go to Indo-China in search of Lana, who had disappeared. They find her taking groups of Chinese children to places of safety. Gable recognizes her fine qualities and loves her deeply. But believing that Sterling would make her a better husband, he leaves them and goes to Manila. They follow and find him just as war had been declared. Dingle assigns Lana and Sterling to Australia, while Gable remains in Manila. On Bataan, Gable finds Sterling a soldier in the front ranks. He learns that Lana had joined

the Red Cross, and that they had never left for Australia. In a skirmish with a party of Japs, Sterling heroically dies. Lana and Gable are reunited, and together they write the story of Bataan's heroes.

Marguerite Roberts wrote the screen play, Pandro S. Berman produced it, and Wesley Ruggles directed it.

Morally objectionable for children.

"Sabotage Squad" with Bruce Bennett, Kay Harris and Edward Norris

(Columbia, August 27; time 64 min.)

Just another program spy melodrama; its most receptive audience should be those patrons who demand action and a few thrills, regardless of story values. The action concerns itself with the tracking down of a spy ring by the police, aided by a petty gangster attempting to clear himself of involvement with the spies. Both the story and the action of the players follows a set formula for pictures of this type, offering little that is novel. The direction and the acting are fair:—

Refused enlistment in the army because of a bad heart, Edward Norris, a gambler, is jailed when he attacks the recruiting officers. He is bailed out by Police Lieutenant Bruce Bennett, his rival for the attentions of Kay Harris, a manicurist. As chief of a "Sabotage Squad," Bennett seeks the head of a spy ring. His only clue is a medal known to be carried by the head. With George McKay, his pick-pocket friend, Norris goes to the barber shop where Kay worked to inform her of his new job in a gambling "joint." While Norris talks to Kay, McKay steals a wallet from Sidney Blackmer, secret head of the spy ring and a customer in the shop. The wallet contains the medal and some money, but it means nothing to Norris, who plans to return it. But before he can find Blackmer, Norris is arrested in a police raid on the "joint," and the wallet found on his person. Bennett grills Norris and McKay without results. He allows Norris to "escape," hoping that he would lead him to Blackmer while attempting to clear himself. When Blackmer returns to the barber shop in search of his wallet, McKay recognizes him as the man from whom he had stolen it. He notifies Bennett who arrives with a squadron of police. Using Kay as a shield, Blackmer escapes. His men capture Norris and McKay and bring them to a soap factory where he is holding Kay. While Blackmer supervises the loading of trucks with explosives to wreck an airplane plant, the three captives escape and hide in one of the trucks. During a stop on the highway Norris sends Kay and McKay to warn the police. Holding Blackmer at gun-point, he takes command of the truck. To avoid hitting a truck load of soldiers, Norris swerves off the road, and with Blackmer, is killed in the explosion that follows. Bennett presents Kay with a posthumous award for Norris.

Bernice Petkers, Wallace Sullivan, and David Silverstein wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Suitable for all.

"Journey Into Fear" with Orson Welles, Dolores Del Rio and Joseph Cotten

(RKO, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

A fairly good program spy melodrama. Throughout its seventy minutes running time, Orson Welles' latest production builds up an interest that holds one deeply engrossed, and always tense, but all this is torn down by a weak ending. The many confusing characters keep one guessing as to their intent, but the weak ending clears up little, and one is made to feel as if the story had no point. The highly suspenseful action revolves around the efforts of an American naval gunnery expert to escape Axis agents, who seek his death because of information he possessed about the Turkish Navy. Orson Welles and Dolores Del Rio are cast in secondary parts, while Joseph Cotten plays the lead. The direction and the performances are very good:—

Enroute to the United States, Joseph Cotten, naval gunnery expert representing an American firm, arrives in Istanbul, Turkey, with Ruth Warwick, his wife. Everett Sloane, Turkish agent of the firm, induces Cotten to go to a cafe where they could talk. There, he becomes acquainted with Dolores Del Rio and Jack Durant, adagio dancers. During the entertainment, Cotten is persuaded to assist in a magician's act involving the transference of two people. As the lights are dimmed, the magician is shot dead. Orson Welles, head of the secret Turkish police, informs Cotten that Nazi agents were attempting to kill him, because of his knowledge regarding the re-arming of the Turkish Navy. Welles secretly puts Cotten aboard a small Greek steamer bound for Batumi, Russia, and assures him that he would personally see to it that his wife met him there. Aboard the

steamer, Cotten is reasonably content, inasmuch as Dolores also was a passenger. Two days out, however, he recognizes one of the passengers as Jack Moss, a Nazi, from a photograph he had seen in Welles' office, Cotten discovers that his table companion, an apparently gentle professor, was Eustace Wyatt, Moss' chief. Unarmed, he tries to enlist the aid of Richard Bennett, the captain, but he thinks Cotten's story is fantastic. Wyatt offers Cotten the choice of death or internment in a hospital until the information he has will no longer be useful. Edgar Barrier, Welles' agent aboard the ship, evolves a scheme to get help but is himself murdered before he can put the plan in operation. Desperate, Cotten appeals to Frank Readnick, an Englishman, and Agnes Moorehead, his wife. But they, too, are unarmed. Cotten submits to internment, but escapes the Nazis when he goes ashore in Batumi. He makes his way to a hotel where he finds his wife waiting in her room, entertaining Wyatt, who had represented himself to Ruth as a business acquaintance. In a final chase, the Nazis fall to their death from a building ledge when cornered by Welles, who arrives on the scene.

Orson Welles and Joseph Cotten wrote the screen play. Mr. Welles produced it, and Norman Foster directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Wings and the Woman" with Anna Neale and Robert Newton

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

This British-made drama, formerly titled, "They Flew Alone," is a biography of the life of Amy Johnson, famous British aviatrix. It is a fair entertainment, but it will require extensive exploitation for American audiences. The popularity of Anne Neagle may, however, help at the box office. Beginning with her school-girl days, the film depicts her growing into a woman air-enthusiast, her many famous flights, her unhappy marriage with Jim Mollison, and ends with her untimely death as a ferry pilot. While neither highly dramatic or spectacular, the picture manages to maintain one's interest. This is due to Miss Neagle's sympathetic and restrained performance. Robert Newton, as Jim Mollison, handles his part well:—

Early in life, Amy Johnson (Anna Neagle), as a school-girl, shows her distaste for conformity. As she grows older she decides to make her mark in a man's field—aviation. She becomes Britain's first woman pilot and, with a second-hand plane, is the first person ever to fly to Australia. There she meets Jim Mollison (Robert Newton), a transport pilot, who becomes inspired with her achievement and falls in love with her. Returning to England, Amy is received at Buckingham Palace. To see Amy, Jim makes a successful flight to London, only to discover that she had left for Capetown, making a record flight. Jim follows her, setting a new record flight, and they meet again. But Jim's behavior makes the meeting an unsuccessful one. They meet again in London and make a whirlwind decision to marry. After the honeymoon, Jim leaves for a successful solo flight across the Atlantic. Because of his playboy activities, however, Amy is most unhappy. In an effort to retrieve her romance, Amy plans another Atlantic crossing, this time as Jim's co-pilot. The flight ends in a crash. Jim's easy way of living eventually leads to their divorce. At the outbreak of the war, both are given jobs as ferry pilots. When they meet for the first time since their divorce, there is a promise that they will remarry. But it is unfulfilled as Amy meets death, losing her life when her plane runs out of gas and crashes.

Miles Malleon wrote the screen play, and Herbert Wilcox produced and directed it.

"Mexican Spitfire's Elephant" with Lupe Velez and Leon Errol

(RKO, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

As entertainment, this latest of the "Mexican Spitfire" program comedies is on a par with the others in the series. Following the set formula familiar to the other pictures, Leon Errol is again capably cast in a dual role, provoking considerable comedy by his portrayal of two "Lord Eppings" in addition to his "Uncle Matt" role. This time jewel smugglers cause the excitement. Lupe Velez is her usual fiery self, and is particularly effective in two Mexican dance numbers:—

Enroute to New York to aid Elisabeth Risdon in her War Relief Drive, Lord Epping (Leon Errol) is tricked into carrying a small onyx elephant, in which was concealed a gem, stolen by Marion Martin and Lyle Talbot, jewel smugglers. They intend to get it back after the customs is cleared. They follow Epping to his hotel, but are themselves trailed by customs men. Elisabeth takes Walter Reed to meet Lord Epping, while Uncle Matt (Leon Errol), Elisabeth's husband, takes Lupe Velez, Reed's wife, to dinner

at the same hotel. Marion attempts to retrieve the elephant given Lord Epping, but he does not remember what he did with it. Talbot threatens Epping, and is overheard by Lupe who induces Uncle Matt to impersonate Epping to find out what the thieves wanted. When Lupe learns that it was an elephant they seek, she returns with a live one, causing much pandemonium. When Elisabeth learns that Uncle Matt was disguised as Epping she beats him with her handbag, only to find that she was hitting the real Lord Epping. Because of this treatment, Lord Epping refuses to take part in the relief show. Lupe once more induces Uncle Matt to impersonate Epping. At the hotel the clerk mistakes him for Lord Epping, and gives him the onyx elephant, found by a cleaner in a suit. During a mind reading act at the relief show, a Chinese magician reveals that Uncle Matt had the elephant in his pocket. The thieves start a fight, but the customs men arrest them.

Charles E. Roberts wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

"Tales of Manhattan" with an all star cast

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 117 min.)

A series of short stories revolving around the adventures of a gentleman's tailcoat, interpreted by a roster of stars that reads like a "Who's Who" of film circles, has resulted in a picture of many moods, but whatever the mood, it is at all times highly entertaining. The clever screen play, in which no less than ten writers took a hand, is so formulated as to allow the individual talents of the stars to be displayed to the best advantage, each one cast in a leading role. From the time the coat first drapes the shoulders of a matinee idol, until it ends up as a scarecrow on a sharecropper's farm, one's interest in the proceedings never fades. It is by turns suspenseful, heart-warming, tragic, and comical. Capably directed and effectively performed, it should prove to be one of the year's top box-office pictures:—

A gentleman's tailcoat, accursed by a disgruntled tailor, is bought by Charles Boyer, an actor. He wears it for the first time at a party given by Thomas Mitchell and Rita Hayworth, Mitchell's wife, with whom Boyer had been philandering. Mitchell shoots Boyer when he discovers him alone with his wife. Eugene Pallette, Boyer's butler, takes the coat to Roland Young, his butler-friend, who needs a coat for the wedding of Caesar Romero, his employer. Ginger Rogers, Romero's fiancee, and Gail Patrick, her friend, visit the apartment the morning after a bachelor party. Challenged by Gail to search the pockets of the coat, which was hanging over a chair, Ginger finds a love letter Romero had received from Marion Martin. Aware of her discovery, Romero telephones Henry Fonda, his best man, to come over and claim the coat as his. Fonda succeeds in fooling Ginger, but upon the arrival of Marion, Ginger learns the truth. She discovers that she is more interested in Fonda, and breaks the engagement with Romero. The two butlers sell the coat to a pawnbroker. He in turn sells it to Elsa Lanchester, whose husband, Charles Laughton, had quit his job as a piano player in a beer saloon when Victor Francen, a famous conductor, had agreed to let him conduct his symphony in Carnegie Hall. Laughton is broken-hearted when the much-too-small coat rips and the audience breaks into laughter. Realizing that their laughter had brought tragedy to Laughton, the men in the audience shed their coats. Encouraged, he finishes his symphony in triumph. On his way home from the concert, Laughton gives the coat to a Bowery mission. Father James Gleason, head of the mission, persuades Edward G. Robinson, a derelict, to wear the tailcoat to his college class reunion. At the party, Robinson is made the victim of a mock trial when his past life as a disbarred lawyer is slightly mentioned by George Sanders, a classmate. He walks out on his friends after denying their falseness, but two of them hurry to the mission and offer him a job. Gleason sells the coat to a second hand shop. J. Carrol Naish and John Kelly, gangsters, steal the coat which they need for a gambling club robbery. After stealing \$50,000, Naish charts a plane for Mexico. During the flight the coat catches fire and he throws it from the plane before thinking about the money in the pockets. The coat is found by Paul Robeson and Ethel Waters, negro sharecroppers. On the advice of Preacher Eddie Anderson, the money is divided among the poor negroes. The tailcoat ends up as a scarecrow in one of their fields.

The original stories and screen play were written by Ben Hecht, Ferenc Molnar, Donald Ogden Stewart, Samuel Hoffenstein, Alan Campbell, Ladislav Fodor, L. Vadrnai, L. Gorog, Lamar Trotti, and Henry Blankfort. Borris Morris and S. P. Eagle produced it, and Julien Duvivier directed it. Included in the cast are The Hall Johnson Choir and others. Morally suitable for all.

**"The War Against Mrs. Hadley" with
Fay Bainter, Edward Arnold,
Richard Ney and Jean Rogers**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 84 min.)

Topical in subject matter and timely in message, this human interest drama is a good entertainment. The story deals with the chaotic change, brought about by the war, in the life of a strongly anti-new deal, class-conscious, wealthy widow, prominent in Washington's social circles. Though not unpatriotic, she regards the war as something that disturbs the even tenure of her family life, and her refusal to reconcile herself to the changed conditions results in a break with her friends and her family. Her views, however, are changed when news of her son's heroism on the battlefield causes her mother's pride to rouse her patriotic fervor. A touching scene, with a powerful message in unity, is the one when Edward Arnold reads to her a congratulatory letter from President Roosevelt, in which he states that her son was endowed with the same fineness and courage as her husband, whom he had deeply admired, despite his opposition views. This message brings about her reformation. One is sympathetic to "Mrs. Hadley"; her devotion to her family and friends is deep, hurting them by her selfishness only unwittingly. The picture is more than just a drama; it is a character study of the American scene. Fay Bainter, as the widow who regards the war as secondary to her new deal prejudices; Edward Arnold, as the staunch republican who regards his political affiliations as secondary to the war effort; Richard Ney, as a spoiled son of the rich who finds a new interest in life when he joins the army; Jean Rogers, as Miss Bainter's democratic daughter who frowns upon her mother's desire to live in a world of the past; Sara Allgood, as Jean's whole-hearted Irish mother-in-law, who, though of a lower social stratum, matches in dignity, and surpasses in patriotism, the haughty "Mrs. Hadley,"—all these characters have their counterpart in American homes throughout the land. The picture combines human interest with comedy and romance. The direction is good and the performances first rate. Although it lacks stars with drawing power, word of mouth advertising might help the box-office considerably.

The story opens with Fay Bainter's birthday party disrupted by the news of Pearl Harbor. Edward Arnold, a war department official and an admirer of hers, rushes to his office, taking with him Richard Ney, Miss Bainter's dissipated son, who was employed in his department. Displeased with the excitement caused by the war, Miss Bainter cannot reconcile herself to the changes that take place. Spring Byington, an old friend of hers, becomes active in war work, her butler becomes an air raid warden, and Jean Rogers, her daughter, joins the Red Cross canteen. When Arnold transfers Ney to active service, hoping that it will better him, Miss Bainter is shocked. Her protests to Arnold are futile. Meanwhile Ney cheerfully accepts the assignment, and mends his ways. Displeased when Jean falls in love with Sergeant Van Johnson, of a lower class family, Miss Bainter refuses to attend their wedding. Sara Allgood, Johnson's mother, calls on her and is rebuffed. Alone with her servants, she suffers ludicrously through the months that follow until Ney is cited for heroism on the battlefield. This news, and word that Jean was to have a baby, brings about a change. She is reconciled with Arnold, marrying him; she ends her feuds with social enemies because of their political beliefs; gives her blessing to Jean and Johnson, and turns her mansion over for the use of the Red Cross.

George Oppenheimer wrote the screen play, Irving Asher produced it, and Harold A. Bucquet directed it. Included in the cast are Dorothy Morris, Connie Gilchrist, Halliwell Hobbes, Miles Mander, "Rags" Raglund and others.

**"The Big Street" with Henry Fonda
and Lucille Ball**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Although not a "big" picture, Damon Runyon's first venture as a producer offers fairly good mass entertainment. With the underworld of Broadway and Miami as its background, the typical Runyon tale deals with the one-sided love of a bus boy for a beautiful, but selfish, show-girl, whose delusions of grandeur, despite her illness, cause him to make many sacrifices for her. There is plentiful human interest and comedy, but it is not altogether a cheerful entertainment, for the story is one of human suffering. One is sympa-

thetic to the hero who displays fine character, but not so to the heroine whose motives at all times are selfish. Henry Fonda's popularity should be of help to the box office:—

When Henry Fonda, a bus boy, retrieves Lucille Ball's dog, he disrupts an eating contest causing Barton MacLane, owner of the restaurant and Lucille's boy-friend, to lose a wager. Fonda is dismissed. Lucille, a hard and self-centered night club entertainer, gets him a job at the night club where she worked. When she flirts with William Orr, a millionaire, MacLane slaps her, and she falls, injuring her spine. Without funds to remain in the hospital, and unaware that she was permanently paralyzed, Lucille accepts the hospitality of Fonda's cellar apartment. He treats her tenderly, but suffers her continual abuse. When she complains of the bitter cold of New York, he sets out for Florida, pushing her wheelchair. Kindly truck drivers help them reach Miami, where they live with Eugene Pallette and Agnes Moorehead, Fonda's friends. Fonda caters to her every whim, but Lucille does not recognize his love for her. He gets a job at a night club operated by MacLane. Lucille meets Orr on the beach and reawakens his interest in her. She upbraids Fonda, blaming her when Orr sees her in the wheel chair and notices her crippled condition. Fonda finally displays spirit and leaves. When Lucille suffers a relapse, the doctor informs Fonda that her delusion of glamorous greatness must be maintained or she will die. While stealing an evening gown for Lucille, Fonda learns that MacLane was head of a jewel-stealing syndicate. He blackmails the gangster, compelling him to give a night club party in honor of Lucille. Fonda's many gangster friends compel the elite of Miami to attend. Detectives arrive to arrest Fonda, but after hearing his story they arrest MacLane and allow the party to continue. As Fonda takes Lucille in his arms and dances with her, she dies.

Based on the story "Little Pinks," by Damon Runyon, the screen play was written by Leonard Spiegelglass. Damon Runyon produced it, and Irving Reis directed it.

Not for children.

**"Lure of the Islands" with Margie Hart,
Robert Lowery and Big Boy Williams**

(Monogram, July 3; time, 61 min.)

Terrible! This comedy-melodrama is a perfect example of Hollywood's abuses in matters treating of the war. The picture is a flimsy affair dealing with the exploits of two F.B.I. agents bent on uncovering enemy espionage activities on a South Sea island. So foolish are they made to appear that it might well be considered an insult to the F.B.I. Obviously, the picture's locale was chosen so as to allow Margie Hart, famous as a burlesque queen, to appear in a sarong. The story is extremely silly, the action uninteresting, and the performances poor. It is doubtful if even the most undiscriminating audiences of secondary theatres will have the patience to see it through:—

Robert Lowery and Big Boy Williams, F.B.I. agents, land on the island of Tanukai disguised as shipwrecked sailors, in response to a message from Jerome Sheldon, another agent. Meanwhile Sheldon, having discovered a powerful wireless set, is murdered by Ivan Lebedeff, commandant in charge of the island, who is a Nazi though he pretends to be French. Lowery and Williams become friendly with Margie Hart, a half-Tahitian and half-Irish girl, who is ignored by the natives because she was a half-breed. Margie wants Lowery to marry her so that she could leave the island. He agrees, provided she will help him with his investigation. Eluding the soldiers of the suspicious commandant, Lowery and Williams discover the wireless set, and find it tuned for Japanese reception. They put the set out of order by stealing the condenser. Lebedeff orders the native chief to cut down the cocoanut trees along the shore line so that invading Japanese could effect the landing of an air troop transport. Refusing to carry out the order, the chief is jailed. Lowery and Williams gain the cooperation of the natives by releasing the chief. Learning of the plan for the Japanese landing, the two men repair the wireless set and permit the enemy airmen to follow the radio beam to the island. The plane crashes into the trees, the commandant is exposed, and the island freed of the enemy. Margie and Lowery depart to be married.

Edmund Kelso wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Jean Yarborough directed it.

Morally objectionable for children.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1942

No. 33

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

"Tales of Manhattan," one of the latest 20th Century-Fox productions, will undoubtedly make a box-office success, not only because of the stars that appear in it, but also because of the fact that it has heart appeal.

The story is not new—it is evident that the authors, in writing it, were influenced by the style of de Maupassant's "A Piece of String"; but the treatment is new. For a writer, or a group of writers, to take a dress suit and build on it a human interest story is, indeed, a case of excellent treatment, and one that shows the ingenuity of those who conceived it, and the skill of those who developed it.

Usually a novel idea or treatment brings out a flood of imitators, and I would not be surprised if some producers, or producing companies, should come out with episodic films on the style of "Tales of Manhattan." For that reason this paper desires to warn the exhibitors against rushing to buy the imitations, for the following reasons: Past experience has proved that the imitations are hardly ever as good as the originals that gave birth to the imitations, because, the imitators, as a rule, lack an understanding of the elements that made the original pictures successful, as well as the ability to make a good imitation. Even when the imitators possess to a certain extent the understanding and the ability, their efforts are usually wasted on account of the fact that what inspires them to write the story is, not the birth of an idea, but the unworthy object of plagiarizing on some one else's creative ability.

A CAUSE WORTH SUPPORTING

Neil Agnew, vice president in charge of distribution at Paramount, has been appointed chairman of the Amusement Industry Campaign for raising funds to buy 250 ambulances for the American Field Service, at a cost of \$2,200 each ambulance.

The American Field Service operates an Ambulance Corps the task of which is to rescue the wounded in the fighting fronts.

The importance of the service this Corps renders may be evidenced by the fact that, in the last war, it rescued more than 600,000 wounded men. One hundred and twenty-seven of its drivers were killed in action, and two hundred and thirty-six were decorated for bravery under fire.

Mr. Agnew will set up in each film zone, a committee headed by an exhibitor, with a distributor co-chairman, the committee to consist of public-spirited citizens, leaders in some kind of activity, for raising the money needed for these ambulances.

HARRISON'S REPORTS feels confident that every exhibitor in the country will give Mr. Agnew and the committees all the cooperation that is necessary.

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES

United Artists

"Miss Annie Rooney" Fair
 "Friendly Enemies": Fair-Poor

Two pictures have been checked with the following results:

Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

Universal

"You're Telling Me": Fair-Poor
 "Broadway": Good
 "Escape from Hong Kong": Fair-Poor
 "Almost Married": Fair
 "Eagle Squadron": Very Good-Good
 "Tough As They Come": Fair
 "Private Buckaroo": Fair
 "Top Sergeant": Good-Fair
 "There's One Born Every Minute": Fair-Poor
 "Lady in a Jam": Fair
 "Deep in the Heart of Texas": Good-Fair
 "Danger in the Pacific": Fair
 "Drums of the Congo": Fair-Poor

Thirteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 4.

Warner-First National

"Juke Girl": Very Good-Good
 "Lady Gangster": Fair
 "The Big Shot": Good-Fair
 "Wings for the Eagle": Good
 "Escape from Crime": Fair

Five pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2.

I have received the following interesting letter from a British subscriber:

C. H. WHINCUP

THE TOWER
 BRIGGATE,
 LEEDS, 1.
 2nd July, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
 1270 Sixth Avenue
 New York, U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

Your comments under the heading "Pictures That Distort Life In The United States," in your issue of 6th June, echo the feelings of many Britishers who have visited the U. S. A. Over a long period of years occasional American films created a mental impression which is not truly representative of the life of the average American citizen and I am afraid, too, that many British and American films have likewise given your countrymen a distorted knowledge of us.

Without detracting from the primary purpose of offering entertainment, films present a powerful instrument for the promotion of goodwill and better understanding. The screen has done an enormous amount of good in this direction, but it is to be deplored that this should be neutralised to the slightest degree by a minority of producers who appear to stubbornly resist the influence of any factors which interfere with their personal creative ideas.

Yours sincerely,

C. H. Whincup

"Wake Island" with Brian Donlevy, Macdonald Carey and Robert Preston

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 86 min.)

Thrilling is the word for this dramatization of the defense of Wake Island. The story is one of virile action, depicting the courageous stand of a handful of Marines who are methodically whittled down, both in men and materials, by overwhelming odds. Void of romantic interest, and touching only lightly on the personal drama involving the main characters, the picture is factual of the events culminating in the capture of the island by the enemy. The realism of the Japanese attacks, and the stout defense put up by the Marines, are spine-chilling battle scenes that hold one in constant suspense, even though one is aware of the final outcome. The picture is not without its message; one is made to feel the importance of supplying our fighting forces with the necessary implements of war, the shortage of which was the prime factor resulting in the loss of Wake Island. Although there are some individual acts of heroism, more stress is placed on the bravery of the garrison as a whole. There is considerable comedy, both in dialogue and situations, with William Bendix and Robert Preston provoking much laughter. The direction and the performances are first rate.

The story begins with the arrival of Major Brian Donlevy to supervise the installation of the island's defenses. He encounters some opposition from Albert Dekker, a brusque civilian contractor, who resents what he refers to as "brass hat" interference. When news comes of the Pearl Harbor attack, Commander Walter Abel and Donlevy prepare to defend the island. Dekker forgets his resentment and offers his services. They made the most of their meager equipment and man power, but their twelve planes are no match for the overwhelming number of Jap planes. Donlevy assumes command when Abel is killed in action and, through his leadership, the garrison repels an attempted invasion by holding their fire until the Jap ships come within range of their guns. Endangered by a cruiser too distant to be reached by their shore guns, Macdonald Carey, the only flier left, volunteers to bomb the ship. His mission is successful, but he dies in the attempt. Realizing that defeat was inevitable, because of his shortage of men and material, Donlevy orders Captain Damion O'Flynn to fly to Pearl Harbor, in a Navy Patrol plane, with a final report. When the Japs make a landing, Donlevy and Dekker are killed when both man machine guns in a final stand.

W. R. Burnett and Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Joseph Siström produced it, and John Farrow directed it.

"Cairo" with Jeanette MacDonald and Robert Young

(MGM, no release date set; time, 99 min.)

The humorous foreword dedicating the picture to Hollywood's spy-story writers sets the mood for this fairly entertaining bit of spy nonsense. With Egypt as the background, the thin story is based on the mistaken identity theme, and is a mixture of romance, comedy, music, and melodrama, each in sufficient proportions to satisfy most picture-goers. Most of the laughter is provoked by the misunderstandings that arise because of the suspicions of the hero and heroine; each suspect that the other is a Nazi spy. Miss MacDonald sings several numbers extremely well, and handles the comedy touches expertly. Ethel Waters, colored songstress, sings two numbers. The production values are good:—

Robert Young, war correspondent for a small-town newspaper, is shipwrecked when his boat is torpedoed in the Mediterranean enroute to Cairo. Reginald Owen, a fellow passenger, shares his raft. The two finally reach land—the Libyan desert, but are forced to separate when German soldiers approach. Owen, a Nazi spy, informs Young that he is a British agent and, giving him a message, asks him to contact Mona Barrie in Cairo. Reaching Cairo, Young delivers the message to Mona. He presses her for a story. To get rid of him, she implies that Jeanette MacDonald, an American movie star entertaining British troops in Cairo, was head of a Nazi spy ring known as the "Big Six." Young is convinced when he sees Jeanette and Ethel Waters, her maid, exchange mysterious signs. To follow her movements, Young secures employment as her butler. But so strangely does he act, Jeanette believes that he is a spy. Despite their suspicions, both fall in love. They eventually realize each

other's innocence. One night Young follows Mona and other Nazi agents into the desert. He learns that Edward Cianelli, an Arab, had devised a plan whereby through remote control a ship could be bombed by a plane. Young is trapped. As they lead him to a pyramid, whose secret door opens at the sound of a tuning fork's high "C," Young drops \$100 bills in the sand to leave a trail. The spies permit Young to escape in the plane, aware that he would be unable to control it. The bills lead Jeanette and British Intelligence officers to the pyramid, but they find themselves blocked by the immovable door. Realizing that the slang name for a \$100 bill was a "C" note, Jeanette sings out, causing the door to open. They trap the spies and destroy the remote control radio in time to save Young from crashing into a troop transport ship. Young gets his story, as well as Jeanette.

John McLain wrote the screen play, and Major W. S. Van Dyke II produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Seven Sweethearts" with Kathryn Grayson, Van Heflin and Marsha Hunt

(MGM, no release date set; time, 98 min.)

Picture-goers will find this romantic comedy, with music, a delightful and pleasant entertainment, the sort that allows one to relax. With its background of a mythical American village, whose inhabitants of Dutch ancestry follow traditional Dutch customs, most of the action takes place in a hotel owned by an old Dutchman, whose seven daughters act as the hotel's personnel. In such an atmosphere, a young newspaperman finds romance. More so than the story, it is the background and the mood that give this picture its quality. Its comedy keeps one chuckling all the way through. Lacking star strength, the picture is of program grade, but it should do better than average program business because of the popularity of the featured players, and of the fact that the production values are good. Kathryn Grayson has a charming voice:—

Van Heflin, a young reporter covering the tulip festival in Little Delft, Michigan, stops at an inn managed by S. Z. Sakall, an eccentric old Dutchman, and his seven daughters. Marsha Hunt, the eldest, a spoiled, stage-struck girl, attaches herself to Heflin because she thinks that he is acquainted with Broadway producers. The other six daughters are Kathryn Grayson, Cecilia Parker, Dorothy Morris, Peggy Moran, Frances Raeburn, and Frances Rafferty—all work in the hotel. All have suitors, except Kathryn, and hope that Marsha will marry Heflin; custom does not permit them to marry until the eldest daughter is wed. When Kathryn sings at a party in the hotel, Heflin falls in love with her. He goes to Sakall and asks to marry his daughter, but before he can explain which one, Sakall rushes away and returns with Marsha. Heflin admits to Marsha that it is Kathryn he loved, but she tells him that it made no difference to her, and that she sought this opportunity to get away. Marsha and Kathryn quarrel. When Heflin informs Sakall that he and Kathryn loved each other, the old man charges that they had planned to elope, and tells them to leave. Kathryn refuses, and tells Heflin to forget her. Marsha follows him to New York, hoping that he will marry her, and help her become an actress. But Sakall, too, arrives, and informs Marsha that he will not stand in her way if she wants to become an actress. He then asks Heflin to marry Kathryn. Marsha is vexed. But she returns to Little Delft with Carl Esmond, a pianist, in time to join her six sisters in a mass marriage.

Walter Reich and Leo Townsend wrote the screen play. Joe Pasternak produced it, and Frank Borzage directed it.

"Berlin Correspondent" with Dana Andrews and Virginia Gilmore

(20th Century-Fox, Sept. 11; time, 69 min.)

Ordinary program fare. It is just another one of those implausible war melodramas, in which a jaunty American correspondent foils the Gestapo with the utmost of ease. As in other films of this sort, the Gestapo is depicted as a stupid lot. It is extremely far-fetched stuff, but it has fast action, suspense, and plentiful excitement, the type that should satisfy the followers of action pictures, who are not too exacting in their demands for logical stories. The performances are uniformly good:—

Although his script was censored, Dana Andrews, American radio commentator in Berlin, succeeded in broadcasting

important news through clever phraseology. Martin Kosleck, Gestapo chief, rages when he cannot find out from his henchmen how Andrews got his news, or how he gets it out of the country. Kosleck assigns Virginia Gilmore, his fiancée, to spy on Andrews. He falls in love with her. Learning that Andrews got his news from an unknown stamp collector, Virginia reports this to Kosleck. She is shocked when the stamp collector proves to be Erwin Kalser, her father. He is jailed. Posing as a doctor on Hitler's staff, Andrews gets into Kalser's cell and helps the old man escape to Switzerland. The Gestapo catches up with Andrews and places him in a concentration camp. An actor capable of imitating Andrews voice, continues with his broadcasts so that he would not be missed. Grateful to Andrews for helping her father, Virginia pleads with Kosleck in his behalf. She agrees to an early wedding date on his promise to arrange for Andrews' escape. On the night of the escape, Virginia learns from Mona Maris, Kosleck's jealous secretary, that Kosleck had arranged for Andrews to be electrocuted when climbing over the camp's wire fence. Taking Mona's official Nazi car, Virginia reaches the camp in time to pick up Andrews, who had made his escape good. Andrews manages to steal a Nazi officer's uniform and, impersonating Kosleck, they steal his plane and fly out of the country. Kosleck is arrested for aiding the escape.

Steve Fisher and Jack Andrews wrote the screen play, Bryan Foy produced it, and Eugene Forde directed it. Morally suitable for all.

**"Orchestra Wives" with Glenn Miller,
George Montgomery, Lynn Bari
and Ann Rutherford**

(20th Century-Fox, Sept. 4; time, 97 min.)

Exhibitors who have had success with musical pictures featuring top name bands should find no difficulty putting over this one; patrons who enjoy modern "swing" music will get more than a fair share of it. But, aside from the musical part of the picture, it is no more than a fair entertainment. Following a routine treatment, the story is based on an oft-told tale of misunderstanding between newlyweds, caused by gossiping women, in this case the wives of orchestra members. The abundance of dialogue slows up the action considerably. It has, however, some human interest and light comedy. A highlight of the film is a show-stopping dance routine by the Nicholas Brothers. This alone is worth the price of admission:—

George Montgomery, a trumpet player in Glenn Miller's band, flirts with Ann Rutherford, a "swing" addict who lives in a small town. Awed by his attentions, Ann meets him the following night in another town. After the dance, Montgomery proposes to her on a sudden impulse, and they are married that night. She telephones Grant Mitchell, her father, informing him that she was married and that she was going on tour with Montgomery. Carole Landis, Mary Beth Hughes, and Virginia Gilmore, gossiping wives of the other band members, take a sudden interest in the terminated romance between Montgomery and Lynn Bari, singer with the band. Their vicious gossiping and Lynn's jealousy, almost breaks up Ann's marriage. In retaliation, she purposely gossips about some of the wives and members of the band. This starts a quarrel, resulting in the breaking up of the band. Angry, Montgomery leaves her. To rectify her wrong, Ann, with the aid of Cesar Romero, the piano player, sends telegrams to each of the members, offering them jobs with different bands, and asking them to come to a New York hotel. Realizing that they had been duped, the members nevertheless forget their differences and reorganize the band. Ann and Montgomery are reunited when Romero informs him that Ann had sent the telegrams.

Karl Tunberg and Darrell Ware wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Archie Mayo directed it. There are no objectionable situations.

**"Invisible Agent" with Ilona Massey,
Jon Hall and Peter Lorre**

(Universal, July 31; time, 80 min.)

The invisible man theme goes timely in this fairly entertaining spy farce-melodrama. By means of a drug that makes him invisible, a U.S. agent enters Germany and raises havoc with the Gestapo while obtaining military information. The picture is by turns farcical, slapstick, and melodramatic, and consistently pokes sly fun at the Nazis and

Japs. The bewilderment of the Nazis as the invisible agent moves about is highly amusing. The trick photography is handled well, but it does not offer anything new for those who have seen the other "invisible" pictures. Consequently, they might find it less exciting. The production values are good:—

Jon Hall, possessor of a secret drug that renders a man invisible, is attacked and beaten by Sir Cedric Hardwicke, a Nazi spy, and Peter Lorre, a Jap spy, when he refuses to divulge the formula. He goes to the U.S. authorities and volunteers to employ the drug in carrying out a secret mission. Flown to Berlin, his invisible status enables him to reach the home of Ilona Massey, a secret British agent, with whom Hardwicke was in love. His visit is interrupted by the arrival of J. Edward Bromberg, a Gestapo agent, with whom she also was friendly. When Hall flits about upsetting wine and food on Bromberg, the mystified Nazi leaves in a huff. He reports these doings to Hardwicke, his chief, who quickly understands. Expecting a visit from Hall, he attempts to trap him in his office, but Hall escapes, taking with him a list of Nazi and Jap spies in the United States. Hardwicke and Lorre quarrel over this loss. Meanwhile Hardwicke orders the arrest and execution of Bromberg, because of his attentions to Ilona. He is freed by Hall in exchange for military information. While on his way to get Ilona and to return to England, Hall is trapped by Lorre, who uses a silk net with fish hooks. This is noticed by Bromberg, who, hoping to get back in the good graces of Hardwicke, notifies him. As the Nazis descend on the Jap Embassy to claim the prisoner, Hall escapes. Quarreling, Lorre kills Hardwicke, then commits hari-kari. Hall and Ilona make their way to an airport where they steal a plane and return to England. There Hall regains visibility, much to Ilona's delight.

Curtis Siodmak wrote the screen play, George Waggner and Frank Lloyd produced it, and Edwin L. Martin directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Highways by Night" with Richard Carlson
and Jane Randolph**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

Notwithstanding the lack of star names, this gangster melodrama measures up as fairly good program fare, the sort that should please indiscriminating audiences. Dealing with the transformation of a serious-minded young millionaire into a man of action, capable of getting along in the world without resorting to the use of his financial power, his adventures involve him in a murder and gangland activities, culminating in his marriage to a girl who lived on the wrong side of the tracks. It is a nice blend of comedy, romance, fast action, and suspense, well directed and capably performed:—

Richard Carlson, wealthy young owner of a motor works, who leads a quiet life, is taunted by Ray Collins, his uncle and attorney, about his never getting into a boyish scrape, and tells him he could not earn his own living if he had to. At a birthday party, Carlson becomes drunk and quarrels with Eleanor Cromwell, his socialite fiancée. He goes to a night club and inadvertently becomes involved in a gang murder. Knocked unconscious, his clothes are exchanged with those of the murdered gangster. He is then tossed into a truck and carted away to be drowned. He bounces out of the truck, however, and the next morning awakes in a ditch with a throbbing head, and parole papers in his pocket identifying him as a gangster named Duke. Walking along a road, Carlson meets Jane Randolph, who with Gordon Jones, her brother, and Jane Darwell, her grandmother, operates a trucking business. Determined to show his uncle that he could be independent, Carlson goes to work for them. A rival company, operated by the gangsters responsible for the murder Carlson became mixed up in, was trying to force them out of business. To foil the gangsters, Carlson meets them identifying himself as Duke, and theoretically goes to work for them. Under Carlson's leadership the business improves, and grandma makes him a partner. But the gangsters catch up with him when he contracts to move the furnishings of a large hotel. A showdown is inevitable. With the aid of his uncle and truckdrivers from his motor company, the gangsters are rounded up and jailed. Convinced that he could earn his own living, Carlson admits to Jane that he is a millionaire, and asks to marry her.

Lynn Root and Frank Fenton wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Peter Godfrey directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Careful, Soft Shoulders" with Virginia Bruce and James Ellison

(20th Century-Fox, Sept. 18; time, 69 min.)

Dull and boresome program fare. Not only is the story of this spy drama nonsensical, but from the moment the picture starts until the very end, one is literally talked to death by the constant jabbering of the characters. The action centers around a Washington glamour girl, with Mata Hari aspirations, who unwittingly acts as a spy for the wrong side. The comedy is meant to be merry, but for the most part it is on the dull side. There is no human interest, and none of the characters arouse any sympathy:—

At a Washington cocktail gathering, Virginia Bruce is not amused by the romantic advances of James Ellison, a playboy, whose father was an important civilian naval consultant. Everyone is shocked by the news of Pearl Harbor, and Virginia announces that she would like to serve her country as a spy. Reaching home that night she finds Aubrey Mather, a Nazi spy, waiting for her. He had overheard her remark at the party and, representing himself as a U.S. Secret Service agent, invites her to join his staff. Virginia thinks that this was one of Ellison's practical jokes, and accepts. Mather pledges her to secrecy. When Virginia speaks of his visit to Sheila Ryan, her sister, and Ralph Byrd, a G-man, both are taken prisoners by Mather. He assigns Virginia to become chummy with Ellison, informing her that the government suspected him of selling valuable information to enemy agents, which he obtained from his father. Virginia was to induce Ellison to sell her this information. She follows instructions, only to find out that Ellison was patriotic, and that she loved him. Virginia and Ellison are captured by Mather, who takes them to a mountain hideout. While Mather prepares to radio convoy information to enemy subs, Virginia and Ellison break their bounds. Sheila and Byrd, too, free themselves. The spies are subdued. Byrd radios fake information to the subs, as a result of which they are sunk by the U.S. Navy.

Oliver H. P. Garrett wrote the screen play and directed it. Walter Morosco produced it. Morally suitable for all.

"Iceland" with Sonja Henie, John Payne and Jack Oakie

(20th Century-Fox, October 2; time, 78 min.)

As in "Sun Valley Serenade," this latest Sonja Henie picture has comedy, romance, and music, but in neither department does it approach the charm of the other picture; moreover, the story is artificial. But it will probably draw because of the popularity of the stars, and of Sammy Kaye's "swing" band. To give it a timely angle, the picture's locale is set in Iceland, with John Payne, a Marine, the object of Miss Henie's affections. For comedy there is Jack Oakie, but his material offers him scant opportunity to provoke laughter. Miss Henie gives her usual good skating performance. The barrenness of the outdoor scenic backgrounds are certainly not a treat to the eye:—

Sonja Henie, daughter of an innkeeper in Iceland, breaks her engagement to Sterling Holloway when she meets John Payne, a U.S. Marine. Sonja's family was anxious to see her married, because Osa Massen, her younger sister, must wait before she can marry the son of a rich herring merchant. Payne tries to tell Sonja that his intentions were not serious, but she insists upon taking an opposite view and arbitrarily sets their wedding date. Jack Oakie, Payne's pal, evolves a scheme to help him. He arranges with Joan Merrill, a singer with Sammy Kaye, whose band played at the inn, to discourage Sonja by representing herself as a jilted former girl-friend of Payne's. Using this incident as the reason for his not marrying her, Payne patches up the rift. Pressed by her family, Sonja arranges for a marriage license without Payne's knowledge. When he hears of this he volunteers for a special assignment so that he could be sent away. In order to help her sister, Sonja informs her family that she and Payne had been married before he left. On the day of Osa's wedding, Payne returns and is surprised to be greeted as Sonja's husband, but he acts the part. Felix Bressart, Sonja's father, insists upon escorting both couples to the bridal chambers. Sonja is hesitant, but Payne gleefully accepts. Oakie solves the problem by smuggling Fritz Feld, local Justice of the Peace, through a window and marrying them in the bedroom.

Robert Ellis and Helen Logan wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Bruce Humberstone directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"A Yank at Eton" with Mickey Rooney and Freddie Bartholomew

(MGM, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

Good entertainment. This comedy-drama of student life at England's famed Eton is somewhat a junior edition of MGM's "A Yank At Oxford," having many situations that compare. It should, however, please all types of audiences. With his usual "high-jinks," Mickey Rooney portrays an outspoken and obstreperous American boy, whose resentment against living in England arouses in him a prejudice for English customs and traditions. The story is developed in an interesting way, with plentiful action, human interest, and comedy that on occasion goes slapstick. The dress and the traditions of Eton have been faithfully reproduced, giving the film an authentic atmosphere. Stock shots have been used to good advantage:—

Mickey Rooney, an American boy, receives a cable from Marta Linden, his widowed mother, asking him to come to England; she had married Ian Hunter, a wealthy Englishman. Mickey's dreams of playing football at Notre Dame are shattered. With Juanita Quigley, his ten-year-old sister, Mickey arrives in England determined to hate his new surroundings. Arrangements are made for him to enter Eton, where Freddie Bartholomew, his stepbrother, attends. Mickey's refusal to recognize the traditions of Eton gets him into many scrapes. During a vacation dance at his stepfather's home, Mickey is goaded by Tina Thayer, a teenage sophisticate, to take Hunter's prize horse out of his stall. The horse runs away, breaking his leg when he leaps over a hedge. Hunter is forced to shoot the animal. Feeling badly, Mickey attempts to run away. But he changes his mind when Hunter speaks to him kindly. He returns to Eton resolved to make good, and becomes a star athlete. One night after hours, Peter Lawford, a student, slips out and steals Headmaster Edmund Gwenn's car to keep a date with Tina. Freddie rushes out to catch the thief. Locked out, he climbs through the window and inadvertently drops his scarf. This is noticed by Mickey, who, attempting to retrieve the scarf, is caught outside by Gwenn. Meanwhile Peter wrecks the car after getting drunk. Later, Gwenn accuses Mickey of stealing the car. He accepts the blame, believing that he was shielding Freddie. Juanita and Raymond Severn, a classmate, compel Mickey to admit that he was innocent. Freddie convinces Mickey that he, too, was innocent. With the aid of his classmates, Mickie kidnaps the proprietor of the roadhouse where Peter became drunk. They return to Eton, arriving in time for Mickey to enter a cross-country race which he wins. The proprietor identifies Peter, clearing Mickey.

George Oppenheimer, Lionel Houser, and Thomas Phipps wrote the screen play, John W. Considine, Jr., produced it, and Norman Taurog directed it.

"Just Off Broadway" with Lloyd Nolan and Marjorie Weaver

(20th Century-Fox, Sept. 25; time, 65 min.)

This murder mystery is typical of the series of program pictures in which Lloyd Nolan portrays Michael Shayne, ace private detective. Packed full of fast action and suspense, and acted with zest by the players, it should satisfy the followers of the series, and will certainly hold its own as part of a double bill. Phil Silvers, as a news photographer, adds to the comedy. This time Nolan solves no less than three murders. As a member of a jury at the murder trial of Janis Carter, he is present when a witness, testifying in her behalf, is murdered by a knife thrown from in back of the courtroom. Obeying his instinct for investigating murders, Nolan disregards the Judge's order that all jurors remain locked in their rooms overnight. He sneaks out of his room and all through the night tracks down various clues with the aid of Marjorie Weaver, a girl news reporter. He manages to return to his room unnoticed. The following day in court, he requests permission from the judge to question the witnesses from the jury box. He cleverly succeeds in pinning the crimes on Richard Derr, the defense attorney. Nolan wins high praise from the newspapers for his clever sleuthing. But because he violated the jury rules and left his room, the Judge gives him a sixty-day jail sentence for contempt of court.

Arnaud d'Usseau wrote the screen play, Sol Wurtzel produced it, and Herbert I. Leeds directed it. Included in the cast are Phil Silvers, Joan Valerie, Alexander Lockwood and others.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1942

No. 33

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War Against Mrs. Hadley, The—MGM (84 min.)	128
Wings and the Woman—RKO (90 min.)	127

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3043 Submarine Raider—Howard Chapman	June 4
3006 They All Kissed the Bride—Douglas Crawford	June 11
3044 Parachute Nurse—Chapman-Harris	June 18
3045 Atlantic Convoy—Beal-Field	July 2
3012 Flight Lieutenant—O'Brien-Ford	July 16
3215 Prairie Gunsmoke—Tex Ritter (54 min.)	July 16
3026 Enemy Agents Meet Ellery Queen—Gargan Linsday	July 30
3018 Blondie for Victory—Singleton-Lake	Aug. 6
3207 Bad Men of the Hills—Starrett (58 min.)	Aug. 13
3001 The Talk of the Town—Grant-Arthur Colman	Aug. 20
3046 Sabotage Squad—Bennett-Harris	Aug. 27
3216 Vengeance of the West—Tex Ritter	Sept. 3
My Sister Eileen—Russell-Aherne	Sept. 24
3208 Overland to Deadwood—Starrett	Sept. 25

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

242 Tarzan's New York Adventure—Weissmuller O'Sullivan	June
243 Jackass Mail—Beery-Main (re.)	July
244 Crossroads—Powell-Lamarr (re.)	July
245 The Affairs of Martha—Hunt-Carlson	August
246 Pierre of the Plains—Carroll-Hussey	August
247 Calling Dr. Gillespie—Lionel Barrymore	August
Mrs. Miniver—Garson-Pidgeon	August

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Rubber Racketeers—Cortez-Hudson	June 26
Lure of the Islands—Margie Hart	July 3
Smart Alecks—East Side Kids	Aug. 7
Hillbilly Blitzkrieg—Duncan-Kennedy	Aug. 14
Riders of the West—Buck Jones	Aug. 21
Arizona Stagecoach—Range Busters	Sept. 4
King of the Stallions—Chief Thundercloud	Sept. 8
Police Bullets—Marsh-Archer	Sept. 25

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

One Thrilling Night—Beal-McKay	Aug. 28
Isle of Missing Men—Howard-Roland-Gilbert	Sept. 11

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4126 Take A Letter, Darling—MacMurray-Russell. July 3
- 4127 Night in New Orleans—Foster-Morison. July 10
- 4129 Sweater Girl—Bracken-Preisser July 17
- 4130 Beyond the Blue Horizon—Lamour-Haley. . . July 24
- 4128 Dr. Broadway—Carey-Phillips July 31
- 4131 Are Husbands Necessary?—Milland-Field. . . Aug. 14
- 4132 Tombstone—The Town Too Tough to Die—
Dix Aug. 21
- 4134 Holiday Inn—Astaire-Crosby Sept. 4
- 4135 I Live On Danger—Morris-Parker. . No rel. date set
- 4140 Undercover Man—Western No rel. date set

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 212 They Raid by Night—Talbot-Neise (72 m.) . . June 26
- 254 Tumbleweed Trail—Bill Boyd (57 m.) July 10
- 204 Prisoner of Japan—Baxter-Michael (64 m.) . . July 22
- 220 A Yank in Libya—King-Woodbury (67 m.)
(re.) July 31
- 203 Jungle Siren—Corio-Crabbe (68m.) (re.) . . . Aug. 21

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 157 Sons of the Pioneers—Roy Rogers (61 m.) . . . July 2
- 104 Joan of Ozark—Canova-Brown. Aug. 1
- 131 Call of the Canyon—Gene Autry (71 m.) . . . Aug. 10

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 201 Hi, Neighbor—Parker-Archer July 27
- 271 The Sombrero Kid—Don Barry (56 m.) July 31
- 202 The Old Homestead—Weaver Bros. (68 m.) . Aug. 17
- 261 Shadows on the Sage—Three Mesq. Aug. 24

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 230 Mexican Spitfire Sees a Ghost—Errol-Velez. . . June 26
- End of 1941-42 Season*

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- Journey Into Fear—Welles-Cotten)
- Wings and the Woman—(formerly They) No
Flew Alone)—Neagle-Newton) release
- Mexican Spitfire's Elephant—Errol-Velez) date
- Highways By Night—Carlson-Randolph) set
- The Big Street—Ball-Fonda)

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 251 Ten Gentlemen from West Point—Montgomery-
O'Hara-Cregar June 26
 - 252 Postman Didn't Ring, The—Travis-Joyce. July 3
 - 254 United We Stand July 10
 - 253 This Above All—Power-Fontaine July 24
- End of 1941-42 Season*

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 301 Footlight Serenade—Payne-Grable Aug. 1
- 302 A-Haunting We Will Go—Laurel-Hardy. Aug. 7
- 303 Little Tokyo, U. S. A.—Foster-Joyce. Aug. 14
- 304 The Pied Piper—Woolley-McDowall. Aug. 21
- 305 The Loves of Edgar Allan Poe—Darnell-
Shepperd Aug. 28
- 308 Orchestra Wives—Montgomery-Rutherford. . Sept. 4
- 311 Berlin Correspondent—Gilmore-Andrews . . . Sept. 11
- 312 Careful, Soft Shoulders—Bruce-Ellison Sept. 18
- 310 Just Off Broadway—Nolan-Weaver Sept. 25
- 306 Iceland—Henie-Payne-Oakie Oct. 2

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Friendly Enemies—Winninger-Ruggles June 26
- One of our Aircraft is Missing—British. No rel. date set
- Jacaré—Frank Buck No rel. date set
- Moon and Sixpence, The—Sanders-Marshall. No rel. date set

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6043 There's One Born Every Minute—Herbert. . . June 26
- 6008 Lady In A Jam—Dunne-Bellamy. June 26
- 4010 Men of Texas—Stack-Gwynne. July 3
- 6056 Danger In the Pacific—Terry-Carrillo. July 12
- 6040 Drums of the Congo—Erwin-Munson. July 17
- 6049 Invisible Agent—Massey-Hall. July 31
- Pardon My Sarong—Abbott-Costello Aug. 7
- 6507 Timber—Carrillo-Devine Aug. 11
- 6067 Boss of Hangtown Mesa—Johnny M. Brown
(58 min.) Aug. 21

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 137 Escape From Crime—Travis-Bishop. July 25
- 138 Gay Sisters, The—Stanwyck-Brent Aug. 1
- 139 Spy Ship—Stevens-Manning Aug. 15

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

- 3860 Screen Snapshots No. 10 (9 m.).....June 19
 3508 Woodman Spare That Tree—Col. Rap.
 (7½ m.) (re.)July 2
 3809 Tennis Rhythm with Bobby Riggs—Sports
 (10 m.) (re.)July 3
 3755 The Bulldog and the Baby—Cartoon (re.)...July 24
 8810 Canvas Cut-Ups—SportsAug. 7
 3705 Old Blackout Joe—CartoonAug. 27

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 4551 Journey to Denali—Col. Tours.....Aug. 5
 4851 Screen Snapshots No. 1 (11 m.).....Aug. 7
 4901 Cajuns of the Teche—Panoramics.....Aug. 13
 4751 America Sings with Kate Smith.....Aug. 14
 4651 Community Sings No. 1.....Aug. 15
 4601 Kitchen Quiz No. 1.....Aug. 21
 4951 Ted Powell—Famous Bands.....Aug. 27

Columbia—Two Reels

- 3435 Olaf Laughs Last—All Star (16½ m.).....June 18
 3186 Underwater Gold—Mounted No. 6 (17 m.)..June 24
 3187 Bridge to the Sky—Mounted No. 7 (16 m.)..July 1
 3407 Matri-Phony—Stooges (17 m.).....July 2
 3188 Lost In the Mine—Mounted No. 8 (16 m.)..July 8
 3189 Into the Trap—Mounted No. 9 (17 m.).....July 15
 3436 All Work and No Play—All Star (17 m.)...July 16
 3190 Betrayed by Law—Mounted No. 10 (18 m.)..July 22
 3191 Blazing Beacons—Mounted No. 11 (16 m.)..July 29
 3408 Three Smart Saps—Stooges (16 m.).....July 30
 3192 The Mounties Last Chance—Mounted No. 12
 (17 m.)Aug. 5

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 4421 Phony Cronies—All Star (16½ m.).....Aug. 27
 4422 Carry Harry—All Star.....Sept. 3
 4401 Even as IOU—Stooges.....Sept. 18

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- W-350 Bats In the Belfry—Cartoon. (7 m.).....July 4
 W-351 The Bowling Alley Cat—Cartoon (8 m.)..July 18
 K-386 Vendetta—Passing Parade (11 m.).....July 18
 C-398 Doin' Their Bit—Our Gang (11 m.).....July 18
 S-370 Self-Defense—Pete Smith (10 m.).....July 25
 C-399 Rover's Big Chance—Our Gang.....Aug. 22
 S-371 It's A Dog's Life—Pete Smith.....Aug. 22

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-304 For the Common Defense (21 m.).....June 20
 A-305 Mr. Blabbermouth—Special (19 m.).....Aug. 8

Paramount—One Reel

- Z1-4 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 4 (10 m.)..June 19
 L1-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5 (11 m.).....June 26
 U1-5 Tulips Shall Grow—Mad. Mod. (7 m.).....June 26
 W1-8 Superman In Volcano—Superman (8 m.)..July 10
 E1-10 Baby Wants A Battleship—Popeye (7 m.)..July 13
 R1-12 Let Them Go Alive—Spotlight (9 m.)....July 17
 Q1-6 The Quiz Kids No. 6 (10 m.).....July 31
 J1-6 Popular Science No. 6 (11 m.).....July 31
 E1-11 You're a Sap Mr. Jap—Popeye (7 m.)....Aug. 7
 Z1-5 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 5 (10 m.)..Aug. 14
 S1-5 The Man's Angle—Benchley (9 m.).....Aug. 14
 L1-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6 (11 m.).....Aug. 28
 W1-9 Superman In Terror On the Midway—
 Superman (9 m.).....Aug. 28

RKO—One Reel

- 24105 Donald's Garden—Disney (7 m.).....June 12
 24311 Cinderella Champion—Sportscope (8 m.)..June 12
 24411 Picture People No. 11 (8 m.).....June 19
 24208 Information Please No. 8 (10 m.).....June 19
 24106 The Sleepwalker—Disney (7 m.).....July 3
 24312 Polo Pony—Sportscope (9 m.).....July 10
 24412 Picture People No. 12 (9 m.).....July 17
 24209 Information Please No. 9 (11 m.).....July 17
 24107 Donald's Gold Mine—Disney (7 m.).....July 24
 24108 T-Bone for Two—Disney (7 m.).....Aug. 14

RKO—Two Reels

- 23406 Cooks and Crooks—Edgar Kennedy (17m.)..June 5
 23706 Hold 'Em Jail—Leon Errol (18 m.).....June 26
 23112 March of Time No. 12 (20 m.).....July 3
 23504 Range Rhythm—Ray Whitley (18 m.)....July 17
 23113 March of Time No. 13 (18 m.).....July 31

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 2514 Gandy Goose in Tire Trouble—Terry-Toon
 (7 m.)July 24

End of 1941-42 Season

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 3151 Desert Wonderland—Magic Carpet (9 m.)..Aug. 1
 3551 All Out For "V"—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Aug. 7
 3301 Well-Rowed Harvard—SportsAug. 14
 3552 Life With Fido—Terry-Toon.....Aug. 21
 3152 Wedding In Bikaner—Magic Carpet (9 m.)..Aug. 28

Universal—One Reel

- 6252 Juke Box Jamboree—Cartoon (7 m.) July 27
- 6253 Pigeon Patrol—Cartoon (7 m.) Aug. 3
- 6384 Mile of Dough—Stranger Than Fiction Aug. 10
- 6365 Crater City—Scenic (9 m.) Aug. 17
- 6385 Smoke Painter—Stranger Than Fiction Aug. 31

Universal—Two Reels

- 7885 The Black Dragon Strikes—Junior G-Men No. 5
(18 m.) July 28
- 7886 Flaming Havoc—Junior G-Men No. 6
(19 m.) Aug. 4
- 7887 The Death Mist—Junior G-Men No. 7
(17 m.) Aug. 11
- 7888 Satan Fires the Fire—Junior G-Men No. 8
(19 m.) Aug. 18
- 6231 Shuffle Rhythm—Musical (15 m.) Aug. 19
- 7889 Satanic Sabotage—Junior G-Men No. 9
(20 m.) Aug. 25
- 7890 Trapped In A Blazing Chute—Junior G-Men
No. 10 (17 m.) Sept. 1
- 7891 Undeclared War—Junior G-Men No. 11
(17 m.) Sept. 8
- 7121 Trumpet Serenade—Musical (15 m.) Sept. 9

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 7612 Gopher Goofy—Looney Tunes (7 m.) June 20
- 7613 Wacky Blackout—Looney Tunes (7 m.) (re.) . July 11
- 7722 Bugs Bunny Gets the Bird—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
(re.) July 11
- 7409 Hunter's Paradise—Sports Parade (10 m.) . . July 18
- 7723 Foney Fables—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Aug. 1
- 7614 The Ducktator—Looney Tunes (7 m.) Aug. 1
- 7724 The Squawkin' Hawk—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
(re.) Aug. 8
- 7410 Argentine Horses—Sports Parade (8 m.) . . . Aug. 8
- 7510 Glen Gray & His Casa Loma Band—Mel. Mast.
(10 m.) (re.) Aug. 15
- 7615 Eatin' On The Cuff—Looney Tunes (7 m.)
(re.) Aug. 22
- 7725 Fresh Hare—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Aug. 22
- 7726 Fox Pop—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Sept. 5
- 7616 The Impatient Patient—Looney Tunes (7 m.)
(re.) Sept. 5

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 7006 Men of the Sky—Special (20 m.) July 5
- 7112 Divide & Conquer—B'way Brev. (20 m.) . . . Aug. 22

**NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES**

Pathe News

**Beginning of
1942-43 Season**

- 3511 Sat. (O.) . Aug. 29
- 3522 Wed. (E.) . Sept. 2
- 3513 Sat. (O.) . Sept. 5
- 3524 Wed. (E.) . Sept. 9
- 3515 Sat. (O.) . Sept. 12
- 3526 Wed. (E.) . Sept. 16
- 3517 Sat. (O.) . Sept. 19
- 3528 Wed. (E.) . Sept. 23
- 3519 Sat. (O.) . Sept. 26
- 35210 Wed.(E.) Sept. 30
- 35111 Sat.(O.) . Oct. 3
- 35212 Wed.(E.) Oct. 7
- 35113 Sat.(O.) . Oct. 10
- 35214 Wed.(E.) Oct. 14
- 35115 Sat.(O.) . Oct. 17
- 35216 Wed.(E.) Oct. 21

Universal

- 115 Wednesday . Sept. 2
- 116 Friday Sept. 4
- 117 Wednesday . Sept. 9
- 118 Friday Sept. 11
- 119 Wednesday . Sept. 16
- 120 Friday Sept. 18
- 121 Wednesday . Sept. 23
- 122 Friday Sept. 25
- 123 Wednesday . Sept. 30
- 124 Friday Oct. 2
- 125 Wednesday . Oct. 7
- 126 Friday Oct. 9
- 127 Wednesday . Oct. 14
- 128 Friday Oct. 17
- 129 Wednesday . Oct. 21
- 130 Friday Oct. 23

Paramount News

**Beginning of
1942-43 Season**

- 1 Saturday Aug. 29
- 2 Wednesday . . Sept. 2
- 3 Saturday Sept. 5
- 4 Wednesday . . Sept. 9
- 5 Saturday Sept. 12
- 6 Wednesday . . Sept. 16
- 7 Saturday Sept. 19
- 8 Wednesday . . Sept. 23
- 9 Saturday Sept. 26
- 10 Wednesday . . Sept. 30
- 11 Saturday Oct. 3
- 12 Wednesday . . Oct. 7
- 13 Saturday Oct. 10
- 14 Wednesday . . Oct. 14
- 15 Saturday Oct. 17
- 16 Wednesday . . Oct. 21

Metrotone News

**Beginning of
1942-43 Season**

- 200 Thursday . . Sept. 10
- 201 Tuesday . . . Sept. 15
- 202 Thursday . . Sept. 17
- 203 Tuesday . . . Sept. 22
- 204 Thursday . . Sept. 24
- 205 Tuesday . . . Sept. 29
- 206 Thursday . . . Oct. 1
- 207 Tuesday Oct. 6
- 208 Thursday . . . Oct. 8
- 209 Tuesday Oct. 13
- 210 Thursday . . . Oct. 15
- 211 Tuesday Oct. 20
- 212 Thursday . . . Oct. 22
- 213 Tuesday Oct. 27
- 214 Thursday . . . Oct. 29

Fox Movietone

**Beginning of
1942-43 Season**

- 1 Wednesday . . Sept. 9
- 2 Saturday Sept. 12
- 3 Wednesday . . Sept. 16
- 4 Saturday Sept. 19
- 5 Wednesday . . Sept. 23
- 6 Saturday Sept. 26
- 7 Wednesday . . Sept. 30
- 8 Saturday Oct. 3
- 9 Wednesday . . Oct. 7
- 10 Saturday Oct. 10
- 11 Wednesday . . Oct. 14
- 12 Saturday Oct. 17
- 13 Wednesday . . Oct. 21
- 14 Saturday Oct. 24
- 15 Wednesday . . Oct. 28
- 16 Saturday Oct. 31

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 1942

No. 34

THE BILLION-DOLLAR DRIVE IN SEPTEMBER

It took a war to do it, but at last one can definitely say that unity has arrived. The actors are working with the producers, the producers are working with the distributors, the distributors are working with the exhibitors, and the exhibitors are working with one another. No one seeks the advantage, and every one is eager to help the other fellow.

Such unity is nothing new—it is just the American way. It is a sort of temporary truce in which everyone forgets for the time being their differences and unite in a cause that overshadows by far their own private interests. It is a cause that, when victorious, will allow them to resume their private bickerings, and enable them to settle their differences in a democratic way.

Our industry has been challenged and every one in it, from the man who cleans up after the last show to the executives who guide production, has accepted that challenge. We have been named by our government to act as the spearhead in a drive to sell \$1,000,000,000 in War Stamps and Bonds during the month of September.

Now, that is a big order, but not impossible when one considers the wealth of material we have to work with. Stars, producers, high priced exploitation men, studio groups, various guilds, exhibitor organizations—all are willing and eager to exert their best efforts. With such a combination, we cannot fail to fill this order. We must not!

The success of this drive is dependent upon its proper exploitation, and the industry's top exploiters are doing a fine job. Through the War Activities Committee, these men have made available a wealth of material to aid exhibitors in getting the most out of their local drives. Their ideas are such that they can be made to fit the particular situation of each exhibitor, who would do well to make the most of them.

The scope of this drive goes beyond the sales made by the industry. Every bond and War Stamp sold in the country, whether sold in a retail store or deducted from a pay envelope, will go to the industry's credit. Consequently, an exhibitor need not confine his activities within the boundaries of his theatre.

For months we have been telling the government that ours is an industry deserving of an essential rating. We must not only prove it; we must earn it. The exhibitor who fails to do his utmost is definitely out of step.

THE REJECTION OF THE UMPI SELLING PLAN

The Department of Justice has turned down, as you undoubtedly know by this time, the UMPI sales plan, which was intended to take the place of the group-of-five plan now in force.

The reasons given for the plan's rejection are that trade-showing of pictures before selling is desirable in that it tends to encourage the production of better pictures; and that blind-selling is undesirable.

The producers now (after September 1) may sell their pictures as they see fit except so far as they are limited by the general provisions of the Sherman act, which forbids concerted action to establish competitive practices.

Although the Department of Justice has recognized the fact that the rejected UMPI plan was conceived by concerted action, it will not use this as a basis of action against the producers, for the reason that such an action was necessary before the amendment to the Consent Decree could be presented to the Department of Justice. "However," the statement says, "any agreement or concerted action by the consenting distributors to put into operation any uniform method of selling their 1942-43 features will be viewed by the Department in the light of its effect upon competition in the industry and with particular reference to its effect upon the ability of independent exhibitors to compete."

The closing paragraph seems to be a warning to the theatre-owning producers: "In the judgment of the Department," it says, "the motion picture decree has not yet succeeded in accomplishing its objective. Its operation must be watched during the remaining period before final decision is made as to whether it affords adequate relief without involving the remedy of divorcement and dissolution."

The statement said that there is nothing in the decree that prevents the distributors from competing
 (Continued on last page)

"Now, Voyager" with Bette Davis

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 116 min.)

Artistically produced, intelligently directed, and skillfully acted, this drama of frustrated love and suffering will certainly appeal to class audiences, particularly to women. But its slow-paced action and its none-too-cheerful atmosphere make it hardly suitable entertainment for the masses. Outstanding is the performance of Bette Davis, who has been given an extremely sympathetic role. From a neurotic young woman, broken in spirit, conducting herself like a middle-aged spinster, she is transformed into a beautiful woman, worldly-wise and capable of exerting her own will. But the happiness she finds is marred by the love she feels for a married man, whose sense of duty to his ailing wife denies them the happiness of being together. She finds solace in caring for his small daughter who, like herself, had been a neurotic child. It is rather somber entertainment, unrelieved by comedy, and it will have to depend on the popularity of Miss Davis for its box-office results:—

Gladys Cooper, wealthy Boston dowager, becomes resentful when Ilka Chase, her daughter-in-law, comes visiting with Claude Rains, a psychiatrist. Ilka pleads that Rains be allowed to examine Bette Davis, Miss Cooper's neurotic daughter. Bette, too, is resentful, but she soon responds to his friendliness. In the privacy of her room he learns that Bette had been born an unwanted child, and that she hated her mother because of her domineering ways. Bette had grown into a drab person, with no choice in her manner of dress or way of life. She once had a love affair, but her mother soon put a stop to it. Rains takes Betty to his rest home, and there teaches her to stand on her own feet and to exert her own will. He suggests that she take a long sea voyage. With the help of Ilka, who takes her to a beauty parlor and buys her new clothes, Bette boards the liner a beautiful woman. Frightened and uncomfortable at mixing with the passengers, Bette is put at ease when she meets Paul Henried, a lonely but friendly young man. She learns that he was married and that he had a daughter seven years old, unwanted by her mother and suffering from fixations and phobias. She learns from his friends that his wife enjoyed acting like a martyr, and that Henried's only emotion for her was pity. Their many weeks together ripens into a deep love. But both realize that their love was to no avail, and at the end of the cruise they bid each other goodbye. Returning to Boston, Bette shocks her mother with her new ways. She threatens her with disinheritance, but Bette remains defiant. When Bette becomes engaged to John Loder, a Boston socialite, her mother is pleased. But when Bette accidentally meets Henried again, she breaks her engagement to Loder. As a result, Bette and her mother quarrel, and the old lady dies of heart failure. Suffering a nervous breakdown, Bette seeks haven at Rain's rest home. There she meets Janice Wilson, Henried's daughter, a rude and rebellious girl. Bette takes an interest in the child, changing her into a normal little girl. She takes Janice home with her. Feeling useful and wanted, Bette is for the first time a happy woman. Henried consents to Bette's keeping the child with her. Through Janice, both find an outlet for their love.

Casey Robinson wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and Irving Rapper directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Secret Enemies" with Craig Stevens and Faye Emerson

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 57 min.)

A trite program action melodrama, dealing with spies. The story is far-fetched, and there is nothing about the treatment that is novel; but since the action moves along at a fast pace, and since there is some excitement and suspense, the picture should serve its purpose as the lower half of a double bill. There is a little human interest, but no comedy or romance:—

Craig Stevens, an attorney, goes to Washington to seek assistance in getting out of Germany the wife of Frank Reicher, a German-born American and owner of a large hotel. Meanwhile Robert Warwick, head of a Nazi spy ring, compels Reicher to allow his hotel to be used for espionage purposes under threat of harm to his wife. When Stevens returns unsuccessful, he is visited by Charles Lang, a G-man friend, who had suspected Reicher's activities. Stevens scoffs at his suspicions, and invites him to live at the hotel. Warwick's henchmen murder Lang. John Ridgley, another G-man, suspects Stevens. Determined to hunt down Lang's slayers, Stevens becomes a G-man, and is assigned to Ridgley for training. When another G-man meets death, the two men go to New York and register at the hotel. Stevens informs Faye Emerson, a night club singer, with whom he was infatuated, that he was after the spies. But Faye, herself a spy, informs Warwick. Stevens and Ridgley foil an

attempt on their lives, capturing Warwick and his confederates. Faye learns from Stevens that the spies had been sent to Washington on the midnight train. She informs other Nazi spies, and they rescue them, killing three G-men. The spies kidnap Reicher; but, as they take him out of the hotel, he drops a photo. Stevens finds and identifies the photo as Reicher's hunting lodge, which the gang used as a hideout. During the battle at the lodge, Reicher manages to send over his amateur radio set a warning that Warwick had arranged for a rendezvous with a U-boat, giving the location. Warwick shoots Reicher and then escapes. Information given Stevens by the dying Reicher leads him to Faye's room at the hotel, where he captures Warwick, killing him when he resists. As Stevens arrests Faye, the radio announces the sinking of the U-boat by the U. S. Navy.

Raymond P. Schrock wrote the screen play and Ben Stollf directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Busses Roar" with Richard Travis and Julie Bishop

(Warner Bros., Sept. 19; time, 59 min.)

Just another program picture with a spy background, undistinguished either in acting, story, or production. Although the picture runs only 59 minutes, considerable padding had to be done to give it that footage. It moves along at a slow pace, and it is not until the closing scenes that it offers any excitement. It may, however, appeal to the followers of spy melodramas in small-town theatres. The romantic interest is incidental:—

Rex Williams, a Nazi spy, is assigned to plant a time bomb on a bus that was to travel through oil fields on the central California coast. His object was to set a fire that would serve as a target for a Jap submarine's shells. Williams goes to the bus depot, with the time bomb set to explode at 10 p.m. in a brief case. There he meets Julie Bishop, who was without funds and eager to return to San Francisco. Informed that brief case contained valuable papers, she agrees to deliver it to a friend in San Francisco in exchange for William's bus ticket. When Julie becomes friendly with Richard Travis, a Marine, and tells him of the deal, Travis becomes suspicious. Williams is compelled to change his plans. After many escapades, in which he murders George Meeker, a passenger, Williams finally hides the bomb in a small crate of oranges carried by Harry Bradley and Vera Lewis, an elderly couple. Bill Kennedy, a G-man posing as a tramp, observes this. He attempts to stop Williams, but is hit from behind by Peter Whitney, another spy. Enroute the bus is ordered to stop during a blackout. Realizing that the bomb would explode before reaching the oil fields, the spies, hiding nearby, make for the bus. They reach it just after the driver and some of the passengers had gone out for a walk. They head for the oil fields, and two minutes before the explosion was to occur they jump out of the bus and let it run wild. Julie grabs the wheel and brings the bus to a stop. The bomb falls out of the crate into the elderly Bradley's lap. He renders it useless by removing the detonator. Meanwhile Kennedy had recovered consciousness and, commandeering an ambulance, pursues the bus. Picking up the passengers who had gone for a walk, they come upon the Nazis walking in the road and overpower them.

George R. Bilson and Anthony Coldewey wrote the screen play. D. Ross Lederman directed it.

Not for children.

"Blondie for Victory" with Arthur Lake, Penny Singleton and Stuart Erwin

(Columbia, August 6; time, 71 min.)

Except for its topical nature, this latest of the "Blondie" comedies differs little from the situations familiar to previous pictures of this series. As entertainment it is on a par with the rest of the "Blondies," and should please its followers. This time the happy "Bumstead" home is disrupted by "Blondie's" war activities as the head of a "Housewives for America" organization. Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton turn in their usual good performances, ably supported by Larry Simms, Stuart Erwin, and Jonathan Hale. The direction is fair:—

Because of too many interruptions in the office, Jonathan Hale, Arthur Lake's employer, sends Lake home to do his work. But at home, Lake's work is interfered with by a meeting of the "Housewives of America," headed by Penny Singleton, his wife. The men of the neighborhood, aroused at their wives' neglect of them, hold a meeting and decide that Lake should compel Penny to disband the group. Meanwhile, Hale is practically forced from his own home by a delegation of visiting soldiers. One of them, Stuart Erwin, comes to Lake's home in search of him. The sight of him

gives Hale an idea: He prevails on Lake to don Erwin's uniform, go to the dam where the women had camped overnight in training for fire-watching, and let Penny think that he had enlisted. When Lake arrives at the dam he finds Penny alone, deserted by the women, who had been frightened off by a sinister looking man carrying a package. Overcome at the sight of Lake in uniform, Penny admits that the housewives should stay at home. Erwin, who had reluctantly given up his uniform, is instructed to report back to his regiment. He sets out after Lake, knowing that if he doesn't report to camp at once he would be listed as a deserter. As Erwin catches up with Lake, a squadron of soldiers arrive and, mistaking Lake as the deserter, pursue him. During the pursuit Lake notices the sinister little man, with the strange package under his arm, climbing the dam. He chases and captures him, but the package is nothing more than a bag of sugar, which the man was attempting to hide. Lake's evident heroism in chasing a supposed spy wins him a pardon for wearing an army uniform unlawfully. The "Housewives" are disbanded, and quiet reigns once again.

Karen DeWolf and Connie Lee wrote the screen play, Robert Sparks produced it, and Frank R. Strayer directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Enemy Agents Meet Ellery Queen" with William Gargan and Margaret Lindsay

(Columbia, July 30; time, 64 min.)

Typical in treatment and production values to the other pictures of the series, this espionage melodrama offers fair program entertainment. To his many other accomplishments, Ellery Queen now adds the breaking up of a Nazi spy ring. The story is far-fetched, but there is plentiful action and suspense throughout, with most of the excitement concentrated towards the end, where a group of sailors and marines trap and beat the spies into submission. It is strictly in the Hollywood manner, but it should satisfy the action fans, as well as the followers of the series:—

A secret radio message from New York orders a German submarine to allow the S.S. San Capeador to reach New London, Conn. On a train bearing William Gargan, crime expert, and Margaret Lindsay, his secretary, is an Egyptian mummy brought to America by the San Capeador. Others on the train are Sergeant James Burke, with Louis Donath, a prisoner; Gilbert Roland, a mysterious looking foreigner whom Margaret had met; and Sig Ruman, a Nazi spy, with two of his henchmen. Ruman and his pals slug Burke, liberate Donath and question him about a jeweler he had murdered. They then kill Donath by pushing him off the train. Inspector Charley Grapewin, Gargan's father, is so disappointed with Burke's fiasco, that he suspends him. Gargan undertakes to get Burke reinstated. With Margaret, he visits the jewelry shop of Gale Sondergaard, widow of the murdered jeweler, only to be informed that she was out. As they leave, Margaret recognizes Roland entering the shop. When he leaves, she trails him to an art gallery where the mummy had been stored. She is captured by Roland, and is accused by him of being a Gestapo agent. Late that night, Gargan, by deft tracing, rescues Margaret. Learning that the mummy had been stolen from the art gallery, Gargan finds it in a cemetery nearby. In the mummy case, he finds Roland, murdered. Margaret goes to telephone for Burke, who in turn brings Grapewin. They discover Gargan in the mummy case unconscious, and Roland's body missing. The following day Gargan learns from Gale that the mummy case held diamonds smuggled out of Antwerp by Free Holland agents. A clue leads Gargan to the Lido Club, and there he and Margaret are captured by Ruman before being able to act. Gargan manages to elude his captors long enough to enlist the aid of a marine and some sailors. The Nazis are beaten and captured, and the diamonds recovered. When the police arrive, Gargan allows Burke to take the credit.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Ralph Cohen and Rudolph Flotow produced it, and James Hogan directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Across the Pacific" with Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor and Sidney Greenstreet

(Warner Bros., Sept. 5; time, 97 min.)

If your patrons enjoyed "The Maltese Falcon," this espionage melodrama is sure to please them, for again John Huston directs the same cast of leading players. As in that picture, Humphrey Bogart and Sidney Greenstreet play their respective parts with ruthlessness. Mary Astor, however, is given a much more sympathetic role, although her status remains questionable until towards the end. The smooth direction and the excellent performances lend a high degree of intrigue and suspense to the story; one remains intensely interested in the proceedings. The dialogue is sparkling; some of

it borders on the risqué. The popularity of the director-player combination, and the fact that the story was adapted from a *Saturday Evening Post* serial, assures the picture's box-office success:—

Humphrey Bogart, U. S. Army secret agent, is discharged from the service, to all appearances dishonorably. In Halifax, he boards a Japanese freighter bound for Yokohama. Two fellow-passengers are Mary Astor, a vacationist, and Sidney Greenstreet, a sociologist with a liking for the Japanese. Both show an unusual interest in Bogart. When the boat docks in New York, Bogart visits Paul Stanton, his chief, and is informed by him to watch Greenstreet, as well as Miss Astor. Returning to the boat, Bogart saves Greenstreet from death when he is attacked by a Filipino patriot. Sen Yung, an American-born Jap, is a new passenger on the boat when it leaves for Panama. Bogart accepts money from Greenstreet as a down payment until he delivers military information concerning the Panama Canal. In Colon, Bogart accuses Miss Astor, with whom he was now in love, of complicity with Greenstreet. She starts to confess something, but is called to the telephone. She does not return. At the hotel, Bogart searches her room and finds a photograph of the "Bountiful Plantation," signed "Dad." After turning valuable information over to Greenstreet, Bogart is knocked unconscious and beaten. When he recovers, Lee Tung Foo, the Chinese hotel proprietor and Bogart's friend, advises him to go to the plantation. Bogart is captured by Sen Yung at the plantation, where he finds Greenstreet, Miss Astor, and Monte Blue, her father, owner of the plantation. She explains that her father had fled to Panama following an embezzlement scandal, and that he was an innocent victim of Greenstreet's espionage activities. Learning that Greenstreet planned to blow up the Gatun Locks with torpedoes from a Japanese piloted plane, Bogart overpowers his guards and escapes with Miss Astor. As the Jap plane takes off, Bogart fires at the torpedoes, and the plane explodes. Greenstreet is captured.

Richard Macaulay wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald and Jack Saper produced it, and John Huston directed it. Not for children.

"Desperate Journey" with Errol Flynn and Ronald Reagan

(Warner Bros., Sept. 26; time, 106 min.)

For those who enjoy virile melodramas, this one is highly recommended. The film deals with the adventures of a British bomber crew, whose plane is shot down in Germany. From the time their plane crashes to the time they escape in a captured plane, their exploits amount to a virtual "blitzkrieg" on the Nazis. Throughout its entire length the picture is filled with fast action, suspense, and thrills. It is far-fetched stuff, but it packs a wallop. There is much human interest in the friendship of the men, and in their willingness to risk their lives for one another. There is no romantic interest:—

Errol Flynn, Ronald Reagan, Arthur Kennedy, Alan Hale and Arthur Sinclair, members of a British bomber crew, are shot down over Germany. Captured, they are brought to Major Raymond Massey, Nazi Intelligence officer. While questioned alone, Reagan overpowers Massey. The five men make their escape, taking with them valuable military information. Led by Reagan and Flynn the men make slow progress northeastward, travelling at night only. Meanwhile Massey pursues them. They subdue a patrol of unwary sentries, whose uniforms they don. Bordering a train at a water stop, they ride into Berlin, eventually finding refuge in a deserted building. Flynn, whose knowledge of German had been of considerable help, notices a huge chemical factory when he goes out to buy food. Agreeing to take a chance, the men set fire to the factory, demolishing it. Sinclair is shot as they make their escape. Inquiring at a drug store for a doctor, Flynn is overheard by Nancy Coleman, a customer, who surmises that he is English and offers to help him. Flynn and the others bring Sinclair to a surgeon, known to the girl. Massey, however, catches up with them, and Sinclair dies as the others make their escape. They make their way to Nancy's home, where they are greeted warmly by a couple posing as Nancy's parents. They notify Massey. Nancy arrives in time to help them escape over the rooftops. Hale is killed by Gestapo bullets. Fleeing in a car stolen from Massey, the men reach the Dutch border with Massey in hot pursuit. They take to the woods and discover a hidden airport, where a captured British plane was being outfitted for a raid over London. In the melee that follows, Kennedy is killed, but Flynn and Reagan get the plane off the ground and fly to England.

Arthur T. Horman wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. Morally suitable for all.

with each other in granting cancellation privileges equal to those that were proposed in the UMPI plan, or in excess of them. But the grant "should not be conditioned upon express departmental acquiescence in blind selling. The existence of the large backlog of features already completed . . . will permit the consenting distributors to sell in blocks as large as 13, grant the cancellation privileges they have represented themselves as willing to grant in selling blocks of that size, and still tradeshow them before licensing them."

It seems as if the consenting distributors are left in a quandary as to what will or will not constitute concerted action in regards to the number of pictures they may sell, and the number that the exhibitors may cancel, without running afoul of the law. What will the Department do in case two or three of them adopted the same selling policy accidentally?

The best way to interpret the intent of the Department of Justice's statement is that a consenting distributor may sell as many pictures as he can tradeshow, with a cancellation privilege not to be smaller than the one he was willing to adopt, as that distributor informed the Department of Justice by letter.

A long distance inquiry at the Washington Allied headquarters brought out the information that the Allied position is to the effect that any attempt by the consenting distributors to continue the blocks-of-five system without a cancellation privilege will be regarded by it as unlawful.

At the time of writing this editorial, a release from Mr. Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of Allied States Association, was in the mails. This will be published in full in next week's issue.

INTELLIGENT EXPLOITATION

On the opening day of "The Pied Piper" at the Roxy Theatre, this city, on Wednesday, August 12, one hundred and fifty children from the Children's Colony, of Harrison, N. Y., representing twenty-seven nations, were guests of the management at the first show.

After the show, the youngsters, dressed in blue and white jerseys and blue trousers, marched with their standard bearers down Broadway to the Astor Hotel, where they were guests at a luncheon.

The affair attracted so much attention that the following morning the newspapers printed pictures of groups of those children and wrote eulogizing stories about it.

It was a simple thought in conception, but very human and effective, particularly because the affair was handled with dignity. Credit for this goes to Mr. Hal Horne, publicity director of the Twentieth Century-Fox home office.

It is simple ideas such as this one that help pictures pile up grosses. And "Pied Piper" is certainly piling them up.

This paper suggests to those exhibitors who can do

it, to follow up this idea. It feels sure that the publicity department of Twentieth Century-Fox will collaborate fully.

LET THE EXPLOITATION MEN TAKE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE

In the issue of July 4, a suggestion was made to the effect that the exploitation men should be put on the same level as the writer, the unit producer, the director and even the star. At that time, HARRISON'S REPORTS predicted that, within about six months from that date, there would be few male stars left, because either of the draft or of the volunteering, and that, for that reason, the exploitation men should be given the prominence they deserve so that their exploitation ideas, conceived in advance of production, might be able to offset the loss of star values for the marquee.

Even though only one and one-half months have elapsed since that editorial appeared, the industry is already feeling the loss of the male stars. For this reason, the producers should give greater thought to giving the exploitation man equal responsibility in the choosing, and the treating of the story, and in putting it into production. A few ideas, suggested by these men, and incorporated in the story should go a long way toward offsetting the loss of the stars.

The idea should be adopted even when a popular player, man or woman, appears in the picture, for it would enhance the value of the picture for marquee purposes and add to the star's following.

PICTURES WITHOUT STARS THAT ARE BREAKING RECORDS

"Who is in it?" is the question that has been asked by many an exhibitor when a salesman approached them for the sale of a good picture without star names.

While this paper feels that the exhibitors are right when it concerns pictures that are merely good, it believes that they are not right when pictures are treated on a bigger scale from the treatment as well as the cost point of view.

Lately there have been released two pictures for which most exhibitors would ask, "Who's in it?" if they were sold before they were produced: "Mrs. Miniver," and "The Pied Piper," and one third picture that was sold before it was produced, well enough, but which has in it no player who means anything to the box office—"Eagle Squadron"; all three pictures are breaking box-office records.

This paper believes that the loss of the male stars has opened the field for good writers to write powerful stories, and for capable unit producers and directors to put all their skill into them, turning out pictures of the aforementioned box-office power. Before these writers, producers and directors should be able to exercise their ingenuity, however, they must be unshackled from the restrictions consequent to studio politics.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asla 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1942

No. 35

THE VANISHING OF THE DOUBLE-FEATURE BILL

Allied States Association, particularly its Illinois unit headed by Jack Kirsch, has fought long and hard for the elimination of the double-feature bill. But, however hard this organization as well as other organizations and individual exhibitors have fought for its elimination, theirs has been a losing battle, for no exhibitor conducting his theatre profitably on double features would dare risk changing his policy on the mere theory that in the long run he would make more profits. The war, however, has brought to these forces the aid that may help kill the double-feature bill—the WPB order of August 20, freezing all 35 mm raw film stock.

Although the WPB order does not compel the producer to reduce the amount of film they are using other than that they cannot use a greater number of feet than they used in 1941, a reduction is eventually inevitable. If such should be the case, then the producers will be compelled to reduce the number of the secondary features that they are now producing. The consequence will be that there will not be enough feature pictures produced to serve the needs of the double-billing exhibitors. It will then be necessary for these exhibitors either to run the bill twice as long as they have been running it, or adopt a single-feature policy.

In the event that the producers will be compelled to reduce their output, the reduction will undoubtedly be proportionate; it will be based on the number of features, shorts, and newsreels they produced during the previous season.

If a reduction order should be issued by the WPB, the current season may not be affected materially, by reason of the fact that enough pictures have already been produced, and enough product remains unplayed, to take care of practically each exhibitor's needs to the end of the season. But it behooves the producers as well as the exhibitors to begin doing some figuring as to what they should do in case such an order forthcame.

One way by which the producers could offset the reduction in the number of features they are now producing is to give greater care in the preparation of their stories before shooting begins; they must eliminate the doubtful stories, and the hastily produced pictures made just to comply with the release schedule's demands. It will be criminal to waste on worthless product materials needed by the nation in waging the war.

What is true of the feature pictures is undoubtedly true of the shorts. Most of them are not worth showing.

In reference to the shorts, it is the opinion of this paper that a reduction of the number produced should be made now, and not wait until the WPB issued an order. Too many of them are produced. In 1941, the number of reels of single-reel and double-reel shorts produced was approximately 800, not including newsweeklies. Not all these were used, because of the double-feature policy of the majority of the exhibitors. As a matter of fact, this has been going on for many years. As a result of it, the vaults of the producers are full of either unused or partly used shorts. Consequently, the production of most shorts may be discontinued entirely for a while and still the exhibitors will be able to obtain the necessary supply, particularly now when a substantial number of Government shorts are shown.

The responsibility for the reduction of the raw stock used rests mainly on the shoulders of the producers. To them falls the work of weeding out worthless stories, of seeing that the raw stock is used judiciously, and of having every unused short as well as feature used. Let them discharge this responsibility praiseworthy.

HERE AND THERE

WITHIN A FEW DAYS the starting gun will boom, heralding the beginning of the biggest and most important job our industry has ever undertaken—the sale of one billion dollars in War Bonds and Stamps.

To accomplish this, it will require that every one in this industry exert his greatest effort, one that will have an A-1 priority over all other business of the day. The war is not a side issue, and the sale of bonds and stamps must not be treated as such.

It is up to us to make every man, woman, and child in this country conscious of the fact that the government must have his support. When we have accomplished this, we will have rendered to our nation, and to ourselves, a great service.

It is the greatest show on earth and, as showmen, we know how to exploit it. We have a big job to do; so let us do it in a big way!

* * *

NEIL AGNEW, of Paramount, has announced that the starting date for the collection of funds to buy ambulances for the Ambulance Corps of the American Field Service has been postponed till the week beginning Thursday, October 8, so that the field men who will work for the War Bond Drive in September may not be handicapped.

To date, the response in the humanitarian appeal for the ambulances has been highly encouraging.

* * *

PARAMOUNT HAS ANNOUNCED that it has re-issued "The General Died at Dawn," which picture it released September 4, 1936.

It is the opinion of this paper that Paramount, in releasing this picture at this time, is doing just as unpatriotic an act as was done by Samuel Goldwyn in releasing "The Real Glory," for it shows some of the Chinese in a bad light; it depicts a Chinese War-Lord, who oppressed the common people, conniving to become a dictator. "The film is based," says one of the readers in the Paramount press sheet, "on the struggle between modern China and the predatory war-lords who are laying the country waste. On the one side is General Yang, ambitious war-lord intent upon crushing China under his iron heel. On the other is a growing people's movement. . . . The part of General Yang is played by Akim Tamiroff, skilled depicter of sinister oriental roles. . ."

Paramount will not find a single man, woman or child of Chinese descent who will relish the depiction of this ruthless General, and since the Chinese have been sacrificing their lives in the defense of the world democracy the American producers should have greater consideration for their feelings. If they have any doubts about it, let them read the dispatch that our President sent to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek in July, on the occasion of the closing of the fifth year of China's fight against Japan.

* * *

IN THE ISSUE OF AUGUST 15, I warned you against imitations of the style of "Tales of Manhattan," the Twentieth Century-Fox picture, in which the story was told in episodic form, for experience has proved that imitations are never as good as the originals. I now read in the New York World-Telegram of August 21 that an imitation is already in the making:

Charles Boyer told Paul Harrison, Hollywood correspondent of the New York World-Telegram, that he is preparing an episodic story, to consist of four episodes, to deal with palmistry, with dreams, and with fortune-telling.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that Mr. Boyer will have better luck with his "imitation" than has been had by other imitators.

"Wildcat" with Richard Arlen and Arlene Judge

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Dealing with oil wells, this outdoor melodrama is a moderately entertaining program fare. The story is trite, and one guesses in advance the twist each situation will take. But it has some fast action, comedy, and romance, the sort that should prove acceptable to action fans that are not too fussy about story values. There is some excitement in the closing scenes, where the hero and the heroine succeed in extinguishing an oil well fire. The direction and the performances are nothing to brag about:—

Richard Arlen, an impoverished oil promoter, and Elisha Cook, Jr., his new-found friend, accidentally discover oil on property located near the town of Antrim Bend. The town had offered \$25,000 to the person who would bring in the first oil well. Having no money, Arlen gives Will Wright, owner of the land, a check for the lease. Arlen and Cook go to a saloon, where they pretend to have a fight. Cook mentions that they had discovered oil and that Arlen was attempting to double-cross him. John Dilson, an oil promoter, overhears the remark and induces Arlen to sell him half of the lease. The deal gives Arlen and Cook enough money to cover the check and to buy drilling equipment. A race develops between Dilson and Arlen to win the \$25,000 prize. Buster Crabbe, Dilson's foreman, and Arlen are old enemies. To hinder Arlen's progress, Crabbe releases the brakes of a huge truck and sends it crashing into Arlen's rig, killing Cook. William Frawley, a gambler, and Arlene Judge, his partner, evolve a scheme to fleece Arlen. Representing herself as Cook's sister, Arlene visits Arlen. He believes her story and gives her a one-half interest in the well. She helps with the cooking, and eventually falls in love with him. When some of the equipment breaks down, Arlene induces Arlen to join a poker game, and arranges with Frawley to make sure that he wins. Arlen "wins" \$500 and goes to buy the equipment, only to find that Crabbe had bought out the dealer's stock. He is compelled to order equipment from a distant city at a greater cost, giving the dealer a lien on his well, due in thirty days. At the end of that period he requests an extension, only to learn that Crabbe had bought that note. Angry, Arlen orders his men to blow up the well. The explosion brings the well in. Crabbe deliberately sets fire to the well. Arlen attempts to put out the fire, but is trapped by falling debris. Arlene rushes to his aid and, together, they extinguish the flames.

Maxwell Shane and Richard Murphy wrote the screen play, William H. Pine and William C. Thomas produced it, and Frank MacDonald directed it.

Not very edifying.

"There's One Born Every Minute" with Hugh Herbert

(Universal, June 26; time, 58 min.)

Silly and tiresome. Unless the movie picture-goer who sees this so-called comedy is an avid follower of the Hugh Herbert brand of comedy, he will undoubtedly feel like the "sucker" implied by the film's title for having paid an admission price to see it. The story is inane; it is a hodge-podge of nonsensical action and stupid dialogue, the sort that may amuse juveniles, while others will be bored. The picture rates no better than the lower half of a second-rate mid-week double bill in the smaller houses:—

Until Tom Brown's advertising slogans and the laboratory reports reveal that Hugh Herbert's patent-prepared pudding contained Vitamin "Z," Herbert's family life had been quite peaceful. Peggy Moran, his daughter, was in love with Brown, although her mother wanted her to marry Scott Jordan, the son of Guy Kibbee, political boss of the town. Because of his difficulties in controlling local politics, Kibbee was backing Herbert for the oncoming mayoralty election. But he did this only to keep a political enemy from gaining that office, planning to switch at the last moment his support to Edgar Kennedy, the incumbent Mayor. Herbert, however, gains much popularity because of his pudding's Vitamin Z, reputed to keep women young. Kibbee realizes that he will be elected in spite of his political power. Through a sly trick he has Herbert's pudding branded as a fake, and Herbert himself as a fraud. But Herbert's ancestors determine to help him. As Herbert dozes, they take shape before him and counsel him to fight to the last ditch. One of them reveal Kibbee's trick. With the aid of Brown, Herbert proves that his pudding is not a fake, and exposes Kibbee as the real fraud. Herbert is elected Mayor, and Peggy and Brown plan to marry.

Robert B. Hunt and Brenda Weisberg wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

"The Major and the Minor" with Ginger Rogers and Ray Milland

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 98 min.)

This comedy has an incredible story, but those who are willing to stretch the imagination a bit will find it a most delightful entertainment. Ginger Rogers gives a fine performance as a young woman who masquerades as a twelve-year-old girl to avoid paying full train fare. Before reaching her destination she finds herself a guest at a boys military academy. The romantic inclinations of the students who believe her to be their age give rise to many amusing moments. A humorous situation is the scene where Ray Milland, who believes her to be a child, embarrassingly attempts to inform her of the facts of life. The picture has its sophisticated side, but this angle has been handled in a manner that will not offend even the family trade. The production values are very good:—

Ginger Rogers decides to return to her home town in Iowa after spending a discouraging year in New York. Short of funds, she masquerades as a twelve-year-old girl and manages to obtain a half-fare train ticket. When the conductor catches her smoking, she hides in a compartment occupied by Major Ray Milland, an instructor at a boys military academy. Believing her to be a frightened child, traveling alone, Milland allows her to sleep in one of the berths. The following morning Rita Johnson, Milland's fiancée and daughter of the Academy's commandant, visits him on the train and misunderstands when she discovers Ginger with him. Milland induces Ginger to accompany him to the academy so that he might show Rita that she was only a little girl. Everyone at the academy is so pleased with Ginger, that they insist that she spend the weekend at the school. Diana Lynn, Rita's twelve-year-old sister, discovers Ginger's masquerade but, instead of exposing her, she seeks her aid. Ginger learns that Diana hated her sister because, while pretending to help Milland get transferred to active duty, she contrived to keep him at the academy. Using information given her by Diana, Ginger telephones the wife of a Washington official and, imitating Rita's voice, requests that Milland be transferred. At a student ball on the eve of her leave, Benchley recognizes Ginger as the girl he had met in New York, and so informs Rita. After the ball, Ginger plans to reveal herself to Milland, but she is stopped by Rita, who informs her that she must leave without saying goodbye, or she will create a scandal that may result in Milland's dismissal from the army. Ginger returns home. Several days later Milland visits Ginger's home. Disguising herself as her own mother, Ginger learns that he was enroute to active duty, and that his engagement to Rita had been broken. When he departs, Ginger follows him to the station, and there she reveals herself to him. She joins him on his trip.

Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder wrote the screen play, Arthur Hornblow produced it, and Mr. Wilder directed it.

"The Old Homestead" with the Weaver Brothers and Elviry

(Republic, August 17; time, 68 min.)

One of those harmless little pictures that please small-town audiences. It should prove suitable for a double bill, particularly in the Southern States and in the middlewest, where the Weaver clan is popular. The action is pretty fast, and the chief characters are sympathy awakening. There is a novel twist in the plot: the hero employes the sugar-rationing act to jail the gangsters. A few songs are sung. A mild romance is interwoven in the plot:—

June Weaver, Mayor of the town, and Leon Weaver, Chief of the Police and June's husband, unavailingly try to stop crime in their town. June goes to the Capitol to interest a famous investigator, but being unable to do so she conceives of making a "deal" with Dick Purcell, a notorious gangster, to drive the lawless element out of town and then settle there himself, her idea being that, after the other gangsters were driven out of town she would drive out him, too. Purcell uncovers that the power back of the gangsters was Jed Prouty, one of the respected councilmen of the town, and cleans out his racket. But when June tries to drive Purcell out of town, he threatens to expose her as his "partner." Unable to arrest Purcell in the regular way, Leon raids Purcell's gambling joint, finds in it more sugar than he had declared, and arrests him and his gang for a violation of the sugar-rationing act. Robert Conway, the newspaper publisher of the town, and Maris Nixon, the Weavers' daughter, patch up their quarrel, and June and Leo retire from public offices and move back to the "old homestead," which Purcell had turned into a gambling joint.

The story is by Dorell and Stuart McGowan; it was produced by Armand Schaefer, and directed by Frank McDonald.

"Timber" with Andy Devine, Leo Carrillo and Dan Dailey, Jr.

(Universal, August 11; time, 60 min.)

As compared with the series of program adventure films recently produced by Universal featuring Andy Devine and Leo Carrillo, this outdoor melodrama is one of the best. This time Dan Dailey, Jr., is the third member of the adventurous trio, and his performance is only one of the film's assets. Action-packed, and filled with suspense, the story is given a war-time significance in that it deals with sabotage at a huge lumber camp. For comedy, there is the usual bickering between Carrillo and Devine, who both provoke considerable laughter. The direction is good, and the performances engaging. A mild romance has been worked into the plot:—

Leo Carrillo and Andy Devine, work-bosses at a huge lumber camp, take steps to halt the sabotaging of their war-program orders. Among the workers were Dan Dailey, Jr., and Edmund MacDonald, F.B.I. agents sent to investigate the trouble. The two are assigned to drive loaded lumber trucks to the mill down a hazardous grade. In the nearby town of St. Marie, a wood-carving novelty shop, owned by Paul Burns, served as headquarters for the saboteurs, who had wrecked many trucks. When MacDonald's truck crashes mysteriously one night, killing him, Devine, Carrillo, and Dailey determine to take the trucks through themselves. After Carrillo had started to drive the first truck down the grade, Dailey notices a miniature wooden kennel, from which a toy dog emerged when anyone whistled. Devine discloses that he had purchased the novelty from Burns. Devising the cause of the accidents, Dailey speeds after Carrillo. He transfers to the truck and takes the steering wheel. When headlights loom ahead, he steers the truck directly into them. Nothing happens but a shattering of glass. The truck's siren had worked a sound system in the same manner as the whistle that had been setting the toy dog in motion. The system moved a large mirror into the road, and the mirror reflected the truck's own headlights. MacDonald and the other truck drivers had turned off the road to avoid a "head-on" collision. The three pals round up the saboteurs.

Griffin Jay wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Christy Cabanne directed it. In the cast are Marjorie Lord, Wade Boteler, Jean Phillips and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Top Sergeant" with Leo Carrillo, Andy Devine and Don Terry

(Universal, June 13; time, 64 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare, suitable for the action fans in neighborhood and small-town theatres. With its background an army camp, and with soldiers as the principal characters, the story is a re-hash of the old "cops and robbers" theme, conforming to a routine treatment. It has some human interest and, except for the situation in which the villain dynamites a bridge, very little suspense. There is the usual brand of Carrillo-Devine comedy, but it is only mildly effective. A good deal of footage has been given over to stock shots of army maneuvers. The romantic interest is incidental:—

Enroute to camp in an Army truck filled with recruits, Sergeant Don Terry and Corporals Andy Devine and Leo Carrillo are forced off the road by fleeing bank bandits. They pursue the crooks to an abandoned house, where they are joined by a posse of deputy sheriffs. Three of the gunmen are killed, but one of them, Don Porter, escapes after wounding Private Gene Garrick, Terry's brother. The boy dies. The army authorities deny Terry permission to track the killers. Reckoning that a perfect hideout would be the U. S. Army, Porter joins and becomes one of a group of recruits assigned to Terry. He gets himself generally disliked, particularly so with Terry, when he tries to compromise Elyse Knox, Colonel Addison Richard's daughter, into covering up his being A.W.O.L. Meanwhile G-men reveal that some stolen bank bills had been passed at a local jewelry store. When Terry learns that Porter had just given Elyse a gift trinket, he drives to town to question the jeweler, only to find him murdered. During army maneuvers, Porter blows up a bridge, killing several soldiers. He diverts the blame upon Devine and Carrillo, and both are court-martialed for negligent homicide. But Terry discovers a witness who identifies Porter as the bank robber. Terry then proves to the court that Porter had blown up the bridge. Porter makes a daring escape, but is later cornered and killed by Terry.

Maxwell Shayne and Griffin Jay wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Christy Cabanne directed it.

Morally not unsuitable for all.

"The Glass Key" with Alan Ladd, Brian Donlevy and Veronica Lake

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

Paramount made this picture once before in 1935. As was the case with that production, this one, too, is a fast-moving melodrama of crooked politics and murder mystery, and a good mass entertainment. But it is demoralizing, for it deals mostly with criminal activities; not one of the characters is deserving of the spectator's sympathy. The story is somewhat involved, but it holds one's interest throughout, because the mystery is not solved until towards the end. As is usual with pictures of this type, some of the situations are thrilling and suspenseful. Particularly so is the one in which Alan Ladd is beaten mercilessly by gangsters hired by political enemies when he refuses to incriminate his chief. Some people may find this scene too brutal. The performances are uniformly good, with that of William Bendix outstanding, even though he plays a minor role. The love interest is incidental:—

Brian Donlevy, a political boss, backs Moroni Olson for Mayor on a reform ticket, against the advice of Alan Ladd, his lieutenant. Donlevy's infatuation for Veronica Lake, Olson's daughter, was the motivating factor. Joseph Calleia, head of a gambling ring, opposes Donlevy. The mysterious murder of Richard Denning, Olson's dissipated son, puts the finger of suspicion on Donlevy; he had resented Denning's attentions to Bonita Granville, his sister. Calleia compels Arthur Loft, a publisher, to hint at Donlevy's guilt. Knowing that Veronica held Donlevy in contempt and that Loft's articles would ruin him politically, Ladd pleads with Donlevy to forget her and make his peace with Calleia. They quarrel and break. Calleia offers Ladd \$10,000 to tell what he knows of Donlevy's part in the murder. When he refuses to talk, Calleia's henchmen beat him unmercifully. Ladd eventually makes his escape, and is confined to a hospital. When he recovers, Ladd threatens to expose Loft as a tool of Calleia's, and the publisher kills himself. Donlevy is arrested when a man, known to have seen him and Denning quarreling, is murdered. Ladd tricks William Bendix, one of Calleia's henchmen, into confessing to the murder. When Calleia berates him, Bendix strangles him to death. Learning that Veronica had been sending anonymous notes to the district attorney indicating that Donlevy had murdered her brother, Ladd forces the district attorney to arrest Veronica, charging her with the murder. This causes her father to break: he admits that he had accidentally killed his son during a quarrel, and that Donlevy had kept quiet to shield him. Veronica and Ladd admit their love for each other. Donlevy gives them his blessing.

Based on the novel by Dashiell Hammett, the screen play was written by Jonathan Latimer, Fred Kohlman produced it, and Stuart Heisler directed it.

Strictly for adults.

"Here We Go Again" with Edgar Bergen, Ginny Simms, Fibber McGee and Molly

(RKO, October 9; time, 76 min.)

A tedious program comedy. It is doubtful if any but children will manifest any interest in the proceedings. Even they may find it boring, except for one or two slapstick sequences. The story is extremely silly: it serves merely as an excuse for the players to go through their familiar radio routines. Because of the radio popularity of the stars, however, it may draw, but their followers are due for a disappointment, for their brand of comedy seems to register better on the air than on the screen.

What there is of story concerns itself with the twentieth wedding anniversary of Fibber McGee and Molly. They leave on a second honeymoon trip and, through McGee's bungling, find themselves occupying the bridal suite in an exclusive summer hotel, at a rental they cannot afford to pay. Gale Gordon, a guest at the hotel and Molly's ex-beau, learns of McGee's predicament. In order to avoid being blackmailed by Gordon, McGee agrees to interest Edgar Bergen, a scientist friend, in a new gasoline substitute that Gordon had stumbled upon. He gets a big check from Bergen and turns it over to Gordon, who promises to get McGee out of his financial difficulties. Meanwhile Bergen, by mating a male and a female moth on a mulberry bush, discovers that he gets silk. But the silk is not strong. The gasoline substitute proves to be worthless, for it ruins the engines into which it is poured. But Charlie McCarthy accidentally drops one of the cocoons into the liquid, and when the silk is subsequently tested the tensile strength is phenomenal. As a result, McGee, Gordon, and Bergen become financially independent.

Paul Gerard Smith and Joe Bigelow wrote the screen play, and Allan Dwan produced and directed it.

THE ALLIED STATEMENT ON ARNOLD'S VETO OF THE NEW SALES PLAN

The following statement was issued by Abram F. Myers, general counsel, for Allied States Association:

"ALLIED STATES ASSOCIATION OF MOTION PICTURE EXHIBITORS

"729 Fifteenth Street, N.W.

"Washington, D. C.

"August 18, 1942

"ARNOLD ACTS

"Allied's charge that the Department of Justice planned a 'pocket veto' for the UMPI selling plan was followed by quick action.

"Within a week, and on August 17, Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold announced that the Department would not sanction the incorporation of that plan into the Consent Decree.

"Arnold did not say whether the Department would sanction the UMPI plan if modified to provide for the tradeshowing of all feature pictures. His statement indicates that the distributors are free to sell in any size blocks they please, and to grant whatever cancellations they see fit, provided the pictures are tradeshown before licensing.

"UP TO THE DISTRIBUTORS

"Arnold puts the problem up to the distributors in a none-too-helpful way. He 'overlooks' the collusion that took place when the distributors and exhibitors negotiated for the plan. (Any other attitude would have been treacherous since he was consulted by exhibitor representatives during the negotiations.) But he also warns that the UMPI plan may not be put into effect by concerted action. This leaves the distributors free to sell pictures in whatever way they please, provided each formulates its own policy and there is no concert among them.

"The pertinent paragraph in the statement reads as follows:

"So far as the cancellation privilege sought by the independent exhibitors is concerned, there is nothing in the decree which prevents the distributors from competing with each other in giving cancellation privileges equal to or in excess of those proposed in the UMPI plan. Such a grant should not be conditioned upon express Departmental acquiescence in blind selling. The existence of the large backlog of features already completed, referred to above, will permit the consenting distributors to sell in blocks as large as thirteen, grant the cancellation privileges they have represented themselves as willing to grant in selling blocks of that size, and still trade show them before licensing."

"Can the distributors carry out the substance of the UMPI agreement, modified by the tradeshowing of all pictures, without running afoul of the anti-trust laws?"

"IT CAN BE DONE

"Prior to Arnold's statement one of the consenting distributors had announced it would sell in line with the UMPI formula. This company—MGM—will offer eight tradeshown pictures in its first block. It will grant the cancellations stipulated in the UMPI agreement. Obviously this represents Metro's individual company policy so far as this group is concerned. Such offering clearly is sanctioned by the above-quoted passage from Arnold's announcement.

"There is no reason why other distributors can not announce groups of tradeshown pictures up to a maximum of 13, with cancellations not less than those agreed to in UMPI, without risking prosecution by the Department.

"The greater the variation in the size of the groups and in the amount of the cancellations the greater the security from government molestation. It is noteworthy that the four grounds of objection cited in the statement all have to do with the tradeshowing of pictures.

"BLOCKS-OF-FIVE NO LONGER SAFE

"Arnold in his statement, speaking of the Consent Decree, says:

"It was not the intention of the Department to sanction non-competitive control of the industry, either by an industry council or by the Department itself."

"This is in the teeth of the fact that the Consent Decree established non-competitive control of the industry by the Department. The five picture plan led to greater uniformity among the five consenting companies than had ever existed

before. It was the product of concert of action by the five distributors, with the Government sitting in.

"For the distributors now to revert to that plan will involve implications of collusion greater than those implicit in following generally the UMPI plan. The Department has impliedly denounced its own action in approving the Consent Decree. A reversion by the five consenting companies to blocks-of-five should be followed by a departmental crack-down.

"NO TIME FOR PANIC

"There will be a great deal of griping and recrimination, but that will do no good. The Department has put the industry 'on its own,' at the same time telling it to watch its step. There was no occasion for such 'double-talk.' However, the show will go on despite official antics.

"Each company must devise and follow its own policy. The only uniformity that the Department will favor is in tradeshowing pictures. Beyond that, uniformity will be looked upon with suspicion.

"Each company should offer such number of tradeshown pictures in a group as it feels will best serve its interests and meet the needs of its customers.

"Each company should grant whatever cancellation privilege it sees fit, but this should not fall below the minimum provided in the UMPI agreement.

"In this way the distributors can proceed with assurance. The competition engendered will be all to the good from the standpoint of Arnold's statement. The exhibitors will enjoy the advantages which they sought through UMPI.

"THE SKY IS THE LIMIT—LEGALLY

"Arnold says:

"All of the public groups which communicated their views to the Department opposed the plan as did the organized independent producers and a number of independent exhibitors."

"The identity and motives of the 'independent' producers and exhibitors are accounted for. But Allied is unaware of any public groups that opposed the UMPI plan. Allied is aware of some groups that expressly refrained from taking any position because they place their faith in legislation.

"But Allied is positive that no public group, unless it was one of those who used to accompany the Hays Office representatives to Washington to testify against the Neely Bill, ever opposed the UMPI plan with knowledge that the alternative was to remove all legal restraints from the selling of pictures.

"While Arnold suggests that a distributor may offer up to a maximum of 13 pictures in a block, actually there is nothing to prevent it from offering all that it proposes to release.

"While Arnold suggests that all pictures be tradeshown, there is nothing to prevent a distributor from blind selling its entire output.

"Moreover, there is now no restraint whatever against selling to the affiliated chains on long-term monopolistic franchises.

"If any public group was stimulated by selfish interests to oppose the UMPI plan, it is certain that its informants did not point out that rejection of the plan would relieve the distributors of all legal restraint in the matter of selling pictures. Evidently someone has been badly imposed upon.

"END OF UMPI?

"There remains on the UMPI agenda the putting into effect of the plan for conciliation of individual complaints and the investigation of territorial grievances.

"Also, the consideration of proposals for making arbitration under the Consent Decree more effective.

"Distributors and exhibitors alike would be foolhardy to pursue these joint endeavors in the absence of clear-cut approval by the Department.

"Thurman Arnold is an able, clear-headed man and can make himself understood when he wishes to do so. That is the way he talked in 1938 when he was in dead earnest about the motion picture trust. When he wants to throw sand in a visitor's eyes he jumps on his verbal horse and gallops off in all directions. That is the way he was about the Consent Decree in 1940 and about the UMPI plan after it was submitted.

"No one in the future will waste the time or money to engage in cooperative undertakings that can have the slightest bearing on competitive practices until Mr. Arnold tells them, straight from the shoulder, that it is all right to do so."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher
P. S. HARRISON, Editor
Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1942

No. 36

LOWELL MELLETT GIVES GOLDWYN A LESSON

Last week, Mr. Lowell Mellett, Chief of the Motion Picture Division of the Office of War Information, ordered United Artists to withdraw from circulation Samuel Goldwyn's "The Real Glory."

This paper wishes to congratulate Mr. Mellett for being alert in compelling the producer to withdraw this untimely film, which depicts the Philippine Moros, our Allies, in a bad light.

The extent of Sam Goldwyn's unpatriotic act goes beyond the reissuing of a film that was uncomplimentary to the Moros. There is also the matter of a wanton waste of film, and this from a man who urges that the industry slash film production by forty per cent and eliminate double features in order to effect a substantial saving in film raw stock.

It is reported that the picture has already played several hundred theatres, and it is assumed that approximately two hundred prints were available to meet the requirements of the exhibitors. If such is the case, this would amount to approximately two million feet of film, which will be deducted from the total linear feet allowed the industry in accordance with the WPB order not permitting the industry to use more film than it used in 1941. That means two million feet less entertainment for our movie-hungry public, at a time when entertainment is essential to the national morale.

To top off this unpatriotic act, Sam Goldwyn has preyed upon the patriotic fervor of the public in whose minds the gallant defense of the Philippines is still fresh. A review of the press sheet discloses that none of the posters indicate that the action takes place at the beginning of the century, or that the picture has to do with the internal strife on the islands, in which the U. S. Army tried to establish order. Nor does it state that the picture is about the present war.

But the fact that the posters do not clarify the picture's contents, will undoubtedly make most moviegoers believe that it is a picture about present day warfare, particularly since the posters contain wordage such as: "American heroes in the Philippines fighting a savage battle against a savage foe . . . thrilling the world with their dauntless courage . . . the full fury of the war in the Philippines . . . holding the enemy at bay against overwhelming odds."

The fact that it is a reissue does not mean that the public is aware of the picture's contents. This picture,

at best, was never more than a good action film, and the public cannot be expected to remember it in the same way that they would remember a "Gone With the Wind," or many another film of epic proportions; and since it was not an epic, one can rest assured that Sam Goldwyn would not have reissued this film in normal times. Obviously, he took advantage of a situation, placing his own selfish interests above those of the government.

By reissuing this picture, Sam Goldwyn, too, has joined the ranks of those industry persons who are attempting to "cash in" on patriotism.

BLOOD MONEY

Writing for the August 30, 1942, issue of the *New York Times*, Mr. Thomas M. Pryor calls attention to the following:

"Columbia Pictures learned to its sorrow the other day that our air raid wardens just won't stand for any shenanigans. Seems the studio's high-powered press agents got the idea of helping out the government's anti-loose-talk campaign and at the same time garnering a full measure of publicity for one of Columbia's pictures, which opened here last week. With the approval of John H. Morris, sixth deputy police commissioner in charge of Air Warden Service, the studio printed up some 20,000 handbills, for distribution by the wardens, on which Jean Arthur, Cary Grant, and Ronald Colman held admonishing fingers to their lips and cautioned citizens 'Not to let America's secrets become THE TALK OF THE TOWN.' Quick to sense that they were being imposed upon for commercial purposes, the wardens raised such a holler that a few days after the bundles of posters had been delivered to zone headquarters police cars went around picking them up. All of which goes to prove that our wardens are certainly on the alert."

At a time when our industry is exerting every effort to create an impression with official Washington and the public, Columbia's deliberate attempt to take advantage of a group of men and women—every one a volunteer, and doing our country a great service—will do much to offset the good will we are trying to gain.

This is not to be laughed off as an advertising stunt that failed, but to be condemned as a contemptible trick, aimed at "cashing in" on the patriotism of others.

"Isle of Missing Men" with Gilbert Roland, John Howard and Helen Gilbert

(Monogram, Sept. 11; time, 64 min.)

An indifferent program melodrama, with a poorly constructed plot; it is never convincing. The action is slow and long drawn out. In addition, the direction is poor and so is the acting, except for Alan Mowbray's performance as a drunken doctor; it is the film's only asset. Nothing that any character does awakens any sympathy. The hero is a weak character; as the responsible head of a penal colony, he is shown aiding the escape of a criminal, whose wife he loved, then resigning his position. Yet he had no apparent reason for making this sacrifice, since she had done nothing to warrant his love. As a matter of fact, he knew that she had taken advantage of him and his hospitality:—

Aboard the S.S. Bombay, Helen Gilbert meets John Howard, Governor of the remote penal island of Caruba. She cunningly induces him to invite her to visit the island. There she meets Alan Mowbray, the island's drunken doctor, and Bradley Page, the Lieutenant Governor, who is suspicious of her. One night after dinner, Gilbert Roland, a convict, is discovered outside the bungalow occupied by Helen. He is brought in and reprimanded. Unknown to the others, Roland was Helen's husband. Later that night, Roland returns and informs Helen of his plan to escape via a freighter due to stop at the island in a few days. Helen pleads with him to seek a new trial, but he insists on carrying through his plan. She gives him her money and jewels to pay for his passage. As Roland returns to his barracks, he is caught by Howard. The jewels are identified as Helen's, but she insists that Roland stole them from her while she slept. Helen prevails upon Mowbray to help Roland escape. He informs Howard that Roland was ill with typhus, and later pronounces him dead. He allows Roland to escape during the burial. Meanwhile Page learns from the British authorities that Helen was Roland's wife. He also discovers the empty grave. Feeling that Helen loved her husband, and that his own love was to no avail, Howard makes no attempt to stop Roland from sailing on the freighter. After giving the freighter's captain his clearance papers, Howard resigns as Governor. Realizing that Roland was a scoundrel, Helen refuses to sail with him. She returns and confesses her love for Howard. Aboard the freighter, Roland is killed in a fight with the captain.

Richard Oswald and Robert Chapin wrote the screen play, Mr. Oswald produced and directed it.

Strictly adult entertainment.

"Between Us Girls" with Diana Barrymore, Robert Cummings and Kay Francis

(Universal, Sept. 4; time, 88 min.)

It is the excellent performance of Diana Barrymore that makes this comedy a highly amusing entertainment. Unlike her part in "Eagle Squadron," this time she has been given ample opportunity to display her talent. In the various sequences she portrays a twelve-year-old girl, Sadie Thompson (of "Rain"), eighty-two-year-old Queen Victoria, and a vivacious young actress. Of these, it is her portrayal of the child that is outstanding; she imparts realism to the characterization. The story itself is ordinary, but one overlooks this because of the many hilarious situations. The action is fast-moving, and one's interest is held throughout. Because it lacks star appeal, the picture will require extensive exploitation; once you get your patrons into the theatre, they will not be disappointed:—

Diana Barrymore, an ambitious young actress, and Andy Devine, her manager, travel east between shows to visit Kay Francis, Diana's mother. Diana learns that Kay was in love with John Boles, and that he thought of her (Diana) as being only a child. Fearing that Boles might think her mother too old when he finds that she is not a child, Diana decides to masquerade as a twelve-year-old girl. When Boles and Robert Cummings, his friend, visit Kay, Diana dresses and behaves like a child who was treated cruelly. She gains Cummings' sympathy. After they leave, Diana insists that her mother keep up the deception. The following day, Cummings comes visiting unexpectedly, but does not recognize Diana. Representing herself as her mother's sister, she informs him that the child was in her room and that she would send her to him. Quickly changing her clothes, Diana induces him to take her to an ice-cream parlor. There, she starts a near-riot when she picks a fight with a small boy. To keep Cummings out of trouble, she pushes him into his car and drives it through the streets wildly. Both are arrested for reckless driving, but Diana manages to secure their release without revealing her true age, despite the suspicions of the police. That evening, Devine escorts Diana and her mother to a night club where they are later found by Cummings, who for the first time sees Diana as her grown-up self. Angry at

being duped, he leaves in a huff. She follows him, but her entreaties are to no avail. Heartbroken, Diana leaves to open her new show. Cummings, however, follows her to a Detroit theatre where she was appearing as Joan of Arc. Dressed as a knight, he declares his love for her onstage. Boles and Miss Francis marry.

Myles Connolly and True Boardman wrote the screen play, and Henry Koster produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"A Night For Crime" with Glenda Farrell and Lyle Talbot

(Producers Releasing Corp., Sept. 15; time, 73 min.)

This murder mystery melodrama, with comedy, conforms to a pattern reminiscent of the "Torchy Blane" series; it should prove satisfactory as part of a double bill in the smaller houses. Glenda Farrell again portrays a newspaper woman who ultimately solves the crime. The action is slowed down a bit by too much talk, but the interest is maintained, for the murderer is not identified until the end. There is the usual dumb detective for comedy, but for the most part this type of humor falls flat. The story takes place in Hollywood, and the action revolves around Hollywood characters. The direction and the performances are fair:—

The murder of Marjorie Manners, an extra girl, coincides with the mysterious disappearance of Lina Basquette, star of Sunset Productions, a company owned by Donald Kirke. Lyle Talbot, Kirke's publicity director, and Glenda Farrell, his fiancee and a newspaper woman, interest themselves in both cases. At an investigation in Lina's home, Police Chief Forrest Taylor interrogates all the guests who attended a dinner party given by the star the previous night. He also questions Ricki Vallin, Lina's chauffeur. That night, Glenda attempts to search Lina's room for a clue. A mysterious man enters and starts to choke her. The sudden arrival of Detective Ralph Sanford saves her life. Meanwhile Kirke, worried about Lina's incompleting picture, leaves on a hurried trip, taking with him a cameraman. Soon after his return, Lina's body is found in a canyon near Hollywood, strangled as was the girl extra. Glenda and Talbot manage to look at a film that Kirke had secreted in his office, which shows Lina on a bridge that Glenda recognizes as the famous bridge at Reno. Glenda takes her car and drives to Reno. She is followed by the mysterious strangler, who tries to force her off the road. But he himself goes over an embankment, and is killed. He proves to be Lina's chauffeur. In Reno, Lina is found secluded in a hotel. She explains that the dead woman was her twin sister who had threatened to expose the fact that she (Lina) was married to her chauffeur. Vallin had killed her, as well as the extra girl, who, too, knew of their marriage. Glenda brands the story as false when she proves that the woman before them was Lina's psychopathic sister, and that she was attempting to take Lina's place.

Arthur St. Claire wrote the screen play, Lester Cutler produced it, and Alexis Thurn-Taxis directed it.

Not for children.

"The World at War"

(U. S. Government, Sept. 18; time, 66 min.)

This is the first of a contemplated series of factual feature-length war films officially sponsored by the government and produced under the guidance of the Bureau of Motion Pictures of the Office of War Information. The material was taken from Axis films that have been confiscated by the government, and from films supplied by the British, Soviet, and United States governments. Every scene is authentic—nothing has been staged. Beginning with the Japanese invasion of China in 1931, the picture chronologically traces the pattern of aggression by the invader nations through the ten year period leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the confiscated enemy film is found Hitler's own photographic version of the bloodless subjugation of Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, and of the bombing and destruction in Poland, Holland, Belgium, and France, as well as Japanese and Italian invasion records. Our own films and those of our allies show the efforts of the United Nations in fighting the war. The Battle of Britain, the resistance of the Russian army and people, as well as our war production effort, are included in the film.

The picture is an excellent record of the horrors of war, in its depiction of the destruction of property and human lives, and no attempt has been made to show the enemy as being other than the powerful force that he is. But sixty-six minutes of this is much too long for average audiences to sit through, particularly since a good deal of the footage has already been seen by them in the newsreels. The material is best suited for shorts, and not for features.

The picture is being released by all the major distributors.

"Baby Face Morgan" with Richard Cromwell, Robert Armstrong and Mary Carlisle

(Producers Releasing Corp., Oct. 12; time, 60 min.)

Despite its low budget, the entertainment values of this melodrama exceed by far those of a good many program films produced by the majors. The picture is a travesty on gangster films, with a story that is novel and consistently entertaining; it has many amusing situations. Blending comedy, romance, and fast action, it should prove more than satisfactory as a supporting feature on a double bill. The direction and the performances are good:—

Richard Cromwell, a small-town boy, is selected by Robert Armstrong, a gangster, to head a group of racketeers formerly led by Cromwell's deceased father. Cromwell had never met his father and had no knowledge about his activities. Afraid that the gang members would not approve of Cromwell because of his youth and of his naive ways, Armstrong informs them that Cromwell wanted to remain unknown, even to them. Cromwell is made president of the Acme Protection Agency, but he does not know that the company was a "blind" for the gang's activities. The mobsters terrorize the city's business concerns, forcing them to pay "protection" money. Irrked by his inactivity, Cromwell decides to sell protection insurance to the victims of these atrocities. Thus the money collected by the gangsters and placed in the Acme bank account was the same money Cromwell paid out to cover the insurance liabilities. Cromwell falls in love with Mary Carlisle, owner of a trucking company, whose trucks had been wrecked by the gangsters when she refused to pay for protection. The gangsters become mystified when the business men defy them and dare them to wreck their trucks. When Armstrong learns that Cromwell had paid out the money in insurance, he fears the wrath of the gang. He informs Cromwell of the truth, and advises him that he will have to meet them and act as a tough killer in an attempt to bluff them. Meanwhile the gangsters, learning that Mary was Cromwell's sweetheart, kidnap her to force her to disclose Cromwell's whereabouts. When Cromwell arrives and sees them mistreating Mary, he really feels like a killer and starts a fight. The police raid the place and arrest everybody. Cromwell is cleared, and he and Mary prepare for a honeymoon.

Edward Dein and Jack Ruvin wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. In the case are Warren Hymer, Chick Chandler, Ralph Harold and others.

Being a comedy, it may be considered a good family entertainment.

"Strictly in the Groove" with Ozzie Nelson, Leon Errol and Grace McDonald

(Universal, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

Those who enjoy "swing" music will find this program comedy a diverting entertainment. The story is of no importance; since the action is fairly fast-moving, the musical tunes plentiful, and the performances agreeable, however, it does not become boring. Leon Errol provides the comedy. The popularity of Ozzie Nelson and his orchestra should help the box-office draw:—

Russell Hicks, owner of a restaurant chain, is disturbed when he learns that Richard Davies, his son, had formed a "swing" band at college and intended to manage it after his graduation. He sends Davies out west to help Franklyn Pangborn manage the Circle "S" dude ranch. Determined to keep the band together, Davies takes them along. When Pangborn refuses to hire the band, Davies manages to replace the ranch's personnel with his friends. When the guests complain of the service and Pangborn informs Hicks, Davies and his friends find themselves stranded, with jobs. They fake a broadcast to sell a commercial radio program to Leon Errol, a wealthy cattleman, but Errol discovers the ruse and refuses to deal with them. Meanwhile Davies meets Mary Healy, owner of the Arizona Lodge. When she tells him of her difficulties in competing with his father's ranch, he induces her to give his band a trial to bolster business. Seeing in this a possible threat to his ranch's business, Hicks come out west. Errol induces him to attend the opening. They join in the fun, and Hicks gives his blessing to Mary and Davies, who by this time had fallen in love.

Kenneth Higgins and Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Joseph G. Sanford produced it, and Vernon Keays directed it. In the cast are Shemp Howard, Jimmie Davis, the Dinning Sisters and others.

"Gallant Lady" with Sidney Blackmer and Rose Hobart

(Producers Releasing Corp., May 29; time, 67 min.)

An ineffective program melodrama, handicapped by a trite and artificial story. It has some human interest, but the acting is so amateurish and mechanical that hardly any effect is produced on one's emotions. The picture fails to maintain one's interest. The story unfolds just as one expects and the outcome is obvious. Moreover, the action is slowed down considerably by excessive dialogue. There is a pleasant romance, but practically no comedy relief:—

Dr. Rose Hobart, convicted for a mercy killing is forced to accompany Claire Rochelle and Inez Cole, gun molls, when their escape from prison is arranged by Richard Clarke, Claire's gangster boy-friend. Rose determines to go back and give herself up, since she had but one more month to serve. On a country road, she comes to a shack where she finds an old man with a broken leg. She finishes setting and bandaging the leg just as Dr. Sidney Blackmer arrives to attend the injured man. He recognizes her as the escaped convict and offers her refuge at his home. She assists him with his laboratory work and, before long, both fall in love. Because of her criminal status, she refuses his marriage proposal, but he finally induces her to accept. At the marriage bureau, the clerk recognizes her and calls a deputy sheriff. Blackmer knocks out the sheriff and escapes with Rose. He hides her on his farm, but she flees to New York, going to Clarke and Rochelle for help. From a newspaper story, Rose learns that Blackmer had been arrested and was standing trial, accused of harboring and aiding a criminal to escape. She rushes back to the little town by bus, to give herself up. The bus is wrecked outside the town and Rose, unharmed, administers first aid to the wounded passengers. Meanwhile the trial is recessed so that Blackmer, the only doctor in town, could help the injured. Because of their excellent work, Blackmer is acquitted by the jury, and Rose is pardoned by the Governor. She starts life anew as Blackmer's wife.

Arthur St. Claire wrote the screen play, Lester Cutler produced it, and William Baudine directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Give Out, Sisters" with the Andrews Sisters, Dan Dailey, Jr., and Grace McDonald

(Universal, Sept. 11; time, 63 min.)

As in most Universal program comedies, with "swing" music, this picture has a story that is neither serious nor sensible; but it is a gay entertainment, the sort that should appeal to the "jitterbug" set. In addition to their singing a few popular songs, the Andrews Sisters add to the comedy by their impersonation of three spinsters. The picture is a pleasant blend of comedy, dancing, and singing, and it will serve to round out a double bill where something light is needed in contrast to a more serious feature:—

Peggy Ryan, a girl messenger, delivers a telegram to the Flamingo club, where the Andrews Sisters and Dan Dailey, Jr.'s orchestra were appearing. She learns that William Frawley, the club's owner, contemplated adding new talent to the floor show. She persuades him to give the Jivin' Jacks and Jills a trial. If they succeed, it would mean saving from bankruptcy the dancing school run by Charles Butterworth and Walter Catlett. During the tryout, Richard Davies, a press agent, recognizes Grace McDonald, leader of the group, as the niece of three millionaire spinster aunts, and learns that she was using an assumed name. The subsequent publicity proves sensational. Frawley signs the group immediately, giving Catlett \$500 in advance. Overcome by the news, the spinsters order Grace not to appear, order their attorney to warn Frawley against letting Grace work, and send for a doctor. Catlett dresses the Andrews Sisters as the spinsters and has them slip into the spinster's home while Butterworth, posing as a doctor, keeps the spinsters confined to their bedroom. He then brings Frawley to the Andrews Sisters who consent to Grace dancing at the club. When the spinsters discover that they had been duped, they rush to the club, arriving before the Andrews Sisters remove their disguises. The two sets of spinsters cause many complications. But the real sisters discover that dancing is very enjoyable and join in the fun. They consent to Grace continuing her career.

Paul Gerard Smith and Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Bernie Burton produced it, and Edward P. Cline directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

THE CASE OF ORSON WELLES

In October, 1939, this paper objected to the criticism heaped upon the old RKO administration for having entrusted to Orson Welles \$750,000 and unrestricted authority to produce a picture. Having long been an advocate of new talent in the motion picture industry, the writer of these lines encouraged both Mr. Welles, as a newcomer, and Mr. George Schaeffer, for having the courage to engage him, giving him blanket authority.

Mr. Welles' first production, "Citizen Kane," was an outstanding piece of art. It was, and still is, the opinion of this writer that the picture set a standard for other producer-directors to follow. As director-producer-actor, Mr. Welles displayed a keener understanding of motion picture technique than many men long associated with the business of making pictures; he showed courage in getting away from anything that smacked of the routine, and his handling of the story material was ingenious; and because of his success with this picture, he was acclaimed a genius. This he deserved.

But the genius that is Mr. Welles' seems to have gotten out of hand in his last two productions. There is no doubt about his top-ranking talent as an actor when cast in a suitable role. His ability as a director, capable of inspiring other actors, is demonstrated in the performance of Agnes Moorehead—in her memorable emotional scene in "The Magnificent Ambersons," and in the unusual performance of Tim Holt, in the same picture. But the very subject matter, style, treatment, screen play construction, and motivation, both in this picture and "Journey Into Fear," his unreleased picture, proves that Orson Welles either lacks the instinct, or has not lived long enough to have developed the heartfelt honesty of soul, to select and construct material for the entertainment of the masses through the medium of the motion picture.

I mean to recognize the artistry of his first picture—as having appeal to discriminating audiences, but there can be no doubt that the subject matter was an unwise selection; it closely paralleled the life of a living person and, because of its possible libelous depiction, was dangerous.

In his first picture, Welles produced, directed and acted; in the second, he produced and directed without acting, except for the use of his voice in the narration; in the third picture, he subordinated his acting to a minor role, and even engaged another person to direct the picture, but he continued to dominate its entire spirit, not only as the selector of story but also as the writer of the screen play. His complete domination is evidenced by the fact that the leading man himself imitates Welles' tone, style, and pace of voice delivery. But his utter lack of ability as a story constructionist is fully evident by the artificial and unmotivated continuity of scenes. At the beginning of almost every scene, the players acted as if they were waiting for a cue before making a move—like Buddha statues.

The experience that has been had by RKO with Orson Welles proves that to no one man should there be given the power to be a selector of story material, writer, producer, and director, and to choose his own production staff, cast, crew, and technicians, for them to do his arbitrary bidding. This causes bad pictures

to be handed to the distribution department. It is then necessary for the advertising and the publicity staff to manufacture superlatives to exploit them. And this starts a huge sales force on the herculean task of convincing more than seven thousand theatres to exhibit bad box-office pictures. Multiply these theatres by the number of bad pictures, and you will get an idea of the many thousands of dissatisfied play-dates.

It is the opinion of this paper that the action taken by RKO in dealing with Welles is justifiable. As explained by Mr. Charles W. Koerner, RKO's position is not one of resistance to art, although Welles' last two pictures can hardly be considered in that category, but one that is based on a sound business policy. Mr. Koerner is reported as having said: "I am thinking commercially. The only people who can afford to experiment are those who have the money to do it. RKO, at this point, hasn't."

In addition to delivering poor pictures, Welles was out of hand. At a great cost to RKO, he has just returned from South America where he spent seven months filming his latest picture, "It All Came True." The picture is only three-fourths complete; and, to make matters worse, the negative flown back to Hollywood disclosed that the original purpose of the film had been discarded. The story was not on paper; it was implanted only in Mr. Welles' mind. And that is a poor way of dealing with other peoples' money.

It is reported that Welles has squandered more than one million dollars before RKO discovered his lack of ability.

Mr. Welles' now famous telegram, sent to his Hollywood staff when they were evicted from the RKO Studios, is a study in egoism. Said the telegram: "Hold on. We're just passing a Koerner on the road to immortality." Some one ought to inform Mr. Welles that immortality is attained by one's deeds and service to the people, and not by one's desire to attain it.

THE BILLION DOLLAR DRIVE

As this paper goes to press, the War Activities Committee reports an indicated one hundred million dollar sale for the first day in the September Billion Dollar War Bond Drive. This amount is impressive for it represents approximately a three day national quota.

Recognizing that this news may have an adverse effect, Mr. Si Fabian, national campaign director, wired all leaders, urging that nobody become overconfident. He cautioned that the first day's burst of speed is still no guarantee that the billion-dollar quota will be easy, and the "miracle" goal set still remains an objective that must be fought for every inch of the way.

Mr. Fabian's advice is sound. To slacken our effort because of the sensational business done in the first few days is to invite failure. This must not be a one day, two day, or three day drive, but thirty days of concentrated effort, in which the business of operating your theatre is second in importance to the drive.

This is the greatest cause our industry has ever been called upon to serve, and every one in the industry should give his all. The man who fails to do his part deserves to be labeled a slacker.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service

Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1942

No. 37

WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR

Writing in the September 6, 1942 issue of the *New York Times*, under the heading, "Art Can Do the Job," Mr. Brooks Atkinson, drama critic of that paper, had this to say:

"Art has a practical function in war time. It works in the common cause. Although an artist may feel at loose ends in a period when the world is taut with action, he has something vital to contribute. He can pull together all the scattered details of war-making and give them an eloquent meaning. Better than anybody else, he can teach the truths that transmute an ugly job into a noble mission."

Mr. Atkinson then relates an experience that, as he says, "decisively proved the point." He tells of a recent trip during which he had occasion to observe a great many details dealing with the nation's war effort.

Of these he says: "The details were concrete parts of today's terrible reality. According to materialistic logic, they ought to have been more convincing than a book, film or piece of music. But to tell the truth, they were inconclusive, lacking the final passion that gives life to reality and finds a motive in human conduct. Much to my astonishment, it was two screen plays, seen at odd moments during the journey, that pulled the details into sharp focus, roused my emotions and gave me the feeling that this wide-reaching rush of a nation has a profound human purpose."

Citing "Sergeant York" and "Mrs. Miniver" as the two films he had seen, Mr. Atkinson continued: "In point of fact, neither one of them was as real as a young parachute jumper encountered on a train, or a group of awkward farm boys solemnly taking the oath in a Marine recruiting station. But if I may use myself as a guinea pig in this artistic experiment, I came away from both films sad and exalted—sad because men and women have to go through these shattering experiences, exalted because decent men and women do not give in. Thus, some shadows caught by the artists on celluloid brought order out of contemporary chaos and strengthened loyalty to the principles of our side.

"This is a power that no one except the artist has. Through understanding and imagination, with form and feeling he can give us back the truth that slumbers in our hearts. Facts, logic, events and concrete things lack the humanity that gives an idea wings. When the artist lays hold of it we know not only what it is but what it means."

Elsewhere in his article Mr. Atkinson points out that by impregnating facts with emotion, the artist

becomes the spokesman who tells us the meaning of what we are seeing, by dragging the spiritual truth out of the common materials of life.

He concludes by stating that, "To an unimaginative civilian it (the war) looks like a game of checkers played by counters for a paper victory. That is where the artist's function begins. Better than anyone else, he can pull the myriad details together, look on men with compassion and prove that this is one war against one enemy for a just world and decent people."

Mr. Atkinson's fine article is a deft explanation of the function of the motion picture in these critical times.

Had Mr. Atkinson taken a camera with him on his trip, and recorded all that he saw with regard to the war effort, he would have had a film that, though important, would probably be drably uninteresting, and would fail to impress the unimaginative civilian that he speaks of. There is little about an army camp, a steel plant, shipbuilding, plane factories, airfields, or other such phases of the war, that lends itself either to constructive thought or emotional appeal when presented on the screen in a cold fashion. Dramatization of the facts is essential if we are to rouse the feelings in mind and heart of our unimaginative civilian, who, incidentally, makes up the greater part of the vast American public.

Take, for example, the battle of Wake Island. Had a camera recorded the actual conditions from the time of the attack to the time of defeat, it is doubtful if the film would have been much more than a dull documentary. It could never have hoped to inspire the public as has Paramount's version of the battle through the motion picture "Wake Island."

In that picture, we find all the attributes of artistry dealt with by Mr. Atkinson. To begin with the picture has no plot, and the producer had nothing more to work with than the meagre reports received from the beleaguered garrison. But, by properly dramatizing these reports, and by showing wise restraint in keeping out of the film Hollywood's mock-heroics, the producer has turned a tragedy into a symbol of democracy. Everyone who views this picture will walk out of the theatre proud that he is an American, and with the full realization of what war means.

While on the subject, I should like to call attention to another phase of the war with which our industry can do much through its artists. It is the phase that deals with what we are fighting for—an explanation of the four freedoms, which President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill laid down in their Atlantic
(Continued on last page)

"Police Bullets" with John Archer and Joan Marsh

(Monogram, Sept. 25; time, 61 min.)

Just a minor program melodrama. The story is trite, and the performers are hampered by poor material. The only possible audience it could appeal to would be those who enjoy action pictures of the "cops and robbers" type, regardless of story values. The action revolves around a young college professor, who unwittingly becomes the tool of a "pay-for-protection" racketeer. There is a comedy situation here and there, and a formula romance of no importance:—

Milburn Stone, head of a protection-racket gang, loses his wallet with his list of collections while making his getaway after killing Irving Mitchell, owner of a candy store. Professor John Archer, an archaeologist, finds and returns the wallet. Stone sends Warren Hymer and Pat Gleason, his henchman, to find out whether Archer had seen anything in the wallet, including the serial numbers on the dollar bills. Stone's lawyer informs him that the government was after him for income tax evasion, and advised him to destroy his records. Stone employs Archer to memorize the records, which he later destroys. Joan Marsh, daughter of the murdered man, learns that Archer had memorized the records. She advises the police, who instruct her. Joan pays Archer a visit, but the pair are kidnapped by a rival gang. They threaten to harm Joan unless he reveals what he had memorized. Joan and Archer escape, but are caught by Hymer and Gleason. While being taken to Stone, Archer helps Joan to get away. She sends the police to Stone's hideout, where they arrest the gang. Archer and Joan realize their love.

Edmond Kelso and Ande Lamb wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Unsuitable for children.

"Eyes in the Night" with Ann Harding and Edward Arnold

(MGM, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

Combining a stepmother-stepdaughter rift for drama, a murder for mystery, and a spy ring for timelessness, this melodrama adds up as pretty good program fare. The sleuthing part is given a novel twist: a blind detective and his "seeing eye" dog solve the crime and round up the spies. The film marks the return of Ann Harding to the screen, but since most of the action centers around Edward Arnold, as the detective, her role is secondary; what there is of it, however, she portrays with her usual dramatic skill. The story itself is routine and far-fetched, but it holds one's interest fairly well, for it offers fast action, a few exciting situations, and comedy. Friday, the dog, is exceptionally good:—

Edward Arnold, a blind detective, is visited by Ann Harding, who seeks his aid. Donna Reed, her stepdaughter, had fallen in love with John Emery, an actor, whose lies had turned the girl against her. Ann had once been engaged to Emery, but had broken her engagement to marry Reginald Denny, an inventor. Arnold advises Ann to visit Emery. She goes to his apartment, only to find him dead. Donna surprises her there and accuses her of the murder. Although she is innocent, Ann agrees to Donna's ultimatum to leave Denny; she hopes to save him from the derogatory publicity that would otherwise follow. Ann again

visits Arnold. He goes immediately to Emery's apartment, but finds that the body had been removed. When Horace McNally enters the room to return a rug cleaned of blood stains, he is captured by Arnold and Friday, his "seeing eye" dog. Arnold learns that McNally was the husband of Rosemary De Camp, a maid at Ann's home. Representing himself as Ann's uncle, he visits the home. Donna arrives soon after with Katherine Emery, a playwright, who was really an Axis agent attempting to steal one of her father's inventions. All the servants in the house were members of the ring. With Denny away on business, the spies attempt to open his safe. Arnold delays them by pretending to be intoxicated and awakening the household. He attempts to telephone the police, but finds the wires cut. He then hides a note in Friday's harness and sends the dog for help. Meanwhile the spies discover his identity and place him under guard. Denny returns home, but before Ann can warn him, he, too, is captured. Blasting the safe open, the spies find the formula incomplete. All are threatened with death unless Denny reveals the missing information. They are saved when help arrives, led by Friday. Arnold proves that Katherine had murdered Emery. Realizing her mistake, Donna becomes reconciled with Ann.

Guy Trooper and Howard E. Rogers wrote the screen play, Jack Chertok produced it, and Fred Zimmerman directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"For Me and My Gal" with Judy Garland, George Murphy and Gene Kelly

(MGM, no release date set; time, 102 min.)

This is a very good musical comedy-drama, set against the melodramatic background of the first World War when the pinnacle of fame for vaudeville actors was to appear in the Palace Theatre. The musical numbers and the dancing are of the variety popular in that day, and will appeal to the old-timers, as well as the new generation. Some of the scenes are extremely gripping. The scene where Judy Garland's brother goes off to the war is particularly so; it is the sort of drama that is now being enacted in our present-day life, and it is sure to rouse one's emotions. Part of the action takes place in France, and some of the war scenes are exciting. The story itself is time-worn, and the romance is developed in a somewhat trite manner, but it is appealing. The direction and the performances are very good:—

The one great ambition of Judy Garland and George Murphy, a song-and-dance team, was to play the Palace Theatre. Another ambition that Judy had was to send Richard Quine, her brother, through college. Appearing on the same bill with Judy and Murphy is Gene Kelly, a handsome but arrogant comedian. One night after the show, Kelly convinces Judy that they would make a great vaudeville team. Although Judy was reluctant to leave him, Murphy insists that she do so. She teams with Kelly. After two years, the act is still on the "small time." Judy is deeply in love with Kelly, but he was not aware of it. When Kelly becomes friendly with Marta Eggerth, a singing star, and is with her constantly, Judy is heartbroken. She calls on Marta, who quickly realizes that Judy loved Kelly. She warns Judy that Kelly's nature was egotistical, and that he would eventually make her unhappy. She offers to prove that Kelly

would leave her if given an opportunity to appear at the Palace. Later, Kelly accepts Marta's offer to appear with her. When he breaks the news to Judy, she starts to cry. He realizes his love for her as he comforts her. He decides not to leave her. Their joy is complete when they receive a telegram telling them that they had been booked in the Palace. They plan to marry after the first matinee. In the midst of a celebration, Kelly receives his draft card. Determined to let nothing stand in the way of his appearing at the Palace, Kelly deliberately injures his hand to obtain deferment. Saddened when she learns that her brother had died in action, Judy becomes furious when she discovers that Kelly had injured himself to escape service. She leaves him. Kelly tries to enlist, but is turned down because of his injury. Unable to locate Judy, he joins the Y.M.C.A. and sails for France with an entertainment unit. He finds Judy there, entertaining soldiers in a canteen. Kelly vindicates himself by an heroic act on the battlefield. After the armistice is signed, he is reunited with Judy as she appears with her act in the Palace Theatre.

Richard Sherman, Fred Finklehoff, and Sid Silvers wrote the screen play. Arthur Freed produced it, and Busby Berkeley directed it. Included in the cast are Ben Blue, Keenan Wynn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce

(Universal, September 18; time, 64 min.)

Sherlock Holmes is given a modern setting in this fairly good espionage melodrama. Elementary indeed is his outwitting of a ring of Nazi saboteurs, who terrorize the English by broadcasting an announcement of each sabotage act before committing it. The story is a bit on the implausible side, but followers of mystery pictures should find it to their liking, since it keeps the head spy's identity concealed. Several persons are suspected, but it is not until towards the end that the guilty person is exposed. There is no romance or comedy:—

When Nazi saboteurs jeeringly warn the nation of new depredations through their radio Voice of Terror, the Intelligence Inner Circle summons Sherlock Holmes (Basil Rathbone), to help in the crisis. Holmes and Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce), his companion, are visited the first night their inquiry begins. A man dying from a knife wound enters their apartment. His last words leads Holmes on a hunt into the slums, where he enlists the aid of Kitty (Evelyn Ankers), sweetheart of the slain man. Kitty arouses her friends to help find the saboteurs. Holmes determines that the Voice was actually a phonograph record, transcribed in England and sent by plane to Germany for broadcasting. Summoned by Kitty to a waterfront hideaway, Holmes and Watson discover Meade (Thomas Gomez), the spies' leader. Holmes allows him to escape, then arranges with Kitty to befriend him. Pursuing new clues, Holmes observes an enemy plane making a landing near the estate of Sir Evan Barham (Reginald Denny), chief of the Council. He sees Meade hand the pilot a package as the plane takes off. Soon the Voice of Terror promises new destruction in northern England. Taking the Council members with him, Holmes goes to a point on the southern English coast where, with the aid of soldiers,

he captures Meade and his henchmen in an abandoned castle. Holmes then proves that the threat of destruction in northern England was a ruse to draw men and equipment away from the southern coast to aid an intended Nazi invasion. Sir Barham is uncovered as a Nazi spy. In an unguarded moment, Meade grabs a gun and kills Kitty. Holmes sadly starts home, but with him go the thanks of a nation.

Lynn Riggs wrote the screen play based on a story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Howard Benedict produced it, and John Rawlins directed it.

Not for children.

"One of Our Aircraft is Missing" with an all-English cast

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Dealing with the escape of a British bomber crew from Nazi-occupied Holland, this British-made melodrama is one of the better pictures of the war. Its dramatic force lies, not so much in the melodramatics, of which there is a substantial share, but in the methods employed by the friendly Dutch people in aiding them to make their escape; their tactics are a vivid and realistic portrayal of the subtle manner in which the subjugated peoples of Europe are hindering their captors. At no time does the film resort to ridicule of the Nazis, nor does it depict them as being brutal. Yet one is made to feel the iron rule under which the Dutch exist. The direction and the performances are first rate. It is a good mass entertainment and, although the players are little known in this country, word of mouth advertising should be of considerable help to the box-office:—

Hugh Williams, Eric Portman, Godfrey Tearle, Hugh Boardman, Bernard Miles, and Emrys Jones, crew of a British bomber, bail out of their damaged plane over Holland. When daylight comes, the men take count of themselves and discover that Jones was missing. They are found by three Dutch children, who, upon recognizing their R.A.F. uniforms, offer to take them to Pamela Brown, a school teacher who spoke English. After questioning them carefully, Pamela is convinced that they are not Nazis, sent by the Gestapo to test her loyalty. She plans to help them reach the coast where Googie Withers, a loyal Dutchwoman, would furnish them with a boat. Googie was trusted by the Germans, who believed her anti-British sentiments. Disguising the fliers as peasants, Pamela takes them to a church ten miles towards the coast. From there, others take them to the home of Burgomaster Hay Petrie. The following day Petrie leads them to Jones, who had been hidden by the kindly Dutch. The six men make their way to the coast, hidden in a peasant's ox-cart. At their destination, Googie's timely arrival halts a search of the cart by the Nazis. She succeeds in getting them into her home, and informs them that they would have to wait for an air raid so that they could escape during the confusion. When the raid comes, she leads them to the boat. The fliers manage to slip by the Nazi coast patrol and into the English Channel. Towards dawn, they sight a huge German rescue buoy, with a conning tower entrance. Inside they find and overpower two Nazi aviators, who had been shot down during the night. The fliers are rescued by two British torpedo boats, and return to England with two prisoners.

Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger wrote the story. Mr. Powell produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

Charter many months ago. Our unimaginative civilian is hazy about what these four freedoms are, and what they stand for. About the best explanation he has had is contained in a pamphlet issued by the office of War Information, which, according to Time Magazine, is "anonymous, but bearing the cool steel touch of Elmer Davis' pen." It is well worth reprinting:

"Nothing is for sale at bargain prices, nor will the house be built in three days with cheap labor. The declaration of the four freedoms is not a promise of a gift which the people will receive: it is a declaration of a design which the people themselves may execute."

FREEDOM OF SPEECH. "Free government is the most realistic kind of government for it not only assumes that a man has something on his mind, but concedes his right to say it. It permits him to talk—not without fear of contradiction, but without fear of punishment.

"The first condition of free speech is that the individual have something to say. Literacy is a prerequisite of free speech and gives it point. Denied education, denied information, suppressed or enslaved, people grow sluggish; their opinions are hardly worth the high privilege of release. Similarly, those who live in terror or in destruction, even though no specific control is placed on their speech, are as good as gagged. There can be no people's rule unless there is talk . . . words, ideas, in a never ending stream, from the enduring wisdom of the great and the good to the puniest thought troubling the feeblest brain. All are listened to, all add up to something and we call it the rule of the people."

FREEDOM OF RELIGION. "It was not their stomachs but their immortal souls which brought the first settlers to America's shores, and they prayed before they ate. . . . The democratic guarantee of freedom of worship is not in the nature of a grant—it is in the nature of an admission. It is the state admitting that the spirit soars in illimitable regions beyond the collectors of customs.

"Today the struggle of man's spirit is against new and curious shackles . . . a seven days' wonder, a new child of tyranny—a political region in which the leader of the state becomes, himself, an object of worship and reverence. This Nazi freak must fail, if only because men are not clods, because the spirit does live."

FREEDOM FROM WANT. "The proposal that want be abolished from this world would be pretentious, or even ridiculous, were it not for two important recent discoveries: that men now possess the technical ability to produce in great abundance the necessities of daily life, a revolutionary and quite unprecedented condition on earth; and that the earth is one planet indivisible, that one man's hunger is every man's hunger. . . . A hungry man in Cambodia is a threat to the well-fed of Duluth.

"Freedom from want is freedom from mass unemployment, plus freedom from penalty for those unable to work. We state these things as 'right'—not because the world owes any man a living, but because, unless a man succeeds in filling primary needs, his only development is backward and downward, his only growth malignant, and his last resource war.

"Freedom from want is neither a conjurer's trick nor a madman's dream. The earth has never known

it, nor anything approaching it. But free men do not accept the defeatist notion that it never will."

FREEDOM FROM FEAR. "Aggressive war, sudden armed attack, secret police, these must be forever circumvented. . . . Force can be eliminated as a means of political action only if it be opposed with an equal or greater force—which is economic and moral and is backed by police power.

"The first move to free people from fear is to achieve a peaceable world which has been deprived of its power to destroy itself. This can only be accomplished by disarming the aggressors and keeping them disarmed. Last time we were disarmed, but they were not prevented from rearming. This time they will be disarmed in truth."

These doctrines, said the OWI, "form the good granite ledge on which the United Nations propose to raise their new world after victory."

I believe that this explanation of the four freedoms is by far the best. But our unimaginative civilian is not one to get the full significance of these words—assuming, of course, that he has had the patience to read them after getting through with the headlines and pictures in his newspaper.

That is where we, of the motion picture industry, come in. Using the artistry we have at our command, we must dramatize the facts through narration and depiction on the screen. Our unimaginative civilian will then learn not only what the four freedoms are, but what they mean.

When we have accomplished this, we would have done our government a great service, for, to repeat Mr. Atkinson's words, we would have brought to our unimaginative civilian "order out of contemporary chaos and strengthened loyalty to the principles of our side."

MOBILIZING OUR "KID POWER"

Having advocated in a recent issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS that the industry mobilize our "kid power" for the purpose of collecting scrap materials, I was indeed pleased to learn that the officials of the Conservation Division of the War Production Board contemplate organizing thirty million children to stage a friendly invasion of American homes in search of these materials.

It will be an all-out effort, under the guidance of local school boards, in which it is planned that children conduct a systematic, thorough, house-to-house canvass.

Do what you can to cooperate with the school authorities in your locality to help make this drive successful. The good will that you will gain is of inestimable value.

NEXT WEEK'S HARRISON'S REPORTS WILL BE MAILED LATE

Your copy of next week's issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS will reach you one or two days late. The reason for it is that Warner Brothers is trade-showing a block-of-five next Thursday and Friday and I want to include the reviews in that issue.

Although not definitely set, 20th Century-Fox, too, may tradeshow five pictures on those days.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1942

No. 38

HERE AND THERE

BY ALL MEANS BOOK "The Battle of Midway," the official U. S. Navy picture, released through the War Activities Committee and distributed by 20th Century-Fox.

This is not an ordinary war short. Photographed in color by Lieutenant Commander John Ford, it is a thrilling two-reel account of the actual attack on Midway by the Japanese, and it is undoubtedly the most impressive and dramatic bit of footage yet to be shown about the war.

Play it in connection with the bond drive; it will help your sales considerably. And do not hesitate to publicize it, or to give it top billing. There is more in this short than in many a feature that will appear on the same bill.

A BOW IN THE GENERAL direction of Paramount for its wise decision to release "Wake Island" at no advance in admission prices, regardless of the fact that the picture has been acclaimed by public and critics alike, and is doing smash box-office business in its opening engagement.

Because of the picture's timeliness and of the fighting spirit that it will impart to those who view it, Paramount desires to obtain for it the widest distribution in the shortest possible time.

Recently, M. A. Rosenberg, President of National Allied, sent a letter to Barney Balaban protesting an advance in admission prices, if contemplated, and appealed to him to make the picture available on the usual terms. Mr. Rosenberg's fear of an increased admission policy was aroused by Balaban's including in a publicized letter to William Randolph Hearst a statement that the picture had been completed at a cost of nearly one million dollars.

I do not know if Mr. Rosenberg's letter has prompted the decision by Paramount, but both are to be congratulated: Paramount for its wise and patriotic decision, and Rosenberg for his being alert to a harmful practice.

RECENTLY A REVIEWER friend of mine on another trade paper dropped into a local movie house to review Monogram's "Enemy Roundup."

After seeing this picture, he was quite positive that his paper had covered it in Hollywood and had published a review. Yet a thorough search of his files failed to disclose the review.

Fortunately, he mentioned this to me before writing his review, and I saved him his labor by informing him that the picture he had seen was "Hillbilly Blitzkrieg," the title under which it was released in every state but New York, where the title is "Enemy Roundup." My friend thanked me, but he was indignant at the waste of his time.

I wonder what he would have said if he were not a reviewer but an ordinary patron, had paid an admission to see this picture elsewhere, under the title "Hillbilly Blitzkrieg," and then paid another admission to see it again, because the different title indicated that it was a picture he had not seen! He would have said that the exhibitor was a faker.

No matter which title you exhibit this picture under, the practice is harmful and it cannot do you or your fellow-exhibitors any good.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN INC., LTD.
 7210 Santa Monica Blvd.
 Los Angeles, California

September 11, 1942.

Mr. P. S. Harrison
 1270 Sixth Avenue
 New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

My attention has been called to an article in HARRISON'S REPORTS under the heading, "Lowell Mellett Gives Gold-

wyn a Lesson," in which it is stated that "Mr. Lowell Mellett . . . ordered United Artists to withdraw from circulation Samuel Goldwyn's "The Real Glory."

As I am sure it is your intention to be completely fair in your conclusions and comments, I think you would like to have the facts in the case.

Mr. Mellett has at no time, to our knowledge, issued any instructions that the picture be withdrawn. Mr. Goldwyn withdrew the picture of his own volition, as you may verify with the United Artists sales department.

I am attaching copies of letters to Mr. Goldwyn, one from Mr. Mellett, and one from His Excellency, Manuel Quezon, which will further confirm the above.

In view of the damaging misrepresentation given the facts, I hope you will find it possible to bring the true circumstances to the attention of your readers.

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM HERBERT,
 Director of Publicity.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
 OF THE PHILIPPINES

Washington, D. C.
 August 27, 1942.

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn
 7210 Santa Monica Blvd.
 Los Angeles, California

My dear Mr. Goldwyn:

I am more than thankful to you for your decision taken upon your own initiative, that "The Real Glory" was not appropriate for distribution. Indeed, I should have known, having learned of your fairness and patriotism, that on seeing again the picture you would come to that conclusion. In any event, please accept my heartfelt thanks.

Very sincerely yours,

s/ MANUEL L. QUEZON

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
 Washington

August 27, 1942.

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn
 7210 Santa Monica Blvd.
 Los Angeles, California

Dear Sam:

I am very happy to hear that you are withdrawing THE REAL GLORY on your own motion, and am sure that President Quezon will be even happier.

Best regards to you,

s/ LOWELL MELLETT,
 Chief,
 Bureau of Motion Pictures.

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
 Washington

September 1, 1942.

Mr. P. S. Harrison
 1270 Sixth Avenue
 New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I appreciate your note concerning the withdrawal of THE REAL GLORY, but it is only fair to state that Mr. Goldwyn acted very quickly in the matter when protests from various sources were brought to his attention.

Very sincerely yours,

LOWELL MELLETT
 Chief,
 Bureau of Motion Pictures.

"Hillbilly Blitzkrieg" with Bud Duncan and Edgar Kennedy

(Monogram, August 14; time, 62 min.)

This sequel to "Private Snuffy Smith," which is released in the State of New York as "Enemy Round-up," is so bad, that it is a sheer waste of film. The direction, the acting, the story, and the dialogue is amateurish, and your patrons will probably squirm in their seats—provided, of course, that they will have the patience to sit through the picture. It is doubtful whether even children will show more than a passing interest in it. It will take more than a timely title to help it:—

Sergeant Gatling (Edgar Kennedy) and Snuffy Smith (Bud Duncan) are detailed to a lodge in the Smokey Mountains to guard a rocket invention that the government was interested in. Snuffy learns that half of the invention belonged to Barney Google (Cliff Nazzaro), his old friend, who needed \$500 to complete it. Present at the lodge are a few spies posing as vacationists. Barney arranges a race between Spark Plug and an army mule, and bets the spies his half of the invention against their \$500. Snuffy helps Barney win by slowing up the army mule. The spies decide to blow up the invention,—a rocket ship worked by remote control. They enter the barn where the ship was kept, but are seen by Gatling and some soldiers. Meanwhile Snuffy hides in the ship to get out of Gatling's way. In the ensuing fight, the pulling of a lever sets the rocket in motion, and away it goes with Snuffy aboard. During the fight the men fall against different levers, causing the rocket to do many tricks. It is finally brought down, and Government men, who had watched the manœuvres, agree that it had passed the test. Snuffy crawls out disheveled but happy, and the spies are captured.

Based on the comic strip by Billy De Beck, Ray S. Harris wrote the screen play. Edward Groos produced it, and Ray Mack directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"White Cargo" with Hedy Lamarr, Walter Pidgeon and Richard Carlson

(MGM, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

This drama, which is based on the famous stage play of the same name is extremely sexy. The direction and the performances are very good, but the story is sordid; it deals with a young Englishman, on a tropic rubber plantation, who degenerates because of his love for an unscrupulous native girl. It becomes unpleasant to watch a man abase himself for a worthless woman. None of the characters is appealing. Many of the situations are quite suggestive, and the "kiddies" best be kept away. Picture-goers who enjoy seeing Hedy Lamarr will see plenty; her "lurong" costume is most "revealing." The popularity of the stars assures, no doubt, good box-office returns. In 1930, a British company produced the same story:—

At a rubber station in Africa, Walter Pidgeon, a hard-bitten overseer, is displeased with the way Bramwell Fletcher, his assistant, had deteriorated. Fletcher, sick in mind and body, bids goodbye to Frank Morgan, kind-hearted but drunken doctor, and to Henry O'Neill, missionary for the territory. The river boat that picks him up brings also Richard Carlson to replace him. Despite the cynical comments of Pidgeon, Carlson is determined not to become like Fletcher. He sets out with Pidgeon to learn his duties. Pidgeon warns him to keep clear of Hedy Lamarr, a beautiful native girl who enjoyed a reputation as a temptress. One day, Hedy visits Carlson at his bungalow. She is caught by Pidgeon's native policemen, and is banished from the territory. Langford is soon faced with futility when his orders are ignored by the natives. Gradually, his decay begins. Hedy comes back. Fearing lest Pidgeon catch her again, Carlson sends her away. She returns after two months. He decides to marry her, despite the pleas of Pidgeon, O'Neill and Morgan. O'Neill cannot refuse to wed them, for he reveals that she is a white woman. Carlson becomes ill with fever. Displeased with her marriage, Hedy attempts to kill him. Pidgeon catches her in the act of giving poison to Carlson. When she denies that it is poison, Pidgeon forces her to drink it herself. She runs into the jungle and falls writhing to the ground. Carlson is sent home, and Pidgeon once more assumes the task of breaking in a new man.

Leon Gordon wrote the screen play, Victor Saville produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. Included in the cast are Reginald Owen, Andy Clyde and others.

Definitely not for children.

"Counter Espionage" with Warren William

(Columbia, Sept. 3; time, 71 min.)

A fair addition to "The Lone Wolf" series of program melodramas. This time the action takes place in London, and espionage is the theme. As in most of the other pictures, Warren William is again a suspect and faced with the problem of proving his innocence. This he does in his usual adroit manner. The story is, of course, far-fetched; but since the action is fast, holds one in suspense, and is fairly exciting, one's interest is held to a fair degree. There is some comedy, and an incidental romance:—

Stanley Logan, head of British Intelligence, discusses with Morton Lowry and Leslie Denison, his assistants, the necessity of cleaning out a Nazi spy ring operating in London. As Denison leaves to meet Hillary Brooke, Logan's daughter and his fiancée, he is knocked unconscious by Forrest Tucker, a spy, and thrown into an automobile. Logan's safe is rifled and important plans stolen. Logan calls Scotland Yard. Inspector Matthew Boulton and Detectives Thurston Hall and Tom Stevenson, his New York guests, discover a clue indicating that Warren William, The Lone Wolf, was the thief. William is arrested, but manages to escape. He is contacted by Tucker, who offers to buy the plans. William is blindfolded and taken to the headquarters of Kurt Katch, head of the spy ring. There he finds Denison imprisoned. William strikes a bargain and agrees to bring the plans to Katch. When Logan is killed in an air raid, Lowry, actually a Nazi spy, learns from Logan's private papers that William was a special British agent. He destroys this proof, and informs Katch. Through clever deduction, William locates Katch's headquarters, which was beneath a cafe. Anticipating trouble, he sends Eric Blore, his butler, to fetch Billy Bevan, an air raid warden, whose life he had just saved. Soon after entering the cafe, William is followed by Miss Brooke. She threatens to turn him over to the police, but, before she can act, both are seized by German agents, posing as waiters, and taken to Katch. William is forced to turn over the plans, which Katch transmits to Berlin by a wire photo apparatus. The detectives arrive at the cafe and they, too, are apprehended. With a cry, "Unexploded bomb!" Bevan and Blore enter the cafe, causing confusion. The two men make their way to Katch's headquarters and capture the spies. Denison verifies that William was a British agent, and William calmly informs the detectives that the transmitted plans were faked.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"My Sister Eileen" with Rosalind Russell and Brian Aherne

(Columbia, Sept. 30; time, 97 min.)

An excellent comedy. It is a laugh-riot from the moment it starts right to the very end, where the "Three Stooges" make an appearance. Expertly cast, the performers play their respective parts with zest. Most of the action takes place in a Greenwich Village basement apartment, formerly occupied by a lady of loose morals, and presently occupied by two small-town sisters who had come to New York to seek their fortune. Life in the apartment is one of utter confusion. Strangers enter at all hours, drunkards peep through the window, numerous men are "on the make" for the younger sister, dynamite blasts for a new subway cause the apartment to tremble, and the policeman on the beat suspects the sisters' virtue. The dialogue is extremely funny and sophisticated, and some of the situations are quite risqué. The picture deviates little from the play of the same name that is still enjoying a successful run on Broadway. The popularity of the players and the film's own merit should make it one of the top box-office hits of the new season:—

Arriving in New York to try their luck, Rosalind Russell, a writer, and Janet Blair, her younger sister and amateur actress, lease an apartment from George Tobias, an eccentric artist. After an eventful night, the girls learn that the apartment was once occupied by June Havoc, a "clairvoyant." Rosalind sets out the following day to sell her stories. She meets Brian Aherne, editor of a magazine. To win an argument, Aherne has her tell Clyde Fillmore, the publisher, that his magazine was outmoded. Fillmore orders her out. Returning home, Rosalind learns that, socially, Janet had not done so badly. That evening they are visited by a drugstore manager, a theatrical reporter, a suspicious policeman, the "clairvoyant," and an air-raid warden. In the midst of this confusion, Aherne arrives to discuss Rosa-

lind's stories. She faints. Encouraged by Aherne, Rosalind writes a new story, despite the problem of housing Gordon Jones, a professional football-player neighbor, who slept in the kitchen because his mother-in-law was visiting his wife. Against his publisher's orders, Aherne prints Rosalind's story, and then resigns. Meanwhile Rosalind's troubles mount. Six Portuguese Cadets follow her home. When they see Janet, they force her to lead a conga dance. This lands them and Janet in jail for disturbing the peace. To add to her troubles, Rosalind's father and grandmother arrive for a visit. But everything turns out for the best: Janet is released from jail with profuse apologies from the cadets' captain, and Aherne and his publisher arrive with a check for Rosalind and a request for more stories. Aherne and Rosalind plan to marry, and the publisher promises to help Janet with her career.

Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov wrote the screen play, Max Gordon produced it, and Alexander Hall directed it. In the cast are Allan Joslyn, Donald MacBride, Elizabeth Patterson, Grant Mitchell, Richard Quine and others.

Strictly for adults.

"Phantom Killer" with Dick Purcell and Joan Woodbury

(Monogram, October 2; time, 60 min.)

This program murder-mystery melodrama has more entertainment values than many another like film produced by major studios. Although most spectators will guess the solution of the crimes accurately, one remains deeply interested in the efforts of the district attorney to prove his murder charge against a reputable citizen, who masquerades as a deaf and dumb mute, and who manages to establish an air-tight alibi, through reputable witnesses. It is a fast-moving film, capably directed and acted, with sufficient comedy and romance to satisfy most picture-goers:—

John Hamilton, a prominent deaf and dumb citizen, is identified by Mantan Moreland, a negro janitor, as having been at the scene of the murder of a finance company owner. He is brought to trial by Dick Purcell, assistant district attorney, but his iron-clad alibi causes his acquittal. As a result of his poorly presented case, Purcell loses his job. Positive that Hamilton was guilty, Purcell determines to track him down. Joan Woodbury, Purcell's sweetheart and a newspaper reporter, is assigned to write up Hamilton's life. Purcell receives a mysterious telephone call from Elliot Sullivan, who offers damaging evidence against Hamilton, but before he can complete the appointment Sullivan is murdered. Sullivan's mother identifies Hamilton as the killer and also confirms the suspicion that he can hear and speak. Hamilton again frustrates the police by proving that he was being interviewed by Joan at the time of the murder. In the presence of Hamilton, Police Lieutenant Kenneth Harlan tells Purcell that Hamilton seemed perturbed when anyone neared the grand piano in his home. That night, Harlan, too, is murdered. Warned by Purcell of the piano clue, Joan visits Hamilton the following night to continue the interview. She plays a tune on the piano and, upon striking a certain key, a secret door slides open revealing Hamilton's twin brother, really a deaf and dumb mute. Outside the house Purcell and Police Sergeant Warren Hymer hear Joan's screams. Breaking into the house, they rescue Joan and capture Hamilton. He confesses that he and his brother were able to commit the crimes by not publicizing the fact that they were twins.

Karl Brown wrote the screen play, A. W. Hackel produced it, and William Beaudine directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"The Moon and Sixpence" with Herbert Marshall and George Sanders

(United Artists, no rel. date set; time, 87 min.)

Although this is an intelligent drama, with a fine production and good acting, it has a limited appeal; it is only for the intelligentsia. As a novel, "The Moon and Sixpence" is a meritorious work, but for adaptation to the screen it does not possess the ingredients that make for a good entertainment. The theme is one of bitterness, and the hero is without character. He breaks up his home, leaving his wife and two children to shift for themselves. He is ungrateful, in that he steals the wife of the only man who befriended him; and he causes that woman to commit suicide when he leaves her after living with her for two years. Moreover, his contracting leprosy, dying from that disease, is repulsive. With the exception of Steve Geray, as the Dutch painter

who befriends the hero, none of the characters is sympathetic. Even Geray shows weak character; he is depicted as groveling at the feet of his wife. For example, the hero's wife believing her husband had left her for another woman, decides never to grant him a divorce, but when she learns that he had left her only because of his desire to paint, she reverses her decision, because she deems it an unworthy reason. The film follows the book faithfully, and the story is told by means of narration and flashbacks, with Herbert Marshall, the narrator, portraying the role of an author retracing the life of the hero. It is George Sanders who has the important role, and his performance leaves nothing to be desired. The popularity of the novel and the publicity the picture is sure to receive, because of its controversial nature, may be of considerable help to the box-office:—

George Sanders, a seemingly commonplace man, deserts his wife and children, leaving them destitute, and goes to Paris to study art. Steve Geray, a Dutch painter, takes up with Sanders and recognizes his genius. But Sanders is brutally indifferent to him, as he is to all other people. Despite this, Geray calls on Sanders to invite him to his home for Christmas dinner and finds him dangerously ill. He takes the ungrateful man home and nurses him back to health. Paying him back with ingratitude, Sanders steals Doris Dudley, Geray's wife. After two years, Sanders tires of her, and she commits suicide. Sanders is unmoved by this tragedy. He makes his way to the island of Tahiti, where he finds a place that leaves him free to devote himself to his work. He marries Eleana Verdugo, a native girl, whose devotion and love brings out the art within him. With this happiness comes the fulfillment of his ambition to paint. After several years, he contracts leprosy and dies. In accordance with his wishes, his wife sets fire to their cottage and burns all his paintings along with the cottage. After his death, Sanders is acclaimed a master.

Albert Lewin wrote the screen play and directed it. David L. Loew produced it. The cast includes Florence Bates, Eric Blore, Albert Basserman, and others.

Strictly adult entertainment.

"The Omaha Trail" with James Craig and Pamela Brown

(MGM, no release date set; time, 61 min.)

A fair program western, with a historical angle. The action takes place during the early days of the west, when ox trains were the only means of transportation, and the story deals with the efforts of the ox-train owners to prevent the expansion of the railroad in the Omaha territory. It has a good share of fast action, comedy, and romance. An exciting sequence is towards the end, where the hero drives off a band of Indians with live steam from a locomotive. The direction and the performances are good:—

Dean Jagger and Howard da'Silva, ox train owners, have a race to Jefferson City. Jagger purposely leads da'Silva's train into a quicksand-filled river bed, causing him to lose the race. In Jefferson City, James Craig, boss of da-Silva's outfit, is attracted to Pamela Blake, da-Silva's sister, only to learn that she was engaged to Jagger. Edward Ellis, seeking transportation to Omaha for his steam engine, with which he plans to open the first railroad line in that country, approaches Craig. The ox train owners had refused to take him, fearing that the railroad would end their freight business. Craig offers to undertake the job. Attempting to buy a wagon train, Craig discovers that Jagger had bought up all the available oxen. Beaten, Ellis agrees that Jagger and da-Silva take the job at an enormous price, little suspecting that they planned to wreck the locomotive before reaching Omaha. At Ellis' insistence, Craig is hired as wagon boss. Pamela goes along, since she and Jagger planned to marry in Omaha. Jagger and Henry Morgan, his henchman, attempt to wreck the engine, but Craig succeeds in saving it from destruction. Morgan needlessly kills two friendly Indians, and the entire tribe sets out to ambush the wagon train. After a few brushes with the Indians, Ross and his henchmen kill da'Silva and, taking away their guns, leave Pamela, Craig, Ellis, and Donald Meek, the engineer, to the mercy of the Indians. When the Indians attack, Craig drives them off by letting loose live steam from the engine. Craig succeeds in bringing the locomotive to Omaha, where he goes in search of Jagger and Morgan. In a gun fight he kills them both. Julie realizes her love for him.

Jesse Lasky, Jr., and Huo Butler wrote the screen play, Jack Chertok produced it, and Edward Buzzell directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Hard Way" with Ida Lupino, Joan Leslie and Dennis Morgan

(Warner Bros., no rel. date set; time, 108 min.)

This interesting drama, with popular music, has been given a good production and it is helped considerably by competent direction and performances, but the story is unpleasant. It revolves around a ruthless woman, who, by her domineering and cunning ways, compels her younger sister to act against her will, causing much unhappiness to her and to others. It is difficult to sympathize with the younger sister, for she is a weakling. She allows her sister to ruin her marriage, resulting in the husband committing suicide. The ending, too, is depressing; it pits sister against sister. The comedy relief is negligible:—

Disgruntled at living in poverty in a grimy Pennsylvania town, Ida Lupino quarrels with Roman Bohnen, her husband, because of his inability to buy Joan Leslie, her young sister, a graduation dress. That evening Joan meets Jack Carson and Dennis Morgan, vaudeville actors appearing in a local theatre. Carson thinks that Joan has great talent, and falls in love with her. Sensing an opportunity to better herself and Joan, Ida induces Carson to marry Joan and give her a place in the act. Ida leaves her husband to travel with the act. Morgan dislikes Ida, for he recognizes in her a calculating woman. So that Joan would be given more time on stage, Ida instigates a quarrel between Carson and Morgan, causing them to break. Joan and Carson continue the act. In New York, Ida becomes friendly with Paul Cavanaugh, a producer, and induces him to catch the act. He offers Joan a job, but not Carson. Having separated the couple, Ida begins to build Joan's career with cold, relentless cunning. She soon becomes a musical comedy star. Meanwhile Carson works in small-time vaudeville circuits. He begs Joan to return to him, but under Ida's influence, she refuses. Carson commits suicide. Joan is broken-hearted, but Ida is glad that he is out of the way. Joan continues to star in musicals, and soon Ida plans for her to do a serious play. She deserts Cavanaugh, their patron. At a night club, Morgan, now a famous band leader, meets Joan. He persuades her to leave Ida and join him on a vacation. A love affair develops and they plan to marry. But again Ida influences Joan and she leaves Morgan. Tugged by regret for Carson, love for Morgan, and hatred for Ida, Joan cannot act. Her play is a failure. Morgan consoles Joan, and both quarrel with Ida. Dejected, Ida drowns herself.

Daniel Fuchs and Peter Viertel wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and Vincent Sherman directed it. Included in the cast are Faye Emerson, Gladys George, Julie Bishop and others.

Morally unobjectionable.

"George Washington Slept Here" with Jack Benny and Ann Sheridan

(Warner Bros., no rel. date set; time, 92 min.)

Considering the drawing power of Jack Benny and Ann Sheridan, and the fame the play gained as a Broadway stage hit, this picture should do good business. It is a pretty good comedy, patterned in a manner that does justice to Jack Benny's type of humor. The story lacks a substantial plot, but some of the dialogue is bright, and several of the situations extremely comical. Occasionally, the comedy is of the slapstick variety. The surprise of the film is Percy Kilbride; his performance, as the caretaker, adds much to the comedy:

Jack Benny becomes indignant when Ann Sheridan, his wife, buys an old broken-down house in Pennsylvania, because legend had it that Washington once slept there. With the house in complete disrepair, it is more than Benny can bear when Percy Kilbride, the caretaker, informs him that the water well was dry and that a new one would have to be dug. On moving day, Benny encounters Charles Dingle, his neighbor, who does not permit him to use the road leading to his home, because it trespasses on his property. Benny is forced to drive over the countryside. Harvey Stephens, a friendly neighbor and president of the County Historical Society, disillusions Benny and Ann when he informs them that it was, not Washington, but Benedict

Arnold who had slept in their home. In a few months the home is completely remodeled, although Kilbride is still drilling for water. Douglas Croft, Ann's mean nephew, arrives for a visit, and is followed by Charles Coburn, a rich uncle, who demands and obtains every attention. One night Benny becomes suspicious when Ann and Stephens are out together until past midnight. They quarrel, but the following morning Ann informs Benny that she and Stephens had uncovered an old map with an original deed showing that their property went 64 feet into Dingle's property. Dingle informs them that it does not matter, since he intends to foreclose on their property unless they meet the \$5000 due within one week. All their money having been spent on the repairs, Ann and Benny appeal to Coburn for help. He admits that he went broke in 1929 and that he was living off relatives who expected an inheritance. The situation is saved when, in an old boot dug up by Kilbride, Ann's dog finds a letter addressed to the Continental Congress by George Washington. The letter's value more than pays for the mortgage.

Everett Freeman wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and William Keighley directed it. The cast includes William Tracy, Hattie McDaniel, Joyce Reynolds and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Young Mr. Pitt" with Robert Donat

(20th Century-Fox, October 20; time, 103 min.)

Produced in Britain, this biography of William Pitt, Jr., England's great Prime Minister during the Napoleonic wars, is a very fine drama, and should please American audiences. It is a costly production, and the settings of the period have been reproduced faithfully. The odd part about this picture is that it parallels England's present struggle with the Axis closely, and the internal strife that Pitt had to overcome has its counterpart in the issues that Winston Churchill has been and still is fighting. Robert Donat is excellent as Pitt, and the supporting players are first-rate. The speeches that Pitt makes in the House of Commons during debates are inspiring; they are authentic and just as timely today as they were then. The human interest and the sincerity with which Donat portrays Pitt make this an entertainment that should appeal to all types of audiences. The romantic interest is mild:—

The story begins in 1783: England is a third rate power, George III is on the throne, and the coalition government of Charles James Fox (Robert Morley) is unpopular throughout the land. Fox's government is defeated, and William Pitt (Robert Donat), a young man of twenty-four, is appointed Prime Minister. Despite Fox's opposition, Pitt wins the country to his side. Under his leadership, Britain rebuilds and becomes a first rate power. Although a man of peace, Pitt resists the European aggression that follows the French Revolution. In 1793 France declares war on Britain. As the years of endless war roll on, the people become war-weary and restless. Politicians, led by Fox, urge a truce, but Pitt remains firm. He sees the real menace of the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte, and realizes that only the complete defeat of the enemy will bring peace. Pitt, never a healthy man, weakens in strength. He abandons his mild romance with Phyllis Calvert to serve his country better. Overriding Admiralty opposition, he appoints Lord Nelson (Stephen Haggard) in command of the fleet. The French fleet eludes Nelson, and Pitt is the object of many jibes. When Nelson defeats the French at the battle of the Nile, England goes wild with victory fever, but the war continues and Pitt's status declines. Refusing to bow to a truce with Napoleon, Pitt resigns. The new government signs a truce with Napoleon, and England relaxes. But before long, Napoleon breaks the truce and war is renewed. The country clamours for Pitt, and he is returned to power. Even Fox offers assistance. Britain rearms under Pitt's dynamic leadership. Once more he sends Nelson into battle and, at Trafalgar, Nelson defeats Napoleon. Pitt, now forty-five, climaxes his career with a stirring speech at a victory banquet.

Sidney Gilliat and Frank Launder wrote the screen play, Edward Black produced it, and Carol Reed directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service

Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1942

No. 39

END OF DISTRIBUTOR-EXHIBITOR COLLABORATION

At this writing, it appears as if the decision reached by Paramount and Warners not to participate, financially or otherwise, in the affairs of UMPI has sounded the death knell for that committee.

When the end of UMPI comes about—and there seems to be little doubt that it will be soon—it will mean the removal of an ideal medium by which exhibitors and distributors could have settled their differences in amicable fashion, instead of at sword-point, and at a savings of many thousands of dollars that would otherwise be spent in legal wrangling.

The abandonment of UMPI would be deplorable, for in the maintenance of this organization lies the hopes of the industry to stave off government regulation of the business.

Apparently, Thurman Arnold's rejection of the new selling plan, which was considered by many the main cog in UMPI's machinery, has been deemed reason enough to abandon further attempts at unity. This is a short-sighted view, for the new selling plan, though of prime importance, was but a small part of one point in the five-point plan laid down when UMPI was formed, and it certainly was not the only benefit that the industry hoped to gain.

Still unfinished on the UMPI agenda is the putting into effect of a plan for conciliation of individual complaints, of the investigation of territorial grievances, and of the formulation of a plan that would make arbitration under the Consent Decree more effective. This is a very important program, and one that the industry can ill afford to abandon.

As long as there will be buying and selling of pictures—and it does not matter under which plan they will be bought or sold—there are bound to be abuses. Some of these abuses are: higher film rentals, a greater number of percentage pictures at higher percentage figures, preferred playing time, increased admission prices that antagonize the public, extended runs, and the forcing of shorts, newsreels and trailers. Of the latter, so long as the salesman feels that his increased sales will better his chances of promotion, he will try to compel an exhibitor to buy the shorts before making a deal for the features, no matter what orders he is given by the home office. And if he produces results, the home office will probably wink at the practice. In addition, there is the problem of film-rental adjustments due to the shifting populations throughout the country.

Unless we ourselves set up the necessary machinery to police and settle these abuses, the strife that will follow is sure to invite government regulation of our affairs. And since none of us want that to happen, a suitable conciliation system is essential. But, with

UMPI doomed to oblivion, the setting up of such machinery seems to be a forlorn hope.

There is doubt that the language of Thurman Arnold used in his rejection of the sales plan did much to dampen enthusiasm for the continuance of this body, but his action did not in any way wreck its main purpose—unity. The wreck of the unity movement falls squarely on the shoulders of Paramount and Warners because of their withdrawal from UMPI. By their action, they have left a doubt as to their sincerity in the movement up to this point.

UMPI has proved that it was possible for opposite factions within the industry to get together and make an honest effort to improve intra-industry relations. When intelligent men meet face to face across a table a spirit of good fellowship is bound to prevail, and in such an atmosphere one is more sympathetic to the other fellow's problems.

Now that the movement is doomed, storm clouds are gathering. Allied's Caravan, which is preparing for a fight against higher film rentals and other abuses, is receiving unanimous support from exhibitors in the territories that they have visited. It will be a determined fight and it might end up with the government stepping in to establish order out of chaos.

If and when this happens, it is the distributors that will be to blame, for it was the dissension within their ranks, and not the ranks of the exhibitors, that caused the death of unity.

Recognition is due Bill Rodgers for his earnest efforts in behalf of unity. As chairman of UMPI, he discharged his duties with such fairness that he commands the respect of the entire industry. It is indeed to his credit that UMPI lasted as long as it did.

THE BOND DRIVE

There are but a few days left before the industry's bond drive will come to a close, and the Treasury Department figures indicate that we have fallen below, not only our self-set quota, but also the one set by the government.

No one can deny that we have worked hard to make this drive a success, but if we are to gain our goal we must double, and even re-double, our efforts.

To the people in the Axis countries, we in America are known as the richest country in the world, and their leaders should like nothing better than to use as propaganda the fact that our government is having difficulties in securing financial support from its people. We must not give them this opportunity.

It is up to us to make the public aware that we are not in this war ankle-deep; we are in it over our heads, and every penny counts.

Go after the sales of war stamps and bonds with renewed efforts.

"Springtime in the Rockies" with Betty Grable and John Payne

(20th Century-Fox, Nov. 6; time, 91 min.)

Although this musical has a feather-weight story, the Technicolor, lavish settings, good comedy, gaiety, romance, and popular music make it an enjoyable mass entertainment. In addition to the drawing power of the stars, the box-office possibilities are enhanced by the presence of Harry James and his orchestra, whose music exerts a particular appeal to the "swingsters." The comedy is well handled by Edward Everett Horton, Charlotte Greenwood, and Carmen Miranda, with the latter provoking most of the laughter by her twisting of the English language, and by her singing of a popular tune in Spanish. The story revolves around show-folk, with the hero and heroine constantly at odds because of their romantic jealousies. The atmosphere is gay, the situations amusing, and the music tuneful:—

Betty Grable and John Payne, a singing and dancing team, break their engagement when she suspects him of philandering with other women. Betty joins Cesar Romero, her former dancing partner, and goes to a resort in the Canadian Rockies for an engagement. Drowning his sorrows at a bar, Payne is approached by Jackie Gleason, an actor's agent, with a contract for a new show. The contract, however, provided that he appear with Betty. Payne is not interested; none-the-less Gleason gives him plane tickets to the resort and gives Edward Everett Horton, the bartender, a good-sized tip to see that he makes the plane. The following day, Payne awakens in a room at the resort's hotel, bewildered at how he arrived there. He is further disturbed to learn that he had insisted that Horton come along as his valet, and that at a stop-over in Detroit he had hired Carmen Miranda as his secretary. He takes Carmen down to the lobby to arrange to send her home. But Betty passes by and notices him with his paternal arm around Carmen. He quickly senses that she is jealous and makes the most of the situation. In retaliation, Betty informs him that she intends to marry Romero. In the ladies' powder room, Betty learns from Carmen that there was nothing between herself and Payne. Betty taunts him by making love to Romero, but eventually they become reconciled and plan to marry. The following day Gleason arrives, and informs Betty that he knew Payne would get her to come back for the new show. Suspecting that Payne had romanced with her only because of the show, Betty becomes furious. During the mixup, the backers of the show lose their tempers and call off the deal. Carmen, Horton, and Charlotte Greenwood, Betty's friend, succeed in patching up the quarrel. When Carmen reveals that Horton was really a man of wealth, the others induce him to finance the show.

Walter Bullock and Ken Englund wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Irving Cummings directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"You Can't Escape Forever" with George Brent and Brenda Marshall

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 77 min.)

Effectively blending mystery, romance, and comedy, this fast-moving melodrama is pretty good program fare. The well worn theme—newspaperdom versus gangsterism—has been given a timely angle, in that the enterprising editor and the inevitable girl-reporter set out to track down a corrupt political boss dealing in black market activities. Although the story is far from original, it is consistently entertaining by reason of its fast action, suspenseful situations, and good comedy. The direction and the performances is good:—

George Brent, managing editor of the News Chronicle, assigns Brenda Marshall to cover the electrocution of Joseph Downing. Believing that Downing would gain a last minute reprieve because of his connection with Edward Ciannelli, a political boss, Brent readies an extra to that effect. His hunch is correct, but Brenda, who had fainted just before the execution, was not aware of the reprieve; she telephones a graphic account of the electrocution. As punishment, Brent compels her to write the Lonely Hearts column. When Erville Anderson, an eccentric reformer who had been working on an expose of Ciannelli, is found dead, Brent suspects Ciannelli and prints enough of his suspicions to put the paper in an embarrassing position when no substantiating evidence is found. The publisher demotes him, and compels him to write the Lonely Hearts column. Through a reader, Brent obtains a clue that leads him to a Lonely Hearts club managed by Gene Lockhart. He discovers that the club is a

"blind," from which Lockhart operates a black market in tires and sugar. He learns also that Lockhart is Ciannelli's cousin. Another clue leads him to Edith Barrett, the reformer's wife. Posing as a member of the gang, he draws from her an admission that she believed Lockhart had killed her husband to obtain a document that incriminated both Ciannelli and himself. With the aid of Brenda and Roscoe Karns, a photographer, Brent brings Lockhart and Ciannelli together, and overhears that the document had been buried with the reformer. They rush to the cemetery and secure the document, with Ciannelli and his henchmen in hot pursuit. Ciannelli almost catches them, but an army truck convoy cuts him off. The evidence contained in the document smashes Ciannelli's black market ring, and Brent gets back his job as managing editor.

Fred Niblo, Jr., and Hector Chevigny wrote the screen play, and Jo Graham produced it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"The Hidden Hand" with Craig Stevens and Elisabeth Fraser

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 67 min.)

If yours is a house that caters to horror picture fans, this melodrama is sure to whet their appetites. Every conceivable trick and situation long identified with horror pictures has been employed to give it an eerie atmosphere, and murders are committed so often that one fears the picture will run out of players before it comes to a close. The film is lacking in suspense, for one guesses in advance the twist that each situation will take. Obviously meant to be serious, one finds the proceedings amusing instead. It is suitable double-bill material for the smaller theatres:—

Milton Parsons, a mad killer, escapes from an insane asylum and is given refuge by Cecil Cunningham, his eccentric sister. She disguises the crazed man as her butler, and the following day invites her unprincipled nephews and their wives to spend the week end at her home, so that she might torment them with the fact that Elisabeth Fraser, her secretary, and not they, would inherit her fortune. Cecil's nephews and their wives include Roland Drew and Julie Bishop; Stuart Holmes and Ruth Ford; and Dr. Frank Wilcox, who is accompanied by Marian Hall, his nurse. After mysterious attempts on her life, Cecil suspects that one of her nephews had been trying to kill her. She arranges with Wilcox to give her a drug that would make it appear as if she were dead and, after her relatives have fought over her money, he was to restore her to consciousness with an antidote. Upon the "death" of Cecil, Craig Stevens, her attorney and Elisabeth's fiancée, informs the family that three-fourths of the estate had been left to Elisabeth, and that the other fourth had been hidden in the house, the finder to be the keeper. Wilcox decides not to revive Cecil. A deliberate clue leads Drew to a wheel-clock over a mantel. When he operates it, he falls through a trap-door and meets a watery death. Unable to control his murderous instincts, the maniac butler strangles the maid and the nurse. Shortly thereafter, Cecil makes an appearance. Suspecting that Wilcox would let her die, she had arranged with her brother to administer the antidote. She kills both Wilcox and Holmes. With all her evil relatives disposed of, Cecil plunges through the trap-door to her death. The police arrest the madman, as Elisabeth and Stevens leave the house of death.

Anthony Coldeway and Raymond Schrock wrote the screen play, and Ben Stoloff directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"The Man in the Trunk" with George Holmes, Raymond Walburn and Lynn Roberts

(20th Century-Fox, October 23; time, 70 min.)

A mildly entertaining program murder mystery melodrama, with comedy. The producer has drawn upon the "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" idea, in that the spirit of the victim helps to unravel the mystery surrounding his murder, but he cannot be seen or heard by the persons he helps. The story follows a routine mystery formula, with several persons suspected of the crime, and it is not until toward the finish that the guilty person is uncovered. The action moves along at a leisurely pace, and is at times slowed down by excessive dialogue. The mystery fans in the secondary theatres should find it to be acceptable double-bill entertainment:—

When the police discover in a swamp a skeleton, they believe it to be the bones of Raymond Walburn, a gambler, who had disappeared many years previously. Douglas Fow-

ley, an underworld character, is convicted and sentenced to die for the crime. George Holmes, his attorney, seeks to uncover new evidence. Following a tip, Holmes trails Arthur Loft, who had taken over Walburn's activities, to a warehouse where he sees him examining a trunk. Determined to examine the trunk's contents, Holmes switches tags with an unclaimed trunk being sent down for auction. Lynn Roberts, a chorus girl, outbids him for the trunk. He follows Lynn to her apartment and, explaining his interest, induces her to let him examine the contents. He discovers a human skeleton, and a derby hat with Walburn's initials. As both dash out to call the police, Walburn's ghost materializes from the trunk. A gay fellow, the ghost cannot be seen or heard. When the police arrive, they brand the "new evidence" as a publicity stunt, when Lynn poses for photographs. Holmes and Lynn determine to find the murderer and Walburn, curious to learn who had killed him, follows them. Numerous clues lead them to Joan Marsh, a burlesque queen; Theodore Von Eltz, Loft's partner; Milton Parsons, a psychoanalyst; Dorothy Peterson and J. Carrol Naish, owners of an antique shop; and Eily Malyon, Walburn's eccentric spinster sister—all had known Walburn, and their stories indicated that they knew the murderer. After many incidents, in which Von Eltz and Loft are mysteriously murdered, Naish confesses to the crime; he becomes hysterical when Walburn, unseen, raps the empty trunk from inside. With Fowley freed, Holmes and Lynn begin concentrating on each other.

John Larkin wrote the screen play, Walter Morosco produced it, and Malcolm St. Clair directed it.

Children might be horrified at the sight of the skeletons.

"Destination Unknown" with William Gargan and Irene Hervey

(Universal, Oct. 9; time, 60 min.)

A fair melodrama of program grade. With China as the background, the action takes place prior to the Pearl Harbor attack, and deals with a hunt by international spies for a clue to the St. Petersburg crown jewels. The story is routine, and the treatment according to formula. The best that can be said of it is that the action is fast moving and exciting in spots, and that the performances are adequate. There is some comedy and a romance:—

In Shanghai, Irene Hervey, a Dutch agent, attempts to learn the whereabouts of the hidden St. Petersburg jewels from Felix Basch, an Axis agent working for the Japs. When Basch becomes suspicious, Irene hurries to Colonel Charles Lung, and offers to sell her information about the jewels. Lung refuses to listen to her. Meanwhile William Gargan persists in forcing himself into Irene's affairs. He offers to help her ransack Basch's apartment. Unnoticed by Irene, Gargan finds a small clock containing a clue to the jewels. Both learn that their quarry was in Peking, and each board the same train. Basch, too, boards the train. In an attempt to elude the others, Irene leaves the train, but Basch follows and threatens to kill her. Gargan intervenes, and they leave Gargan bound and gagged. In Peking, Gargan contacts Olaf Hytten, who had the complement clue contained in the clock. Believing that Gargan was working for enemy forces, Irene arranges for his arrest. When she learns that he is an American flyer, friendly to the Chinese, she tries to effect his release. But Captain Turhan Bey, Japanese chief in Peking, refuses to release him. She seeks the aid of Hytten, but is confronted by Basch, who had caught up with her. The Axis agent is about to shoot her when Gargan, who had outwitted Bey, appears. He kills Basch, and both make their escape from the city, although hunted by Japanese troops.

Lynn Riggs and John Meehan, Jr. wrote the screen play, Marshall Grant produced it. The cast includes Keye Luke, Donald Stuart and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Lucky Legs" with Jinx Falkenburg and Kay Harris

(Columbia, October 1; time, 64 min.)

An ordinary program comedy-drama, with some dancing and music. In spite of the fact that the action is steady, it is difficult for one to remain interested in the proceedings, for the story is silly and tiresome, and the outcome is obvious. Moreover, the players mean little to the box-office. Its best outlet would be as a second feature in the neighborhood theatres:—

Jinx Falkenburg, a chorus girl, inherits one million dollars when "Herbert Dinwiddie," an elderly playboy, dies. Don

Bedlow, producer of the show in which she was appearing, induces her to back him in a new show, with herself as the star. Unknown to Jinx, the money inherited actually belonged to William Wright, a racketeer, who had entrusted the money to Dinwiddie, his bookkeeper. Wright is advised by Eddie Kane, his attorney, to in some way get a power-of-attorney over Jinx's funds. Meanwhile in Elmville, a small upstate town, Elizabeth Patterson and Adele Rowland, Dinwiddie's spinster sisters, who had been left \$10,000, retain Russel Hayden, a young attorney, to contest the will. The three leave for New York. By this time, Wright had visited Jinx, and representing himself as Dinwiddie's best friend, induced her to put her affairs in his hands. When Hayden calls to inform her that his clients would contest the will, she refers him to Wright. Hayden investigates Wright and, finding him to be a racketeer, gets out an injunction against disbursement of the estate. Unable to furnish Bedloe with money for the show, and fearing that her chorus girl friends will be out of work, Jinx offers to settle for \$25,000. Elizabeth is willing, but Adele is adamant. When Wright visits the sisters to get their cooperation in withdrawing the injunction, Elizabeth arranges for Wright to "kidnap" her, after which a tearful note to her sister is sure to get the latter to withdraw the injunction. Wright agrees and, as his share of the deal, sends Jinx the \$25,000. Wright's stupid henchmen kidnap the wrong sister, but, regardless, Adele signs. The night of the show, Hayden learns that Jinx was under twenty-one years of age. He informs Wright that the power-of-attorney she signed was illegal. When Wright gets nasty, Elizabeth has him arrested for kidnapping her sister. Hayden and Jinx plan to marry.

Stanley Rubin and Jack Hartfield wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Flying Tigers" with John Wayne and John Carroll

(Republic, October 8; time, 100 min.)

Very good! Republic comes to the fore with this well presented film extolling the American Volunteer Group, the airmen who fought for China against the Japanese, better known as the "Flying Tigers." The picture will appeal to the masses, not only because of its own merits, but because it glorifies a group of men who have endeared themselves to all freedom-loving people. The courageous spirit with which they fought, and the reverence and admiration of the Chinese people for them, has been caught by the camera vividly. The story, though formula, has human interest, comedy, and romance, and the direction and performances are fine. The air battles are spectacular and thrilling. It is definitely a box-office picture—one that would make any major studio feel proud:—

Seeking fliers to reinforce his men against overwhelming Jap odds, John Wayne, Squadron Leader of the "Flying Tigers," goes to Rangoon, where he finds Edmund MacDonald and John Carroll. MacDonald, in disrepute because of a flying accident that had proved fatal to a fellow flier, is given another chance after Mae Clarke, his wife, pleads with Wayne. Carroll, a cocky transport pilot, frankly admits that his only interest in joining the group was for the money he would collect for bagging Jap planes. Because of his egotism and his mercenary motive, he wins the ill will of his fellow fliers. He adds to his unpopularity by provoking a quarrel with MacDonald, who was earnestly trying to redeem himself. Shortly afterwards, MacDonald is killed in an air skirmish under circumstances that made it appear as if Carroll could have saved him. Actually, Carroll was unable to help him. Unknown to the others, he gives his bonus money to MacDonald's widow. One night, Carroll leaves the field against orders to keep a date with Anna Lee, Wayne's sweetheart. He fails to return in time to take over his scheduled flight duties, and Paul Kelly, an older flier grounded because of faulty vision, takes Carroll's place to cover his absence. Kelly is killed and, as a result, Wayne discharges Carroll from the squadron. Carroll persuades Wayne to give him another chance, and redeems himself by saving Wayne's life when the plane in which they attempt to bomb a Japanese supply train and a bridge catches fire. He pushes Wayne out of the plane, to safety. Taking the controls, Carroll sacrifices his life by diving headlong into the train, blowing it up.

Kenneth Gamet and Barry Trivers wrote the screen play, Edmund Grainger produced it, and David Miller directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Girl Trouble" with Joan Bennett and Don Ameche

(20th Century-Fox, October 9; time, 82 min.)

This fairly good comedy-farce should amuse most audiences even though the plot is quite obvious and one is able to foresee the outcome; but it is hardly strong enough to stand on its own as a single feature, and it will have to depend on the popularity of the stars for its box-office appeal. The comedy is provoked by Miss Bennett's masquerading as a maid, and accepting employment as such, when she subleases her Park Avenue apartment to a wealthy South American. His falling in love with her gives rise to many amusing situations. The production values are very good:—

When Joan Bennett learns from Alan Dinehart, her attorney, that she was bankrupt, she poses as a maid and leases her apartment to Don Ameche, a South American. Ameche attempts to obtain a two million dollar rubber contract from Frank Craven, a rubber millionaire, but fails when Craven proves more interested in antique firearms than in rubber. Ameche falls in disfavor with his employer when the newspapers erroneously report that he had completed the deal. Joan decides to help her depressed "boss." Meanwhile Helene Reynolds, Joan's "catty" friend, becomes aware of Ameche's mission, and offers to take him to a party. He meets Joan there and realizes that she was not a maid, but a socially prominent woman. They fall in love. Jealous, Helene poisons Ameche's mind against Joan by claiming that she had influenced Craven against him, so that she could sell him her ranch on which a new-found rubber plant grew. Ameche sees Joan and Craven together and assumes that Helen's story was true. Angry, he plans to obtain the contract through Joan, but she overhears his plan, and they quarrel and part. Billie Burke, a friend, inadvertently informs Joan of Helene's trick. Realizing Ameche's innocence in his attitude toward her, Joan determines to help him. She arranges a charity auction and manages to have both Craven and Ameche attend. She places a rare gun on the auction block and sells it to Ameche before Craven can bid. Craven agrees to give Ameche the contract if he will give him the gun. Ameche begs Joan's forgiveness.

Ladislas Fodor and Robert R. Crutcher wrote the screen play, Robert Bassler produced it, and Harold Schuster directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Halfway to Shanghai" with Irene Hervey and Kent Taylor

(Universal, September 18; time, 60 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. Produced on a modest budget, the picture is a mixture of murder mystery and spy melodramatics, with all the action taking place aboard a train speeding for Rangoon. The story is familiar and the treatment is routine, but it has sufficient excitement and suspense to satisfy the followers of this type of melodrama, and it will well serve its purpose as the lower half of a double-bill:—

Among the assorted passengers on a train bound for Rangoon are: Kent Taylor, an American engineer; Henry Stephenson, retired British army officer; J. Edward Bromberg, a Burmese detective; George Zucco and Lionel Royce, Gestapo agents; Charlotte Wynters, American newspaper correspondent, whose sympathies are with Hitler; Charles Wagenheim, a renegade German agent, and Irene Hervey, who, caught without funds when the Japs had invaded Shanghai, had contracted to marry a rich Rajah. Zucco and Royce know that Wagenheim was on the train, carrying with him a map showing the location of Chinese munitions dump—a paper the Germans want. Irene and Taylor, former sweethearts, meet for the first time in two years. Learning of her marriage pact with the Rajah, Taylor plans to get her out of it and wed her himself. During the night, Wagenheim is murdered by Royce, and circumstances make it appear as if Taylor was the murderer. Meanwhile Charlotte obtains the map through a switch of briefcases, and offers it to Zucco. Believing in Taylor's innocence, Bromberg decides to solve the murder. He sets a trap, by which Royce is caught attempting to murder Taylor. Royce is killed when he jumps from the train. Zucco establishes an alibi by stating that he and Charlotte had been in her stateroom at the time of the murder. But Fay Helm, Charlotte's secretary, informs Bromberg that they were lying, and that both were in the employ of the Nazis. Zucco attempts to escape, but is shot dead. Bromberg makes it possible for Irene and Taylor to leave the train before reaching Rangoon and the Rajah.

Stuart Palmer wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and John Rawlins directed it.

Objectionable for children because of the murder.

"Flying Fortress" with Richard Greene

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 68 min.)

The action fans should find this British-made program melodrama to their taste, for its main attraction is the flying sequences, which were filmed in collaboration with the British authorities. For American consumption, the film's former running time of 109 minutes has been cut down to 68 minutes. There is not much to the story, and the heroics are formula, but the action moves along at a steady pace. Most of the excitement is concentrated toward the end where the hero extinguishes a burning motor in mid-air. Of the players, only Richard Greene is known to American audiences. The romantic interest is mild:—

Piloting a plane while intoxicated, Richard Greene and a friend crash despite the efforts of Donald Stewart, a commercial pilot, to pull the plane out of its fatal spin. The friend is killed, and Stewart loses his commercial license. Greene's money and influence help him escape punishment. The press, however, hounds Greene, including Carla Lehmann, newspaper woman and Stewart's sister. Greene falls in love with her, but breaks up the affair when he discovers her identity. Brooding over this disappointment in love, he answers an advertisement for ferry pilots to fly Flying Fortresses from America to England. He flies to the field to enlist in this service, and is reprimanded for making a spectacular landing. He encounters Stewart, who, too, had joined the service, and a fist fight ensues. Both, however, become fast friends on their first flight. In England, Stewart meets and falls in love with Betty Stockfield, an upper class war worker. Stewart suggests to Greene that he locate Carla, who was working in London, and that the four have dinner that evening. At first Carla refuses, but she eventually forgives him and accepts his attentions. After taking part in rescue work during an air raid, Stewart and Greene enlist as combat fliers in the R.A.F. On their first flight they successfully bomb a power plant in Berlin, and on their way back are attacked by German planes. They fight off the planes, but one motor catches fire. Ordered by Captain John Stuart to abandon the plane, Greene volunteers to crawl out to the motor and extinguish the fire. He succeeds, and the plane returns safely to England.

Brock Williams, Gordon Wellesley and Edward Dryhurst wrote the screen play, and Walter Forde directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Manila Calling" with Lloyd Nolan and Carole Landis

(20th Century-Fox; October 16; time, 79 min.)

A thrilling program war melodrama; it will certainly find favor with the action fans. The story revolves around a group of American guerillas in the Philippines, who capture a Japanese radio broadcasting propaganda post deep in the hills, and use it to encourage the Filipinos to resist the Japs. Their determined stand against continuous assaults is full of exciting situations. There is plentiful human interest, some comedy, and an unimportant romance:—

A dozen employees of the Pacific Radio Corporation, accompanied by a handful of Moro soldiers, are cut off from their source of supplies on a Philippine island. Lloyd Nolan, one of the group, discovers a small Japanese post, from which the Japs broadcast their propaganda. The men attack and quickly take it. A bullet riddled automobile comes charging in bearing Lester Matthews, a rich planter, and Carole Landis, a dance hall girl whom he had been entertaining. They seek refuge. The men are pleased by Carole's appearance, but Nolan is not; an unfortunate love affair had set him against women. Nolan favors seeking the Japs out for attack, but Cornell Wilde, his superior, favors a defensive action so that they could use the radio to counteract the Jap propaganda. One by one the small force is reduced by Jap snipers, and their hardship increases when the Japs cut off their water supply. Nolan shoots down a Jap plane that lands intact. Harold Huber sets about to repair the motor. Two Moro soldiers, who had disappeared, return to the post mutilated, sent by the Japs to warn the others of the fate that will befall them unless they surrender. This cruelty has its effect upon the men, but Nolan keeps them under control. Fearing the Japs, Matthews attempts to destroy the radio transmitter, thus removing the reason to continue resisting the Japs. He is caught and shot. A new Jap assault leaves but a few men. Nolan decrees that Wilde, badly wounded, and Carole, should make their escape in the plane piloted by Huber. Carole refuses to return to her dance-hall life, and remains with Nolan. In their last moments in the midst of a fierce bombardment. Nolan and Carole broadcast encouragement to the Filipinos.

John Larkin wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Herbert I. Leeds directed it. The cast includes James Gleason, Ralph Byrd, Sen Yung and others.

Morally suitable for all.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

**1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.**

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1942

No. 40

A "HOME-GROWN" PRODUCER

With "Flying Tigers," a picture of major calibre and their greatest motion picture to date, Republic Pictures qualifies for consideration as a major studio.

Of equal significance is the fact that this fine picture was produced by Edmund Grainger, who had started to learn the business of making motion pictures as soon as he was old enough to learn how to read and write. He literally cut his eye teeth studying the business.

Eddie had the good fortune to study under a master—Jimmy Grainger, his father. About the time Eddie was born, Jimmy was pioneering the growth of the motion picture industry. Eddie learned more from his father about exhibitors' ideas of what constitutes a box-office success than many another producer can learn in a life-time.

After finishing his school education, Eddie was given all sorts of jobs in the studio so that he would have a better understanding of the practical problems that arise in the production of pictures. Later, as a producer, he was given the responsibility of selecting story ideas and guiding those ideas into completed pictures of many different types, and for many different studios. Many millions of dollars were at his disposal, and he spent them wisely.

In his handling of "Flying Tigers" for Republic, Eddie does credit to the teachings of his father, and reaches a new high in his career.

For the present, Eddie has called a temporary halt to his motion picture career to take up arms in the defense of his country.

Eddie Grainger has proved himself to be a man and a credit to his parents. Any one would be proud to have him as a son.

HERE AND THERE

NOW THAT THE BOND DRIVE is over, the government is asking the industry to lend its efforts to the nation-wide scrap drive.

The importance of this drive cannot be overstressed. Without metal scrap our steel mills cannot produce the steel that is required in the production of ships, tanks, guns, ammunition, and other essential war materials.

To many exhibitors, the scrap drive is not new. They have been running special scrap matinees for many months, and through them have accomplished wonders. The successes that they have so far had proved that the scrap matinee is the finest method by which we can do our share.

The distributors have agreed to provide the exhibitors with free films in connection with these

matinees. They will permit exhibitors playing percentage pictures to use them for morning shows on Saturdays or matinees during the week for scrap drives without charge to the exhibitor. As an alternate, exhibitors preferring not to play their current picture may, in lieu thereof, obtain free from the producers with whom they are doing business, a previously played available feature picture. Short subjects, too, are made available. In consideration of this, all proceeds received by the exhibitors from these scrap matinees must be turned over to some charity, local or national, to be selected, however, by the exhibitor.

Local salvage committees have been set up in your community, and they will give you every cooperation in helping you dispose of the scrap.

* * *

PARAMOUNT'S RECENT PRODUCTION, "Street of Chance," reviewed elsewhere in this issue, bears the same title as the picture that was produced by this company in 1930, but the similarity is in the title, and not in the story. The earlier picture, which starred William Powell, was a gambling melodrama, whereas the present picture is a murder mystery melodrama.

From the quality point of view, the present picture is one of the best murder mystery melodramas to come out of Hollywood in some time, and for this reason I wonder why Paramount should have given it the title of the 1930 picture, which was highly successful at the box office.

Apparently Paramount feels that by giving the present picture a title identified with a successful picture, its box-office chances will be enhanced. That may be so, but I am of the opinion that this title will prove to be more detrimental than beneficial, and that it may act as a boomerang. Many people, believing the picture to be a remake, may not care to see it, whereas those who enjoyed the 1930 picture, and care to see the same story again, will be disappointed, and even peeved, to find that it bears no resemblance to the picture they had been led to believe they would see. In such a case it is the exhibitor, and not Paramount, who will be the recipient of numerous complaints, and to him will fall the embarrassing task of explaining a situation that has no logical explanation.

There seems to be no point in placing a handicap on this valuable piece of property by giving it a misleading title. The present picture is one of merit, and it deserves every chance to prove its worth at the box-office. By changing the title, Paramount will save the exhibitors much embarrassment; it will also eliminate from the minds of the public the thought that this picture is a remake.

"Foreign Agent" with John Shelton and Gale Storm

(Monogram, October 9; time, 64 min.)

This spy program melodrama is best suited for the small towns and neighborhood theatres, where the action fans accept their screen entertainment in an uncritical frame of mind. The story and treatment are formula, and the suspense is mild, for the situations are telegraphed in advance. But there is enough fast action, comedy, and romance to make it a suitable supporting feature on a double-bill. The direction and the performances are fair:—

Hans Schumm, head of a Nazi spy ring on the west coast, kills the father of Gale Storm, a night-club entertainer, in order to secure secret plans for a searchlight filter. But the plot fails, for Gale had the plans. John Shelton, Gale's boyfriend, works with William Halligan, radio commentator exposing subversive organizations. Ivan Lebedeff and George Travell, members of Schumm's band, successfully ransack Gale's apartment in the hope of finding the plans. Shelton, by following one of the gang, discovers Schumm's headquarters, and Davis and he have a dictaphone connection rigged up from the spies' office to Gale's home. Gale, Patsy Moran, her roommate, and Shelton take turns in keeping the connection open, recording everything said by Schumm. David Clarke, another member of the gang, discovers the dictaphone and traces the wire to Gale's home where Gale, Halligan, and Shelton are captured and taken to the hide-out, along with the records they had made. Schumm has the records played back, and Shelton dares him to play a certain record that would show Schumm as intending to double-cross the others. When the gang hears the record, they turn on Schumm, and a gun battle ensues. The police arrive in time to apprehend the criminals. Gale and Shelton admit that they had imitated the voices of Schumm and his secretary to make the recording.

Martin Mooney and John Raft wrote the screen play. Mr. Mooney and Max King produced it, and William Beaudine directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Get Hep to Love" with Gloria Jean and Donald O'Connor

(Universal, October 2; time, 78 min.)

A pleasant program comedy with music, but its running time is a bit too long. Gloria Jean continues to charm with her pleasant voice, and it is a pity that the film concerns itself more with her adolescent romanticizing than with her singing. Most of the action revolves around high school students, with Gloria vying with another girl for the attentions of Donald O'Connor. The story is thin, but it is a nice blend of human interest, comedy, music, dancing, and romance, and it should please the "jitter-bugs," as well as your regular patrons:—

Yearning for a vacation, Gloria Jean, an eleven-year-old concert star, disappears after a concert when Nana Bryant, her avaricious aunt, heartlessly books her for a new singing tour. Miss Bryant employs a private detective agency to find Gloria, but is warned that the juvenile authorities may make trouble when they learn that she had been overworking the child. In a small Connecticut town Gloria, pretending to be a foundling, goes to the home of Robert Paige and Jane Frazee, a young married couple, who decide to adopt her. At school, Gloria is attracted to Donald O'Connor. For this, she is snubbed by Cora Sue Collins, who was Donald's girlfriend and the singing star of the school. Through newspaper publicity, Paige discovers Gloria's identity but he allows her to remain in his home when she tells him of the cruel treatment she had received from her aunt. Edith Barrett, the school's singing teacher, recognizes Gloria as the girl for whom a nation-wide search was being made, and goes to New York to contact Gloria's aunt. When she meets Miss Bryant and realizes that she is a selfish woman, Miss Barrett decides not to reveal Gloria's whereabouts. The detectives follow her to the small town, where they discover Gloria singing at a school contest. Gloria flees with Donald, but they are caught by the police. In court, however, it is disclosed that Gloria's aunt had no legal claim on her, and the child is allowed to choose Paige and Miss Frazee as her new parents. Gloria's happiness is complete when Donald invites her, instead of Cora, to the school prom.

Jay Dratler wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Good for the entire family.

"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" with Fay Bainter

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 80 min.)

A fairly good program entertainment, suitable particularly for small towns and neighborhoods. This is the third time that Paramount has produced this picture; once as a silent in 1919, and as a "talkie" in 1934. The picture has, however, lost none of its charm, and it should appeal to most audiences because of the human interest and the comedy. The story has been given a few changes, but it is substantially the same as the 1934 version, and deals with the struggle of a courageous woman, who cheerfully protects her brood of children against the ravages of poverty. Some of the situations touch the emotions of sympathy, while others are highly amusing. Fay Bainter, as the mother, is appealing. Barbara Jo Allen, as the spinster maid, and Hugh Herbert, as her suitor, add much to the film's gay moments:—

Living in constant hope that her husband, who had left for the Klondike three years previously, would return, Fay Bainter, who lives in a shabby neighborhood known as the Cabbage Patch, supports her five children by taking in washing. John Archer, a young doctor, becomes friendly with the family after they seek his aid for their dying horse. Archer was in love with Barbara Britton, whose wealthy uncle (Moroni Olsen) would not consent to the marriage unless Archer gave up his work among the poor. When one of the children becomes ill on Thanksgiving Day, charity workers visit Miss Bainter and suggest that the Children's Aid Society take over the children and give them a proper home. Miss Bainter orders them to leave. The sick child (Billy Lee) becomes worse, and Archer removes him to Olsen's private hospital. Olsen quarrels with Archer over the caring of the child without a fee. Barbara takes the family to the theatre and, during the performance, the manager announces that Miss Bainter was wanted at the hospital immediately. With his mother at his side, the boy dies. In due time the family adjust their lives without Billy, and busy themselves preparing for the wedding party that Miss Bainter was giving for Barbara Jo Allen, a spinster neighbor, and Hugh Herbert, her suitor. Soon after, the Children's Aid Society informs Miss Bainter that the state had given them authority to adopt two of the children. Harry Shannon, Miss Bainter's husband, returns home in time to prevent the adoption and keep the family intact.

Doris Anderson, William S. McNutt, and Jane Storm wrote the screen play. Ralph Murphy produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Falcon's Brother" with George Sanders and Tom Conway

(RKO, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

The entertainment value of this latest of the "Falcon" program mystery melodramas is on a par with the other pictures in this series, and should please the mystery fans. This time George Sanders is aided by Tom Conway, his brother, both on and off the screen, in solving the crime and tracking down a Nazi spy ring. As is usual in stories of this type, one is held in tense suspense since most of the characters are cloaked in an air of mystery. Towards the end, Sanders meets with a screen death, so as to make it possible for Tom Conway, his actual brother, to take his place in the future pictures:—

Arriving at the boat to meet Tom Conway, his brother, from South America, George Sanders is informed by the police that Conway had just committed suicide. Sanders shows sorrow, but does not inform the police that the body was not his brother's. Later Conway and Sanders meet and determine to find out what was behind the murder. They follow Gwili Andre, a passenger on the boat, to the dress shop of Charlotte Wynters, where she worked. There she quarrels with James Newill, editor of a fashion magazine, who had been having an affair with Charlotte. A short time later, Gwili is found murdered. When Sanders is deliberately

run down by an automobile, Conway continues the investigation with the aid of Jane Randolph, a girl reporter. Evidence leads Conway to Andre Charlot, who worked as a photographer for Newill. As Charlot offers to make a confession, he lights a poisoned cigar that causes his death. Conway discovers that certain photographs published in the magazine acted as code messages for Nazi agents throughout the country. By tying up the photographs in the back copies with events that had transpired, Conway decodes a message in the magazine's latest issue indicating that a South American diplomat would be murdered on his arrival that afternoon. Together with Sanders, who had by this time recuperated, Conway foils the plot and captures the ring headed by Newill. But in the fracas, Sanders is shot fatally. Conway determines to carry on his brother's work.

Stuart Palmer and Craig Rice wrote the screen play, Maurice Geraghty produced it, and Stanley Logan directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Henry Aldrich, Editor" with Jimmy Lydon

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Mild program fare. As in the other pictures in the "Henry Aldrich" series, this one, too, has a childish story, and it will have to look for its box-office appeal to the persons following the doings of the Aldrich family on the radio. This time Henry becomes editor of the high school paper and causes himself and his family no end of trouble when the townsfolk suspect him to be a pyromaniac. There is some human interest, a few good comedy situations, and the action is steady, but it is the sort of entertainment that is more to the taste of children than to that of adults:—

Selected as editor of the high school paper by reason of his winning an essay contest, Jimmy Lydon decides to increase the paper's circulation. He plans to print outside news. Jimmy rushes to the scene of a burning building where a good-natured reporter gives him the facts surrounding the fire, and advises him to write it up in a sensational manner. Dazzled by the suggestion, Jimmy writes a story that implies sabotage of the most diabolical sort. The paper's circulation triples. Charles Halton, owner of the store that had burned down, threatens to sue the school when the insurance company refuses to pay damages as a result of Jimmy's story. Jimmy loses his editorship. He meets Francis Pierlot, a little man with a violin case, who informs him that there will be a beautiful fire in an old barn at eight o'clock that night. Realizing that Pierlot was a pyromaniac, Jimmy goes to meet him at the barn, but turns in an alarm before reaching there. Jimmy fails to apprehend Pierlot, and is himself caught by the firemen, who think him insane when he informs them of the little man. After a series of fires at which Jimmy is caught under the same circumstances, he is accused of being the fire-bug and is put on trial. While waiting for the court's decision in an anteroom, Jimmy remembers that Pierlot was to have set fire to a warehouse that night. With the aid of Charles Smith and Rita Quigley, his schoolmates, he slips out of the courtroom. At the warehouse that night he finds Pierlot, who had already set fire to the building. Jimmy tries to get him to leave the building, but to no avail. To save themselves from the flames, they are forced to jump into a fireman's net. Pierlot is arrested, and Jimmy absolved of all blame.

Muriel Roy Bolton wrote the screen play, Jules Schermer produced it, and Hugh Bennett directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tomorrow We Live" with Jean Parker and Ricardo Cortez

(Producers Releasing Corp., Sept. 29; time, 67 min.)

Considering its budgetary limits, this program gangster melodrama is better than average in production values, but it is an unpleasant entertainment. The story's main character is an egotistical gangster, who endeavors to force a young woman to accept his attentions, by threatening to turn her father, a fugitive from justice, over to the authorities. The plot is illogical, and the players are guilty of overacting, particularly in the dramatic scenes. The story is one of human suffering, and its theme is too morbid to be considered a suitable entertainment:—

Suspecting that Emmett Lynn, her father, was engaged in unlawful activities, Jean Parker gives up her college career to join him in his lunchroom on the Arizona desert. She learns that Ricardo Cortez, a gangster who owned a cabaret nearby, had Lynn under his control for some unknown reason, and was compelling him to hide stolen tires in a building adjoining the lunchroom. Jean visits Cortez at the cabaret in an effort to learn what secret hold he had on her father. She discovers Cortez to be a psychopath with delusions of wielding power. Desiring her, Cortez preys on her sympathy. He tells her that he is lonely, and that fate never gave him the chance to have the love of a nice girl. Cortez fascinates her, but Jean fights against falling under the spell of his hypnotic nature, and leaves. When Cortez learns that Jean was engaged to Lieutenant William Marshall, who was stationed in a camp nearby, he orders Lynn not to allow Jean to see Marshall again. Cortez then informs Jean that her father was a fugitive from justice for a crime he had committed in his early youth, and if Jean disobeyed, he would turn him over to the authorities. To save her father from Cortez's vengeance, Jean renounces Marshall and tells him that she was going to marry Cortez. Shortly thereafter, rival gangsters visit Cortez and, giving him an ultimatum to leave the territory, wreck the cabaret and give Cortez a beating. Half mad with pain, and believing Lynn responsible for the beating, Cortez makes his way to the lunchroom and shoots Lynn in the presence of Jean. The dying man shoots Cortez as he attempts to molest Jean. Marshall and Jean are reunited.

Bart Lytton wrote the screen play, Seymour Nebenzal produced it, and Edgar G. Ulmer directed it.

Not for children.

"Sin Town" with Constance Bennett and Broderick Crawford

(Universal, Sept. 25; time, 74 min.)

Set against the background of an oil boom-town, this rousing, western-like, melodrama is pretty good program fare. But there is little human interest in it. The story is demoralizing in that it deals with shady politics and lawlessness and, since both the hero and the heroine are crooks, one feels little sympathy for them. In spite of the fact that the story is somewhat far-fetched, it holds one's attention well, for the action is fast and exciting. A highlight of the film is a barroom fight; it should please the action fans:—

Working as a confidence team, Constance Bennett and Broderick Crawford have the tables turned on them by Leo Carrillo, himself a confidence man, when he sells them a worthless oil lease. Lacking funds, Constance and Crawford arrive in Carsin Town to find the citizens about to hang Ward Bond, gambling czar, for killing the local newspaper editor. Despite the objections of Patric Knowles, leader of the lynching party, Crawford induces the mob to give Bond a fair trial. Bond declares Crawford a partner to his nefarious business. Not satisfied with Bond's business methods, Crawford organizes a protection racket and compels the town's business men to pay tribute to him. Anne Gwynne, daughter of the murdered editor and Knowles' sweetheart, starts a newspaper campaign against Crawford. Quick to sense his new power, Crawford brings Andy Devine, his friend, to Carsin Town and, using some money that Constance had saved, buys a half interest in the paper through Devine. When Constance learns that Crawford was in love with Anne, she breaks up their partnership. Anne uses the money to help Knowles work on his oil well, which was on heavily mortgaged land, and for which payment had to be made within a few days. Bond, the mortgagor, arranges with his henchmen to blow up the well, so that Knowles, unable to bring it in, would forfeit his rights. The explosion, instead of damaging the well, causes the oil to gush. Believing that Crawford had been responsible for the blast, the irate citizens form a mob. But Crawford's quick wit gets him out of danger when he convinces the mob that he was but a tool of Bond's. Constance and Crawford reunite, and leave town to seek their fortune elsewhere.

W. Scott Darling and Gerald Geraghty wrote the screen play, George Waggner produced it, and Ray Enright directed it.

Strictly adult entertainment.

"Street of Chance" with Burgess Meredith and Claire Trevor

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 74 min.)

Except for the title, there is no similarity between this production and the one produced by Paramount in 1930. The 1930 picture was a gambling melodrama, based on a story by a different author. This picture is, by far, one of the best mystery melodramas to have come out of Hollywood in a long time, and it could certainly hold its own as the top half of a double-bill. The story is given a novel twist in that at the start the hero comes out of a state of amnesia to find that the police are hunting him for a murder he does not remember having committed. Owing to the clever screen play, the expert direction, and the good performances, one's interest never lags, for the spectator is as mystified as the hero while he attempts to unravel both the crime and the circumstances under which he became involved:—

Stunned in an accident, Burgess Meredith recovers consciousness and comes out of a state of amnesia. He returns home to Louise Platt, his wife, only to learn that he had been absent from home for more than a year. The following morning he returns to his old job and is disturbed when Sheldon Leonard, an apparent stranger, eyes him suspiciously as he enters the building. On his way home that evening, Sheldon attempts to follow him, but Meredith eludes him. Late that night, Sheldon attempts to break into his apartment, but Meredith holds him off long enough to escape with his wife over the roofs. Meredith sends Louise home to her mother, then determines to find out why he was hunted. He returns to the neighborhood where he had received the blow, hoping that someone would recognize him. His efforts are rewarded when Claire Trevor rushes out of a building and, addressing him by a strange name, urges him to hide quickly in her apartment. Cleverly keeping from her the fact that she was strange to him, he learns from her that they were sweethearts and that they both worked as domestics for a wealthy man, who had been murdered on the day that Meredith had disappeared. He learns also that Frieda Inescort and Jerome Cowan, the murdered man's wife and brother, respectively, had been secretly carrying on a love affair. Claire informs Meredith that Leonard was a detective. Protesting his innocence, Meredith urges Claire to accompany him back to the Long Island home. There he finds Adeline De Walt Reynolds, the dead man's mother, a paralytic who could not speak but who could hear. Determined to solve the crime, Meredith arranges with the old woman to answer his questions by flickering her eyelids. His scheme is successful, and he uncovers Claire as the murderess. Her confession is overheard by Leonard, who had followed them to the home. Claire commits suicide.

Garrett Ford wrote the screen play, Burt Kelly produced it, and Jack Hively directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Forest Rangers" with Fred MacMurray and Paulette Goddard

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

Lavishly produced and photographed in Technicolor, this outdoor comedy-melodrama is a fairly good entertainment. The drawing power of the stars should be of considerable help at the box-office. The story, which is weak, has two angles: one is the hunting down of the villain who sets the forest fires, and the other is a love triangle. The film is at its best when it sticks to the love triangle, for it is then that the comedy prevails. A highly amusing scene is the one where Paulette Goddard runs across some floating logs in a creek. Most of the excitement occurs towards the end, where MacMurray rushes to the rescue of the two women who are trapped in a forest fire. It is ten-twenty-thirty stuff, and the children will "eat it up." The methods by which forest fires are fought should be of interest to most people:—

Suspecting that Albert Dekker, a mill owner, was responsible for numerous forest fires, Fred MacMurray, Chief Forest Ranger, goes to a town nearby in search of evidence. He arrives in the midst of a festival, and meets Paulette Goddard, daughter of Eugene Pallette, a wealthy politician. A whirlwind romance results in their marriage on the following day. The men at the Ranger Station are amazed when MacMurray introduces Paulette as his bride; they had expected him to marry Susan Hayward, owner of a lumber

mill nearby. MacMurray liked Susan, but not romantically. Susan is displeased, but not so Regis Toomey, an aviator who guided the fire-fighters from the air; he loved Susan and felt that MacMurray's marriage had left him a clear field. Susan determines to show up Paulette as unfit for the rigors of forest life. Both women vie for MacMurray's attentions. Witnesses identify Dekker as the man seen in the vicinity of the last fire, and MacMurray jails him. A new fire breaks out just as Dekker, out on bail, phones MacMurray that he has vital information. Dispatching the fire-fighters, MacMurray goes to Dekker's place only to find him murdered. He returns to the fire. Meanwhile Paulette, eager to do her bit, brings food to the men. MacMurray sends her and Susan back to headquarters with a message. Fire surrounds the girls' car before they can get out of danger. They seek refuge in a small stream, covering themselves with a tarpaulin from the car. Using Toomey's plane, MacMurray throws to the girls a portable pump, then prepares to parachute down to them. He is felled by a blow from Toomey, who deliberately sets fire to the plane. As Toomey jumps, he reveals that he had set the fire to discredit MacMurray in the eyes of Susan. Toomey falls into the flames, and MacMurray succeeds in parachuting down to the girls. He finds Paulette fighting the flames, and Susan cowering in the stream.

Harold Shumate wrote the screen play, Robert Sisk produced it, and George Marshall directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Road To Morocco" with Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

Excellent! About the only complaint that one can have against this hilarious comedy is that the constant laughter drowns out many of the gags. As in the other pictures in which Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Dorothy Lamour have appeared as a team, the story does not, nor does it pretend, to make any sense. The picture constantly pokes fun at itself. For example, one sequence shows two talking camels, with one camel saying, "This is the 'screwiest' picture I ever saw." In addition to the witty dialogue, many of the comedy situations are slapstick in its broadest form, and well suited to the brand of clowning expounded by Crosby and Hope. The musical numbers are pleasant. The popularity of the stars assures its box-office success:—

Shipwrecked off the coast of Africa, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby swim to the Moroccan mainland and make their way to a village. As they wander through the village in search of food, Anthony Quinn, a desert sheik, and his tribesmen, rush through the streets on horses, shooting and knocking natives down. Quinn had come to town to ask Dorothy Lamour, a princess, to marry him. Crosby and Hope enter a restaurant and order a big meal. While Hope worries about how they will pay the bill, Crosby sells him into slavery for two hundred dollars. Two natives carry him away, kicking and screaming. Disturbed at what he had done, Crosby goes in search of Hope on the following day. At the palace walls, a note from Hope drops at his feet urging him to flee for his life, and that he, Hope, was undergoing severe torture. Crosby determines to help him. Scaling the wall, he enters the palace only to find Hope in a vast throne room, with his head reclining in Dorothy's lap. Hope tries to discredit Crosby, but Dorothy reproaches him. She falls in love with Crosby, but tells him that Vladimar Sokoloff, a Prophet, had found it written in the stars that she must marry Hope. Meanwhile Quinn hears of the marriage, and arrives to claim her as his bride. She appeases Quinn by informing him that Sokoloff had prophesized that her first husband would die within a week of the marriage. When the Prophet discovers that he had made a mistake, Dorothy agrees to marry Crosby. But Quinn learns of this and kidnaps Dorothy. Crosby and Hope are captured and left to die in the desert. They wander about and finally come upon the retreat of Quinn, where a huge wedding feast was in progress. Quinn had as his guest another sheik, his enemy of many battles. Both decide to become friends. Disguising themselves as natives, Crosby and Hope break up the friendship by playing tricks on the enemy sheik and his tribesmen. In the ensuing fight, the boys and Dorothy make their escape. On a ship going to New York, Hope lights a cigarette in a gunpowder room and once again they find themselves shipwrecked.

Frank Butler and Don Hartman wrote the screen play, Paul Jones produced it, and David Butler directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1942

No. 40

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

3216 Vengeance of the West—Tex Ritter (61m.)	Sept. 3
3208 Overland to Deadwood—Starrett (58 m.)	Sept. 24
3002 My Sister Eileen—Russell-Aberne (re.)	Sept. 30

(End of 1941-42 Season)

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

4027 Counter Espionage—William-Brooke	Sept. 3
4022 Spirit of Stanford—Albert-Chapman	Sept. 10
4044 A Man's World—Chapman-Wright	Sept. 17
4032 Lucky Legs—Falkenburg-Brooks	Oct. 1
4201 Riding Through Nevada—Starrett (61 m.)	Oct. 1
The Daring Young Man—Brown-Chapman	Oct. 8
Smith of Minnesota—Smith-Judge	Oct. 15
4209 The Lone Prairie—Hayden-Wills (55 m.)	Oct. 15

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

260 Mrs. Miniver—Garson-Pidgeon August
(End of 1941-42 Season)**Beginning of 1942-43 Season**301 Somewhere I'll Find You—Gable-Turner..... Sept.
302 Tish—Main-Pitts Sept.
303 Panama Hattie—Skelton-Sothorn Sept.
304 Apache Trail—Nolan-Reed Sept.
305 A Yank At Eton—Rooney-Gwenn..... Oct.
306 The War Against Mrs. Hadley—Arnold-
Bainter Oct.
307 Cairo—MacDonald-Young Oct.
308 Seven Sweethearts—Grayson-Heflin Oct.
309 Eyes in the Night—Arnold-Harding..... Oct.
310 White Cargo—Lamarr-Pidgeon Nov.
311 The Omaha Trail—Craig-Blake..... Nov.
312 For Me and My Gal—Garland-Murphy..... Nov.**Mongram Features**

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

1941-42 SeasonRiders of the West—Buck Jones (60 m.)..... Aug. 21
Arizona Stagecoach—Range Busters (57 m.)..... Sept. 4
King of the Stallions—Chief Thundercloud (63m) .Sept. 8
Police Bullets—Marsh-Archer Sept. 25
Phantom Killer—Purcell-Woodbury Oct. 2
West of the Law—Buck Jones..... Oct. 2
Foreign Agent—Shelton-Storm Oct. 9
Criminal Investigator—Fellows-Lowery Oct. 23
War Dogs—Lee-Richards Nov. 13**1942-43 Season**One Thrilling Night—Beal-McKay Aug. 28
Isle of Missing Men—Howard-Gilbert..... Sept. 11
Texas to Bataan—King..... Oct. 16
Bowery at Midnight—Bela Lugosi..... Oct. 30**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

4135 I Live On Danger—Morris-Parker..... Sept. 18
4140 Undercover Man—Western No rel. date set
(End of 1941-42 Season)**Beginning of 1942-43 Season**4205 Wake Island—Donlevy-Carey-Preston Sept. 25
4201 Priorities on Parade—Ann Miller..... Oct. 2
4202 The Major and the Minor—Rogers-Milland.. Oct. 9
4203 The Glass Key—Ladd-Lake-Donlevy Oct. 23
4204 Wildcat—Arlen-Judge Nov. 6**Producers Releasing Corporation**

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

203 Jungle Siren—Corio-Crabbe Aug. 21
261 Billy the Kid In Law and Order—Crabbe
(58 m.) Aug. 28
255 Frontier Marshal in Prairie Pals—Bill Boyd
(60 m.) Sept. 11
266 Lone Rider in Border Round-Up—Huston
(59 m.) Sept. 18
262 Billy the Kid Sheriff of Sage Valley—Crabbe.. Oct. 2
256 Frontier Marshal Along the Sundown Trails—
Bill Boyd Oct. 19
267 Lone Rider in Outlaw of Boulder Pass—
George Huston Oct. 28**1942-43 Season**317 Baby Face Morgan—Armstrong-Carlisle..... Sept. 18
307 Tomorrow We Live—Parker-Cortez..... Sept. 29
301 The Yanks are Coming—Heller-King's Orch... Oct. 12
308 City of Silent Men—Albertson-Lang..... Oct. 26
309 Secrets of a Co-Ed—Kruger-Thayer..... Nov. 9
357 Billy the Kid No. 1—Buster Crabbe..... Nov. 20
318 Miss V From Moscow—Lane-Madison..... Nov. 23
310 Boss of Big Town—Rice-Litel..... Dec. 7**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1941-42 Season131 Call of the Canyon—Gene Autry (71 m.).... July 2
158 Sunset Serenade—Roy Rogers (58 m.)..... Sept. 14
132 Bells of Capistrano—Gene Autry (73 m.)... Sept. 15
100 Moscow Strikes Back—Ed. G. Robinson..... Oct. 1
777 Flying Tigers—Wayne-Carroll-Lee Oct. 8**1942-43 Season**261 Shadows on the Sage—Three Mesq. (55 m.) .Aug. 24
203 Youth on Parade—Hubbard-O'Driscoll..... Oct. 24
272 Outlaws of Pine Ridge—Don Barry..... Oct. 27
204 X Marks the Spot—O'Flynn-Parrish..... Nov. 4
262 Valley of Hunted Men—Three Mesq..... Nov. 12
Johnny Doughboy—Withers-Wilcoxon Nov. 20**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

The Magnificent Ambersons—Cotten-Costello.... July 10
Thundering Hoofs—Holt-Whitley (61 m.)..... July 24
Bambi—Disney Animated Feature..... Aug. 21
The Big Street—Fonda-Ball Sept. 4
Mexican Spitfire's Elephant—Velez-Errol Sept. 11
Wings and the Woman—Neagle-Newton..... Sept. 18
Bandit Ranger—Holt-Edwards (56 m.)..... Sept. 25
Highways by Night—Carlson-Randolph Oct. 2
Here We Go Again—McGee & Molly-Bergen..... Oct. 9**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

306 Iceland—Henie-Payne-Oakie Oct. 2
309 Girl Trouble—Ameche-Bennett Oct. 9
314 M. v. l. a Calling—Nolan-Landis Oct. 16
315 The Man in the Trunk—Roberts-Holmes..... Oct. 23
316 The Young Mr. Pitt—Donat-Morley..... Oct. 30
317 Springtime in the Rockies—Payne-Grable... Nov. 6**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Friendly Enemies—Winner-Ruggles June 26
The Moon and Sixpence—Sanders-Marshall..... Sept. 28
One of Our Aircraft is Missing—British..... Oct. 30
Jacaré—Frank Buck Nov. 15

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 6003 Pardon My Sarong—Abbott-Costello.....Aug. 7
- 6507 Timber—Carrillo-Devine.....Aug. 11
- 6067 Boss of Hangtown Mesa—J. M. Brown
(58 m.).....Aug. 21
- Between Us Girls—Barrymore-Cummings...Sept. 4
- 7021 Give Out Sisters—Andrews Sisters.....Sept. 11
- 7020 Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror—
Rathbone-Bruce.....Sept. 18
- 7035 Half Way to Shanghai—Hervey-Taylor...Sept. 18
- Sin Town—Bennett-Crawford.....Sept. 25
- 7071 Deep In the Heart of Texas—J. M. Brown..Sept. 25
- Get Hep to Love—Jean-Frazer-Paige.....Oct. 2
- 7030 Destination Unknown—Hervey-Gargan...Oct. 9
- Arabian Nights—Sabu-Montez-Hall.....Oct. 16
- Nightmare—Barrymore-Donlevy.....Oct. 23

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 2Q1 Yankee Doodle Dandy—Cagney-Leslie...No date set
- 202 Across The Pacific—Bogart-Astor.....Sept. 5
- 203 Busses Roar—Travis-Bishop.....Sept. 19
- 204 Desperate Journey—Flynn-Reagan-Coleman .Sept. 26
- 207 You Can't Escape Forever—Brent-Marshall...Oct. 10
- 205 Secret Enemies—Stevens-Emerson.....Oct. 17
- 206 Now, Voyager—Davis-Henreid-Rains.....Oct. 31

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 3755 The Bulldog and the Baby—Car. (6 m.)....July 24
- 8810 Canvas Cut-Ups—Sports (8 m.).....Aug. 7
- 3705 Old Blackout Joe—Cartoon (5½ m.).....Aug. 27
(End of 1941-42 Season)

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 4551 Journey to Denali—Col. Tours (10 m.)....Aug. 5
- 4851 Screen Snapshots No. 1—(11 m.).....Aug. 7
- 4901 Cajuns of the Teche—Panoramics (11 m.)..Aug. 13
- 4651 Community Sings No. 1—(8 m.).....Aug. 15
- 4751 America Sings with Kate Smith(re.) (9½m) .Aug. 21
- 4601 Kitchen Quiz No. 1—(10 m.).....Aug. 21
- 4951 Ted Powell—Famous Bands (10 m.).....Aug. 27
- 4501 Song of Victory—Col. Rhap.Sept. 4
- 4852 Screen Snapshots No. 2.....Sept. 11
- 4801 Trotting Kings—Sports.....Sept. 11
- 4652 Community Sings No. 2.....Sept. 17
- 4701 The Gullible Canary—Cartoon (6½ m.)...Sept. 18

Columbia—Two Reels

- 3192 The Mounties Last Chance—Mounted No. 12
(17 m.).....Aug. 5
- 3193 The Painted White Man—Mounted No. 13
(16 m.).....Aug. 12
- 3194 Burned at the Stake—Mounted No. 14
(16 m.).....Aug. 19
- 3195 The Mountie Gets His Man—Mounted No. 15
(18 m.).....Aug. 26
(End of 1941-42 Season)

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 4422 Carry Harry—All Star (17 m.).....Sept. 3
- 4121 Enemy Passport—The Secret Code No. 1
(32 m.).....Sept. 4
- 4122 Shadow of the Swastika—Secret Code No. 2
(19½ m.).....Sept. 11

- 4123 Nerve Gas—Secret Code No. 3 (19 m.)....Sept. 18
- 4401 Even as IOU—Stooges (15½ m.).....Sept. 18
- 4124 The Sea Spy Strikes—Secret Code No. 4
(19½ m.).....Sept. 25
- 4423 Kiss and Wake Up—All Star (18 m.).....Oct. 2
- 4424 Sappy Pappy—All Star (16 m.).....Oct. 30
- 4402 Sock-A Bye Baby—Stooges (16½ m.)....Nov. 13

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- C-399 Rover's Big Chance—Our Gang (11 m.)..Aug. 22
- S-371 It's A Dog's Life—Pete Smith (10 m.)....Aug. 22
- W-352 The Blitz Wolf—Cartoon (10 m.).....Aug. 22
- W353 The Early Bird Dood It!—Cartoon (9 m.)..Aug. 29
- M-336 The Greatest Gift—Miniature (11 m.)...Sept. 5
- W-354 Chips Off The Old Block—Cartoon (8m.) .Sept. 12
- S-372 Victory Vittles—Pete Smith (10 m.)....Sept. 19
- S-373 Football Thrills of 1941—Pete Smith (9m) .Sept. 26
- M-337 A.T.C.A.—Miniature (11 m.).....Oct. 3
- M-338 The Good Job—Miniature (11 m.).....Oct. 10

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-305 Mr. Blabbermouth—Special (19 m.).....Aug. 8

Paramount—One Reel

- L1-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6 (11m.) (re.)....Aug. 21
- W1-9 Superman in Terror On The Midway—
Superman (9 m.).....Aug. 28
- Y1-5 Speaking of Animals—At The Dog Show
(9 m.).....Aug. 28
- M1-2 Indian Temples—Journeys (10 m.).....Sept. 4
- E1-12 Alona On The Sarong Seas—Popeye (7m.) .Sept. 4
- R1-13 Timber Athletes—Spotlight (9 m.).....Sept. 11
- W1-10 Superman in Japoteurs—Superman (9m.) .Sept. 18
- Z1-6 Hedda Hopper's Hollywood No. 6 (9 m.)...Sept. 18
- U1-6 The Little Broadcast—Mad. Mod.Sept. 25
- Y1-6 Speaking of Animals—In South America....Sept. 25
(End of 1941-42 Season)

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- T2-1 A Letter From Bataan—Victory Short(13m) .Sept. 15
- J2-1 Popular Science No. 1.....Oct. 2
- A2-1 The McFarland Twins and Orch.—Headliner
(9 m.).....Oct. 2
- L2-1 Unusual Occupations No. 1.....Oct. 9
- R2-1 Sports I. Q.—Spotlight.....Oct. 9

RKO—One Reel

- 24107 Donald's Gold Mine—Disney (7 m.).....July 24
- 24313 Record Breakers—Sportscope (8 m.).....Aug. 7
- 24108 T-Bone for Two—Disney (7 m.).....Aug. 14
- 24210 Information Please No. 10 (11 m.).....Aug. 14
- 24413 Hollywood on the Hudson—Picture People
No. 13 (9 m.).....Aug. 14
- 24109 How To Play Baseball—Disney (7 m.)....Sept. 4

RKO—Two Reels

- 23113 March of Time No. 13 (18 m.).....July 31

1942-43 Season

- 33701 Mail Trouble—Leon Errol (18 m.).....Sept. 4
- 33401 Two for the Money—Edgar Kennedy
(17 m.).....Sept. 11

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3301 Well-Rowed Harvard—Sports (9 m.).....Aug. 14
- 3552 Life With Fido—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Aug. 21
- 3152 Wedding in Bikaner—Magic Carpet (9 m.) .Aug. 28
- 3501 The Big Build-Up—Terry-Toon (7 m.)....Sept. 4

- 3401 Our Last Frontier—World Today (9 m.)...Sept. 11
- 3553 School Daze—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Sept. 18
- 3153 Valley of Blossoms—Magic Carpet (9 m.)..Sept. 25
- 3554 Night Life In the Army—Terry-Toon (7 m.)..Oct. 2
- 3201 Along the Texas Range—Hugh James (10m).Oct. 9

Universal—One Reel

- 6384 Mile of Dough—Stranger Than Fiction (9m).Aug. 10
- 6365 Crater City—Scenic (9 m.).....Aug. 17
- 6385 Smoke Painter—Stranger Than Fiction (9m).Aug. 31
- 7241 Andy Panda's Victory Garden—Cart. (7 m.)..Sept. 7
- 7351 Trouble Spot of the East—Var. Views (9m).Sept. 7
- 7371 Human Sailboat—Per. Oddities (9 m.).....Sept. 14
- 7231 Yankee Doodle Swing Shift—Cart. (7 m.)..Sept. 21
- 7532 Canadian Patrol—Var. Views (9 m.).....Sept. 21
- 7372 Jail Hostess—Per. Oddities (9 m.).....Sept. 28
- 7353 Western Whoopee—Var. Views (9 m.).....Oct. 5
- 7373 King of the 49-ers—Per. Oddities (9 m.)....Oct. 12
- Keeping Fit—Victory Featurette (10½ m.)..Oct. 26

Universal—Two Reels

- 7121 Trumpet Serenade—Musical (15 m.).....Sept. 9
- 7892 Civilian Courage Conquers—Junior G-Men
No. 12 (17 m.).....Sept. 15
- 7781 A Race with Disaster—Overland Mail No. 1—
Chaney-Terry (26 m.).....Sept. 22
- 7782 Flaming Havoc—Overland Mail No. 2 (19m).Sept. 29
- 7783 The Menacing Herd—Overland Mail No. 3
(18 m.)Oct. 6
- 7784 The Bridge of Disaster—Overland Mail No. 4
(19 m.)Oct. 13
- 7122 Serenade In Swing—Savitt Orch. (15 m.)...Oct. 14
- 7785 Hurlled To The Depths—Overland Mail No. 5
(18 m.)Oct. 20

Vitaphone—One Reel

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 8401 Sniffer Soldiers—Sports (10 m.).....Sept. 12
- 8301 Sweeney Steps Out—Novelties (10 m.)....Sept. 12
- 8501 Army Air Force Band—Mel. Mast. (10m)..Sept. 19
- 8701 The Dover Boys—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Sept. 19
- 8601 The Hep Cat—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Oct. 3
- 8702 The Sheepish Wolf—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Oct. 3
- 8402 South American Sports—Sports (10 m.)....Oct. 17
- 8703 The Hare Brained Hypnotist—Mer. Mel.
(7 m.)Oct. 17
- 8502 Colleen Band—Mel. Mast. (10 m.).....Oct. 24
- 8602 The Daffy Duckaroo—Looney Tune (7 m.)..Oct. 24
- 8403 The Right Timing—Sports (10 m.).....Oct. 31
- 8704 A Tale of Two Kitties—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)...Oct. 31
- 8302 You Want To Give Up Smoking—Novel.
(10 m.)Nov. 14
- 8705 Ding Dog Daddy—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Nov. 14
- 8404 Cuba, Land of Romance and Adv.—Sports
(10 m.)Nov. 21
- 8603 My Favorite Duck—Looney Tune (7 m.)...Nov. 21
- 8503 U. S. Marine Band—Mel. Mast. (10 m.)...Nov. 28
- 8706 Case of the Missing Hare—Mer. Mel. (7m).Nov. 28

Vitaphone—Two Reels

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 8101 The Spirit of Annapolis—B'way Brev. (20m).Sept. 5
- 8102 The Nation Dances—B'way Brev. (20 m.)..Sept. 26
- 8001 A Ship Is Born—Special (20 m.).....Oct. 10
- 8103 The Spirit of West Point—B'way Brev.
(20 m.)Nov. 7

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| 28 Wednesday ..Dec. 2 | |
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HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
Australia, New Zealand, India, Europe, Asia	17.50
35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1942

No. 41

COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOW

The steps the government has thus far taken in the regulation of our business indicate that, within six months, the industry's peacetime policy of production, distribution, and exhibition will be out of tune with the times.

The order limiting the amount of money that producers could spend on new materials for the construction of new sets was the government's first regulatory step directly affecting the production of pictures; the second, the order freezing all raw film stock; the third, the order cutting the use of raw stock by ten to twenty-four percent of the amount consumed by the industry in 1941.

But this is only the beginning. The gradual sacrifices that our industry will be called upon to make, because of orders yet to emanate from Washington, may eventually reduce the number of pictures we normally produce to about one-half their number.

It naturally follows that the exhibitors will get only one-half the former number of their pictures. This may compel theatres in competitive situations to revert to a single-feature policy.

In the event that the number of feature pictures is cut by government in half, distributor organizations, too, will be affected; they will be marketing only half their former number of pictures at about the same distribution costs. Under such conditions, some distributors will not be able to remain in business, as presently constituted, for the cost to distribute their pictures would run to a too high percentage of their sales. To remain in business, they would have to sell their fewer pictures at higher rentals.

But higher rentals may be obtained only by better grade product—of quality good enough to be shown as a single feature so that the exhibitor, particularly the one who has thus far been dependent on double-billing, could draw patrons in sufficient numbers to enable him to conduct his theatre profitably.

Since better grade product is the only means by which many exhibitors can hope to manage their business profitably on a single-feature policy, it would mean the discontinuance of the production of the so-called "B" pictures, because such pictures will not be of good enough quality to stand on their own as single-feature attractions.

Regulations resulting in a reduction of the number of pictures now produced will not be discriminatory against any one producing company. The products of Monogram and Producers Releasing Corporation will undoubtedly be reduced in the same proportion as those of the major companies.

To the smaller companies, the burden will be harder to bear. Monogram and PRC cannot afford to distribute only one-half their present number of pictures, because their distribution cost would almost double, and little or nothing would remain from collections to pay off the negative costs. These two companies would, therefore, have to spend more money on each of their pictures so that their improved quality would justify higher film rentals, enabling them to meet negative as well as distribution costs.

An alternative for their survival in the event that the product were cut in half might be for these companies to merge physical distribution.

The same observation, but in a larger measure, may be made also in regard to Republic, Universal, or Columbia.

These are but a few of the problems that the industry may eventually have to overcome as a result of the sacrifices demanded by the war, and for this reason now is the time to face them. Since it does not require a prophet to see what is coming, the industry should begin to put its house in order at once so as to prepare itself against possible losses.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not pretend to know the solutions to these problems; it merely recognizes their existence, and feels the necessity of unified action in dealing with them. Ours is an industry of diversified interests, and the need of unity is greater now than ever.

Many will argue that, with the demise of UMPI, all hopes of unity has faded. True, Thurman Arnold's remarks about the government's not tolerating concerted action has left a doubt as to the advisability of getting together again. But we are in no worse position than the small factory owner who is ordered by the government to convert his oil burner into a coal burner, but finds himself unable to comply with the order because government regulations prevent him from obtaining the necessary equipment for the conversion. The government is considering his problem; it will undoubtedly consider ours.

Our industry would do well to establish a war-time strategy board of Bankers, Producers, Distributors, and Exhibitors to consider the coming events and to formulate and regulate sensible policies for the operation of the industry. Our obligation and privilege to remain in business as an essential industry, necessary to the public morale, will surely be recognized.

In the industry's interests, HARRISON'S REPORTS will endeavor to obtain, for publication, the views of people in the industry.

"You Were Never Lovelier" with Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth

(Columbia, Oct. 22; time, 97 min.)

With music and dancing in abundance, this gay comedy is a welcome relief from the war pictures that are now dominating the screen. Xavier Cugat and his orchestra do justice to Jerome Kern's tuneful melodies, while the dancing by Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth is all that can be desired. The picture's locale is South America, and the story has many amusing complications. In addition to his leading the orchestra, Xavier Cugat takes part in the action and adds to the film's gay moments. Adolphe Menjou is exceptionally good as the hard-bitten wealthy hotel owner, whose scheme to awaken romantic inclinations within his daughter acts as a boomerang. It has been given a lavish production:—

Adolphe Menjou, swank hotel magnate, insists that his daughters marry in order of age. Catherine Craig, the eldest, was soon to be married; Leslie Brooks and Adele Mara, the youngest girls, were secretly engaged; Rita Hayworth, their oldest sister, was not interested in romance. Fred Astaire, a New York dancer in South America for the races, loses all his money and tries to obtain a job in Menjou's hotel. Menjou orders him thrown out, but Xavier Cugat, orchestra leader at the hotel, arranges for Astaire to entertain at Catherine's wedding. At the affair, Astaire unwittingly insults both Rita and her father. Pressed by Leslie and Adele to do something about Rita's indifference to love, Menjou decides to do something about it. Every day he sends Rita orchids and unsigned love letters, and she gradually falls in love with her unknown suitor. One day Menjou, believing Astaire to be a messenger boy, orders him to deliver the orchids. Rita thinks Astaire is the unknown suitor, and falls in love with him. Menjou is compelled to give Astaire a contract, and to invite him to his home, on Astaire's promise that he will dispel Rita's romantic illusions. Instead, Astaire falls in love with her. Menjou compels Astaire to bid good-bye to Rita, and offers to write a farewell note for him. Menjou's wife catches him writing the love letter, and believes it was intended for an old sweetheart of Menjou's, who had the same name as Rita. To clear Menjou of scandal, Astaire tells the whole story. Rita is disillusioned and angry with Astaire, but Menjou is for the first time sympathetic toward him. Through his efforts, Astaire and Rita are brought together.

Michael Fessler, Ernest Pagano, and Delmar Daves wrote the screen play. Louis F. Edelman produced it, and William A. Seiter directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Eyes of the Underworld" with Richard Dix and Lon Chaney

(Universal, no release date set; time, 60 min.)

A fair "cops and robbers" program melodrama. The formula story has been given a timely angle in that the crooks are dealers in stolen cars and tires, because of their war-time value. The action is fast, and the excitement and suspense is sustained well. There is considerable human interest in the story, and one is sympathetic to the main characters, particularly Richard Dix, who, as the police chief with a secret prison record, becomes a target for the city council. The love interest is mild but convincing:—

When assistant police chief Joseph Crehan fails to smash an auto theft gang, police chief Richard Dix personally takes charge of the situation. The police apprehend Marc Lawrence, a notorious criminal, who refuses to talk to anyone but Dix. Alone with Dix, Lawrence threatens to reveal his (Dix's) prison record unless he permits him to escape. Dix defies Lawrence, and has him locked up. Without revealing his reasons, Dix tenders his resignation, but it is refused by the city council. Lawrence escapes jail, killing a keeper and revealing Dix's secret. The city council accuses Dix of complicity in the escape, and orders his arrest. With the aid of Don Porter, a state investigator, Wendy Barrie, Dix's secretary, sets out to locate Lawrence. The trail leads him to a garage where both are captured by the gangsters. Meanwhile Lon Chaney, Dix's faithful chauffeur, learns the whereabouts of the gang's hideout. Loyal subordinates allow Dix to

escape and, together with Chaney, he makes his way to the garage. In the gun battle that follows Dix is wounded, Lawrence is killed, and the rest of the thieves rounded up. Porter reveals that Lloyd Corrigan, head of the city council, and assistant police chief Crehan were the brains of the gang. Dix, a widower and father of ten-year-old Billy Lee, is exonerated, and wins Wendy's promise to become his wife.

Michael L. Simmons and Arthur Strawn wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Roy William Neill directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Secrets of a Co-Ed" with Otto Kruger and Tina Thayer

(Producers Releasing Corp., Nov. 23; time, 67 min.)

This father and daughter drama is, by far, PRC's best effort to date, and it should more than satisfy as a supporting feature in other than its regular playing zones. The story is substantial; it holds one's attention consistently. The action revolves around the head-strong daughter of a brilliant criminal lawyer, who secretly heads a ring of gangsters. Alone worth the price of admission is the impassioned jury plea made by Otto Kruger in defense of his daughter, accused of murdering his chief gunman, with whom she had fallen in love. The direction is fine and the performances of the entire cast, very good:—

Otto Kruger, a supposedly reputable criminal lawyer, is the secret leader of a group of gangsters, most of whom were at liberty because of his brilliant defense. Kruger orders Rick Vallin, his chief gunman, to organize the city's gambling houses, but warns him to use no violence. Vallin ignores these instructions and murders a man. Kruger threatens him with dismissal if he violates instructions again. The pride of Kruger's life was Tina Thayer, his head-strong daughter, who was threatened with dismissal from college because she had continuously violated the school's regulations. Tina was not aware of her father's true activities. Kruger adjusts her latest scrape with the school's authorities, and exacts a promise from her to behave. Tina meets and falls in love with Vallin when he accidentally crashes into her automobile. Diana Del Rio, Vallin's girl-friend, discovers him paying attention to Tina and jealously informs Kruger of the affair. Kruger dismisses Vallin from the gang, and orders him to leave town at once. In retaliation, Vallin plans to elope with Tina. Unaware of his connection with her father, Tina agrees. On their way to a minister, Vallin stops off at a gambling club that he had managed for Kruger to steal the money out of the safe. Tired of waiting for him, Tina goes to the club in search of him, only to find him murdered. She is arrested and put on trial for the crime. In a moving plea to the jury, Kruger absolves Tina of the crime when he admits he was the murderer and reveals his criminal activities. Kruger pays for his crimes, and Tina seeks comfort in the arms of Russell Hoyt, her college sweetheart.

George W. Sayre wrote the screen play, Alfred Stern and Arthur Alexander produced it, and Joseph H. Lewis directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Youth on Parade" with Tom Brown, Ruth Terry and Martha O'Driscoll

(Republic, Oct. 24; time, 72 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. Set against a college background, this comedy with music has, in addition to the usual campus capers, a message to college students of America to the effect that they should continue studies until such time as they are drafted so that they might be better fitted for their task. The action revolves around a group of students whose practical joke on the faculty almost results in their expulsion and the cancellation of the annual college show. The treatment lacks originality, but the musical numbers are pleasing, and the direction and performances adequate:—

Rebellious against Professor John Hubbard's revolutionary teaching methods, whereby students were known by numbers instead of names, the students of Cotchatootamee College, led by Martha O'Driscoll and Tom Brown, create a

mythical student whose number was 79 and whose name was "Patty Flynn." With the brightest students collaborating, examination papers are submitted bearing that number, and "Patty Flynn" wins top honors in every subject. Exultant, the faculty sets a date for the public honoring of "Patty Flynn." This move had not been anticipated by the students. Fearing the wrath of the faculty, Brown induces Ruth Terry, an amateur actress, to impersonate the mythical girl, and promises her a star role in the forthcoming college show. Ruth completely fools Hubbard, who considers her "jive" talk and other "jitter-bug" peculiarities a part of her genius. She induces him to join in the student fun so that he would better understand campus life. As a result, Hubbard falls in love with Martha. When Chick Chandler, Ruth's erring brother, visits the college, he unwittingly reveals the hoax to Hubbard. The students, who had now grown to like Hubbard, are genuinely sorry, and confess to the Dean. As punishment, he bans the college show. Far from being resentful, Hubbard offers to help the students. He contrives to keep the Dean in his office while the students put on the show. The Dean, however, hears the music and hurries to the auditorium. He finds a seat next to a high-ranking army officer, who comments on the patriotic spirit of the students. Pleased, the Dean joins in the fun, Ruth's dream comes true when a Broadway producer, who had been watching the show, offers her a contract.

George C. Brown wrote the screen play, Albert Cohen produced it, and Al Rogell directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Spirit of Stanford" with Frankie Albert and Marguerite Chapman

(Columbia, Sept. 10; time, 74 min.)

Fair program entertainment. Frankie Albert, All-American quarterback, plays himself in this formula college football melodrama. The story is routine, with Albert depicted as a cocky football hero who, though he makes good his boasts, annoys his fellow students by his brashness. He redeems himself when his egotism gives way to the "do-or-die for Alma Mater" spirit. As an actor, Albert gives a good account of himself. The best part of the film, however, is where "The Vagabonds," an instrumental and vocal quartet, appear. Marguerite Chapman, too, sings a few pleasant numbers. Quite a bit of footage is of actual football games in which Albert played in his heyday:—

Famous as a high school football star, Frankie Albert enrolls at Stanford University and wins the displeasure of his schoolmates by his boastful attitude, despite his feats on the gridiron. Matt Willis, Frankie's roommate, idolizes him. Frankie secures employment in a sorority house as a waiter to be near Marguerite Chapman, a co-ed, to whom he was attracted. Marguerite is scornful of him. In his first three years at school, Frankie proves himself to be an outstanding football player, leading his team to victory. At a school dance, Frankie and Marguerite forget their feud and fall in love. Frankie's last year at Stanford is no repetition of his earlier ones. The football team was having an unsuccessful season owing to the loss of some of its best players through graduation. Feeling that his association with an unsuccessful team would hurt his reputation and spoil his chances as a professional football player, Frankie quits on the eve of the big California game, and decides to join a professional team. Willis, ill, tries to stop him, but Frankie knocks him down. The next morning, in the professional club's outer office, Frankie gets into a conversation with Ernie Nevers, Stanford's greatest football hero, who calls him a quitter. Nevers' talk inspires Frankie, and he rejoins the team that afternoon to lead them to victory.

Howard J. Green, William Brant, and Nick Lukats wrote the screen play, Sam White produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

"A Yank in Libya" with H. B. Warner and Walter Woolf King

(Producers Releasing Corporation, July 24; time 67 min.)

There is enough substantial entertainment value in this action melodrama to make it suitable supporting fare in the smaller theatres. A good deal of the footage is comprised of

stock shots, but much credit is due the producer for having used them to good advantage. The action revolves around an impulsive American correspondent, whose discovery of an Arab rifle cache seems to be a fairly open secret among international spies. It is an incredulous story, but action fans who are willing to accept fast action, suspense, and comedy regardless of story values may find it to their taste:—

Walter Woolf King, an American correspondent in Libya, discovers a Nazi plot for an uprising of Arab tribes against the British. The Nazis had been supplying them with machine guns. Disguised as a native, King steals one of the guns. Pursued by Duncan Renaldo, a sheik, and his men, King takes refuge in the hotel room of Joan Woodbury. He asks the girl to hide the gun, and escapes before the Arabs break it. On his way to the British consulate to report the plot, King meets Parkyakarkus, an American adventurer posing as an Arab peddler, who offers to help him. H. B. Warner, the British consul, is upset at King's story. The British were aware of the plot, and were biding their time so as to outwit the Nazis. But they did not dare tell this to King, whose story, if filed, would spoil their plans. Warner accompanies King to Joan's room, where Joan denies that King had given her a gun to hide. Bewildered, King determines to substantiate his story. He enlists the aid of Parkyakarkus and, through him, King learns that William Vaughn, an importer and secret Nazi agent, was plotting with George Lewis, a sheik second in command to Renaldo, to rouse the Arab tribes. Renaldo himself was friendly to the British. King is captured by the Arabs when he visits their camp, but escapes in time to warn the British that Renaldo had been shot by Lewis, who had assumed leadership of the Arabs and planned to attack. But Renaldo, who had only been stunned, arrives in time to kill Lewis, and stop the revolt against the British. As King files his story, Joan and Parkyakarkus reveal themselves as British intelligence agents.

Arthur St. Claire and Sherman Lowe wrote the screen play, George M. Merrick produced it, and Albert Herman directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1942.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared P. S. Harrison, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:

Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.
Editor, *P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.
Managing Editor, *None*.

Business Manager, *Alexander Picoult*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

P. S. Harrison, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent, or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: *None*.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owners; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation, has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) P. S. HARRISON,
(Editor).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1942.

LILLIAN SILVER,
(My commission expires March 30, 1944.)

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE JAPANESE WAR EFFORT

Writing in the September 21, 1942 issue of Life magazine, Phylis Argoll, former correspondent on the Japan Newsweek, who recently returned to this country on the diplomatic exchange ship Gripsholm, had this to say with regard to present day film entertainment in Tokyo, where she had been interned:

"I found no real amusement in Tokyo . . . the movie houses run, but they are only open from 3 P.M. to 10 P.M. Most of the pictures shown are flagrant propaganda films, but they are showing some American films, which they use as an anti-U. S. weapon. In June, they were showing 'Mr. Smith Goes to Washington' as an example of the degeneration of American democracy. Voices are in English, with Japanese titles superimposed."

Condemning pictures that distort life in the United States has long been one of my pet peeves and a subject frequently discussed in these columns, particularly with reference to "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

The use of this picture for anti-U. S. propaganda by the Japanese is not new. In a speech to the New York State Chamber of Commerce on January 9, 1941, Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller stated that the Nazis made an effort to have every man, woman, and child in South America see this picture as an example of the "decay of democracy." Needless to say, similar efforts were made throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The Japanese themselves could not have produced a more effective propaganda film against us. To get the full significance of its propaganda value, consider, for example, the importance that our own government places on confiscated Axis films, most of which made up the greater part of "The World at War," the government's recent documentary feature. This confiscated film was used by the Axis to intimidate the conquered and unconquered countries by showing the Nazis as an unbeatable force, one that no nation dare defy. Our government used these same films to depict them as the ruthless butchers that they are.

I doubt if we could have made a better contribution to Japan's propaganda department than "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." In it we are depicted, as I said before, as a people governed by a crooked legislative body; crooked politicians are shown gagging the press; gangsters are hired to run down little boys—all perfect examples of the degeneration of American democracy in the eyes of the Japanese people.

All this is further evidence of the fact that producers must exercise the greatest care in the depiction of the American scene. More important than the fact that an enemy will use such "indiscretions" against us is the fact that friendly nations get a distorted picture of what goes on within our borders, and it is in such countries that the greatest damage is wrought.

The producer who refuses to recognize these factors is abusing his privilege to live and work in a democracy.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

(The previous box-office performances were printed in the issues of August 8 and August 15, 1942.)

Columbia

"Atlantic Convoy": Fair
 "Flight Lieutenant": Good-Fair
 "Enemy Agents Meet Ellery Queen": Fair
 "Blondie For Victory": Fair
 "The Talk of the Town": Excellent-Very Good
 "Sabotage Squad": Fair-Poor
 "My Sister Eileen": Very Good

Seven pictures, excluding four westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Somewhere I'll Find You": Very Good

"Tish": Fair

"Panama Hattie": Good-Fair

"Apache Trail": Fair

"A Yank At Eton": Very Good-Good

"The War Against Mrs. Hadley": Very Good

Six pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2.

Paramount

"I Live On Danger": Fair

"Wake Island": Excellent-Very Good

"Priorities On Parade": Good

"The Major and the Minor": Very Good

"The Glass Key": Good

"Wildcat": Fair-Poor

Six pictures, excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good, 2; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

RKO

"The Magnificent Ambersons": Good

"Bambi": Very Good

"The Big Street": Good-Fair

"Mexican Spitfire's Elephant": Fair

"Wings and The Woman": Fair

"Highways By Night": Fair-Poor

"Here We Go Again": Good

Seven pictures, excluding two westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 1; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

Twentieth Century-Fox

"The Postman Didn't Ring": Fair

"United We Stand": Fair-Poor

"This Above All": Very Good

"Footlight Serenade": Very Good

"A-Haunting We Will Go": Good-Fair

"Little Tokyo, U.S.A.": Fair

"The Pied Piper": Excellent-Very Good

"The Loves of Edgar Allan Poe": Fair-Poor

"Orchestra Wives": Very Good

Nine pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 3; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 2.

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Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1942

No. 42

THE VALUE OF PICTURE SURVEYS

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has announced that it will conduct, through the Motion Picture Research Bureau, a survey for the study of audience preferences and reactions to motion pictures.

Their findings will no doubt be of interest to the industry but, whatever the findings, I do not believe that they can be accepted as a true gauge of audience preferences. Neither do I believe that they will prove anything.

Actually, audiences do not have any particular preference on types of pictures. It is we, ourselves, who set their preferences by giving them occasionally a picture that catches their fancy. Such a picture usually starts a new cycle, regardless of its type.

Cycles, however, are not started by public preference. They are started by the imitators of the particular picture that drew well at the box-office; and since most of these imitations are bad ones the public's indifference is soon felt at the box-office.

It is not the type of story that appeals to the public, but the manner in which it is produced and presented. It is not what we make, but how we make it that counts. For example, "Mrs. Miniver" was a great success because of its human appeal, its lovable characters, and its timeliness. The story itself is simple, but it has a "heart" and a "soul," because there was heart and soul in those who created it. Others may try to make another "Mrs. Miniver," but, although they may have the pattern, pictures like "Mrs. Miniver" are not made—they are inspired.

But the success of "Mrs. Miniver" is no indication that timely topics are a requirement for good pictures. There is nothing timely about "Pride of the Yankees," "My Sister Eileen," "Talk of the Town," or "Tales of Manhattan." Yet all are successful pictures, and all are different in type. These films prove that the public will accept any type of picture, provided it entertains them. Since the beginning of motion pictures, the box-office performances have given evidence of this fact.

The exceptional picture sets the public mood, but only until another exceptional picture of a different type comes along to supplant that mood. Let us assume, for example, that the survey will show that 92% of the public prefers comedy, and then David Selznick produces another tragedy like "Rebecca." Would that not prove that the public likes also tragedy, when it is as good as "Rebecca"? And would it not prove that our box-office is a better barometer than a survey? Suppose the public should vote for tender romance, and then we deliver another "Gone With the

Wind"! Suppose the public votes 92% for fiery romance, and then we deliver another "Mrs. Miniver"! Suppose the public votes against war pictures, and then we deliver another "All Quiet on the Western Front"! Suppose they vote against Westerns, and then we deliver another "Cimarron"! Suppose that they vote for more red-blooded war pictures, and then we give them another "Skippy"! Suppose they ask for "kid" pictures, and then we deliver another "Min and Bill"! Suppose they vote against English-made pictures, and then we give them another "Goodbye Mr. Chips"!

Every one of these pictures were smash-hits; they prove that the public, even if they say otherwise, is not addicted to any particular type of pictures. If the public were to vote 100% for comedies and we produced nothing but comedy pictures, they would soon tire of them.

A good percentage of the movie fans do have definite preferences—mystery, horror, gangster, period, romantic, action, musical, western, sophisticated, detective, and as many other categories under which types can be listed. But most all these fans will go to see a movie of any type, if it is a good one. If we would examine some of the best box-office pictures made in the past, we will find that each one had a certain individualism, which set it apart from its many imitations.

The best survey of audience preferences is in the cash register at the box-office. When the receipts are added up we find that the public will accept any type of picture, so long as it entertains them and is well made.

ACCURATE RUNNING TIME OF PICTURES

A number of subscribers have written to me regarding the running time of "Wake Island."

They are confused by the eighty-six minutes running time indicated in my review, because it is at variance with the seventy-eight minutes running time reported by some of the other trade papers.

I have checked with Paramount about this, and they have confirmed the eighty-six minutes time as being correct.

The running time of all pictures reviewed by this writer is obtained by means of a stop watch so as to assure accuracy. Unless pictures are re-edited after I have reviewed them, the running times reported in this paper can be considered accurate.

"Bowery at Midnight" with Bela Lugosi
(*Monogram, October 30; time, 62 min.*)

The horror and mystery fans should find this fair program murder mystery melodrama to their taste. Cast in a split-personality role, Bela Lugosi portrays a dignified college psychology professor, who heads a Bowery Mission at night to cover up his criminal activities. The implausible tale has been given a routine treatment, and has him committing many murders, but, unknown to him, his victims are restored to life and, toward the end, vengeance is theirs. The action is fast-moving, and the suspense is well maintained:—

Bela Lugosi, a psychology professor in a University, operates a Bowery Mission at night, which he uses as a "blind" for his criminal activities. Lugosi employs escaped convicts to steal for him, and when they show signs of turning against him he murders them. He orders Lew Kelly, a derelict doctor who lived in the Mission's secret basement, to dispose of the bodies. But Kelly, having great hatred for Lugosi, brings these men back to life and keeps them imprisoned in a pit. Wanda McKay, a social worker at the Mission, is unaware of Lugosi's criminal or professional activities. John Archer, her fiance and one of Lugosi's students, plans to write a thesis on social disorganization, and visits the Mission for information. He recognizes Lugosi, who invites him into his office to explain. Lugosi shoots him and orders Kelly to dispose of his body. Archer's disappearance is reported to the police and an investigation at the university is instituted. Asking to see Archer's professor, the police are directed to Lugosi's home. At Lugosi's home a detective, noticing Lugosi's photo, recognizes him to be the head of the Bowery Mission. They question his wife and learn of his double life. When the police arrive at the Mission, Lugosi retreats to the basement hideout where he finds Wanda, who had been doing some investigating of her own. He orders her killed, but Kelly, sensing his revenge, manages to push Lugosi into the pit where he had kept alive Lugosi's victims. These men murder him. Wanda and Archer are reunited.

Gerald Schnitzer wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it. Not for children.

**"Night Monster" with Ralph Morgan,
Irene Porter and Bela Lugosi**
(*Universal, October 23; time, 72 min.*)

Though far-fetched, this program murder mystery melodrama, with a horror side light, should more than satisfy the followers of such type of entertainment. The story is fantastic; it deals with the murders committed by a helpless cripple, without arms or legs, whose highly developed powers of concentration enable him to materialize the missing members of his body. Since this is not found out until the end, one is kept guessing as to the identity of the murderer. There is a romantic interest, but it is subdued:—

Hopelessly crippled by illness, Ralph Morgan invites to his gloomy country home Doctors Lionel Atwill, Frances Pierlot, and Frank Reicher, who had attended him in his illness. Other guests invited are Don Porter, a mystery-story writer; Nils Asther, an East Indian; and Irene Hervey, a woman psychiatrist. Irene was summoned by Fay Helm, Morgan's sister, who, terrified at the strange happenings in the house, believed that she was going insane. This belief is encouraged by Doris Lloyd, the housekeeper, and Bela Lugosi, the butler. Blood stains keep mysteriously appearing on the floors, and because of these weird doings Mary Gordon, the maid, quits her job and informs Lief Erickson, Morgan's lecherous chauffeur, that she intended to speak to Robert Homans, the town constable. Homans is unimpressed with her story. After dinner that evening, Morgan announces that Asther had perfected a new scientific principle—mind over matter. To demonstrate, Asther goes into a trance, causing a skeleton, whose hands dripped blood, to materialize. The skeleton vanishes when he comes out of the trance. According to Asther's theory, a cripple with powers of concentration could make the useless parts of his body come alive. When Mary is reported missing and her mutilated body is discovered, Homans starts an investigation at the house. In rapid succession, all three doctors and the chauffeur are found strangled. Porter and Irene learn from Fay that her brother was the murderer. Fay helps them to escape, then sets fire to the house. Outside, Irene and Porter are attacked by a gruesome figure, who is shot dead by Asther. It was Morgan. He had developed the powers of concentration, which enabled him to materialize legs so that he could walk. He had murdered the doctors because they had left him a cripple, and the others because they knew he could walk.

Clarence Upson Young wrote the screen play, and Don Brown and Ford Beebe produced it. Mr. Beebe directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

**"Smith of Minnesota" with Bruce Smith
and Arline Judge**

(*Columbia, October 15; time, 66 min.*)

Mildly entertaining. The picture is a biography of Bruce Smith, famous All-American football star, and of his family. The best that it has to offer is that the family are a model American type, which is all very nice, but hardly entertaining. The action is extremely slow, and it lacks the color and spirit identified with football pictures. The few football scenes that are shown are newsreel shots of his college games. It is doubtful whether football-picture fans, other than those intensely interested in Smith, will manifest any interest in this picture:—

Warren Asche, a scenarist, is assigned to write a football story, the hero of which was to be Bruce Smith, famous football star. Grumbling that he knows nothing of football, Asche takes a train to Faribault, the town in which Smith lived. He is met by Arline Judge, a local girl-reporter, who offers to drive him to the Smith home. There he meets Bruce; Don Beddoe, his father; Rosemary DeCamp, his mother; Robert Stevens and Maurice Murphy, his brothers; and Kay Harris and Roberta Smith, his sisters. Asche is invited to stay with the family, and is given a pleasant room to work and live in. Bruce, a quiet and retiring sort, is unable to spend much time with Asche, because of his coaching a boys' football team and of his addressing school classes. Asche depends on the other members of the family and on Arline for information about Bruce. In the course of these conversations he learns that Bruce became interested in football because his father, playing for Minnesota in 1910, felt humiliated when Michigan, through no fault of his own, scored the winning touchdown through his position. His father had vowed that some day he would make up for it through a son. Starting in his childhood days, Bruce put his whole heart into the game and eventually became one of Minnesota's greatest players. Despite the fine material given to him, Asche felt that he could get no more than a formula football story out of it. He wires his studio and asks to be relieved of the assignment, but is told to stay on the job. The next day, however, he has a long talk with Bruce, who had just joined the Navy, and for the first time perceives that the finest story he could write was the true life of this unassuming boy.

Robert D. Andrews wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. Morally suitable for all.

**"Jungle Siren" with Ann Corio
and Buster Crabbe**

(*Producers Releasing Corp., Aug. 14; time, 68 min.*)

Aided by a timely plot, this jungle war-melodrama should prove acceptable program fare in its intended playing-zones. With its locale South Africa, the action revolves around the efforts of the Nazis to create an uprising among the native tribes against the Free French. The story and the treatment are formula, and the direction and the acting, adequate. Ann Corio's fame as a burlesque queen may help the box-office, particularly in the exploitation houses:—

Captain Buster Crabbe and Sergeant Paul Bryar of the Free French Army Engineer Corps in Africa are sent to the village of Carraby to make a survey for an airfield, and to block the efforts of a native Chief, a Nazi sympathizer, seeking to rouse the native tribes against the Free French. Plotting with the Chief was Arno Frey, a secret Nazi agent, who, with Evelyn Wahl, his wife, operated a tavern in the village. Ann Corio, a white girl, who had been raised by Dr. Mil Kibbee since the time that her missionary parents were killed by the Chief, kept the natives from uprising. As Crabbe's safari approaches the village, the Chief's warriors put the carriers to rout, leaving Crabbe and Bryar alone in the jungle. Ann finds them and leads them to the village, where they find board and lodging in Frey's inn. Frey's wife falls in love with Crabbe and warns him of impending danger. Ann, too, loves Crabbe, and resents her. Later that night Ann prevents one of the Chief's warriors from killing Crabbe. He falls in love with her. To stir the natives, the Chief places four of his warriors in a coma with a powerful drug, and claims that the two white soldiers had brought a plague to the village. He then offers to revive the warriors if the natives would rise against the French. Sensing the plot, Ann shoots an arrow into Frey, then defies the Chief to bring him back to life. Outwitted, the Chief attempts to kill Ann, but a native strikes him down with a mortal wound. His mission completed, Crabbe radios for a construction crew and a minister.

George W. Sayre and Milton Raison wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"The Navy Comes Through" with Pat O'Brien and George Murphy

(RKO, October 30; time, 81 min.)

Extolling the Navy gun crews that travel with the merchant marine, this pretty good war-melodrama should satisfy in most situations. Although the story is, at times, on the fanciful side, it has been presented in so thrilling a fashion that the interest never lags. There is plentiful action, considerable human interest, some comedy, and a love interest. The good direction and the convincing performances add much to the film's inspirational value:—

When a faulty gun backfires and kills the gun crew, Gunnery Officer George Murphy is accused of criminal negligence. The only men who could prove his innocence are dead. Chief Gunner's Mate Pat O'Brien testifies against him. As a result, Murphy resigns his commission. Jane Wyatt, O'Brien's sister and Murphy's fiancée, accuses O'Brien of deliberately ruining Murphy's career. When war is declared, Murphy enlists in the Navy and, by a coincidence, is assigned to O'Brien's gun crew. O'Brien and his men sail on a tramp steamer to ward off submarines. The first day out the ship is attacked. After a bitter battle, the submarine is sunk. One of the crew, however, is badly wounded. O'Brien signals a hospital ship to bring a surgeon. The surgeon arrives accompanied by Jane, who had enlisted as a nurse. When O'Brien tells him to keep away from her, Murphy deliberately informs Jane that he was in love with another girl. Jane is shocked. One night Carl Esmond, an Austrian refugee, who had joined the Navy, intercepts a radio message from a German supply ship to German submarines, advising that she was ready with a fresh supply of torpedoes. O'Brien and his crew capture the ship. O'Brien suggests to Murphy that he become the navigator and take the ship to Ireland. Murphy insists that they keep the rendezvous with the submarines, and supply them with torpedoes that would explode after loading. O'Brien agrees. With Esmond impersonating a German Captain, the scheme works perfectly, and a number of submarines are destroyed. O'Brien and Murphy become fast friends, and Murphy gets back his commission. Jane and Murphy are reunited.

Roy Chanslor and Islin Auster wrote the screen play. Mr. Auster produced it, and A. Edward Sutherland directed it. The cast includes Jackie Cooper, Max Baer, Desi Arnaz, Frank Jenks and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Mummy's Tomb" with Lon Chaney and Dick Foran

(Universal, October 23; time, 61 min.)

This sequel to "The Mummy's Hand" is a moderately chilling horror melodrama suitable for the lower half of a double bill. The theme, and its treatment, is a rehash of the "Frankenstein" formula in that the Mummy, believed to have been destroyed, lives again to plague those who had defiled its tomb. The action takes place in a small New England town. Much happens, but nothing that will surprise the horror fans:—

Turhan Bey, a fanatical Egyptian priest, arrives in the small town of Mapleton to assume his duties as a cemetery caretaker. He secretly brings with him a 3000-year-old mummy (Lon Chaney), which Bey keeps alive by means of a magic brew. Residing in the town is Dick Foran, an archaeologist; John Hubbard, his son; Elyse Knox, Hubbard's fiancée; and Virginia Brissac, Foran's elderly sister. Bey's purpose was to seek vengeance on Foran, and his family, for his having defiled the mummy's sacred tomb years previously. With the coming of each full moon, Bey orders the mummy to murder one of the family. First Foran, and then his sister meet death. The mysterious killings gain national prominence. Wallace Ford, an old family friend and Foran's fellow archaeologist, recognizes the strange marks left on the bodies, and recalls the curse connected with the opening of the mummy's tomb. The police consider fantastic his story about a mummy committing the murders. Soon Ford, too, is murdered. On the eve of Elyse's and Hubbard's marriage, Bey, infatuated with the girl, orders the mummy to bring her to the cemetery. The townspeople see the mummy walking through the streets carrying Elyse, and trail him to the cemetery. Bey is wounded mortally when he resists them, but the mummy escapes with Elyse and carries her back to Hubbard's home. Brandishing a fiery torch, Hubbard grapples with the mummy and frees the girl. The townspeople set fire to the house, and the flames devour the mummy.

Griffin Jay and Henry Sucher wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"Scattergood Survives a Murder" with Guy Kibbee

(RKO, October 16; time, 66 min.)

This mystery comedy is no better and no worse than the other pictures in the "Scattergood Baines" series. This time Guy Kibbee turns amateur detective and unravels the mystery surrounding the death of two wealthy spinster sisters, who will their money to a house cat. During the execution of the will, several murders are committed among relatives, including the murder of the cat. As is usual in pictures of this type, each character seems to have a motive for the crimes, and the one least suspected is found guilty. Comedy and romance round out the plot:—

John Archer, young newspaper editor, seeks to enliven interest in his newly bought paper by writing an article about two wealthy eccentric sisters, whose sole interest was their house cat. But before he can get his article the sisters meet death when their frightened horse overturns their carriage. When it is revealed that the sisters left their money to the cat, Wallace Ford and Margaret Hayes, newspaper reporters, come to town for a story. They learn that, after the cat, Eily Maylon, the housekeeper, is heir; after her were, in turn, relatives Frank Reicher, Lloyd, his brother, John Miljan, Sarah Edwards, and Dick Elliott. Lloyd had not been heard from in years. When Reicher is found dead from poison administered through scratches on his arm, the cat, who had disappeared, is suspected. When the housekeeper dies in the same manner, Florence Lake is suspected of collusion with Elliott, a druggist who knew poisons. Meanwhile Archer and Ford vie for the attentions of Margaret. Guy Kibbee enters the picture and discovers a lynx skin with a paw missing. He finds also a picture of the missing Lloyd, holding a baby. Margaret finds an object, which she conceals, and Ford discovers the cat, dead. Kibbee then sets about to trap the murderer. Summoning all interested, Kibbee reveals that the missing Lloyd had left a son. He frightens every one by producing a cat. All think that its paws are poisoned. Then he produced the lynx paw, tied to a stick, this being the object Margaret had found. To demonstrate, he grabs Ford's wrist. Ford screams, "It's poisoned!" Ford is revealed as Lloyd's son and the murderer. Archer wins Margaret.

Michael L. Simmons wrote the screen play, Jerrold T. Brandt produced it, and Christy Cabbane directed it.

"Moonlight in Havana" with Allan Jones and Jane Frazee

(Universal, October 16; time, 63 min.)

Tuneful melodies, sprightly dance routines, and fair comedy situations have been nicely blended in this comedy, making it a pleasant program entertainment. The picture is at its best during the musical numbers, for the story is somewhat trivial. The action revolves around a baseball player who is torn between love for the game and a desire to sing with his sweetheart in night clubs. Allan Jones and Jane Frazee make a nice team, both musically and romantically. The dancing of the Jivin Jacks and Jills gives the film a breezy pace:—

Allan Jones, a player on the Blue Sox baseball team, is suspended because of insubordination. Shortly afterwards William Frawley, a theatrical producer, hears Jones singing and offers him a contract to appear with Jane Frazee, an entertainer. When Frawley informs him that his first engagement would be in Havana, Jones accepts at once—since the Blue Sox were training in Havana, this would give him an opportunity to seek reinstatement. In Havana Marjorie Lord, daughter of Wade Boteler, owner of the ball team, helps Jones regain his position with the team, despite the protests of Don Terry, the team's manager. But complications arise: Jones had fallen in love with Jane and wanted to fulfill his singing contract, but Terry had warned him against visiting night clubs. Jane was unaware of Jones' baseball activities, and looked forward to their opening night. Jones' difficulties increase when a special exhibition game is set for the same evening as the night club opening. Moreover, Marjorie's unwanted attentions toward him results in a misunderstanding with Jane. But Jones' difficulties are straightened out when rain spoils the ball game. He makes his appearance with Jane and both are a great success. The newspapers discover his dual profession, and Boteler, instead of being angry, is delighted with the publicity. But since Jones' heart was with baseball, Frawley agrees to get another singing team, and straightens out the misunderstanding between Jones and Jane.

Oscar Brodney wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Anthony Mann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"That Other Woman" with James Ellison and Virginia Gilmore

(20th Century-Fox, November 13; time, 75 min.)

Lacking in star names, and undistinguished either in story, direction, or acting, this comedy is just mildly entertaining. The story is based on the time-worn "secretary chases boss" theme, and centers around a pretty secretary, in love with her play-boy boss, and her efforts to make him cognizant of her. The production has been handled in a routine manner; it offers little that is new. The action is considerably slowed down in spots by too much talk, and its running time is much too long:—

Virginia Gilmore is secretly in love with James Ellison, her play-boy employer, but he is unaware of it and considers her as nothing more than an efficient secretary. Knowing his weakness for women, Virginia mails him a number of perfumed love letters, and signs them "The Pink Lady." Ellison's interest in this unknown admirer increases when one of the notes suggests a rendezvous at a beach, instructing him to look for a girl in a striped bathing suit. Wearing such a suit, Virginia is approached by Ellison, who is surprised to see her but does not connect her with the "Pink Lady." For the first time Ellison is attracted to her, but he is compelled to postpone his love making because of business pressure. Determined to help Virginia, her grandmother, Alma Kruger, sends a gangster to Ellison's office with a threatening note from the "Pink Lady." Ellison decides to get out of town, and takes Virginia with him to help him with his work. They go to a hotel in Utica. Meanwhile, Dan Duryea, a chivalrous Southerner in love with Virginia, believing that Ellison has designs on her, follows them. When Duryea reaches the hotel, Virginia recognizes him and deliberately informs Ellison that he was probably a gangster sent by the "Pink Lady." They elude Duryea, and drive to Ellison's backwoods cabin. But Duryea catches up with them, and they are compelled to spend the night in the woods. The following day they return to the city and, in order to allay Ellison's fear, Virginia sends him a "Pink Lady" note advising that she had given up trying to meet him. But the note only increases his desire for this woman. Angry, Virginia reveals the truth and leaves him. This awakens his love for her, and he eventually wins her back.

Jack Jungmeyer, Jr., wrote the screen play, Walter Morosco produced it, and Ray McCarey directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Boogie Man Will Get You" with Boris Karloff and Peter Lorre

(Columbia, October 29; time, 66 min.)

This satire on horror films is a moderately amusing homicidal comedy, (even though the story is silly), suitable as supporting fare in the small-town and neighborhood theatres. Obviously inspired by the Broadway stage hit "Arsenic and Old Lace," but in no way matching its entertainment standard, the film treats of murder as a lark. Boris Karloff portrays a kindly but mad scientist, who attempts to create a super-man. But something always seems to go wrong with the experiments and, as a result, the laboratory is soon filled with corpses. Karloff is aided and abetted by Peter Lorre, who plays as an insane doctor. As a matter of fact, except for two of the characters, all the others are lunatics. The comedy is humorous in spots, but most of it falls flat:—

Boris Karloff, an eccentric scientist, sells his old Colonial home to Jeff Donnell, a young girl with a penchant for antiques, with a provision that he be permitted to continue his experiments in the basement of his home. Just as Dr. Peter Lorre, the mortgagor, completes the deal, Larry Parks, who had divorced Jeff because of her mania for antiques, arrives to seek a reconciliation. Maude Eburne, the housekeeper, and George McKay, the handyman, both eccentrics, are retained by Jeff to help put the house in condition. When Parks discovers a dead man in the basement, he telephones Lorre, who was also the sheriff. Lorre investigates and finds a room with five corpses. He confronts Karloff, and is convinced by him that it was all in the interests of science; he claimed to have perfected a method by which ordinary men could be changed into super-men. He had used for the experiment peddlers. Unfortunately, something went wrong each time. Lorre offers to invest money in the experiment if Karloff would make him a partner. He agrees. They persuade Maxie Rosenbloom, a peddler, to test the invention. Rosenbloom is apparently killed. Meanwhile Jeff and Parks, disturbed by the weird doings, investigate and find the corpses. The police, notified, arrive to find every one assembled, held at bay by Frank Puglia, who held a bomb in

one hand. To add to the confusion, the five corpses walk in. Puglia throws the bomb, but it sputters and dies. As every one, with the exception of Jeff and Parks, is led away to the insane asylum, Lorre chuckles and mentions that he is a director of that institution.

Edwin Blum wrote the screen play, Colbert Clark produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Seven Days Leave" with Victor Mature and Lucille Ball

(RKO, November 13; time, 87 min.)

Good! This picture bears the same title as the one produced by Paramount in 1930, but the similarity is in the title only. This is a comedy with music and, although the story adds up to nothing, it has enough entertainment values to satisfy most audiences. The picture brings to the screen two well known radio programs—"The Court of Missing Heirs" and "Truth or Consequences"—which should appeal to the radio fans. For the popular-music fans there is Les Brown and Freddy Martin, each with his own orchestra, and the singing of Ginny Simms. Other radio personalities are "The Great Gildersleeve" and Peter Lind Hayes. It is a fast moving film with lively music, some good comedy situations, and a love interest. A pleasant personality is Mickey McGuire, a teen-age youngster, who sings and acts; she will bear watching:—

When Private Victor Mature learns from radio's "Court of Missing Heirs" that he had been left a legacy of one hundred thousand dollars, he immediately proposes marriage to Mapy Cortez, his South American sweetheart and, being without funds, borrows money from his buddies to go to New York to claim the money. Mature takes a few buddies with him. He visits Gildersleeve, the estate's lawyer, to collect his money, only to learn that under the terms of the will he must first marry Lucille Ball, a haughty socialite. Mature meets Lucille, but he finds that his charm does not appeal to her; she was already engaged to Walter Reed, a wealthy broker. Considerably in debt, Mature determines to win her. His buddies help him by conspiring to get Reed out of town so that Mature would not have any interference. Mature doggedly pursues her and, eventually, both fall in love with each other. Mapy learns of Mature's matrimonial intentions toward Lucille and demands an explanation. He informs her that he intended to marry Lucille in order to get the inheritance and, succeeding that, he would get an annulment. But Mapy realizes the truth, and does her best to help the new romance. At a party Gildersleeve wrecks the romance when he inadvertently reveals to Lucille the reason for Mature's attentions. Meanwhile Reed returns, angry at being duped, and starts a fight with Mature. Mature's buddies join the fight, which lands them all in jail. Mapy patches up the romance by convincing Lucille of Mature's sincerity, Mature and his buddies are released from jail in time to join their unit going overseas.

William Bowers, Ralph Spence, Curtis Kenyon, and Kenneth Earl wrote the screen play. Tim Whelan produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

Universal

"Invisible Agent": Fair
 "Pardon My Sarong": Very Good
 "Timber": Fair-Poor
 "Between Us Girls": Good
 "Give Out Sisters": Fair
 "Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror": Fair
 "Halfway to Shanghai": Fair
 Seven pictures, excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:
 Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 1.

Warner-First National

"The Gay Sisters": Very Good-Good
 "Spy Ship": Fair
 "Yankee Doodle Dandy": Excellent-Very Good
 "Across the Pacific": Very Good
 "Busses Roar": Fair-Poor
 "Desperate Journey": Very Good-Good
 Six pictures have been checked with the following results:
 Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Very Good, 1; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

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Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1942

No. 43

"AMATEURS WITH ULCERS"

According to Daily Variety, the phrase "Amateurs with Ulcers" was used last week by a Hollywood producer to attract attention to Hollywood's problem in the casting of pictures as an ever increasing number of actors are entering the armed services.

The continual depletion of players is making the casting of pictures more difficult, and with each succeeding picture that the exhibitor offers to the public he is going to be criticized by his patrons for not giving them their money's worth, for they will not be aware of these difficulties.

Exhibitors who value the good will of their customers will give this problem the consideration that it deserves. But those who see no further than their daily collections will look at their cash register, glance at their crowded theatre, and treat this warning with a disdainful shrug of the shoulders—in the same manner that short-sighted producers shrug their shoulders when they deliver to the exhibitor bad pictures.

These producers scornfully answer criticism of their bad pictures by pointing to the successful box-office returns. What they fail to see is the danger that lies in the fact that our inflated box-office returns have not been earned by any extra efforts on the part of the producers, distributors, or even exhibitors; they are the result of war-time conditions, in which an entertainment-hungry public has more money with which to buy extra entertainment and, since motion picture theatres give them an opportunity to relax while being entertained, they go to see even the bad pictures.

During normal times, we could not have attracted these additional customers if we had spent ten million dollars in exploitation campaigns. But if we had really spent the ten million, rest assured that the producers would have supported such a campaign with an inspired effort to supply the exhibitor with better quality pictures that he might satisfy and hold the increased patronage.

But because the increased patronage has come to us like a wind-fall out of a war condition—a condition that has closed the doors of many other industries, we ignore this ten million-dollar gift and offer nothing in return.

It is not only our star names that are leaving us to join the armed forces; we are losing also our supporting players, who have added dramatic power to scenes, many of which have been made emotionally unforget-

table. We are losing also our outstanding art directors and other experts, who have advanced the making of motion pictures into an art. Steadily depleting are the ranks of our technical men, too—men who record our sound, who handle our cameras, who give us mood-inspiring lighting effects. All these specialists are an integral part of our industry, for, without them, good quality pictures cannot, under the present development of the motion-picture art, be produced.

When the aforementioned Hollywood producer stated that Hollywood would have to rely on players of the "4F" classification and on "amateurs with ulcers," he meant just what he said. But Hollywood can do something about this problem. It can stop squandering the valued services of our remaining actors and technical experts, whose ability they continue to waste in the production of pictures based on half-baked, inane, mediocre, or shallow themes.

Because of the scarcity of good motion picture talent, Hollywood's producers should study carefully the scripts that are now in preparation, designed deliberately for "B" pictures. Such scripts as contain worthy themes, but are not properly developed, should be handed back to the writers for revisions and improvements. In the interest of raising the standard of motion pictures, many Hollywood writers would welcome an opportunity to devote more time and thought to the improvement and development of their hurriedly designed scripts.

Such scripts as cannot be developed into better than "B" grade pictures should not be placed on the production assembly line; they should, instead, be thrown into the nearest waste basket, their loss to be charged off against the increased patronage we are getting without effort or monetary expenditure.

This is not a suggestion for Hollywood to be magnanimous by giving something away for nothing—Hollywood may even ignore that fact that this increased patronage is entitled to better-grade entertainment in return for their greater contribution to the box-office; it is a suggestion that Hollywood consider the expense of bettering its product as a wise investment for future days, the days when the public's spending money may not be so plentiful. By offering our increased patronage pictures of worthy quality now, instead of "B" pictures of poor quality, we shall find that, with the return of normal times, many of our new customers will remain steady patrons.

"The Undying Monster" with James Ellison, Heather Angel and John Howard

(20th Century-Fox, November 27; time, 63 min.)

Based on the "werewolf" theme, this murder mystery melodrama is pretty good program fare. In spite of the fact that every conceivable trick has been employed to divert suspicion on the various characters, because of the director's skillful handling of the material one is held in suspense throughout. The production values are good, and the background, that of an old English castle by the sea, lends itself well to the eerie atmosphere. The photography is particularly good. The followers of mystery pictures should enjoy it, for it is not until the closing scenes that the murderer is identified:—

James Ellison, a scientific detective, is assigned by Scotland Yard to investigate the murder of a girl, committed in the vicinity of a medieval castle, where Heather Angel and John Howard, her brother, lived. According to legend, a mysterious monster, for centuries past, had murdered the men in Howard's family. Howard, who had attempted to rescue the murdered girl, but who was himself attacked, could describe the monster only as something hideous and powerful. Others in the household were Halliwell Hobbs, the butler, Charles Crisp, the groom, Lily Malyon, the housekeeper, and Bramwell Fletcher, a doctor and Heather's fiance. With the conviction that the murder was committed by a human being, and not a supernatural creature, Ellison carries on his investigation. The queer behavior of the household help puzzles him, and he is unsuccessful in his efforts to make them explain. The butler pleads with him to drop the case and go back to London, but he refuses to explain his reasons for this advice. Ellison is particularly suspicious of Fletcher, who continuously hampers the investigation and refuses to cooperate with him. At the scene of the crime Ellison finds a piece of cloth and a tuft of hair. Laboratory tests show that the cloth had come from a muffler belonging to Howard, and that the hair was wolf's hair! While Ellison discusses this evidence with Fletcher, a scream rends the air. Both men rush out and see a monster carrying Heather toward the cliffs. Ellison, followed by constables, gives chase and catches the monster. The monster attacks him, but is shot dead by the constables. As it lies dead, the monster's form changes into that of Howard! He had been a "werewolf"!

Lillie Hayward and Michel Jacoby wrote the screen play, Bryan Foy produced it, and John Brahm directed it. Not for children.

"Dr. Renault's Secret" with J. Carrol Naish, John Shepperd and Lynne Roberts

(20th Century-Fox, December 11; time, 58 min.)

A fairly good murder mystery-horror melodrama, the kind that may serve as good supporting fare to a feature comedy. Fast action and suspense are well maintained as mysterious murders are committed on an estate in pre-war France. The main character is an "ape-man" who, by a series of brain operations and plastic surgery, administered by a scientist, assumes a reasonable resemblance to a normal human being, and is taught to speak and walk like a man. Since this fact is unknown until half-way through the picture, one remains mystified as to the murderer's identity up to that point and, from then on, one is held in suspense in anticipation of his next crime:—

Dr. John Shepperd, a young American, arrives in France to claim Lynne Roberts, his fiancee and niece of George Zucco, a scientist. He stops at an inn, where he is met by a strange character named Noel (J. Carrol Naish), who was to escort him to Zucco's chateau on the following day. That night a drunkard mistakenly sleeps in Shepperd's room and is murdered. The police suspect an ex-convict, who was Zucco's gardener. Shepperd learns that Noel is a native of Java and is assisting Zucco. At the chateau that evening, a strange dog attacks Noel for no apparent reason. The following day the dog is found strangled. In the basement of the chateau, Zucco accuses Noel of killing the drunkard and the dog, but Noel denies this. Their conversation reveals that Noel was an ape, made into a man by Zucco. He beats Noel and places him behind bars. Noel escapes his cage, and goes to the village to join in a Bastille Day celebration. He dances with Lynne, whom he idolized, and is ridiculed by two villagers because of his clumsiness. He waylays both men and murders them. At the scene of the murders, Shepperd finds a clue indicating Noel's guilt. He returns to the chateau with Lynne. Leaving her alone he goes to Zucco's

laboratory and discovers the records of his experiments with Noel. Zucco surprises Shepperd and is about to shoot him when Noel enters, kills Zucco, and knocks Shepperd unconscious. During this confusion, the gardener kidnaps Lynne in an attempt to obtain money from Shepperd. Noel gives chase and is fatally wounded by the gardener. But Noel manages to kill him and rescue Lynne before he himself dies. Shepperd and Lynne return to America.

William Bruckner and Robert F. Metzler wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Harry Lachman directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"The Devil With Hitler" with Alan Mowbray and Bobby Watson

(United Artists, October 9; time, 44 min.)

This newest of the Hal Roach streamlined comedies is an amusing bit of slapstick buffoonery, in which Hitler, Mussolini, and a Japanese emissary answering to the name of Suki Yaki are made a laughing-stock. The comedy situations are by no means subtle; they are slapstick in its broadest form, burlesquing each of the Axis partners' mannerisms. Hitler is depicted as a ranting dictator, who depends on an astrologist to guide him, and whose secret hobby is to follow his old trade of house-painter. Mussolini is shown kowtowing to Hitler, and the Japanese emissary is shown slinking about in typical sly fashion, bent on double-crossing his partners. A sequence that will get many laughs is where the three partners attempt to liquidate each other. The dialogue is at times vulgar.

In the development of the story, the Devil (Alan Mowbray) finds his reign threatened when his associates claim that Hitler (Bobby Watson) is more of an evil-doer than he, and was, therefore, slated to become his successor. The Devil pleads for an opportunity to go up to earth so as to show that there was some good in Hitler, thereby proving him to be ineligible to become the new Devil. By his ability to materialize and dematerialize at will, the Devil manages to take over the duties of Hitler's valet, and from then on attempts to place Hitler in a position that would compel him to do a good deed. After many situations in which Mussolini (Joe Devlin) and Suki Yaki (George E. Stone), Hitler's house guests, figure prominently, the Devil manages to lock all three in a munitions warehouse, where live shells whistle all around them, endangering their lives. The Devil releases all three only after Hitler orders his guards to allow Marjorie Woodworth and Douglas Fowley, a young American couple whom he had ordered executed, to go free. Because of this good deed, Hitler becomes ineligible for the Devil's post.

Al Martin wrote the screen play, Glenn Tryon produced it, and Gordon Douglas directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Thunder Birds" with Gene Tierney, Preston Foster and John Sutton

(20th Century-Fox, November 20; time, 78 min.)

There are good entertainment values in this mixture of romance, comedy, and thrills. Photographed in Technicolor against the background of a training field, where young cadets of the United Nations earn their wings, the flying sequences and the life of the cadets form but a minor part of the picture. Primarily, the story is that of a love triangle with a flying instructor and his cadet pupil vying for the love of the same girl. One of the film's highlights is where John Sutton, flying solo for the first time, pilots his plane through a desert sand storm to save Preston Foster, his instructor, who had parachuted from the plane only to be caught in mid-air by the storm. A good comedy sequence is where some of the cadets pose as patients for a women's first aid class:—

Preston Foster, an old-time pilot, is assigned to instruct cadets at Thunderbird Field. Before starting his duties Foster visits a ranch nearby, where Gene Tierney, his former sweetheart, lived with George Barbier, her grandfather. Gene and Foster had broken their engagement, because of his constant absence on flying trips; she good naturedly rejects his plea to start anew. Foster's first pupil is John Sutton, who suffers air-sickness. Foster becomes attached to Sutton, whose father was a fellow-flier during the first World War. Sutton pleads that he do not reject him, and Foster reluctantly agrees to give him another chance. A rift develops between the two when Gene and Sutton strike up a close friendship. Reginald Denny, English Commandant at the Field, takes Sutton up on a test flight and notices his air-sickness. He demands that Sutton be rejected, but Foster

threatens to resign unless Sutton is given another chance. The following day Foster takes Sutton up on a test flight, and tells him that the only way for him to overcome air-sickness was to worry about flying the plane. Foster steps out of the plane and parachutes down. A sudden wind comes up as Foster lands, sweeping him and his parachute toward a cliff. Fighting against the wind, Sutton lands his plane near the cliff and saves Foster in the nick of time. Both men become fast friends. Sutton graduates and takes Gene back to England, while Foster stays on to train more men.

Lamar Trotti wrote the screen play and produced it. William A. Wellman directed it. The cast includes Jack Holt, Dame May Whitty, Richard Haydn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"I Married a Witch" with Veronica Lake, Fredric March and Robert Benchley

(United Artists, October 30; time, 75 min.)

The chief selling point in this fair fantastic comedy is the marquee value of Veronica Lake and Fredric March. Based on Thorne Smith's, "The Passionate Witch," the story centers around a witch who, put to death by a Pilgrim family in 1690, comes back in modern times to plague a descendant of that family, who was a prominent man seeking election. The comedy is provoked by her efforts to interfere with his forthcoming marriage and to discredit him in the eyes of the voters. Trick photography, which allows the witch and her sorcerer father to dematerialize and reappear at will, adds to the amusement. It is a completely nonsensical picture, but it should satisfy those who seek a change from war films:—

A sorcerer and his witch daughter are burned at the stake by a Pilgrim family. As they die, the witch lays on the family's male descendants a curse that they may never marry the right woman. An oak tree is planted over their ashes to hold them prisoners forever. Two hundred and fifty years later Fredric March, a descendant, is a candidate for Governor, backed by Robert Warwick, a publisher and father of Susan Hayward, March's fiancée. During a storm the oak tree is struck by lightning, and two smoky spirits rise from it. They are Veronica Lake, the witch, and Cecil Kellaway, her sorcerer father. Veronica pleads with her father for a body so that she may plague March in a manner that will cause him to lose both Susan and the election. Veronica contrives to have March rescue her from a fire; she then refuses to leave him. March, frantic, thinks that she is a trick of the opposition to ruin his chances of winning the election. To overcome March's resistance to her advances, Veronica brews a love potion for him. But she is knocked unconscious in an accident, and March revives her by giving her the potion. She awakens in love with the man she had set out to ruin. Veronica and her father upset March's wedding reception, causing Susan to fall off the marriage, and Warwick to withdraw his support. But March does not care; he marries Veronica. On their wedding night, Veronica confesses that she is a witch, but March does not believe her. To prove it, she offers to win the Governorship for him. He is elected unanimously on election day. Furious that his daughter had let love get the better of her witchery, Kellaway causes her spirit to leave her body. As both watch the despondent March, Kellaway's smoky spirit enters a whisky bottle for a drink. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Veronica's spirit sneaks back into her body and quickly puts the cork on the bottle, imprisoning Kellaway's spirit forever.

Robert Pirosh and Marc Connelly wrote the screen play, and Rene Clair produced and directed it.

Too sophisticated for the children.

"The Black Swan" with Tyrone Power, George Sanders, Laird Cregar and Maureen O'Hara

(20th Century-Fox, December 4; time, 84 min.)

Very good! This screen version of Raphael Sabatini's novel about swashbuckling pirates, who roamed the seas and preyed upon shipping during the days of the Spanish Main, is a red-blooded action-packed adventure melodrama, reminiscent of the films in which Douglas Fairbanks was a favorite. Produced on a lavish scale, the setting and picturesque costumes—elegant ones worn by the nobility, and colorful rags worn by the pirates—are enhanced by the exceptionally good Technicolor photography. Thrills, excitement, comedy, and romance run high as Tyrone Power, in the role of a dashing reformed pirate, seeks to put an end to the plundering of his former friends. The children will revel in it, and their elders will certainly be pleased:—

Led by Tyrone Power and George Sanders, pirates pillage a quiet town in the Caribbean. As they carouse over their spoils, Spanish soldiers approach. All escape but Power. He was in a drunken stupor, brooding, because Captain Laird Cregar, his former leader, was to be hanged in London. Power is taken to Jamaica and is tortured by the commandant, but he is released when Cregar storms into the castle and announces that the King had pardoned and appointed him the new Governor. Cregar calls a meeting of the pirates and asks them to join him in a peaceful life. All agree, except Captain George Sanders and his crew. Power and Thomas Mitchell are made aides to Cregar. Power is attracted to Maureen O'Hara, ex-Governor George Zucco's daughter, but she scorns him. Edward Ashley, her fiancée, becomes Power's sworn enemy. Through secret information given to him by Ashley, Sanders captures many English treasure ships. The Assembly accuses Cregar of collusion with Sanders, and demand his impeachment. Cregar blocks the move and dispatches Power and a crew to capture Sanders. Learning that Maureen planned to marry Ashley any day, Power kidnaps and takes her to his ship. Sanders' ships catch Power by surprise. Knowing that he cannot outfight or outrun the Black Swan (Sanders' ship), Power joins forces on the pretense that he is tired of a peaceful life. He introduces Maureen as his wife. Fearing harm, she does not deny this. Sanders, however, uncovers the ruse and locks them up. Sanders runs up the British flag on all his ships and heads for Maracaibo, where the unsuspecting Cregar awaited the triumphant return of Power. As Sanders enters the harbor and opens fire, Power frees his bonds, and releases his crew. The men attack the pirates and subdue them, Maureen realizes her love for Power.

Ben Hecht and Seton I. Miller wrote the screen play, Robert Bassler produced it, and Henry King directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"In Which We Serve" with Noel Coward and an all-English cast

(United Artists, December 25; time, 112 min.)

Excellent! This British made drama is one of the finest war pictures yet produced, and it will undoubtedly prove to be one of the top box-office attractions of the new season, in spite of the fact that the players, with the exception of Noel Coward, are unknown to American audiences. Credit for this masterpiece is due to Noel Coward, who, in addition to his acting in the picture, wrote the story, produced it, co-directed it, and even wrote the musical score. In every department his handling is brilliant, and it may well serve as a lesson in motion picture technique for Hollywood. The deeply moving and absorbing story of a warship and her crew has captured the fighting spirit that is England's today. The story has no plot. It is a series of episodes in the life of the ship, and of the intimate details surrounding the loves and lives of some of her men, most of which are told in a flashback manner as the men retrace their thoughts while clinging to a rubber raft, exhausted, wounded, and facing death from the machine gun bullets of strafing Nazi planes, which had sent their ship to the bottom. It is a thoroughly human story, of Britain's fighting men and their families, portrayed vividly with typical English restraint.

The fear that strikes in the hearts of wives and sweethearts when a sinking is announced, and the joy that is theirs when news of the safety of their loved ones comes; the intimacies of family groups; the concern of the men for their families facing air raids at home, while they themselves brave the dangers of sea warfare; the thrills and excitement of life on a fighting ship; the evacuation at Dunkerque of the soldiers, who are completely bewildered but determined to fight on; the camaraderie that war brings between the army and navy, which in peacetime have rivalries; the love of the crew for their Captain; the farewell of the Captain to the survivors of his crew; the romance and marriage of an English sailor and his girl, and the few brief hours or days on leave in which they give each other lasting love and affection—all these and more are what the spectator sees and feels. Some of the scenes tug at one's heart strings and bring tears to one's eyes, while other scenes make one chuckle and even guffaw.

The performances are first-rate. Outstanding is the portrayal of Noel Coward, as the strict but human Captain; Celia Johnson, as his understanding wife; Bernard Miles, as the chief petty officer; Johnny Mills as the Cockney sailor; Kay Walsh as Mill's bride; and Joyce Carey, as Miles' loyal wife.

It is an inspiring picture, and should appeal to any audience, regardless of what side of the tracks they live on.

THE NEW TAXES ON THE FAMILY INCOME AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE THEATRE BOX OFFICES

The new income tax rates that will soon be in effect are going to change, to a greater extent than ever before, the living habits of every patron in this nation. It will probably result in making many of us, who have never bothered about living on a budget, budget-conscious.

The forthcoming tax program will undoubtedly put a strain on the family man's pocketbook. He may find that a percentage of his salary will be deducted at the source, in addition to his being compelled to save enough money for his present year's income tax.

Bear in mind that the family income that used to be thirty-five dollars a week is now probably fifty dollars a week, and our box-office has been getting a fair share of that fifteen-dollar increase. But the share that we have been getting now seems destined to be applied to the payment of new taxes.

When the family man sits down to make up his new budget for the purposes of providing for the payment of his new income tax bill, one of the first items to be pared will, no doubt, be the money that he and his family usually spend for entertainment. And when he pares from the entertainment fund, he is slicing at our box-office.

But if we have earned his patronage with pictures of good entertainment values, his wife and children will squawk at his attempt to cut out motion pictures. Such a protest from the family is a vote for the box-office, for it is then that we shall collect dividends for having given them good pictures. But that same protest may turn into a vote against the box-office, if we persist in feeding them with "B" pictures of poor quality.

By giving that family good entertainment values, and by imbuing them with a desire to go to the movies, it would work to our benefit if the entertainment money allowed on the budget should find its way into our box-office, instead of into the box-offices of other forms of amusement.

Remember that little family conference!—it will be there where the fate of our box-office will be decided!

A COURTESY UNIFORMED MEN AND WOMEN DESERVE

Credit Gus S. Eysell, managing director of the Radio City Music Hall, with probably the nicest gesture that a theatre-man has yet made toward the men in our armed forces.

When Gus learned that a few soldiers, with limited furlough time, were way back in the standing lines that usually form around the Music Hall, he instructed his ushers to escort them directly to the box-office, and to make every effort to secure immediate seating for them.

The special privilege accorded these soldiers has now been instituted as a regular Music Hall policy, regardless of whether the uniformed service man pays for his admission or comes in on a pass.

The man in our armed forces is entitled to every consideration during his furlough, and not one moment of the few hours he has on leave should be wasted in waiting on a long line to buy his admission ticket, or waiting in the lobby to get a seat.

The wise exhibitor will take his cue from Mr. Eysell, and extend every possible courtesy to the men in the service. Instruct your ushers to keep a close watch for uniformed men in line, and to bring them and their female escorts directly to the box-office. It will give them a sense of importance they richly deserve, and no right-minded civilian will object to a service man passing him on line. As a matter of fact, your thoughtfulness will gain you the respect and good will of your patrons.

* * *

While on the subject of consideration to the men of the armed forces, let us not forget about the women who, too, are serving in the armed forces. I refer to the WAACS, the WAVES, and all such women's divisions, other than the numerous women's voluntary organizations.

These uniformed women are governed by rules and regulations that are similar to those that govern the uniformed men. They, too, are granted furloughs, and their wages are, like that of the men, limited and meagre. Most theatres have special admission prices for uniformed men. Is there any reason why these women should not be included?

For the information of exhibitors who desire to extend special admission prices for women, no amusement tax is required. The amusement tax law exempts "Members of the Military or Naval forces of the United States when in uniform."

If you have not yet adopted such a policy, you should.

PAINLESS CONTRIBUTIONS

An excellent idea is the formation of a Radio Star Picture Fund Committee to carry out a plan by which radio fans requesting autographed pictures of radio performers will be asked to contribute ten cents to the USO fund.

A similar committee should be formed in Hollywood, where thousands of requests are received daily from movie fans, asking for a picture of their favorite stars. The thousands of dimes received will go far in aiding this fine organization to continue its good work.

The exhibitors, too, can do something along these lines, either in the way of a contribution to the USO, or increasing the sale of war stamps. The many passes that they issue each week should contain a suggestion that the holder either contribute a dime to the USO, or buy a ten cent or twenty-five cent war stamp, in return for his privilege of seeing the show at no cost.

Although honoring his pass will not be conditional upon his contribution, the holder, in most cases, will be glad to do his bit.

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Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1942

No. 44

CURTAIN TIME

October 21, 1942.

Curtain time for a Broadway stage play indicates the exact time that the curtain will rise for the first act. In movie theatres, however, the curtain time is anytime the patron comes into the theatre and takes a seat.

That difference should be recognized by the writers who construct screen plays.

People who come into the theatre in the middle of a picture cannot, in most cases, enjoy the picture if they missed the introduction of the characters, their relation to each other, or the establishment of the premise.

Screen writers should remember that almost forty percent of our audiences do not see a picture from beginning to end, but from middle to middle. They must, therefore, be more resourceful and adroit in the construction of their screen plays so that the "forty percenters" will better understand the meaning of scenes and of dialogue when they arrive at the theatre during the third or fourth reel.

Every new sequence should be judged before production to determine whether the "forty-percenters" will get the "drift" of the situation. Some sequences might require no more than a modification of some of the dialogue. For example, a character may say "my brother," instead of "George," or "my sister," instead of "Helen."

Screen writers may complain that to follow such a suggestion would be unorthodox and contrary to proper story construction, but they must remember that they are writing for moving picture audiences, and not for Broadway stage play audiences, who, with the exception of those few making a grand entrance, are in their seats at curtain time.

Most of our patrons come to the theatre after the supper dishes are washed, and it is up to us to accommodate our screen-play writing to their customs and habits, rather than compel them to change their habits to accommodate us. Let us not forget that it is we who are seeking their patronage.

OF COMING EVENTS

Commenting on the editorial that appeared in the October 10th, 1942 issue of this paper, Mr. Jack Kirsch, President of Allied Theatres of Illinois, writes the following:

"Dear Pete:

"Answering your editorial of October 10th entitled, 'Coming Events Cast Their Shadows,' there is no doubt that more government regulation of the industry is on the way. I don't think anyone in the film business is so naive as not to foresee this. We have actually been at war almost a year and our country has been indirectly involved for more than three years.

"While we have been classed as an essential industry, the big-wigs of production, distribution and exhibition have continually dissipated this privilege by the shameful and wasteful production which has been emanating from Hollywood. Despite the fact that other industries have been compelled to close up shop for lack of materials, the producers and chain theatres have continued to operate on a 'business as usual' basis.

"I think one of the biggest problems today is the double-feature evil. I don't have to tell you, Pete, how often and vociferously I have decried this wasteful policy. I asked the distributors and chains alike to endeavor to stop it and pointed out the natural consequences that would follow if it weren't halted. But instead of hearing our pleas, they have continued to encourage the practice by producing 'so many clucks.' Their greed for more revenue now places them in a position where they will have to momentarily meet drastic changes in production.

"They talk about reducing prints to conserve film, while they persist on making the type of pictures that are only suitable for double features and the public is getting fed up. Gallup's poll will tell you that. As for exhibitor sentiment, our recent poll tells the story. (By the way, Pete, I didn't see any mention of this in HARRISON'S REPORTS.)

"In my opinion, as much as I dislike government regulation of industry, I think the best thing that can happen to our business is for the government to issue an order abolishing the showing of double features for the duration. It's a shame that such a move must come from the government and not from the industry itself, which by this time should have realized that it couldn't possibly continue to grind out picture after picture, what with many of the stellar stars joining the service and the demands of the draft upon the manpower of our country.

"Further, I sayeth not.

"Sincerely,

"Jack Kirsch."

"Boss of Big Town" with John Litel, Florence Rice and H. B. Warner

(Producers Releasing Corp., December 7; time, 65 min.)

Food racketeering is the topical theme of this gangster melodrama, which should prove to be an acceptable supporting feature in other than its normal playing zones. The story follows a formula, and there is a lack of physical action common in gangster pictures, but one's interest is maintained to a fair degree by reason of the good direction and the cast's good performance. Although the story attempts to conceal the identity of the racketeer boss, one guesses, early in the picture, who he is. Two mild romances have been worked into the plot:—

When John Litel, manager of a large produce market owned by a syndicate, refuses to join John Miljan in a scheme to control the city's food supply, a few of the produce dealers are beaten, and their stores smashed. Litel persuades Florence Rice, a girl reporter, not to break the story; he felt that Miljan was but a tool of a more powerful individual, and he was determined to uncover him. Because of the continued vandalism and decreased business, H. B. Warner, head of the market syndicate, informs Litel that he is compelled to dismiss him. Frank Ferguson, a friend of Litel's, is killed by the gangsters, leaving Patricia Prest, his little daughter, in Litel's care. Litel agrees to join up with Miljan, in the hope that he would eventually meet the gangster head. One night Jean Brooks, Warner's daughter, who had become interested in Litel, visits him at his apartment where she is molested by Paul Dubov, one of Miljan's henchmen. When Litel intervenes, Dubov shoots at him, but Jean, in an effort to shield Litel, is wounded. Jean begs Litel to explain to her father, and reveals that Warner had an appointment that evening with Miljan. Realizing that Warner was the gangster head, Litel telephones the police, then goes to Warner's home. Learning that Litel was working with the police, Miljan, too, goes to Warner's home. As Warner decides to surrender to the police, Miljan shoots him. Litel is saved from a similar fate by the appearance of Florence and the police. The racket broken, Florence becomes Patricia's new mother.

Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz and Harry Edwards produced it, and Arthur Driefuss directed it. There are no objectionable situations.

"Army Surgeon" with James Ellison, Kent Taylor and Jane Wyatt

(RKO, December 4; time, 63 min.)

Although meant to extol the Army Medical Corps for the part they play in war time, this film really is no more than a romantic war melodrama of program grade,—and an ordinary one at that. Moreover, the story takes place during World War I and, to many people, it may seem out-dated. The action revolves around a love triangle, and deals with the undeclared love of an Army surgeon for his nurse, and the inevitable cocky flier, her former sweetheart. It all takes place amidst war scenes in an emergency hospital in a French battlefield. There are the usual heroics and exciting battle scenes (mostly library shots), but somehow it fails to impress. The direction and the performances are nothing to brag about:—

Jane Wyatt, a woman doctor, volunteers as a nurse to assist Capt. James Ellison of the Medical Corps. Ellison felt that he could save more men if he would be allowed to establish a hospital directly behind the front lines. Unknown to Ellison, Jane intercedes with the commanding officer, and

Ellison, Lieut. Walter Reed, his assisting surgeon, and herself are moved to a makeshift hospital in a cave dug out of the side of a hill at the front. Lieut. Kent Taylor, a cocky flier and high school sweetheart of Jane's, is shot down near the hospital. Taylor wants to resume his courtship, but Jane discourages him. Ellison, who was falling in love with Jane, resented Taylor. When Reed is killed during a heavy bombardment, Jane breaks down and holds herself responsible for bringing him to the front lines. Given a few days leave, Jane goes to a little village where she meets Taylor. Ellison, off duty, sees them, and he and Taylor almost come to blows. They return to the base just as a big German drive starts. While moving the wounded, an explosion loosens tons of earth, sealing the entrance to the cave. Taylor and Ellison dig furiously for days, while Jane tends to the wounded. Ellison finally breaks through, only to find that they were now behind enemy lines. All are saved when the Allies force the Germans to retreat. Jane and Ellison realize their love. Taylor and Ellison become fast friends.

Barry Trivers and Emmet Lavery wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and A. Edward Sutherland directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Criminal Investigator" with Robert Lowery, Edith Fellows and John Miljan

(Monogram, October 23; time, 61 min.)

Mediocre program fare. The story is based on the time worn "cub reporter versus gangsters" theme, and this version offers little that is novel; nor is it distinguished either in production or acting. The chief faults lie in the loosely written screen play, and in situations that are forced. The thrills are negligible, and the comedy and romantic interest mild. It is strictly a supporting feature for the small-town and neighborhood theatres:—

Robert Lowery, cub reporter, becomes involved with a gangster ring headed by John Miljan, an attorney. Lowery is assigned to cover the prison release of Vivian Wilcox, a show-girl, whose millionaire husband had been mysteriously murdered. Vivian had been "railroaded" to prison by Miljan, who was executor of her husband's estate. Arriving in time to see Vivian enter a cab, Lowery sees her hurled from the cab within a few blocks. Lowery learns from a letter found on her body that Edith Fellows, her younger sister, did not know that she had been in jail, and that Edith intended to meet her at a New York bus station with a key that would open up her late husband's safety deposit box. Lowery arrives at the bus station in time to prevent two of Miljan's henchmen, who were after the key, from kidnaping Edith. Lowery hides her in his apartment, but Miljan manages to contact her, and arranges for her to come to a theatre to meet her sister, of whose death Edith was still unaware. Learning of the rendezvous, Lowery notifies the police to keep a close watch at the bank for any person attempting to open up the safety deposit box, then follows Edith to the theatre. As Miljan tells Edith that Lowery's story of her sister's death is fantastic, the police arrive with Jan Wiley, Miljan's girl-friend; she had attempted to open the deposit box. Miljan denies the murders, but confesses that he sought to destroy the will contained in the deposit box. As he starts to name the murderer, Lawrence Creighton, one of his henchmen, kills him. Creighton is quickly apprehended, and confesses to the crimes.

George Jeske wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Miss V from Moscow" with Lola Lane

(Producers Releasing Corp., November 23; time, 66 min.)

Although it offers little that is novel in story or in treatment, this espionage melodrama is satisfactory program fare. The action revolves around a Russian "Mata Hari" (in Occupied France), who, with the aid of the Free French, secures and transmits Nazi military information to her homeland. The film has occasional suspenseful moments, and the action moves along at a swift pace, but, as in most pictures of this type, the story is on the implausible side. There is no romance or comedy:—

Because of her close resemblance to a German woman-spy, who had been secretly murdered, Lola Lane, a Russian agent, is sent to Paris to impersonate her. In Paris Lola contacts a French artist, who gives her a cigarette case that belonged to the dead spy, and contrives to have her arrested. Brought before Colonel John Vosper, Gestapo Chief, Lola displays the cigarette case, which he recognizes as a gift from Hitler. He instantly accepts her as the real spy. Vosper escorts her to the dead spy's apartment, where the German maid suspects that she is not her mistress. Meanwhile Howard Banks and Victor Kendall, RAF fliers shot down in France, make their way to Paris hotly pursued by the Gestapo. They separate and agree to meet the following day at a cafe, where the Free French operated a secret radio transmitter. To escape the Gestapo, Banks climbs through a window of Lola's bedroom, where he is later found by her. They are interrupted by the arrival of a Nazi officer, who had been informed by the maid that Lola was not her mistress. Banks knocks him unconscious and escapes with his uniform. The following day Noel Madison, a Gestapo agent, trails Lola to the cafe, where she had gone to transmit valuable information she had received from Vosper. Banks and Kendall arrive in time to hold the Nazis at bay while Lola sends her message. All succeed in making their escape through a secret passage.

Arthur St. Clair and Sherman Lowe wrote the screen play, George M. Merrick produced it, and Albert Herman directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Northwest Rangers" with James Craig, William Lundigan and Patricia Dane

(MGM, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama. Unlike most films of the Canadian Northwest, it has a minimum of outdoor action. It concerns itself mostly with the gambling exploits of an erring but carefree young man, who finally meets death at the hands of his foster-brother, a Mountie. Steady action is sustained throughout and, although the plot is thin, the spectator's attention is held to the end. Some of the gambling sequences have been presented well; they hold one in suspense. Comedy and romance round out the plot:—

When their parents are killed by Indians, Blackie Marshall (Darryl Hickman) and Jim Gardner (Drew Roddy) are befriended by Sergeant Duncan Frazier (Jack Holt). As the boys grow up, Jim aspires to join the Mounted Police. Blackie, however, has a gambling streak and runs away from home. Years later, Blackie (James Craig) returns and is warmly greeted by Frazier and Jim (William Lundigan), who had become a Mountie. Blackie goes to the Topaz saloon, owned by Martin Caswell (John Carradine), who had cheated him as a youngster. There he meets Jean Avery (Patricia Dane), a singer seeking a job. Gambling for huge stakes, Blackie wins the saloon from Caswell. Jean is estab-

lished in the cafe, and Blackie becomes popular and prosperous. Jim and Jean fall in love, and Blackie, himself in love with her, wishes them happiness. When a gambler named Fowler (Grant Withers) fails to pay a gambling debt, Blackie goes after him, killing him in a fight near an old mine. Jim attempts to arrest him, but lack of evidence exonerates Blackie. When Caswell uncovers evidence that might convict him, Blackie agrees to gamble the saloon against his silence. Caswell wins, then threatens to tell the Mounties that Blackie traded Jean to Jim for his freedom. Enraged, Blackie kills him. Reluctantly, Jim goes into the woods after Blackie, only to find Frazier there ahead of him. Blackie knock Frazier down and attempts to escape, but Jim shoots him down. Blackie dies in Jim's arms.

Gordon Kahn and David Land wrote the screen play, Samuel Marx produced it, and Joe Newman directed it.

Not for children.

"Whistling in Dixie" with Red Skelton and Ann Rutherford

(MGM, no release date set; time, 73 min.)

This sequel to "Whistling in the Dark" is a good murder-mystery comedy. Again cast in the role of "The Fox," radio detective, Red Skelton becomes involved in a real-life murder, which takes place on the site of an old Confederate fort in the deep South. Buried treasure; crooked public officials; a Confederate veteran and his whistling cockatoo; an honest chauffeur and his criminal twin brother; broad Southern accents—all these are compounded into a series of highly amusing slapstick situations, which, together with the typical Skelton gags, will certainly please most audiences, particularly the Skelton fans. Rags Raglund adds much to the comedy:—

Red Skelton, radio detective, is granted a vacation by his sponsor so that he could marry Ann Rutherford, his fiancée. As they prepare to leave, Ann receives an urgent message for help from Diana Lewis, an old school chum. Ann persuades Skelton to go South, where Diana lives with Judge Guy Kibbee, her uncle. Arriving there, Skelton learns from Diana that Mark Daniels, a young man toward whom she and Celia Travers, her cousin, were romantically inclined, had disappeared while doing historical research work at an old Confederate fort. The evidence points to murder. Skelton's first suspicions are directed toward the Judge and Rags Raglund, his chauffeur, whose twin brother was a notorious criminal whom Skelton had recently tracked down. Skelton's troubles increase when Raglund's twin brother arrives and poses as the chauffeur. In the fort, Skelton finds Daniels' brief case, and in it a clue that leads him to a buried treasure chest containing old gold coins. Sheriff George Bancroft and District Attorney Peter Whitney are summoned. Publicly, these two officials were enemies; privately, they were friends. They had long known of this treasure, and had abducted Daniels when they found that he had discovered the hiding place. Bancroft arrives first, and imprisons Skelton, Ann, Raglund, and Diana in an old cell, without ventilation. When Whitney arrives, he double-crosses Bancroft and throws him into the cell with the others. An old Confederate soldier learns of the prisoners' plight and releases them. In the confusion, Bancroft escapes and speeds to murder Daniels, but is pursued by Skelton. After an exciting chase, Bancroft, Whitney, and Raglund's twin brother are captured, and Daniels is saved. Skelton becomes a local hero.

Nat Perrin wrote the screen play, George Haight produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Stand By All Networks" with John Beal and Florence Rice

(Columbia, Oct. 29; time, 63 min.)

An "assembly line" espionage melodrama, suitable for the lower half of a double bill. Though the action is fast, making the picture acceptable to "action" fans, the story is factory-made, and the direction and acting are not distinctive even for a picture of this type. There is a romance, but one hardly notices it:—

John Beal, an on-the-spot radio announcer, vainly tries to awaken the public to the danger the nation faces from saboteurs and spies—his employer is annoyed and the police think he is a "publicity hound." Having heard that a tanker had been torpedoed, he flies over it to announce the news. While there, he notices signals flashed from a ship to a strange plane. Upon his return, he questions the Captain as to the meaning of the signals, but the Captain pretends ignorance. Suspecting him and his crew, Beal puts Pat McVey, his collaborator, on their trail. Beal goes to Pat's apartment but finds him dead—murdered. The following morning he receives by mail a list of names of the saboteurs sent to him by Pat just before his death. The list includes the name of Margaret Hayes, an amateur flyer connected with the radio station he worked for. But before confronting Miss Hayes, Pearl Harbor is bombed. Suddenly he is amazed to hear over the radio his own voice, trying to cause the public to distrust the Government leaders. The saboteurs were using his voice. Miss Hayes, realizing that Florence Rice, friend of Beal, suspected her, has Florence kidnaped and taken to "Ariel," a boat, the lair of the saboteurs. With the aid of Government agents, Beal is eventually able to uncover the gang, and to bring about their arrest.

The story is by Maurice Tombragel; the screen play, by Tombragel himself, Doris Malloy and Robert Lee Johnson. It was produced by Jack Feir, and directed by Lew Landers.

"Gentleman Jim" with Errol Flynn, Alexis Smith, Jack Carson and Alan Hale

(Warner Bros., Nov. 14; time, 104 min.)

Biographical of James J. Corbett, this colorful melodrama is a very good mass entertainment. Filled with fast action, human interest, and comedy, the film depicts the rise of Corbett from a bank clerk to heavyweight champion, by defeating the invincible John L. Sullivan. The boxing matches are thrilling; they show the superiority of Corbett's fast footwork over the lumbering style of the boxers of that era. Some of the comedy situations are hilarious, particularly those in which Alan Hale, as Corbett's blustering Irish father, appears. Errol Flynn is very good as the cocky but lovable Corbett, as is the remainder of the cast in their respective roles. The production is lavish:—

Jim Corbett (Errol Flynn), a bank clerk, meets Vicki Ware (Alexis Smith), daughter of Buck Ware (Minor Watson), millionaire member of the Olympic club, to which Jim aspired to be admitted. Vicki resents his cocky manner, but shows him through the club where, in the gymnasium, he boxes with an instructor who recognizes his aptitude with his fists. Jim is made a member of the club. Resenting Jim's brashness, Ware arranges a match with Jack Burke (Art Foster), English champion, hoping that Burke would beat him. Jim knocks out the Englishman. At a dance, Jim resents the attempts of the members to eject Walter Lowrie (Jack Carson), his friend, from the party. Both men become drunk and leave. The following morning, Jim is astonished when Billy Delaney (William Frawley), a stranger, announces that he is Jim's manager, and that Jim had signed for a fight that evening. Jim wins the fight and decides to turn profes-

sional. He climbs the fistic ladder of success, and soon becomes a popular hero, second only to John L. Sullivan, the champion. Jim sends most of his money to his family, buys them a new home, and sets up his father and brothers in business. Meanwhile a continuous feud exists between Vicki and Jim because of his cockiness. Jim goads Sullivan into agreeing to a championship fight, but he is stumped by Sullivan's demand that he bet \$10,000 on the outcome. Jim did not have the money. Unknown to Jim, Vicki puts up the money; she wanted the satisfaction of seeing him beaten. After a furious battle, Jim beats Sullivan.

At a party later that evening, Sullivan enters the room and, in a touching scene, hands Jim his championship belt. Subdued, and his brashness gone, Jim gravely accepts the belt and informs Sullivan that he will try to be a good champion. Realizing that beneath Jim's cocky exterior was tenderness, Vicki declares her love for him.

Vincent Lawrence and Horace McCoy wrote the screen play, Robert Buckner produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Journey for Margaret" with Robert Young, Laraine Day and Fay Bainter

(MGM, no release date set; time, 81 min.)

Very good! Intelligently directed and splendidly performed, this drama is one of the most appealing and highly emotional pictures yet produced of the war. The story of an American war correspondent and of his attachment for two war orphans is filled with human interest, comedy, and pathos. One feels deeply the tragedy that befalls children who are orphaned or often maimed, in air raids. All the characters are extremely sympathetic. The spectator who could sit through this picture and remain with dry eyes would indeed be a hardened person:—

Robert Young, American war correspondent, arrives in London from war-torn France accompanied by Laraine Day, his wife. Laraine, who was soon to become a mother, refuses to listen to Young's plea that she return to the United States. While covering an air raid, Young rescues William Severn, a four-year-old boy, whose parents had been killed in an air raid. Young takes the youngster to an orphanage home conducted by Fay Bainter, who had dedicated her life to the care of children orphaned by the war. Returning to his hotel, Young learns that Laraine had been injured and taken to a hospital. An operation saves her, but the surgeon informs Young that she could never have a child. When Laraine recuperates, Young sends her back to the United States for a rest. Young visits Miss Bainter for a story about war orphans, and renews his friendship with little William, to whom he takes a great liking. He also meets Margaret O'Brien, a sad-eyed child, whose pathos he feels deeply. Young and the children become greatly attached to each other. He attempts to help Miss Bainter place them with childless families, but the children refuse to leave him. He finally decides to adopt them and take them home to America. Lack of airplane space compels him to choose only one of the children. Miss Bainter settles his problem by selecting Margaret. Heartbroken at leaving William behind, Young manages to induce one of the plane's passengers to take William instead of her luggage. The three are met in New York by Laraine, who takes the children to her heart.

David Hertz and William Ludwig wrote the screen play, based upon the book by William L. White. B. P. Fineman produced it, and Major W. S. Van Dyke II directed it. Included in the cast are Nigel Bruce, Elisabeth Risdon and others.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1942

No. 45

AN IMPORTANT CORRECTION

In an editorial appearing in the October 24, 1942, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, discussing the advisability of charging lower admission prices for uniformed women in the armed forces, the following statement was made:

"For the information of exhibitors who desire to extend special admission prices for women, no amusement tax is required. The amusement tax law exempts 'Members of the Military or Naval forces of the United States when in uniform.'"

That statement was incorrect.

The law relative to taxes on admissions is as follows:

"Persons in military or naval forces of the United States when in uniform and members of Civilian Conservation Forces when in uniform, are not liable for tax if admitted free, and if admitted at a reduced rate are liable for tax on the reduced rate."

HARRISON'S REPORTS regrets the error.

REPUBLIC PICTURES CORPORATION

1790 Broadway
 New York, N. Y.

October 23, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
 1270 Sixth Avenue
 New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Your editorial of October 10th, COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOW, was read with interest. A great caption to be sure, but I doubt if there is any individual of group of individuals who can foresee precisely the nature of the economic or social changes which will occur during or following the world war.

Because of the grave problems you refer to, I see no reason for discouragement or mental defeatism. We should not assume that everything is going to be different during the war, nor cross bridges which we may never have to cross; on the other hand, I believe we should recognize the fact that changes have occurred and will continue, and that it is going to be possible to make the necessary adjustments. That we must struggle with many serious problems I frankly admit, but I do not overlook the important fact that the forces that gave the motion picture industry its powerful influence throughout the world had many grave problems for solution under economic and social conditions less favorable than exist today. I am convinced that these same forces will again prevail.

It is a fact that substantial progress has already

been made in meeting the shortages of manpower and raw materials—for instance: (1) Reduction in negative footages. (2) Fewer shorts. (3) Fewer prints. (4) Fewer sets. (5) Employment of more women and older men. Because of the accumulated result from these efforts, I cannot share your opinion that a shortage of pictures will exist which would be considered ruinous.

I find much encouragement in the President's statement, I quote: "The American Motion Picture is one of the most effective media in informing and entertaining our Citizens. The motion pictures must remain free in so far as national security will permit."

If I am to believe the President's statement—and I do—I cannot believe that the industry will be burdened with regulations which will prove ruinous. I rather lean toward the belief that many of today's regulations, and those to come, will prove blessings in disguise.

It is safe, I believe, to anticipate that, with the Army and Navy Photographic Departments more efficiently organized, waste of photographic raw materials will be substantially reduced. This, together with a sizeable reduction in the quantity of photographic raw materials presently being supplied for commercial films and amateurs, should make available a greater quantity of raw materials to the industry.

It is also important to mention that the industry's inventory value of negatives on hand and in production is greater than at any other time in its history. Furthermore, because the production of negatives during the past few years has been larger than usual there are thousands of prints of good quality pictures which have never reached the screen in many theatres and in many towns throughout the country. If and when it becomes necessary to tap this reservoir, much if not all of any possible shortage of pictures can be satisfied.

Because of the foregoing statements, which I am convinced are facts, I can find no reason why any Exhibitor should at this time change his policy on account of any anticipated shortage of pictures now or during the months to come.

During the 30 years I have been active in the motion picture industry, I have always understood that "A" theatres were established to play "A" pictures plus added attractions: shorts, famous bands, stage shows, etc.; that "B" theatres were established to play "B" pictures—single or double bill, as well as subsequent "A" pictures. I think it is fair to say a larger part of the public depends on "B" theatres than "A" theatres. The pattern of the entertainment of each group of theatres, as well as of their audiences, is as different as day and night, and the range of admission prices is fixed accordingly.

(Continued on last page)

"Once Upon a Honeymoon" with Ginger Rogers and Cary Grant

(RKO, November 27; time, 117 min.)

There are some good comedy situations and a few dramatic highlights in this comedy-drama, but it is hampered by a thin story and a loosely written screen play; as a whole, it adds up to no more than a fair entertainment, despite the costly production and the good acting of the cast. Moreover, its running time is much too long. It may, however, do well at the box-office because of the Ginger Rogers-Cary Grant combination. All the action takes place in war-torn Europe from the time that Hitler invaded Austria to the fall of France. But all this merely serves as a background for the romanticisms of an American correspondent and an American "strip-teaser" dancer, who seeks to escape her husband, a titled Nazi "big-wig." There is human interest in some of the situations, but they fail to rouse the emotions. For the most part, the film is nonsensical comedy, with enough laughs to satisfy most patrons:—

In Vienna, Baron Walter Slezak prepares to marry Ginger Rogers, a former American "strip-teaser," whose pose as a Philadelphia society girl does not fool Cary Grant, American correspondent and news broadcaster. Grant suspects the Baron of being one of Hitler's smartest advance agents, and tries to discourage Ginger from marrying him. The fall of Austria confirms his suspicions. Ginger marries the Baron, and Grant follows the newlyweds through the conquered countries. During the attack on Warsaw, Grant convinces Ginger that her marriage was a mistake, and induces her to leave the Baron. To help a Jewish maid and her two children escape the invader, Ginger switches passports with her. Grant arranges with the local newspaper editor to place Ginger's name on the death list. Challenged by the Gestapo, Grant claims that his passport was lost during the bombing, and identifies Ginger as his wife. But they find the maid's passport on her, and both are thrown into a Jewish concentration camp. They manage to prove their American citizenship, and are released. Fleeing from one invaded country to another, the pair reach Paris just as the Germans march in. While sitting for a passport photograph, Ginger reveals her identity to Albert Dekker, the photographer. Dekker identifies himself as a secret American agent, and induces her to return to the Baron so that she could learn of the Nazis' intentions toward the United States. Learning of the deception, the Baron kills Dekker, and places Ginger under guard. He then compels Grant to make a pro-Nazi broadcast to the United States, threatening to harm Ginger if he refuses. But Grant cleverly double-crosses the Baron by broadcasting his marriage to a "Jewish" woman, thereby rousing Hitler. Ginger escapes the Baron and, together with Grant, boards a liner for America. Unknown to them, the Baron, too, was a passenger. During the trip, the Baron attempts to push Ginger overboard, but in the struggle goes over the side himself. After a lengthy discussion, Ginger and Grant decide to inform the Captain that a man was overboard.

Sheridan Gibney wrote the screen play, and Leo McCarey produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"My Heart Belongs to Daddy" with Cecil Kellaway, Richard Carlson and Martha O'Driscoll

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 75 min.)

Very pleasant program entertainment. It is a romantic comedy, and although it is short on marquee names it certainly is not short in entertainment values. There is lots of good comedy and human interest in the story, which revolves around a youthful widowed college professor, who gives refuge to a young widow and her new born baby, thereby upsetting his household and the faculty. Cecil Kellaway's performance is outstanding. As the good samaritan, he does everything, from convincing the faculty that bubble dancing is an art, to acting as a male midwife when the baby is born. Taxicab driver, butler, and nursemaid are not the least of his other accomplishments. The direction is smooth, and the performances very good:—

When his cab stalls on the way to a hospital with Martha O'Driscoll, an expectant mother, Cecil Kellaway, the driver, takes her into Professor Richard Carlson's home, where

Kellaway delivers her baby. Because of this, Carlson, a widower, is upbraided by Florence Bates, his mother-in-law, and Frances Gifford and Velma Borg, her daughters, all living with him. The following morning Kellaway is questioned by a detective regarding Martha's whereabouts. He learns that she was a former bubble dancer, whose wealthy young husband had died. Her "in-laws" were seeking custody of the child. Kellaway deliberately misinforms the detective. Meanwhile at Carlson's home, Miss Bates fears that Martha might interfere with her scheme to have Frances marry Carlson. She insists that Martha be removed to a hospital, but the family doctor advises against it. Kellaway informs Martha that he was aware of her trouble, and advises her to reveal nothing to Carlson. When Martha's nurse causes the household servants to resign, Kellaway takes over their duties. For two months Martha pretends that she is too weak to walk. Carlson grows fond of her and the baby. He is delighted to find her dancing with the baby one night, and takes her to a night club. She is recognized as a former bubble dancer, and both are photographed. When the faculty demands an explanation, Carlson becomes angry and offers to resign. Kellaway, however, talks the faculty out of accepting the resignation. Feeling that she would harm Carlson's career, Martha writes him a note and leaves. Frances consoles Carlson, and before long they plan to marry. On the wedding day, Kellaway learns that Frances has substituted the note left by Martha. Taking Carlson with him, Kellaway drives madly through the streets, arriving at a burlesque theatre in time to stop Martha's signing over custody of the child.

F. Hugh Herbert wrote the screen play, Sol C. Seigel and E. D. Leshin produced it, and Robert Siodmak directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Palm Beach Story" with Claudette Colbert, Joel McCrea, Rudy Vallee and Mary Astor

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

A good comedy for adults. In spite of the fact that the story is thin, it is entertaining and holds one's attention because of the sparkling dialogue and of amusing situations. The comedy is provoked by the efforts of a young wife to divorce her husband so that she could meet wealthy men who would be willing to finance his business. An hilarious situation is on the train where members of a hunting club, whose guest Miss Colbert was, form a posse and, with bloodhounds baying, go in search of her, rousing the passengers from their berths. It is nonsensical stuff, but good relief from war films:

After five years of marriage, Claudette Colbert decides to divorce Joel McCrea, a struggling young engineer. Claudette felt that she might meet a man who would be willing to finance a suspended airport that McCrea had invented. Despite McCrea's protests, she decides to go to Palm Beach for her divorce. Short of funds, Claudette goes to the railroad station where she attracts the attention of a few wealthy members of a hunting club, en route to Georgia on a hunting trip. They adopt her as their mascot and take her aboard their private car. A riotous party ensues. Scared, Claudette finds a berth in another car. In the morning she finds that the conductor had disconnected the private car during the night, leaving her stranded without clothes. Rudy Vallee, a shy young millionaire, comes to her rescue. He takes her off the train in Jacksonville, where he buys her new clothes. They continue to Palm Beach on his yacht. Meanwhile, McCrea, who had flown to Palm Beach, learns that Claudette would arrive on Vallee's yacht. He meets her at the dock. Vexed, she introduces him as her brother. Mary Astor, Vallee's often-divorced sister, insists that Claudette and McCrea be their house guests. Alone with Claudette, McCrea protests, but she insists that their marriage is over, and that she is determined to build his airport. But Vallee's attentions to her, and Miss Astor's attentions to McCrea, soon have the proper effect—they make up and confess the hoax to Vallee. Though disappointed, Vallee insists upon financing the airport. Everything turns out all right when Miss Astor and Vallee learn that Claudette had a twin sister, and McCrea a twin brother. It ends up with a double wedding, with Claudette and McCrea in attendance.

Preston Sturges wrote the screen play and directed it. Paul Jones produced it.

Not for children.

"Neath Brooklyn Bridge" with the East Side Kids

(Monogram, October 17; time, 60 min.)

A typical "East Side Kid" melodrama, no better and no worse than the other pictures in this series. The story follows a familiar pattern—a "Kid" is unjustly accused of a crime, and his pals proceed to track down the guilty person. The usual "high jinks" and the slaughtering of the English language are employed for comedy. It is a swiftly-moving film, and should prove satisfactory as the lower half of a double bill:—

Hearing the screams of Ann Gillis, the East Side Kids enter a tenement house and find Bud Osborne, Ann's stepfather, beating her. Led by Leo Gorcey, the boys halt the beating and knock Osborne unconscious. As the boys leave, Marc Lawrence, a gangster, enters the apartment and kills Osborne in settlement of an old grievance. The crime is seen by Arthur Young, Ann's paralytic grandfather. Bobby Jordan, a member of the Kids, is apprehended by the police and imprisoned for the crime. The Kids hide Ann in their club room. Lawrence had always wanted the Kids to work for him, but they refused. He leads Gorcey to believe that he had murdered Osborne, and threatens to inform the police unless he helps him to rob a warehouse. Gorcey agrees. Noah Beery, Jr., a sailor and former member of the Kids, returns on leave and falls in love with Ann. Beery discovers that Ann's grandfather, although paralytic, could talk by blinking his eyes in Morse code. The old man reveals that Lawrence had murdered Osborne. While Beery goes to notify the police, Gorcey hides the Kids in the warehouse, and opens the doors for the unsuspecting Lawrence and his gang. By the time the police arrive, the Kids subdue the gangsters. Jordan is freed. Beery and Ann plan to marry.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, Sam Ketzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it. In the cast are Huntz Hall, Gabriel Dell, Jack Mulhall, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Avengers" with an all-English cast

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

Though somewhat far-fetched, this British-made melodrama is a satisfactory entertainment. The action is fast, the dialogue is good, and for the most part the story is interesting. Most of the action takes place in Norway, and revolves around the adventures of a London correspondent, who, with the aid of the Norwegian underground movement, obtains valuable military information. The film depicts the scorn with which the Norwegians treat their Nazi masters, despite threats of punishment. A great deal of the excitement occurs toward the end, where a Commando raid saves the hero and heroine from a firing squad. There is some comedy and romantic interest:—

When war is declared, Hugh Williams, London newspaperman, is assigned to cover Norway. There he meets Finlay Currie, a sea captain—during a fight between Nazi sailors and Norwegians in a cafe. Currie informs him that the Nazis were building a secret U-boat base in a remote fjord. Aboard Currie's boat, Williams accompanies the captain and Deborah Kerr, his daughter, to their native village adjoining the secret base. En route they are attacked by a Nazi submarine. Currie reports the incident to Griffith Jones, local police chief and Nazi sympathizer, who does nothing about it. Williams returns to Oslo and reports the attack to the British Naval Attache. Soon after, the Nazis invade Norway. Williams is shanghaied aboard a German trawler, but is later rescued by a British destroyer. The Admiralty asks him to guide RAF bombers to the secret submarine base. Dropped by parachute, Williams, with the aid of Norwegian patriots, including Deborah and Currie, carries out his mission. While flashing the location to the bombers overhead, Currie is killed. The Nazi Governor seizes eight Norwegian hostages and orders them shot unless Williams is brought in. Williams surrenders to save their lives, but the Governor refuses to reprieve the captives, Deborah among them. Just before their execution, a sudden Commando raid throws the Nazis into confusion. The police chief and the Governor are killed, and the U-boat base wrecked. Williams and Deborah join the invading force as they re-embark for England.

Terence Rattigan, Anatole de Grunwald and Patrick Kirwen wrote the screen play, Paul Soskin produced it, and Harold French directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Wrecking Crew" with Chester Morris, Richard Arlen and Jean Parker

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Although the story is built along familiar lines, and the heroics are such as to stretch the imagination, this program melodrama should more than satisfy the action fans. Thrills, excitement, and suspense run high, as men working at great heights dangle from beams, and in other ways narrowly miss death, while demolishing a skyscraper. There are some good comedy situations, human interest, and a love triangle:—

Despite his reputation as a "jinx," Chester Morris is hired by Esther Dale, owner of a wrecking company demolishing a large hotel. Richard Arlen, boss of the crew, and Morris were old friends. All the men are friendly toward Morris, except Billy Nelson; he feared that Morris would "jinx" the job. One night a man working with Morris slips and falls to his death. Although the men tell Morris it was not his fault, he is despondent. While walking the streets Morris meets Jean Parker, a girl down on her luck. She jumps into the river, but Morris saves her and takes her to his room. He introduces her to Arlen as his cousin, and the following day both men induce Miss Dale to give her a job. Arlen and Morris vie for Jean's attentions. To finish the job in time, Miss Dale puts on a night crew and places Morris in charge. Refusing to work under him, Nelson quits. One night Nelson sneaks onto a truck and causes a huge wrecking ball to roll off, killing one of the men. Arlen accuses Morris of negligence. Morris quits and asks Jean to go away with him. When she refuses he tells Arlen that she is not his cousin, and that he had picked her up on the street. They start a fight, but it is stopped by Miss Dale, who informs them that the hotel walls threatened to cave into the street. Arlen rushes to the job, but Morris refuses to help. While Arlen attempts to strengthen the walls, a falling beam pins him to a ledge. Morris arrives and climbs up to rescue Arlen, but part of the wall gives way, leaving them both stranded. From an adjoining building, Joe Sawyer throws them a line, and both men are pulled to safety. Arlen gets Jean, and Morris wishes them both luck.

Maxwell Shane and Richard Murphy wrote the screen play, William Pine and William Thomas produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"War Dogs" with Billy Lee and Addison Richards

(Monogram, October 10; time, 63 min.)

Although no better than minor program fare, this melodrama has the advantage of a timely subject, thereby making it exploitable. As entertainment, it should appeal mostly to the family trade in small towns, as well as to children audiences. The picture's best part is the sequences that deal with the training course given to dogs, so as to adapt them for front line and home defense duty. The remainder of the picture is a trite over-sentimental tale of a boy and his shell-shocked father, with forced situations that fail to affect the emotions to an appreciable degree. There is quite a bit of excitement towards the finish, but for the most part the picture is slow-paced:—

Billy Lee, a ten-year-old boy, is taken to the juvenile court of Judge Bradley Page when the man for whom he runs errands catches him stealing from the cash register. Kay Linaker, the Judge's fiancée and a social worker, intervenes for Billy when she learns that he took the money to get his dog, Pal, out of the pound. Investigating Billy's background, Kay learns that his mother was dead, and that Addison Richards, his father, was an unemployed ex-Marine, shell-shocked in the last war. Richards is discouraged because the Marines would not allow him to re-enlist. Kay suggests that they donate their dog for war service. This seems to buck Richards up. The Judge obtains a job for him in a defense plant, where Pal, upon completion of his training, is assigned as one of the watchdogs. Two Nazi saboteurs apprehend a truck taking material into the plant and succeed in getting by the gate. One of the spies is shot dead, but the other manages to throw a bomb into the plant. Richards picks it up and runs outside where it explodes, killing him. Pal is sent after the spy and catches him. Richards is honored as a hero. Kay accepts the Judge's marriage proposal, and they adopt Billy.

John Vlahos wrote the screen play, George W. Weeks produced it, and S. Roy Luby directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

I believe the important industry executives will agree with the following conclusions: (1) That no large studio could profitably exist unless it made "B" pictures and could not remain in business if it did not have "B" theatres as a secondary market for "A" pictures. (2) That no "B" theatre could exist without "B" pictures—single or double bill. (3) That it would be advisable to continue to depend on the public to decide whether it is satisfied with "A" pictures plus shorts and shows, or whether it wants "B" pictures—single or double bill, give-aways, chance games, contests, etc., thrown in as extra attractions. There is a vast difference both as to quality and price of entertainment, and it seems to me that considering the prosperity of the industry over a long period of years, now reaching an all time high, that the public has already made its decision; and it would be unwise to tamper with that decision. Why swap horses in mid-stream or rock the boat during this critical period?

In conclusion, I would encourage exhibitors to believe that they can depend on the studios to continue, even to increase their efforts, to supply a steady flow of good pictures and to improve quality and entertainment values within the range of human possibilities under the conditions and circumstances which from time to time will exist. I make this statement with a comprehensive knowledge that show business is limited as to talent, players, and artisans—and is becoming more limited in these respects as time passes.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

HERBERT J. YATES.

* * *

MONOGRAM PICTURES CORPORATION

4376 Sunset Drive
Hollywood, California

October 26, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

I had read your article of October 10th regarding possible mergers. We would not be inclined to consider any mergers, except that our franchise holders might consent to do physical distribution for the companies, if desired.

If a shortage of raw stock takes place, we should of course make fewer and bigger pictures; as there would be fewer pictures from the Majors in that event and therefore a spot for more "A" pictures from us.

We have already started the ball rolling with two big musicals, "THE RHYTHM PARADE" and "SILVER SKATES." Also, with a big outdoor epic "DAWN ON THE GREAT DIVIDE." You can expect bigger pictures from Monogram from now on.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

W. RAY JOHNSTON.

PARAMOUNT PICTURES, INC.

Times Square, New York

October 23, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Thanks for your memorandum of October 17th.

I feel that I can add nothing to your editorial with respect to "coming events."

Coming events will be here so soon you will either be right or wrong, Pete, and that will be that.

Kind regards,

Sincerely,

NEIL AGNEW.

* * *

FISHMAN THEATRES, INC.

134 Meadow Street
New Haven, Conn.

October 21, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I have read your editorial of October 10th, and I am in hearty accord with your view that our industry should establish a wartime strategy board to formulate policies in the days to come in order to assure the survival of the motion picture industry. The interest of all the branches of the industry, including the forgotten independent exhibitor, should be adequately represented on such a board if it is to be of any assistance to the small theatre owner. I raise this issue because we have learned from bitter experience that the small fellow's interests cannot be well protected by the representatives of the large affiliated chains.

Very truly yours,

J. B. FISHMAN.

* * *

WARNER BROTHERS

321 West 44th Street
New York, N. Y.

October 16, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Your coming events editorial was very interesting and quite sound.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

MORT BLUMENSTOCK.

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1942

No. 46

The Warner Newsreel Is Welcome—After the War

The current announcement by Warner Brothers of its intentions to enter the newsreel field has become a subject of much controversy within the industry. There are many persons who feel that an additional newsreel would serve no useful purpose, and that, because of present film conservation, such a project would be out of tune with the times.

Latest reports have it that the Warners will issue this newsreel some time during January, and that, thereafter, they will put out releases three times a week. They are now busily engaged reconditioning the Vitaphone Studios in Brooklyn, N. Y., where the newsreels will be produced, and they are negotiating with top newsmen and radio commentators to take over the work of editing and of commentary. Company officials have stated that the project would not require an extra WPB allotment for raw film stock, since they will have such film available as the result of a planned reduction in the number of feature pictures that they produce normally.

HARRISON'S REPORTS means to recognize the right of Warner Brothers to issue its own newsreel. It is the only one of the five major companies without a newsreel and, in view of its vast theatre holdings, it can readily be understood why this company desires to issue a newsreel that will bear its own trade-mark instead of the trade-mark of its competitors. And no one can blame a company for utilizing its assets to the best advantage.

In normal time this project would be considered an enterprising move—one to be welcomed by the industry; the competition of an additional newsreel would be a challenge to all other newsreels to better the quality of their product or fall by the wayside. And a better quality newsreel would ultimately benefit the exhibitor.

But these are not normal times, and we are not operating under a business-as-usual policy. Because of present conditions, HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot see any justification in the attempt of Warners to expand into a new field, particularly since such expansion would require the use of vital manpower and materials, the shortage of which has compelled others in the industry to curtail their expansion, and even reduce their normal amount of business.

Further evidence of Warners' poor judgment is the fact that they intend to use for a newsreel the film they will save by a reduction in feature pictures. Today there is no material so vital to the industry as film, and because of its shortage drastic cuts in production

have already taken place. Why then waste valuable film on a newsreel that would, for the most part, be a duplication of coverage by the existing newsreels? Although Warners plans to devote its newsreels mainly to the war effort, this paper fails to see how they can accomplish anymore than the five established newsreels, all of which are closely cooperating with the government on its war efforts.

The exhibitors certainly do not require an additional newsreel. As it is, they do not have sufficient play dates to take care of the existing newsreels, and a good number of the exhibitors are paying for newsreels that they never use.

In these times when the survival of business is the greatest problem facing the industry in all its branches, Warner Brothers should think twice before launching a project that would further reduce the dwindling supply of cameramen, technicians, materials, and equipment, the use of which will add nothing to the war effort or to entertainment, and would only serve to throw a greater burden on an already overburdened industry.

To repeat, the exhibitors do not need another newsreel at this time or, for that matter, at any future time so long as they have five of them from which to choose. What they do need is features, and the Warners' plan to cut their schedule of feature productions so as to have enough film for a newsreel is deplorable. The shortage of raw film stock has already compelled the industry to produce a smaller number of features than it did a year ago, and it is reasonable to assume that, until we win the war, further reductions will be necessary. Why then reduce an all-important item before conditions compel such a reduction? Unless the producers can supply the exhibitors with the necessary amount of product required for the operation of their theatres, they will find the exhibitors going out of business in ever increasing numbers. And for every exhibitor that is forced to close his doors there will be one less outlet for the producers' feature pictures, as well as his newsreel. With less outlets the producers will attempt to raise even higher the already high film rentals and percentages, and if these go much higher the producer will soon find themselves with even fewer outlets.

Because of existing war conditions, and in the best interests of the industry, Warner Brothers should abandon, at least for the duration, their proposed newsreel, and wait for a more propitious time—when competition of a new newsreel would be welcomed.

"X Marks the Spot" with Damian O'Flynn, Helen Parrish and Dick Purcell

(*Republic, November 4; time, 55 min.*)

Just a routine gangster melodrama, with a bit of murder mystery thrown in for good measure. It is best suited for the lower half of a double bill in the smaller theatres, and its appeal will be directed mainly to the followers of this type of entertainment. The story and the treatment are formula and, although the action is fast-moving, it lacks the excitement and suspense one expects in pictures of this type. Even though the gangster chief's identity is not disclosed until the end, it is not difficult for one to guess who he really is. The romance is of slight importance.

Police Sergeant Robert Homans is murdered when he tries to prevent gangsters from "hi-jacking" a truck. Damian O'Flynn, the sergeant's son and a private detective, determines to track down the killers. Neil Hamilton, owner of the truck, employs O'Flynn for the same purpose. Aided by Police Lieut. Dick Purcell, O'Flynn uncovers evidence tending to prove that Jack LaRue, a night club owner, was head of the gangsters. Instructing O'Flynn to keep watch over LaRue in his night club, Purcell goes for a warrant. A fake blackout is announced over the juke box system and, as the lights are extinguished, LaRue is shot and killed. When the lights go on it is discovered that LaRue was killed with a gun belonging to O'Flynn's father. O'Flynn protests his innocence, but Purcell insists upon his arrest. Making a dash for freedom, O'Flynn goes to the juke box company where Helen Parrish, the operator, informs him that an unknown man had telephoned and ordered the blackout announcement. Helen resolves to aid him. O'Flynn goes to Hamilton's home only to find him murdered. Later Esther Muir, a hat check girl, offers O'Flynn information, but is murdered before he can meet her. Posing as an F.B.I. agent, O'Flynn tricks one of LaRue's men into admitting that LaRue had killed his father, and that they were "hi-jacking" the truck to steal a shipment of "frozen" tires. O'Flynn goes to Hamilton's warehouse to investigate. Telephoning Purcell for aid, Helen recognizes his voice as the one who had ordered the fake blackout. She rushes to warn O'Flynn but arrives too late. Planning to kill O'Flynn and Helen, Purcell admits that he and Hamilton were partners in a tire racket, and that he had committed the murders. O'Flynn starts a fight. Purcell is killed, and the members of his gang rounded up by the police, who had been sent to investigate the disturbance.

Richard Murphy and Stuart Palmer wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Seven Miles from Alcatraz" with James Craig and Bonita Granville

(*RKO, January 22; time, 62 min.*)

This program spy melodrama does not offer much in the way of a story, but the action fans should find it fairly entertaining, for it is fast-moving and, on occasion, exciting and suspenseful. The story revolves around two escaped convicts, both anti-social, who seize control of a lighthouse, only to meet up with a Nazi spy ring. After the usual Hollywood heroics our side wins, and the convicts decide that our country is not so bad after all. The production values are modest, and the direction and performances adequate:—

When James Craig and Frank Jenks, convicts, escape from Alcatraz prison in a fog, the tide washes them up on a rocky islet off the coast, where Captain George Cleveland operated a lighthouse. With Cleveland are Bonita Granville, his daughter; Cliff Edwards, a helper; and Erford Gage, a radio operator. Gage, who was a secret Nazi spy, maintained contact with Axis submarines and agents ashore through an ingenious code he used in his radio duties. The

two convicts take possession of the lighthouse, and wait for an opportunity to continue their flight. Bonita repulses Craig's advances. When the fog lifts, the convicts decide to leave in the lighthouse's motor launch, taking Bonita as a guide. Gage, needing the launch for a rendezvous with a German submarine, makes a desperate effort to stop them, but Jenks kills him. The fog closes in, causing the convicts to postpone their getaway. Soon a trio of Axis agents, puzzled over Gage's failure to keep the rendezvous, arrive at the lighthouse in their own speedboat, posing as a yachting party with a broken-down motor. They, too, are made prisoners, and Craig takes a set of secret plans from them. The spies offer Craig passage to South America on the submarine if he would release them. Craig agrees. In an unguarded moment the spies get the upper hand, but Craig outwits them by concealing the secret plans. Aware of Craig's admiration for Bonita, the Nazis start torturing the girl in an effort to make Craig surrender the plans. Craig starts a battle, during which Captain Cleveland manages to reach the light in the tower to signal an SOS to the shore. The U-boat is sunk and the agents captured. Craig and Jenks are returned to Alcatraz, hopeful that a reprieve would be given to them.

Joseph Krungold wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Cat People" with Simone Simon, Jane Randolph and Kent Smith

(*RKO, January 1; time, 73 min.*)

Although slow-moving and depressing, "Cat People" is an interesting program horror melodrama. The story is fantastic—a young Serbian girl turns into a black panther when roused, a power she had inherited from her ancestors, and, because of her inability to control this power, she does not consummate her marriage lest she kill her husband. Some of the situations are highly suspenseful, particularly those where, transformed into a panther by jealousy, she stalks a rival for her husband's love. The transformation is not gruesome, since it is done by indirection; nevertheless, a chilling effect is obtained:—

Kent Smith, a young naval architect, makes the acquaintance of Simone Simon, a young Serbian artist, and learns from her that she avoided romance because she considered herself a descendant from the "cat people" of her native village,—women who had the power to transform themselves into panthers when ever their emotions were roused. After a brief romance, Kent brushes aside Simone's fears, and persuades her to marry him. Simone pleads with Kent for a little time to accustom herself to love. But the unnatural marriage makes them both unhappy. Kent induces her to visit Dr. Tom Conway, a noted psychiatrist. Simone reveals to him what stood between her and normal marriage, but Conway scoffs at her fears. Provoked at his disbelief, and aware that he desired her, Simone does not return for further consultations. Kent discusses this with Jane Randolph, an office friend, who, stirred by sympathy, confesses that she loves him. Fearful of losing Kent to Jane, Simone's emotions of jealousy are aroused, and on two occasions she transforms herself into a panther, but is unsuccessful in her attempts to kill Jane. Spurred by his desire for Simone, Conway visits her apartment and attempts to prove with a kiss that her beliefs were fairy-tales. Roused, she is transformed into a panther, killing him. At a zoo near her apartment, Simone's body is found by Kent and Jane, outside the cage of a panther. It lies black and horrible; Simone had returned to the "cat people."

DeWitt Bodeen wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Jacques Tourneur directed it.

Not for children.

"The Living Ghost" with James Dunn and Joan Woodbury

(*Monogram, November 27; time, 61 min.*)

Although there is nothing novel either in the story or its development, this murder mystery, with comedy, should serve fairly well as a supporting feature, because of the pleasing performances, and the breezy manner in which James Dunn, as the detective, carries on his investigation. Employing the usual tricks to create an eerie atmosphere, the picture has enough fast action and suspense to hold one interested throughout. Romance and comedy are worked into the plot without retarding the action:—

When Gus Glassmire, millionaire, disappears from his home, James Dunn, special investigator, is employed on the case. One night Dunn and Joan Woodbury, Glassmire's secretary, discover the millionaire in the library of his home, minus his mental faculties. Doctors find that one-half of his brain had been destroyed, but that he could live indefinitely under constant care. George Eldridge, a friend of the family, assists in caring for Glassmire. Tracing down clues, Joan and Dunn discover that a man named Carson had purchased the chemicals and had rented the house in which Glassmire had been subjected to the treatment that had destroyed part of his brain. The real estate agent, however, knew the man to whom he had rented the house only by his voice. Dunn summons the entire household in order that he may make recordings of their voices. That night Eldridge attempts to kill Dunn, but the detective overpowers him. It is revealed that Eldridge was the man who was masquerading as Carson, and who had performed the operation on Glassmire. Eldridge and Edna Johnson, the millionaire's second wife, were in love and, having heard that Glassmire's will left his entire fortune to Jan Wiley, his daughter, had kept the millionaire alive in the hope that they might induce him to change the will in favor of Edna.

Joseph Hoffman wrote the screen play, A. W. Hackel produced it, and William Beaudine directed it.

Nothing objectionable in it.

"Nightmare" with Brian Donlevy and Diana Barrymore

(*Universal, November 13; time, 80 min.*)

Good! Skillfully directed and expertly acted by the cast, this combination murder mystery-spy melodrama holds one engrossed from start to finish. The story deals with the adventures of an American, who, through involvement in the mysterious murder of a British Army Captain, uncovers a Nazi spy ring. The action unfolds in an interesting manner. The first half is intriguing. It is not until the second half that the premise is established, and from then on the action is fast and exciting, holding one in suspense. The locale is England, and the production values are very good. There is a romance and some comedy:—

Brian Donlevy, an American, is left destitute when his gambling house is demolished in an air raid. Hungry, he quietly enters the home of Diana Barrymore, who surprises him in the kitchen. After hearing his story, she asks him if he should like to earn some money. She leads him to an upstairs study where he finds the stabbed body of Diana's estranged husband, a British Army Captain, whom she denies murdering. Donlevy agrees to get rid of the body. His mission completed, Donlevy returns on the following day, romantically inclined. Diana repulses him. Piqued, Donlevy leaves. Diana screams bring him back. In the study he finds that the Captain's body had been brought back. With the arrival of the police, Diana and Donlevy sneak from the house and, stealing a car nearby, head toward Scotland and the castle of Gavin Muir, Diana's cousin and a distillery owner. Stopping overnight at an inn, Diana

frustrates Donlevy's love-making, and threatens to involve him in the murder unless he drives her to the castle. Delivering her to the castle, Donlevy starts back for London. En route he discovers a concealed radio in the car, tuned in for shortwave German broadcasts. Sensing that Diana was in danger, Donlevy returns to the castle where he learns that Muir was the head of a Nazi spy ring, and was connected with the Captain's murder. Diana was held prisoner. Donlevy rescues her, but Muir and his men, with the aid of the local police, capture them. The police charge Donlevy with the Captain's murder, and laugh at his accusation of Muir. Meanwhile Muir's men hold Diana at the distillery. Jumping on a motorcycle, Donlevy makes a dash for freedom and drive to the distillery. In the ensuing fight the Nazis are trapped, Diana rescued, and Donlevy cleared. Diana and Donlevy realize their love.

Dwight Taylor wrote the screen play and produced it. Tim Whelan directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Silver Queen" with George Brent and Priscilla Lane

(*United Artists, November 13; time, 80 min.*)

A lavishly produced, colorful melodrama, which, despite the familiarity of the plot, is pretty good entertainment for the masses. Set against the colorful background of New York and San Francisco during the 1870's, the story revolves around a society belle, who, after her father dies penniless, takes up gambling as a career in order to pay family debts. Except for the closing scenes the picture is without exciting action or suspense, but it has been presented in an interesting manner, and holds one's attention throughout. Unlike other Harry Sherman productions, this one has a minimum of outdoor western-like action. Most audiences will enjoy the musical background, which consists of Viennese waltz tunes:—

George Brent, a professional gambler, attends a charity ball sponsored by Eugene Pallette, wealthy ex-miner, whose daughter, Priscilla Lane, was engaged to Bruce Cabot, Pallette's business associate. Priscilla, who had a flair for gambling, falls in love with Brent. A Wall Street panic wipes out Pallette's fortune, and the shock kills him. Priscilla finds herself faced with huge family debts. Hearing of her misfortune, Brent gives Cabot the deed to a mine that Pallette had gambled away, and asks him to give it to Priscilla as a wedding present. Brent closes up his gambling house and heads West. Priscilla runs off to San Francisco and resolves to repay her debts through gambling. Cabot promises to wait for her. Priscilla becomes known as the Silver Queen, owner of a fashionable gambling house. She rapidly makes a fortune, remitting huge sums of money to Cabot in New York to pay off her debts. Cabot, however, uses the money to develop the mine for himself. After a few years Brent arrives in San Francisco, and is surprised to learn that Priscilla was the Silver Queen, that she was not married to Cabot, and that her debts were paid. From Lynne Overman, an old friend of Pallette's and one of the creditors, Brent learns that Cabot did not pay Priscilla's debts, nor did he give her the deed. Brent goes to Nevada City where the mine was located. Meanwhile Cabot shows up in San Francisco and asks Priscilla to marry him. Thinking that Brent had left her, she agrees, but for sentimental reasons insists that they be married in Nevada City. Brent and Cabot meet in a hotel lobby, and a fierce fight ensues. Priscilla learns of Cabot's deceit and also of Brent's real love for her.

Bernard Schubert and Cecile Kramer wrote the screen play, Harry Sherman produced it, and Lloyd Bacon directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Who Done It?" with Abbott and Costello*(Universal, November 6; time, 77 min.)*

If the previous Abbott and Costello pictures have drawn patrons to your theatre, there seems to be no reason why this one should not do the same. This time the two comedians enter the radio murder mystery field and, as fake detectives, help to unravel a studio murder. As in their other pictures, the story is of no importance, and its entertainment value lies chiefly in the "nit-witicisms" of Abbott and Costello. Most of the gags and situations have been done many times, and in all probability the comedians' fans will find them highly amusing, but others may find their type of humor a bit too repetitious, and their reactions may not be so favorable:—

Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, soda clerks, yearn to become radio writers. They meet Patric Knowles, a writer, who invites them to the broadcast of a mystery show produced by Louise Allbritton, his girl-friend. The show opens up with an important statement from Thomas Gomez, head of the radio chain, but before he can speak, he dies in his chair. Among those present are Don Porter, production man; Mary Wickes, Gomez's secretary; Ludwig Stossel, Gomez's doctor; and Jerome Cowan, a writer discharged by Gomez recently. Knowles discovers that Gomez was electrocuted by a wire fastened to the steel chair in which he sat. Hoping that they would be given writing jobs if they solve the mystery, Abbott and Costello pose as detectives and officiously question those present. When Detectives William Gargan and William Bendix arrive on the scene they become incensed at the pseudo detectives, and start chasing them through the halls. During the excitement, Dr. Stossel is found murdered in a closet. Still pursued, the boys escape the detectives by joining an acrobatic act in a theatre in the building. They are finally caught when Costello, who had won \$10,000 on a radio Wheel of Fortune, comes to the radio station to claim the prize. Meanwhile Louise and Knowles had uncovered important evidence. Summoning all the witnesses, Knowles stages a broadcast at which he promises to reveal the murderer. As the show reaches a climax, Don Porter betrays himself, and makes a dash for freedom. The boys chase him to the roof and capture him after a gun battle. Knowles discloses that Porter was an Axis agent who had used the radio program to relay information. Gomez had learned of this and was about to expose him.

Stanley Roberts, Edmund Joseph, and John Grant wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Eric C. Kenton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Great Gildersleeve" with Harold Peary*(RKO, January 15; time, 62 min.)*

Just a moderately entertaining program comedy, which may fare better than average at the box-office, because of the radio popularity of Harold Peary, better known to his listeners as "Gildersleeve." The story is thin, and follows a pattern that is similar to the radio skits, in which Peary gets himself into all sorts of trouble but is finally extricated by the efforts of his two adopted children. Much of the comedy is of the slapstick variety, but it is the sort of stuff that allows Peary to indulge in the mannerisms and gags that have made him a prominent radio star. The audience may not guffaw at all his antics, but they will certainly be kept smiling:—

Because he is a bachelor, Harold Peary is given only the custody of Nancy Gates, his niece, and Freddie Mercer, his nephew. The handling of their estate must be approved by Judge Charles Arnt, their legal guardian. Mary Field, the Judge's old-maid sister, seeks to entice Peary into matrimony, and when he admits that he is thinking of getting a mother for the two children, she mistakes it for a proposal, and spreads the news. The mother Peary referred to was Jane Darwell, his aunt. The Judge, outraged because Peary refuses to marry his sister, orders him to produce a wife

within ten days or lose custody of the children. The children discuss the horrible prospect of having Mary for a stepmother, and decide to make Peary the most important man in town, so that the Judge would not dare carry out his threat. They set in motion a publicity campaign, but to no avail. Discouraged, Peary is about to give up and propose to Mary, but the children urge him to wait. Thurston Hall, the Governor of the state, passes through town incognito, suffering from a bad cold. Freddie encounters him, sells him the idea that his aunt could cure the cold, and brings him home for treatment. Peary learns of Hall's identity, and boasts at the club that the Governor was his house guest. Thinking that Peary was trying to put over on them an imposter, the Judge and the others invite the Governor for luncheon, during which they play on him a series of practical jokes. Horrified when he learns that his victim was really the Governor, the Judge resigns from the bench. But the Governor forgives him, and the custody of the children remain with Peary.

Jack Townley and Julien Josephson wrote the screen play, Herman Shlom produced it, and Gordon Douglas directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Dr. Gillespie's New Assistant" with Lionel Barrymore, Van Johnson and Susan Peters*(MGM, no release date set; time, 87 min.)*

This second of the "Dr. Gillespie" new series of pictures without Lew Ayres, which is a continuation of the old "Dr. Kildare" series, is just as wholesome, entertaining, and deeply appealing as any of the previous pictures, and it should certainly please the masses. This time Lionel Barrymore, in his familiar role of the crusty but kindly medical genius, is faced with the task of selecting a new assistant from a trio of internes. Although the story has its serious moments, the comedy situations are prevalent. In general, the action follows a pattern familiar to the series, but it is presented in so expert a fashion that one never finds it tiresome. The supporting cast add much to the picture:—

In an attempt to prevent Lionel Barrymore from overworking himself, Dr. Walter Kingsford, hospital superintendent, names three young internes to assist Barrymore, the best one to remain his permanent assistant. The three are Van Johnson, an American; Richard Quine, an Australian; and Keye Luke, an American-born Chinese, who plans to join the Chinese forces. Barrymore assigns the three to separate cases, allowing them to work out their own diagnosis. Johnson is assigned to study Susan Peters, an amnesia victim, who had lost her memory immediately after her marriage to Horace McNally, whose father was an old friend of Barrymore's. After much questioning of Susan, Johnson admits to Barrymore that he is stumped—he could not find the cause for Susan's amnesia. Barrymore informs Johnson of his belief that Susan was "faking," and Johnson decides to investigate. On a medicine bottle in Susan's apartment, he finds the name of the doctor who had attended her for another ailment. He manages to get her case history, and from it he learns that she had been married before, and that she had a small son; also, that she was unable to have another child. When Barrymore confronts Susan with the facts, she breaks down and admits the hoax. Deeply in love with McNally, she had hesitated to tell him of her former marriage and her son, lest she break up her present marriage—her former husband had died. Barrymore summons McNally, and puts all the facts before him. He succeeds in reuniting the couple, and they leave to get the child. Meanwhile all the young doctors had distinguished themselves, and Barrymore is unable to tell which one was the best assistant. Luke is assigned to duty in China. Quine and Johnson remain, waiting for their call to war duty.

Harry Ruskin, Willis Goldbeck, and Lawrence P. Bachmann wrote the screen play. J. J. Cohn produced it, and Mr. Goldbeck directed it. In the cast are Nat Pendleton, Alma Kruger, Nell Craig, Rose Hobart and others.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXIV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1942

No. 46

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

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4209 The Lone Prairie—Hayden-Wills (55 m.)...	Oct. 15
4026 The Boogie Man Will Get You—Karloff- Lorre	Oct. 22
4042 Stand by All Networks—Rice-Baxter.....	Oct. 29
4030 Boston Blackie Goes Hollywood—Morris- Worth	Nov. 5
4033 Laugh Your Blues Away—Falkenburg- Douglas	Nov. 12
4022 You Were Never Lovelier—Hayworth- Astaire	Nov. 19
4202 Pardon My Gun—Starrett (57 m.).....	Dec. 1
4210 Tornado In the Saddle—Hayden-Wills (59 m.)	Dec. 15

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

312 For Me and My Gal—Garland-Murphy.....Nov.

Mongram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Texas to Bataan—King (56 m.).....Oct. 16
Bowery at Midnight—Bela Lugosi.....Oct. 30
'Neath Brooklyn Bridge—East Side Kids.....Nov. 20
The Living Ghost—Dunn-Woodbury.....Nov. 27

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

4204 Wildcat—Arlen-Judge (re.)Oct. 30
4206 The Forest Rangers—MacMurray-Goddard...Nov. 20
4207 Road to Morocco—Hope-Crosby-Lamour...Nov. 20
4208 Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch—Bainter-
LeeNov. 27
4209 Henry Aldrich, Editor—Lydon-Litel.....Dec. 4
4210 Street of Chance—Meredith-Trevor.....Dec. 18
4211 Palm Beach Story—Colbert-McCrea)
4212 Wrecking Crew—Arlen-Parker-Morris) No
4213 The Avengers—All English Cast) release
4214 My Heart Belongs to Daddy—Carlson-) date
O'Driscoll) set

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

307 Tomorrow We Live—Parker-Cortez.....Sept. 29
308 City of Silent Men—Albertson-Lang (re.)...Oct. 12
309 Secrets of a Co-Ed—Kruger-Thayer.....Oct. 26
301 The Yanks are Coming—Heller-King's orch
(re.)Nov. 9
357 Billy the Kid—Mysterious Rider-Crabbe....Nov. 20
318 Miss V From Moscow—Lane-Madison.....Nov. 23
310 Boss of Big Town—Rice-Litel.....Dec. 7
363 Lone Rider In Overland Stage Coach—
LivingstonDec. 11
302 Lady From Chung-King—Wong-Huber.....Dec. 21
351 Texas Rangers Take Over—Newill.....Dec. 25
319 Man of Courage—McLane-Winters.....Jan. 4
303 The Payoff—Tracy-Thayer-BrownJan. 21
358 Billy the Kid No. 2—Crabbe.....Jan. 22

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

272 Outlaws of Pine Ridge—Don Barry (56 m.)...Oct. 27
204 X Marks the Spot—O'Flynn-Parrish.....Nov. 4
262 Valley of Haunted Men—Three Mesq. (56 m.)
(re.)Nov. 13
206 Iccapades Review—Drew-DenningDec. 8
251 Heart of the Golden West—Roy Rogers....Dec. 11
207 Traitor Within—Barry-ParkerDec. 16
Secrets of the Underground—Hubbard-Grey..Dec. 24
273 Sundown Kid—Don Barry.....Dec. 30

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

371 The Magnificent Ambersons—Cotten-
CostelloJuly 10
286 Thundering Hoofs—Holt-Whitley (61 m.)...July 24
391 Bambi—DisneyAug. 21
301 The Big Street—Fonda-Ball.....Sept. 4
302 Mexican Spitfire's Elephant—Velez-Errol...Sept. 11
303 Wings and the Woman—Neagle-Newton...Sept. 18
381 Bandit Ranger—Holt-Edwards (56 m.)....Sept. 25
304 Highways by Night—Carlson-Randolph.....Oct. 2
305 Here We Go Again—McGee & Molly-Bergen.Oct. 9
306 Scattergood Survives A Murder—Kibbee-
HayesOct. 16
307 Journey Into Fear—Welles-Cotten-DelRio...Oct. 23
308 The Navy Comes Through—O'Brien-Murphy-
WyattOct. 30
309 The Falcon's Brother—Sanders-Conway....Nov. 6
310 Seven Days Leave—Mature-BallNov. 13
382 Pirates of the Prairie—Holt-Edwards (57m.)..Nov. 20
Once Upon A Honeymoon—Rogers-Grant...Nov. 27
Army Surgeon—Ellison-WyattDec. 4
Cat People—Simon-HoltJan. 1
The Great Gildersleeve—Harold Peary.....Jan. 15
Seven Miles From Alcatraz—Craig-Granville..Jan. 22

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

315 The Man in the Trunk—Roberts-Holmes....Oct. 23
313 Tales of Manhattan—Boyer-Hayworth.....Oct. 30
317 Springtime in the Rockies—Payne-Grable...Nov. 6
318 That Other Woman—Gilmore-Ellison.....Nov. 13
307 Thunder Birds—Tierney-FosterNov. 20
319 The Undying Monster—Ellison-AngelNov. 27
320 The Black Swan—Power-O'HaraDec. 4
321 Dr. Renault's Secret—Naish-Shepperd.....Dec. 11
316 The Young Mr. Pitt—Donat-Morley..no rel. date set

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Friendly Enemies—Winniger-RugglesJune 26
Ku Kan—The Battle Cry of China.....Aug. 7
The Moon and Sixpence—Sanders-Marshall (re.)..Oct. 2
The Devil With Hitler—Hal Roach.....Oct. 9
One of Our Aircraft is Missing—British (re.)....Oct. 16
I Married A Witch—Lake-March.....Oct. 30
Silver Queen—Brent-LaneNov. 13
Fall In—Hal Roach.....Nov. 20
Jacare—Frank Buck (re.).....Nov. 27
The American Empire—Foster-Gifford.....Dec. 11
In Which We Serve—British.....Dec. 25
Crystal Ball—Goddard-MillandJan. 1
Powers Girls—Shirley-LandesJan. 15

Columbia—Two Reels

- 4423 Kiss and Wake Up—All Star (18 m.) Oct. 2
- 4125 Wireless Warning—Secret Code No. 5
(20 m.) Oct. 2
- 4126 Flaming Oil—Secret Code No. 6 (17 m.) . . . Oct. 9
- 4127 Submarine Signal—Secret Code No. 7
(18 m.) Oct. 16
- 4128 The Missing Key—Secret Code No. 8 (17m.) . Oct. 23
- 4424 Sappy Pappy—All Star (16 m.) Oct. 30
- 4402 Sock-A Bye Baby—Stooges (16½ m.) Nov. 13
- 4425 Ham & Yeggs—All Star (16 m.) Nov. 27

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- M-338 The Good Job—Min. (11 m.) Oct. 10
- C-400 Mighty Lak a Goat—Our Gang (10 m.) . . . Oct. 10
- W-355 Fine Feathered Friend—Cartoon (8 m.) . . . Oct. 10
- K-387 The Magic Alphabet—Pass. Par. (11 m.) . . Oct. 15
- M-339 Listen Boys—Miniature (11 m.) Oct. 17
- S-374 Calling All Pa's—Pete Smith (9 m.) Oct. 24
- K-388 Famous Boners—Passing Par. (11 m.) . . . Oct. 24
- K-389 The Film That Was Lost—Pas. Par. (10m.) . Oct. 31
- W-356 Wild Honey—Cartoon (8 m.) Nov. 7

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-305 Mr. Blabbermouth—Special (19 m.) Aug. 8

Paramount—One Reel

- U1-6 The Little Broadcast—Mad. Mod. (9 m.) . . . Sept. 25
- Y1-6 Speaking of Animals—In S. Amer. (9 m.) . . Sept. 25
- W1-11 Superman in Showdown—Super. (8 m.) . . Oct. 16
- W1-12 Superman in Eleventh Hour—Superman
(8 m.) Nov. 20

1942-43 Season

- T2-1 A Letter From Bataan—Victory Sht. (14m.) . Sept. 15
- J2-1 Popular Science No. 1 (10 m.) Oct. 2
- A2-1 The McFarland Twins—Headliner (9 m.) . . Oct. 2
- L2-1 Unusual Occupations No. 1 (10 m.) Oct. 9
- R2-1 Sports I.Q.—Spotlight (10 m.) Oct. 9
- E2-1 A Hull of a Mess—Popeye (6 m.) Oct. 16
- T2-2 We Refuse to Die—Victory Short (14 m.) . . Oct. 22
- U2-1 Jasper and the Haunted House—Mad. Mod.
(7 m.) Oct. 23
- A2-2 Johnny Scat Davis and Orch.—Headliner
(10 m.) Nov. 6
- R2-2 The Fighting Spirit—Spotlight (9 m.) Nov. 13
- T2-3 The Aldrich Family Gets Into Scrap—Victory
Short (10 m.) Nov. 17
- E2-2 Scrap the Japs—Popeye (6 m.) Nov. 20
- J2-2 Popular Science No. 2 (10 m.) Nov. 27
- L2-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.) Dec. 4
- A2-3 Hands of Women—Headliner (11 m.) Dec. 11

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 7010 Between Us Girls—Barrymore-Cummings . . . Sept. 4
- 7021 Give Out Sisters—Andrews Sisters Sept. 11
- 7020 Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror . . . Sept. 18
- 7035 Half Way to Shanghai—Hervey-Taylor Sept. 18
- 7017 Sin Town—Bennett-Crawford Sept. 25
- 7071 Deep In the Heart of Texas—J. M. Brown
(61 m.) Sept. 25
- 7022 Get Hep to Love—Jean-Frazeze-Paige Oct. 2
- 7030 Destination Unknown—Hervey-Gargan Oct. 9
- 7026 Moonlight In Havana—Jones-Frazeze Oct. 16
- 7019 The Mummy's Tomb—Chaney-Foran Oct. 23
- 7038 Night Monster—Porter-Lugosi Oct. 23
- 7063 Arabian Nights—Sabu-Montez-Hall (re.) . . . Oct. 30
- Who Done It?—Abbott & Costello Nov. 6
- 7072 Little Joe, The Wrangler—J. M. Brown
(61 m.) Nov. 13
- Nightmare—Barrymore-Donlevy (re.) Nov. 13
- 7028 Strictly In the Groove—MacDonald-Errol Nov. 20
- Pittsburgh—Dietrich-Wayne-Scott Nov. 27
- Behind the Eight Ball—Ritz Bros.-Bruce Dec. 4
- Madame Spy—Bennett-Porter Dec. 11
- The Great Impersonation—Bellamy-Ankers . . . Dec. 18
- Mug Town—Dead End Kids Dec. 25
- When Johnny Comes Marching Home—
Jones-Frazeze Dec. 25

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 206 Now, Voyager—Davis-Rains Oct. 31
- 208 The Hidden Hand—Stevens-Fraser Nov. 7
- 212 Gentleman Jim—Flynn-Smith Nov. 14
- 210 George Washington Slept Here—Benny
Sheridan Nov. 28

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 4501 Song of Victory—Col. Rhap. (9 m.) Sept. 4
- 4852 Screen Snapshots No. 2 (10 m.) Sept. 11
- 4801 Trotting Kings—Sports (11 m.) Sept. 11
- 4652 Community Sings No. 2 (8 m.) Sept. 17
- 4701 The Gullible Canary—Cartoon (6½ m.) . . . Sept. 18
- 4552 Old and Modern New Orleans—Tours
(10 m.) Oct. 2
- 4902 Oddities—Panaromics (10 m.) Oct. 8
- 4653 Community Sings No. 3 (9 m.) Oct. 15
- 4952 Hal McIntyre—Famous Bands (10 m.) Oct. 23
- 4702 The Dumconscious Mind—Cartoon (7 m.) . . . Oct. 23
- 4853 Screen Snapshots No. 3 (9 m.) Oct. 23
- 4502 Tito's Guitar—Col. Rhap. Oct. 30
- 4802 The Wizard of the Fairway—Sport Nov. 6
- 4654 Community Sings No. 4 Nov. 12
- 4703 Malice In Slumberland—Cartoon Nov. 20
- 4854 Screen Snapshots No. 4 (9 m.) Nov. 26
- 4503 Toll Bridge Troubles—Col. Rhap. Nov. 27
- 4803 Winter Paradise—Sport Dec. 8
- 4504 King Midas, Jr.—Col. Rhap. Dec. 18

RKO—One Reel

- 24109 How To Play Baseball—Disney (7 m.)....Sept. 4
- 24211 Information Please No. 11 (10 m.).....Sept. 11
- 24110 The Vanishing Private—Disney (7 m.)...Sept. 25
- 24111 The Olympic Champ—Disney (7 m.).....Oct. 9
- 24112 How To Swim—Disney (7½ m.).....Oct. 23

Beginning of 1942-43 Season

- 34401 Jamborees—Jerry Wald & Orch. (9 m.)...Sept. 11
- 34301 Show Horse—Sportscope (9 m.).....Sept. 11
- 34402 Jamborees—Johnny Long & Orch. (8 m.)..Oct. 2
- 34302 Touchdown Tars—Sportscope (8 m.).....Oct. 9

RKO—Two Reels

- 33401 Two for the Money—Kennedy (17 m.)...Sept. 11
- 33702 Deer! Deer!—Leon Errol (17 m.).....Oct. 23
- 33101 Private Smith of the U. S. A.—This Is America (19 m.)Oct. 23
- 33402 Rough on Rents—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.)..Oct. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3201 Along the Texas Range—Hugh James (10m.)..Oct. 9
- 3555 The Mouse of Tomorrow—Terry-Toon (7m.)..Oct. 16
- 3154 Royal Araby—Magic Carpet (9 m.).....Oct. 23
- 3556 Nancy In Doing Their Bit—Terry-Toon (7 m.)Oct. 30
- 3502 Ickle Meets Pickle—Terry-Toon (7 m.)....Nov. 13
- 3351 Neptune's Daughters—Sports (9 m.).....Nov. 20
- 3557 Frankenstein's Cat—Terry-Toon (7 m.)....Nov. 27
- 3901 Monkey Doodle Dandies—Lew Lehr (9 m.) .Dec. 4

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 9 No. 1 FBI Front—March of Time (20 m.)..Sept. 11
- Vol. 9 No. 2 Fighting French—March of Time (20 m.)Oct. 9
- 3801 Everybody's War—America Speaks (15 m.)..Nov. 6

Universal—One Reel

- 7373 King of the 49-ers—Per. Oddities (9 m.)....Oct. 12
- 7242 The Lone Stranger—Cartoon (7 m.).....Oct. 19
- 9995 Keeping Fit—Victory Featurette (11 m.)....Oct. 26
- 7354 New Era In India—Var. Views (9 m.).....Nov. 2
- 7374 Double Talk Girl—Per. Oddities (9 m.)....Nov. 16
- 7232 Boogie Woogie Sioux—Swing Symphony...Nov. 30

Universal—Two Reels

- 7785 Hurlled to the Depths—Overland Mail No. 5 (18 m.)Oct. 20
- 7786 Death at the Stake—Overland Mail No. 6 (18 m.)Oct. 27
- 7787 The Path of Peril—Overland Mail No. 7 (17 m.)Nov. 3
- 7788 Imprisoned In Flames—Overland Mail No. 8 (19 m.)Nov. 10
- 7123 Jivin Jam Session—Musical (15 m.).....Nov. 11
- 7789 Hidden Danger—Overland Mail No. 9 (18 m.)Nov. 17
- 7790 Blazing Wagons—Overland Mail No. 10 (19 m.)Nov. 24
- 7791 The Trail of Terror—Overland Mail No. 11 (19 m.)Dec. 1
- 7124 Swing's the Thing—Musical (15 m.).....Dec. 2
- 7111 Roar, Navy, Roar—SpecialDec. 16

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 8403 The Right Timing—Sports (10 m.).....Oct. 31
- 8302 You Want To Give Up Smoking—Novel. (10 m.)Nov. 14
- 8503 U. S. Marine Band—Mel. Mast. (10m.) (re.)..Nov. 14
- 8704 A Tale of Two Kitties—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)Nov. 21
- 8405 America's Battle of Beauty—Sports (10 m.)..Nov. 21
- 8705 Ding Dog Daddy—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)...Dec. 5
- 8603 My Favorite Duck—Looney Tune (7 m.) (re.)Dec. 5
- 8706 Case of the Missing Hare—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)Dec. 12
- 8406 Horses! Horses! Horses!—Sports (10 m.)...Dec. 12
- 8604 Confusions of a Nutsy Spy—Looney Tune (7 m.)Dec. 26
- 8707 Coal Black and de Sebben Dwarfs—Cart. (7 m.)Dec. 26

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 8001 A Ship Is Born—Special (20 m.).....Oct. 10
- 8014 Beyond the Line of Duty—B'way Brev. (20 m.)Nov. 7
- 8103 The Spirit of West Point—B'way Brev. (20 m.) (re.)Nov. 28
- 8002 The Fighting Engineers—Special (20 m.)...Dec. 19

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- 149 Wednesday .Dec. 30

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HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia	17.50
35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1942

No. 47

REISSUES THAT HURT THE WAR EFFORT

Now that our armed forces have established themselves in the North African theatre of war, and the public is fired with enthusiasm over their success, some distributors may decide that this would be an opportune time for them to reissue films that in some manner deal with the North African countries.

Before the distributors ransack their shelves in search of such pictures, a word of caution is necessary. They should consider carefully the contents of the story, and its possible damaging effect on the war effort. A good example is the experience had with "The Real Glory." When this film was reissued by United Artists about six months ago, because of the timely interest in the Philippines, a wave of protests from various sources, including one from President Manuel Quezon, resulted in the film's withdrawal from circulation. These protests were based on the fact that the Moros, our Allies, were depicted, as most of you remember, as villains.

In most films that have as its locale one of the North African countries, the villains depicted are, as a rule, the native villagers or the desert tribesmen. These movie villains are the very people who the United Nations now call friends, for they have joined us in the struggle to liberate the world from Nazi aggression. To reissue at this time a film that in the slightest way depicts them in a bad light would be a sabotage of the work our military leaders are doing toward cementing better relations between their countries and ours.

The people of the countries that line the North African coast, both on the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, are no more bloodthirsty desert pirates than we ourselves are gangsters. Yet that is how the motion picture has depicted us to them and, by the same process, has depicted them to us.

These blood-and-sand epics—tales of the Foreign Legion, the British Colonial forces, and an occasional American adventurer—may have been good entertainment when originally issued, during peacetime, and they may still be good entertainment in these times, provided, of course, they contain nothing derogatory about those we call our Allies, and even all neutrals.

The practice of capitalizing on events of current interest is not objectionable; it is smart showmanship. But this showmanship, instead of being smart, becomes callous when, for the sake of a few dollars at the box-office, a film is reissued because of timely interest, but without regard for its possible effect on the war effort through its depiction of our friends as villains.

Today the reissuance of such films would be not only be in bad taste and a breach of the faith that the

government has in our industry, but also a deliberate attempt to "cash in" on the emotions of a patriotic public. And if such an attempt is made, an exhibitor who exhibits, as well as a distributor who distributes, such a film would be equally guilty.

GOLDWYN'S IMPLIED SCORN OF THE \$30 A WEEK EMPLOYEE

Discussing industry problems, among which was his reiteration that pictures should be licensed in accordance with their worth, Samuel Goldwyn, in an interview that was published in the November Seven issue of *Motion Picture Herald*, is credited with having said about exhibitor complaints against high film rentals that he respected the opinion of showmen who boosted the pictures they bought, but that he thought little of exhibitors who "have a can of film delivered to them, and tell a \$30 a week manager to go ahead and put it on the screen." Mr. Goldwyn added, "These are the type who are always squawking. They face a tragic winter. They won't be able to go to Florida."

Since Mr. Goldwyn was concerned more about Goldwyn pictures than pictures of other producers, we are led to believe that he does not think that a \$30 a week manager is a fit person to handle Goldwyn pictures. He probably rates the ability of a person by the amount of his pay-check, and the smaller his pay-check the lower is Mr. Goldwyn's opinion of the recipient.

In expressing scorn for the \$30 a week manager, Mr. Goldwyn makes us feel that he has the same kind of thoughts about all motion picture industry employees who receive a similar amount weekly. Obviously he is overlooking the fact that, of the thousands working for theatres and film exchanges, eighty-five percent receive less than \$30 a week.

Are we to assume that Mr. Goldwyn determines the rental of his pictures with the same reasoning that he determines the ability of employees? Does he presume that the amount of money he spends for producing a picture determines its box-office value?

As a producer Mr. Goldwyn is entitled to set a price on what film rentals he should attempt to obtain from the exhibitor, but HARRISON'S REPORTS does not feel it proper for a man of his position to stoop to sarcasm to prove his point. When he mockingly said to the exhibitors that, "They face a tragic winter. They won't be able to go to Florida," Mr. Goldwyn seems to forget that he himself had just returned from an extended vacation in Sun Valley, Idaho.

HARRISON'S REPORTS finds no fault with Mr. Goldwyn for having gone to Sun Valley, because he no doubt earned a vacation and needed the rest and relaxation to prepare himself for the work that lies

(Continued on last page)

**"Lucky Jordan" with Alan Ladd
and Helen Walker**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

Although a demoralizing entertainment because of its glorification of a gangster, this combination gangster-spy melodrama is quite exciting, and may go over fairly well with most audiences. As the ruthless gangster who tries to evade the draft and, failing this, attempts to sell out his country, Alan Ladd is afforded many opportunities to display his talent in a role that has made him a top star. Ladd's characterization is most unpleasant and, even though he redeems himself toward the end, one finds it difficult to accept him as a patriot. The action is fairly fast all the way through, and it holds one's interest to the end. There is some romance, but it is unpleasant:—

To evade induction into the Army, Alan Ladd, a racketeer boss, "adopts" Mabel Paige, a derelict addicted to drink, as his "mother," hoping that a deferment would be granted to him because of dependency. The draft board rejects his appeal, and Ladd is inducted. His surly attitude soon lands him in the guard house. Determined not to relinquish his power as a racket boss, Ladd escapes from the camp in an automobile, the owner of which he subdues. Outside the camp limits, the car is stopped by three men who set upon Ladd in an attempt to obtain a briefcase in the car. The men flee when a car driven by Helen Walker, a canteen hostess, approaches. Jumping into Helen's car, Ladd takes her along as hostage lest she notify the authorities. In an attempt to make him stop, Helen throws the briefcase from the car, but Ladd ignores this. Leaving her in the custody of a friend, Ladd goes to his headquarters where he learns from Sheldon Leonard, a henchman, that the men who stopped his car were employed by Leonard, that they did not know Ladd was the driver, and that the briefcase contained valuable military information. Axis agents had offered Leonard \$50,000 to obtain the briefcase. Taking Helen with them, Ladd and Leonard search for and find the briefcase. Leonard attempts to double-cross Ladd, but he is beaten into submission. Ladd turns a deaf ear to Helen's plea that he return the briefcase to the government. Helen manages to escape him, and Ladd returns to the city where he hides out in the apartment of his "mother," lest the authorities find him. Leonard's henchmen discover his hideout and, while Ladd negotiates with Leonard by telephone for the sale of the plans at a higher price, they ransack the apartment and injure the old lady. When Ladd returns, he, too, is beaten, and the plans taken from him. Determined to avenge the old lady, Ladd traces the spies' lair to a flower nursery in Long Island, and goes there unaware that he was followed by Helen. Not realizing that Russell Hoyt, head of the nursery, was in league with the spies, Helen informs him of Ladd's presence and asks him to notify the FBI. Hoyt clears the grounds of visitors, and institutes a search for Ladd. Leonard arrives with the plans and, while he shows them to Hoyt in a greenhouse, Ladd sneaks in and grabs the plans. Unable to leave the grounds, Ladd conceals the plans in the forgotten umbrella of a visitor who, after calling for it, discovers the note and calls the FBI. Meanwhile Helen succeeds in trapping Ladd, only to learn that she was aiding the Nazis. Although threatened, Ladd refuses to reveal the whereabouts of the plans. The FBI arrive in time to capture the spies, and Ladd returns to Army determined to aid his country.

Darrell Ware and Karl Tunberg wrote the screen play, Fred Kohlmar produced it, and Frank Tuttle directed it. Strictly for adults.

**"Boston Blackie Goes Hollywood" with
Chester Morris and George E. Stone**

(Columbia, November 5; time, 68 min.)

Following a pattern familiar to the other pictures in the series, this latest of the "Boston Blackie" comedy melodramas is a fair program entertainment. As usual, Chester Morris, an ex-crook, clears up a crime, despite the fact that the police suspect him of it. The story is, of course, far-fetched, and the melodramatics are of the sort that strain the imagination, but there is plenty of exciting action, and for that reason it should easily satisfy the action enthusiasts who care little about the plausibility of a plot. There is quite a bit of comedy, but no romantic interest:—

As Chester Morris and George E. Stone, ex-crooks, prepare to leave for Florida, they are visited by Inspector Richard Lane, Morris' old nemesis, who questions them about the famous Monterey diamond, which had evidently been stolen. Both men disclaim any knowledge of its whereabouts. As a further check on Morris, Lane details Sergeant Walter Sande to watch outgoing trains to make sure that Morris leaves town. As he boards the train, Morris receives a telegram from Lloyd Corrigan, a Hollywood friend, instructing him to get \$60,000 out of a safe in Corrigan's apartment, and fly it to the coast. Morris and Stone are followed to the apartment by Sande, who arrests them just as Morris opens the safe. Curious to find out what they intended to do with the money, Lane allows the pair to escape. Morris and Stone don disguises and board a plane. Lane and Sande hide in the baggage compartment of the plane, hoping that the \$60,000 will lead them to the Monterey diamond. Arriving in Hollywood, Morris rents an apartment next to Corrigan's, and eavesdrops on his friend before handing him the money. Heretofore in the dark, Morris quickly senses the whole story. Corrigan had a weakness for blondes, and a few days previously while handling the Monterey diamond for its owner, he had let Constance Worth, his current girl-friend, try it on. The diamond disappeared. The following day Forrest Tucker and John Tyrrell, underworld characters, advised Corrigan that they could recover the diamond for \$60,000. Actually the crooks worked for William Wright, an old rival of Morris', and they sought to take advantage of Corrigan without Wright's knowledge. Before entering Corrigan's room, Morris entrusts the money to Stone. By chance, the two crooks recognize Stone in the lobby, and take the money from him. When Morris learns what happened, he plans to locate Wright through Constance. Threatening her with harm, he insists that she take him to her apartment, knowing that she would leave a note for Wright to follow. Lane and Sande, who had been keeping watch over everyone's movements, follow them. At Constance's apartment Morris is surprised by Tucker and Tyrrell, who had come to free her. The two crooks are in turn surprised when Wright enters the apartment and accuses them of trying to double-cross him. At gunpoint he takes the money from them, locks Constance in the closet, and ties the others up. Wright runs down a fire escape just as Lane and Sande drive up to the building. While the two policemen shoot it out with Wright, Morris succeeds in untying himself, and joins the chase. He follows Wright to the roof of the building and into the elevator penthouse. Climbing down elevator cables, the two men end up in the elevator car and fight it out. Morris emerges the winner.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Michael Gordon directed it. There are no objectionable situations.

ALLIED THEATRES OF MICHIGAN, INC.
607 Fox Theatre Building
Detroit, Michigan

Mr. P. S. Harrison October 22, 1942
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

My Dear Pete:—

I appreciate your calling to my attention the comment of the first page of your reports issue of the tenth under the caption "COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOW."

As you have asked me to also comment upon this subject I shall start right in with paragraph four and ask you by using the slang of the street "SO WHAT?"

You say that the possible shortage of raw stock etc., may cause some theatres to resort to single bill. In my humble opinion this would be the best thing that could possibly happen to us as a whole. You will no doubt bounce right back at me and say that because I now confine nearly every change to single bill it would not affect me. I have heard that argument for years now from exhibitors all over the country saying that they had to resort to double bill because their opposition has all the good product, but in most cases I find that competition is terrifically keen in some spots due to the ambition of a lot of exhibitors to crowd into an already filled spot where there were much too many theatres, and still open up another.

In these spots yes, without double bills, screen gadgets, and dishes it would be the survival of the fittest to say the least. But maybe that would be a good idea, it would relieve the pressure somewhat. I once heard an exhibitor make a statement that I thought had more real common sense to it than anything I ever heard relative to give aways, bank nights, double bills, etc. He said quote "That in overcrowded areas which are principally only found in the metropolitan centers, if the houses within that certain area would hold a meeting and pool their interests in such a manner that they could buy out the one or two excess houses, and close them, the rest could operate on an even keel and the contribution necessary to keep the objectionable ones closed would perhaps result in net profit to the rest."

At first blush sounds brutal doesn't it? Yet after you have repeated it over and over to yourself, doesn't it also sound rather logical.

Granting of course that this is the only excuse that we have for running double bills, this might be the only real solution to the problem. And going a step farther I can't see how this type of a situation would tend to create higher film rentals either, for if the remaining theatres were able to regulate traffic, they surely could regulate the tariff also. And maybe we need a little more backbone on these things.

If reducing the number of subjects that could be made is the solution to conform with the Government order, then I am for that, providing however: That the reduction does not just apply to reduction in number of prints alone of each subject. We cannot stress too much the importance of continuing the available prints for each subject. I fail even to see where this will materially hurt the smaller Producer, back in the days when we did not know what a double bill was, and before the Majors took control, we had perhaps twenty-five Producing and Distributing units in the field and none of them fared badly, about the same difference exists now except that many Producers are now linked up with one unit.

That we are all going to make sacrifices is beyond question of doubt. But who isn't ready and willing to do his little part to help win this war? The one thing

that I find bothering most exhibitors today, especially the independent exhibitor is the fact that all this pledging of screens and industry sacrifice is being done by a few that really take for granted that it is agreeable and for some perhaps personal glorification take it upon themselves to speak for the whole industry. This might even be forgivable if those individuals would once in awhile mention the fact that the donation of the screens of the country was cheerfully given by the Exhibitors themselves and not by self styled ambassadors.

I have never as yet run across the individual exhibitor who did not wish to cooperate with the government in every manner possible, but he does resent having some few big named individuals taking all the credit away from him and having it appear that it is necessary to handle it in such a manner. And I wonder if the demise of UMPI isn't caused by just a trifle of this attitude.

RAY BRANCH

K. LOUIS LINKER
7001 N. Clark St.
Chicago, Ill.

November 11, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison, *Editor*
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

It was with much interest that I read your article on "A Courtesy Uniformed Men And Women Deserve," in your report of October 24, 1942. Hats off to Gus S. Eysell of the Radio City Music Hall for his thoughtful gesture . . . but I feel another boquet is due to a showman who, incidentally, has been my client for the past ten years.

That man is Ludwig Susman, manager of the Adelphi Theatre, Chicago. Mr. Susman has been admitting members of the armed forces absolutely free ever since the first man was drafted . . . every day of the week . . . matinee or evening . . . Saturdays, Sundays and holidays included.

And when the WAACS were formed, he immediately changed his free admission trailer and posters to include "both men and women in uniform."

Located close to Chicago's northern boundary, the Adelphi is handy for fun-bound boys from Fort Sheridan (20 miles away) and the sailors from Great Lakes Naval Training Station (about 25 miles away). When these fighting men come to Chicago for their entertainment, the first Chicago stop on the North Shore Electric Lines is Howard Street which is only a few blocks away from the Adelphi Theatre.

To date, over 15,000 members of the armed forces have been admitted free of charge to the Adelphi. They do not even have to go to the box office (except when buying a single admission ticket for their date). And at no time did they have to stand in line . . . but went immediately to the lobby where ushers escorted them to their seats.

To my knowledge, the Adelphi is the only theatre in Chicago offering 100% cost-free admission to all in uniform.

And Mr. Sussman has not stopped there, neither. As tireless commander of the Rogers Park community Civilian Defense center . . . he has set an example in getting quick results.

Moreover, in the recent movie theatre War Bond Sales Drive, Mr. Sussman was responsible for selling over \$105,000 worth of bonds (which was more than four times the original quota set for his theatre).

Sincerely yours,

K. LOUIS LINKER

ahead on his forthcoming productions; it does, however, find fault with his resorting to sarcasm because some exhibitors may be fortunate and wise enough to go to Florida for the same purpose that he went to Sun Valley.

The exhibitors, and not Mr. Goldwyn, are the best judges in the operation of their theatres. If an exhibitor has the executive ability to train and trust a theatre manager to operate his theatre, which to him is an investment of comparatively greater importance than is the picture owned by the producer, why should Mr. Goldwyn speak derogatorily of this exhibitor's manager because he pays him only \$30 a week? A perfect example is Robert M. Weitman, managing director of the New York Paramount Theatre. Not long ago Mr. Weitman was a doorman at the Rivoli Theatre in this city; today he is one of the foremost theatre men in the country. When Mr. Weitman's pay-check was less than \$30 a week, he must have shown marked ability in the judgment of astute theatre owners to have won promotion through various stages until even Mr. Goldwyn would recognize Mr. Weitman's ability to handle a Goldwyn picture. It was men with the ability of Mr. Weitman who, when they earned less than \$30 a week, made it possible for their employers to take vacations in places like Florida and Sun Valley. And there have been and still are in the industry many "Weitmans."

It was a great and successful man like Andrew Carnegie who left a thoughtful message for future generations by placing this epitaph on his tombstone: "Here lies a man who knew how to hire men better than himself." Mr. Carnegie did not mention whether the \$30 a week rate was the basis on which he judged an employee's ability.

Mr. Goldwyn complains that not enough exhibitors boost pictures. I doubt if he has ever given thought to the fact that often these exhibitors are handed pictures that contain nothing worth boosting. For example: "The Cowboy and the Lady" and "The Westerner."

In his many years as a producer Mr. Goldwyn has made some very fine pictures, and he has made also some very bad ones. If he could eliminate these bad ones, from which he seems to expect as great box-office returns as he received from the fine pictures, he will have fewer exhibitor complaints, and less reason for criticizing exhibitors.

Instead of hurling criticism at the exhibitors and their \$30 a week managers, Mr. Goldwyn might do well to consult with them in advance of production. The advice that he could get from them might help him to improve the quality of his pictures greatly, in which case he would be able to "have a can of film delivered" with assurance that the exhibitor could "tell a \$30 a week manager to go ahead and put it on the screen."

PACIFIC COAST CONFERENCE
INDEPENDENT THEATRE OWNERS
Suite 21—1914 So. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif.

November 12, 1942

Mr. P. S. Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

Your request for views of people in the industry on your article "COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR

SHADOW" is of great interest to those of us who are exhibitor representatives and who have been for years advocating the elimination of the "double bill" policy in the exhibition of motion pictures.

First and most important of all, it is the duty and privilege of every branch of the motion picture industry to give all-out cooperation to our government in our present emergency. With this fact established as a premise, the government's need for raw stock must come first and the manner in which the motion picture industry should cooperate is to curtail all raw stock in its most unnecessary departments. By "unnecessary" is meant that which will least affect the theatre going public who today, of all times, need the uplift in morale they can receive only thru viewing the best quality of picture entertainment that can be produced. In addition, theatres should have sufficient time on their screens to present to the public all government made films.

The move to bring about a 20% reduction in prints naturally greatly delays clearance and thus affects the theatre going public. The reduction of raw stock in production will not only help our government by releasing a far greater amount of footage in positive raw stock than can be obtained in reduction of prints but will release the proportionate amount of negative raw stock as well. Thus, it is obvious that the elimination of a great majority of the commonly termed "B" pictures will more effectively and properly show the cooperation of the motion picture industry with our government's needs, because the "B" picture department is obviously the most unnecessary.

This will naturally bring about that which should have been accomplished years ago, the inauguration of a "single bill" policy. In our opinion, this policy, in addition to eliminating approximately 75% of all of the problems now existing in distributor-exhibitor relationships, will also during these trying times result in a far better quality of 2½ hours of entertainment so necessary in areas where blackouts are prevalent; where children are kept in theatres too long; and where gas rationing and tire conservation really demands the shortening of all motion picture programs to not longer than 2½ hours.

We could dwell upon the authenticated facts resulting in a justification of the statement made above that approximately 75% of the problems between distributor and exhibitor would be eliminated under a "single bill" policy, but they are so apparent and have been expressed so many times in trade practice code and at UMPI meetings that they need no repetition here.

In Chicago, on December 9th, producers, distributors and exhibitors gathered together at the first organization meeting of the UMPI and resolved that *all* of the resources of the motion picture industry would be devoted to an all-out cooperation with our government. This resolution was sent to President Roosevelt; the Congress of the United States; the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. Let us fulfill that resolution and we will find that in volunteering to do it before we are asked by our government will result in our government's recognition of the motion picture industry as an essential industry—one devoted to complete cooperation regardless of the sacrifices necessary. Then it can always be said that at least *ONE* good thing came out of UMPI.

Sincerely yours,

R. H. POOLE,
Executive Secretary

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
United States\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
Canada 16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
Great Britain 15.75
Australia, New Zealand,
India, Europe, Asia 17.50
35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
Room 1812
New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1942

No. 48

The Double Feature Issue Is Back Again

Now that the double feature issue has been revived as a result of Lowell Mellett's remarks to the National Board of Review at its annual conference held recently in New York City, such exhibitors and exhibitor organizations who have been advocating the elimination of double features are rallying support for such a movement, and are asking the government to issue an edict banning the showing of two feature length pictures, and to limit the running time of each performance.

In general, those advocating single-feature showings are in agreement with Mr. Mellett in that the elimination of the double features will result in a savings of raw film stock, and will allow more time for the presentation of vital information through government shorts.

Urging Senators and House members to pass a government ruling that would solve the double-feature problem, Allied of Illinois took advertisements in three leading Washington newspapers stating that a recent independent poll showed that a majority of the exhibitors throughout the country favored elimination of double features.

The view held by Allied of Illinois, however, does not seem to be unanimously shared by National Allied, because its Board of Directors, at a recent meeting in Columbus, O., decided to leave the issue to the discretion of its member groups, so as to avoid forcing the opinion of one group upon the entire body.

The most significant step taken thus far is in the St. Louis area where, under the leadership of Harry C. Arthur, Jr., managing director of the Fanchon & Marco Theatres, in St. Louis, a resolution was unanimously passed by the "representatives of 95% of all theatres in the area," abandoning dual film programs in this territory not later than June 1, 1943.

In his announcement, Mr. Arthur had this to say:

"The death knell of duals is being sounded throughout the film industry. The plan was presented by us following the multitudinous suggestions by those in authority in Washington, who declare there is a dire shortage of necessary war material currently being utilized for raw stock film.

"We cannot afford to await orders from Washington demanding the elimination of duals. It is our patriotic duty as citizens wishing to do all in our power to assist in the nation's war efforts—and especially as citizens engaged in a specific profession which affords an ideal medium of reaching eighty million patrons weekly.

"To wait until an edict has been handed down to us is to admit we can't handle our own affairs. This is definitely not the case. We are perfectly capable of so doing, and toward this end, this resolution has been presented, calling a halt to dual film programs for the duration, beginning not later than June 1, 1943. And if the government authorities wish

us to call off the duals sooner, we're ready to follow through!

"Exhibitors throughout the country have been willing to call quits on duals for a long time, but it's one of those things you talk about and never do anything about! It would have been suicidal for a handful of showmen to adopt a single-feature policy while competitive theatres continued double:—the public, we all know to well, wants dual feature programs, despite any poll ever taken showing otherwise.

"But now it becomes a patriotic duty to curtail our activities in the name of the War Effort. The road has been shown to us—none too subtly, but nevertheless effectively. The rest is up to us. It's our responsibility, and we cannot fail.

"June 1, 1943, has been designated arbitrarily as a time limit to allow the cleaning up of all contractual obligations between exhibitors and distributors. It also should afford ample time in which producers and distributors can change their production and distribution schedules to mesh with the new 'duration' trend. Our entire industry must gear itself to a single-feature program policy throughout the nation. It will not only save vital materials ordinarily used for raw film stock, but further, will afford theatre men the opportunity to serve the government by running every single short subject of an educational or intelligence nature provided us through government or industrial channels. The running of these reels is imperative on our part. It is the one tremendously important war task assigned to us by our commander in chief and his aides. Their showing on our screens is actually, what constitutes our having been named an essential industry. The elimination of double-feature programs would afford plenty of time to every exhibitor for the featuring of these subjects, many of which are not receiving full playing time due to film programs packed to the gills with full length features.

"Another thought which certainly would save an appreciative amount of film footage, between now and June 1, would be the elimination of endless credits which now precede all film productions, credits to producers, associate producers, directors, photographers, and scenarists. A great portion of this footage can easily be saved, merely by listing them all on one frame, in the name of economy. We fully appreciate that credit is due these worthies, but we also appreciate that, if these vital materials are actually necessary, every one involved would gladly surrender his billing if he or she knew it would net additional bullets for men on the fighting fronts."

Note, if you will, that Mr. Arthur admits "the public wants dual feature programs, despite any polls taken showing otherwise." Note also that the resolution was not passed by 95% of the exhibitors in the area, but by "representatives

(Continued on last page)

"Random Harvest" with Greer Garson and Ronald Colman

(MGM, no release date set; time, 126 min.)

This version of James Hilton's best-selling novel is one of the most heart-warming, excitable, and emotional love dramas brought to the screen, the sort that should leave audiences thoroughly satisfied. It holds one consistently fascinated throughout its more than two hours running time. As the hero and heroine, no more happier choice than Greer Garson and Ronald Colman could have been made. Under Mervyn LeRoy's sympathetic direction, both handle their difficult roles in brilliant fashion, and they impart to the spectator the most human of emotions. Ronald Colman's characterization is superb. In a memorable performance that is a tribute to his artistry, he makes believable the role of the shell-shocked soldier, an amnesia victim, who, tortured in mind and body by his inability to recall his past, finds peace and comfort in a woman's love, only to become bewildered again when, with the return of his memory, he fails to remember all that occurred while he was an amnesia victim. As the woman in whom Colman finds love and understanding, Greer Garson displays the tenderness and compassion that catapulted her to fame as "Mrs. Miniver." She adds realism and emotional depth to her characterization as Colman's wife, who, after he returns to his wealthy upper-class family and becomes a great industrialist, does not inform him of their marriage, but chooses instead to become his secretary in the hope that the association would refresh his memory, and result in their love being reborn. Miss Garson, in kilts, doing an imitation of Harry Lauder will delight your audience. The supporting cast is very good, particularly Susan Peters, as Colman's young niece, whose marriage to him is frustrated at the last moment. England is the locale, and the action takes place immediately following the signing of the Armistice in 1918. The production values are fine, and the settings authentic. There can be no question of its box-office success:—

In the excitement caused by the Armistice, Ronald Colman, a shell-shocked amnesia victim, wanders out of an asylum and makes his way into Medbury. Because of his odd manner and dress, he is recognized as a patient by Greer Garson, a music-hall dancer. Her sympathy goes out for Colman, and she befriends him, taking him to a country village where she restores his faith in himself. He develops talent as a writer, and he and Greer marry. A child is born to them. Colman goes to Liverpool to inquire about a position, and is struck down while crossing a street. The shock restores his memory, but his two years with Greer are blacked out. Colman returns to his wealthy English family, and within a few years becomes a leading industrialist. Meanwhile Greer, after years of suffering and loss of her child, locates Colman through Dr. Philip Dorn, a kindly psychiatrist. She manages to become Colman's secretary, but he does not show any signs of recognition. Dorn advises her not to reveal herself. Greer is forced to stand by while Susan Peters, Colman's youthful niece, and Colman are engaged to be married. But Susan calls off the marriage when her instinct tells her that somewhere in Colman's forgotten past was another woman. More lonely than ever, Colman comes to depend on Greer. He offers her marriage in name only. She accepts. Under her guidance he becomes a political leader, but her efforts to recapture the past for him fail. She decides to take a trip, but before sailing visits the cottage where she and Colman had been happy. Colman goes to Medbury to settle a strike, and there, piece by piece, his past comes back to him. He retraces his steps to the cottage where he and Greer are reunited.

Claudine West, George Froeschel, and Arthur Wimperis wrote the screen play, Sidney Franklin produced it, and Mervyn LeRoy directed it. The cast includes Reginald Owen, Bramwell Fletcher, Henry Travers and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Casablanca" with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman and Claude Rains

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 99 min.)

Timely in title and topic, "Casablanca" is an excellent war melodrama, one that will certainly appeal to all types of audiences. It should prove to be one of the season's big box-office pictures, not only because its locale happens to be the spot where our armed forces have landed to open up a second front, but because of the film's own fine merits. It is a creditable production in every department—screen play, dialogue, direction, and acting. The city of Casablanca is depicted as a melting pot, to which come harrassed European refugees in search of visas that will take them to Lisbon, and from there to America. Most of the action revolves around an American cafe-owner, whose cafe is one of the city's main attractions—a meeting place of nefarious international characters who deal in a black market for passports. The story is one of intrigue, romance, and human interest, in which the cafe-owner, because of his love for the wife of a European underground movement leader, outwits a Nazi Major's attempt to prevent the leader from leaving Casablanca to continue his work in America. A highly dramatic and thrilling situation is the one where the French patriots and European refugees sing the French national anthem, drowning out the voices of a party of Nazi officers who were singing a German anthem; one is made to feel the fervor that lies in the hearts of oppressed humans, who pray for the day when they and their countries would be rid of Nazi aggression. As the hard-boiled but sentimental cafe-owner, Humphrey Bogart turns in his finest performance yet. Claude Rains, as the gay but shrewd Prefect of Police; Paul Henried, as the underground leader; Ingrid Bergman, as Henried's wife; Conrad Veidt, as the Nazi Major; Sydney Greenstreet, as head of the Black Market; Peter Lorre, as an agent of the Black Market; Dooley Wilson, as the colored entertainer; S. Z. Sakall, as Bogart's faithful waiter—all are impressive in their respective roles.

Major Conrad Veidt arrives in Casablanca to inquire into the death of two Germans, murdered while carrying special visas. Claude Rains assures Veidt that the murderer will be captured at Humphrey Bogart's cafe. That night Peter Lorre induces Bogart to hide the passports. Soon after, Rains enters the cafe, and informs Bogart that his men had surrounded the place to catch the murderer. Bogart and Rains were on friendly terms; Rains received graft for "winking" at the cafe's doings. Lorre is caught, but is shot when he tries to escape. As Bogart quiets the guests, Paul Henried, underground movement leader, and Ingrid Bergman, his wife, enter the cafe. She is the girl with whom Bogart had an affair in Paris, not knowing that she was married. She had thought her husband dead. The couple had come to Casablanca for the passports that Bogart had hidden. Rains and Veidt were aware of their purpose, and they were determined not to let Henried leave the city to continue his work. Bogart greets Ingrid coldly; she had left him stranded in Paris. After the cafe closes, Ingrid visits Bogart to explain, but he bitterly refuses to listen to her. Learning that Bogart had the passports, Henried offers him a fabulous price for them. Bogart curtly refuses. Ingrid goes to Bogart's apartment and, at gun-point, tries to force the passports from him. He tells her to shoot, but she breaks down and admits her love for him. Realizing that their love was unimportant compared to Henried's work, Bogart tricks Rains into arranging for Henried's and Ingrid's departure by plane. Bogart kills Veidt when he attempts to halt the plane. Rains and Bogart leave to join the Free French.

Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein, and Howard Koch wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and Michael Curtiz directed it.

Adult entertainment.

THE SMALL TOWN'S PLIGHT

Under the aforementioned heading, Fred H. Strom, Executive Secretary of Allied Theatre Owners of the Northwest, has issued a bulletin in which is reprinted an editorial that appeared in the November 3, 1942, issue of the *Minneapolis Star Journal*. Following is the editorial:

"Because a world at war urgently needs the things that farms produce, the exodus of agricultural workers to industry and the armed services has become a serious problem. Yet selective service and the employment bureaus, as well as a lot of patriotic individuals, are tackling the matter and the chances are that farm production will stay at a high level.

"But another rural problem has little chance of solution until peace comes. That is the plight of the small towns. All over Minnesota the story is the same—workers have gone off to the factories, youths are in the army.

"An account of McLeod County farming appears elsewhere on this page. Consider the towns there. Filling stations and small restaurants have been closing all over the county. The workers in them get little consideration from the draft board, and everybody accepts that as necessary.

"At Silver Lake, a garage, an implement company and a dry goods store have closed recently. The *Glencoe Republic* suspended publication two weeks after its last printer went into the army. Houses and apartments in once crowded Hutchinson stand empty. J. A. Jorgenson of the draft board vainly tries to hire a man for his Hutchinson hotel. At Biscay, Otto Rasmussen, manager of the oldest co-operative creamery in the state, and his two helpers leave for better jobs.

"More than 1,500 men from McLeod County, out of a population of 21,000, have gone into armed services. Hundreds have left for Rosemount, New Brighton and west coast war industries. Hardly a carpenter, painter or other artisan is left in the towns.

"Down at New Ulm every dwelling in the city was occupied a year ago. Now a hundred are for rent or sale. More than two thousand have gone from Brown County into service and perhaps two thousand more have moved out to defense centers.

"All across northern Minnesota, war has upset the economic scene. Woodsmen, subsistence farmers, resort men and townspeople have gone. Companies with contracts for the Alaskan highway, Newfoundland, Iceland and other sub-Arctic defense projects recruited much of their help in our northern counties. WPA and CCC are out. A recent checkup showed 27 families — 104 persons — gone from Walker to war jobs, and this doesn't include men going into service.

"At Ely a tenth of the population of 6,000 is in the army or navy or marine corps. And not only the men go—young women have taken jobs in Washington as stenographers, they are in arms plants or filling men's places in the larger cities.

"Merchants are having a hard time getting goods. A hardware store and a dry goods store closed at Wheaton a short time ago. In almost every town in Minnesota such instances are repeated. Some of the men are closing up to shoulder a gun, some find their customers have dwindled. The smaller the business, the more likely it is to close.

"Thus the towns, which might reasonably be expected to regain importance with gas rationing and a return to 'horse and buggy' standards, find themselves much more hit than helped by the war. And anybody can say whether the patterns peace brings will restore the economic balance between city and town as it has existed."

Commenting on this editorial, Mr. Strom states:

"Nothing more eloquently describes the sorry straits of the small town exhibitors, throughout the Northwest, than the editorial in the *Minneapolis Star Journal*. That the Distributors have failed to recognize this condition in its true proportions is reflected in the many complaints filed with this office. Palliatives in the form of 'adjustments'; 'We deal with individual complaints'; etc., etc., will not suffice. **SOMETHING DRASTIC MUST BE DONE!** Exhibitors, goaded into desperate measures to protect their investments and livelihood, will not be held responsible for resorting to 'all legal and effective means' to obtain film rental terms they can live under.

"For two years now, Northwest Allied has called these facts to the attention of both local and national Distributor Sales Managers. The net result has been a lot of conversation and very little action, except in isolated and specific instances.

"Generally speaking, the last season was unprofitable for the majority of small town exhibitors in the Northwest, as well as many suburban houses. That the exhibitors do not intend to sit idly by and take another season of the same dose, lying down, is apparent from the wave of activity now going on in exhibitor ranks.

"'Main Street' in the small towns throughout this territory, is a far cry from the 'Broadways' of the big cities, packed with defense workers with more money than they know what to do with.

"Wartime profiteering by the Distributors, at the expense of the public and the exhibitors, is rapidly driving the independent exhibitors to thoughts of State and Federal legislation.

"**SOUND AND CONSERVATIVE** exhibitors, who have expressed their views recently on exhibitor-distributor relationships, have been vehement and emphatic to the point of bitterness over the utter disregard, on the part of the distributors, of wartime problems and conditions affecting their theatres. 'Let the government take over; I'd welcome it,' is their cry.

"Along with more percentage pictures is the bitter complaint over the improper allocation of pictures. Some Distributors are even so short-sighted as to demand more rental terms than a year ago, when these terms have already been proven out of line.

"Many exhibitors have emphatically called for government regulation and control of the industry. Facts are now being compiled and gathered for submission to Congress. An all-out, sweeping investigation of the industry is being demanded by many prominent members of Northwest Allied. After enough case histories have been compiled, a policy of action will be formulated by the board.

"A meeting of the Central States Conference Board of Trustees has been called for the early part of December to consider the entire over-all Northwest picture. What action will ensue from this conference is not predictable at this time. Exhibitor-members will be kept informed by personal letter."

The conditions outlined in the *Minneapolis Star Journal's* editorial, and their effect on the small-town exhibitor, has its counterpart in many other sections of the country. There is little that this paper can add to Fred Strom's comments; he has covered every point very well. Unless the distributors soon take cognizance of these existing conditions and give the exhibitors the relief they seek, the rising tide of exhibitor resentment is sure to lead to government regulation, in which case the distributors will wish they had seen the handwriting on the wall.

of 95% of the theatres in the area." We wonder how many of the theatres included in this 95% are owned by circuits controlling first and second runs! It would be interesting to hear from the exhibitors who represent the theatres that make up the 5%. We wonder how many of them are subsequent run houses!

On the other side of the issue are those who maintain the belief that the abolishment of double bills would result in a large number of independent exhibitors being forced out of business. They assert that there will be fewer pictures for exhibition; that, by the time these pictures reached the small exhibitor, their audience appeal would be void; and that with reduced entertainment would come an increase in admission prices to make up for lost patronage.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has never taken a stand either for or against double features, for it feels that this is a problem that every exhibitor has to determine for himself; it has always been the opinion of this paper that the exhibitor who resorts to double billing does so because of competitive reasons, and to do otherwise would cause him to lose his entire investment. If he could maintain a profitable business on a single feature basis, the exhibitor would no doubt adopt such a policy.

In these abnormal days, when the box-office returns are reaching new highs, there is still to be found many an exhibitor who complains of poor business, because his customers, now that they have more money in their pockets, are patronizing the first run houses at higher admissions. This increased patronage to the first run houses has been responsible for the unusual number of extended runs given to the producers' "A" pictures, and their unnatural smash box-office records serve as the excuse for the high film rentals and percentages demanded by the distributors, as soon as the picture becomes available. But by the time the picture is made available to the subsequent run exhibitor, it is "milked" dry of audience appeal, because of the extended runs it enjoyed prior to his showing it. And that is not the only evil of extended runs. It creates also a back logging of product, which, together with the print curtailment and delivery problems, force the subsequent run exhibitor to show two grade "B" pictures, instead of an "A" feature supported by a "B." But what will happen to this exhibitor if a ban on double features compels him to show but one "B" picture instead of two, while waiting for the "A" product to become available to him? Can he survive?

The fact that those advocating single features are appealing to the government to interfere is an indication that an attempt to settle this problem within the industry would be futile. It is for that reason the independent exhibitors should get together now to formulate a plan, for submission to Washington, whereby they would not suffer any inequities in the event the government decides to issue an edict banning double features.

Such a plan should call upon the government to control extended first and second runs to the extent that a subsequent-run exhibitor would not suffer undue loss of patronage; to re-adjust clearances in places that have been affected by shifting populations and gas and rubber rationing; and to make whatever other adjustments are required that would enable an exhibitor to adhere to the government's edict, and still protect his investment for the duration.

By giving this problem careful consideration now, one man's gain will not be another man's loss.

LOOSE TALK

As Chief of the Office of War Information's Bureau of Motion Pictures, Lowell Mellett was out of bounds when, in his speech to the National Board of Review, he stated:

"Entertainment is essential, but life cannot be all entertainment—not in these times. For its benefit to national morale, entertainment can reach a point of diminishing returns. The habit of sitting three or four or more hours, with one's mind afloat in a fictional world, hardly equips the American population for the serious job of dealing with real life. That way lies degeneration rather than growth."

Mr. Mellett apparently forgot that earlier in his speech he said: "But it is the American way of life to give the people pretty much what the people want."

As a high government official, Mr. Mellett should be more careful in expressing his views in public, so as to avoid the question of whether they are his personal opinions or those of the government.

When Mr. Mellett passes judgment on the length of time he considers proper for one to sit in a motion picture theatre, he is violating one of the democratic principles for which we are now fighting, and the public, which has graciously accepted the numerous edicts emanating from Washington, so long as they were essential to the war effort, would be quick to resent being told how to spend their leisure time.

Mr. Mellett was properly rebuked by his chief, Elmer Davis, director of the OWI, who, in commenting on the speech, said:

"Mr. Mellett's suggestion about eliminating double features was based on discussions with responsible members of the motion picture industry. His speech went through ordinary clearance procedure of OWI. Regarding the amusement habits of America, OWI as an organization has no opinion. Our job is to furnish the people with factual information and what they do with their spare time is none of our concern."

THE NEW BOND CAMPAIGN

The Treasury Department, in cooperation with the War Activities Committee, is calling upon exhibitors throughout the country to stage an intensive Bond selling campaign during the week of December Seven, the first anniversary of the infamous Pearl Harbor attack.

The slogan around which the campaign will revolve is: AVENGE DECEMBER 7TH—ON TO VICTORY." BUY BONDS!

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Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1942

No. 49

The \$25,000 Salary Limit Affects All Exhibitors

This is not propaganda against the rulings of the government. HARRISON'S REPORTS merely wishes to point out that the government is cheating itself out of badly needed taxes by limiting the net salary of any one individual to no more than \$25,000 within one year, and that, ultimately, this ruling may affect the exhibitor in the operation of his theatre, because of its possible drastic effect on the future production of pictures.

Let us skip over the involved explanations of the ruling and get down to simple facts.

Such great screen personalities as Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Bette Davis, and Abbott and Costello are, under their salary contracts, entitled to more than \$25,000 for even one picture, but under the law they cannot draw more than that net sum. If any of these stars work in another picture during the same salary year, the law will not permit payment for their services. It is the American way of life to be paid for services rendered, unless, of course, one gives of his time for a charitable or other worthy purpose, and the stars cannot be blamed for refusing to work without compensation. As a result of this, however, the exhibitor may find himself with fewer box-office pictures.

To give the exhibitor a better understanding of why this ruling may result in fewer box-office pictures, let us dwell upon the matter hypothetically: Suppose that Bob Hope works in one Paramount picture in January of 1943, the year in which this ruling takes effect. He will then have earned his \$25,000 net salary for the entire year and, according to the government's ruling, could not receive additional salary for the rest of the year. Then suppose that Hope is offered a part in another picture that same year, either by Paramount or some other studio. Do you suppose that Hope would risk his health or waste his energy if the law does not permit the producer to pay him? And do you suppose that Paramount, because of this present ruling, would again cast Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, and Dorothy Lamour in the same picture when it would be wiser to cast only one star in a picture? Suppose Bob Hope and Bing Crosby decide to earn their limited salary on the radio?

To continue in this hypothetic vein, let us suppose that one of the big producers has an opportunity to buy a great novel—another "Gone With the Wind"—which may cost about two million dollars to produce. To protect his huge investment, the producer's best insurance would be to acquire one or two great screen personalities to catch the public's fancy and to impress them with the importance of the forthcoming produc-

tion. But if the producer cannot obtain stars of box-office calibre, because they had already earned their salary limit for the year, he may not want to risk his money on the production. The exhibitor, of course, loses a potential box-office attraction.

The majority of the stars, however, are more than willing to work and, though they want to be compensated in accordance with their worth, they are not requesting permission to retain more money than the limitation permits. They are perfectly willing to turn over to the government all earnings over and above the salary limitation. No one can deny that they are asking for a special privilege, but no one can deny their patriotic motive.

By permitting the stars to follow such a course, the government will benefit greatly; more taxes will be collected from the stars; the more pictures the stars appear in, the greater the box-office income and admission taxes; and the more profit the exhibitor realizes, the more income tax he will pay.

Paying for the war is one of the greatest problems facing our country today, and it seems foolhardy to issue an edict that would reduce the national income when every effort should be made to increase it, thereby giving us a source from which greater tax demands can be made.

One of the best sources of revenue our government has is the motion picture industry. In amusement taxes alone, the government collected in October of this year more than fourteen and a half million dollars, which is twice the amount collected in October, 1941.

The country's national debt is now well in excess of one hundred billion dollars, and it is rising steadily. The only way that this debt can be paid is through direct and indirect taxation of the people. Why then limit the earnings of individuals fortunate enough to command high salaries when the huge income tax they pay helps to lighten the burden of the "little fellow"? An individual earning one hundred thousand dollars pays an income tax of approximately sixty-five thousand dollars, and if one's earnings is two hundred thousand dollars, the tax is approximately one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Added to the conservation of film and the loss of many male stars to the armed forces, the \$25,000 net salary ruling can only aggravate further an already aggravated production problem. The fewer pictures we produce, the greater becomes the problem of exhibition. It is for that reason exhibitors should either advocate rescindment of the ruling, or seek a readjustment of the inequities that exist in its present form.

"The Traitor Within" with Jean Parker and Donald M. Barry

(Republic, December 16; time, 61 min.)

Just a routine program melodrama. There is nothing novel in the plot nor in the characterizations. Moreover, it is somewhat demoralizing because of the actions of the heroine who resorts to blackmailing a public official to better her husband's position in life, and does so without his knowledge. An unpleasant situation is that in which a mob breaks into jail in an attempt to lynch the husband, who was falsely accused of murdering the official. The story is extremely thin, but it may get by in the action houses as a mid-week supporting feature:—

Donald M. Barry, a young truck-driver, is engaged to Jean Parker, who bears resentment toward Frank Morgan, the town mayor and a trucking line operator. Years previously, Morgan had accepted credit for an heroic act committed by George Cleveland, Jean's father, and as a result had attained his success. One night while riding with Jean, Barry's truck is sideswiped by another truck, and demolished. Jean imagines that the other truck bore Morgan's insignia, and induces Barry to demand restitution. She also informs Barry that she had proof that would discredit Morgan's pseudo heroism. When Morgan denies that one of his trucks was responsible, Barry threatens to expose him. Morgan quickly agrees. At a party celebrating her marriage to Barry, Jean is approached by Bradley Page, a crooked politician, who suggests that they take further advantage of Morgan's fear of exposure. He plans to set Barry up in business, then force Morgan to turn over his choice accounts to him. Jean agrees to the scheme, but does not reveal it to Barry. After gaining much wealth, Barry accidentally learns of the scheme. Enraged because he had unwittingly built his success on blackmail, Barry leaves Jean. He goes to Morgan, reimburses him, and scornfully berates him for lacking the courage to confess the truth. After Barry leaves, Morgan commits suicide, leaving a note of confession. Morgan's wife destroys the note, lest the town learn her husband was a fake. Barry, who was known to be the last person to visit Morgan, is charged with murder. A mob gathers around the jail to lynch him, but Jean induces Morgan's wife to tell the truth in time to save Barry's life.

Jack Townley wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Not for children.

"Reunion" with Joan Crawford, John Wayne and Phillip Dorn

(MGM, no release date set; time, 103 min.)

An interesting war melodrama that may do better than average business because of the stars' marquee value. The locale is occupied France, in the pre-Pearl Harbor days, and the action revolves around a prosperous and petted Parisian woman whose love for France is awakened by the realities of the Nazi occupation. The story is improbable, but intriguing. One is sympathetic to the heroine who becomes hateful of her lover, a French industrialist, who collaborates openly with the Nazis. It is not until the end that she, as well as the spectator, learns that he was actually serving France by pretending collaboration and supplying the Nazis with defective war materials. The action turns wildly melodramatic towards the end where three RAF fliers, posing as German Generals, make their escape. The gnawing grief of a people divested of country and liberty is dramatically presented:—

With the fall of Paris, Joan Crawford, a beautiful French woman, returns from a vacation in southern France to find that the Nazis had seized her home, and that Phillip Dorn, a French industrialist and her fiancee, was living in his accustomed luxury, and openly collaborating with the Nazis. Disillusioned, Joan breaks with Dorn, despite his pleas that she have faith in him. To support herself, Joan secures em-

ployment as a salesgirl for her former dressmaker. One night Joan is accosted by John Wayne, an American RAF flier who has escaped from a prison camp, and who sought her aid. Joan harbors him at her house, and he falls in love with her. To help him escape, Joan visits Dorn, informs him that she wants to go to America and, representing Wayne as an American student who had lost his papers, asks that he be permitted to drive her to Lisbon. Dorn makes the necessary arrangements with Albert Basserman, the military governor, but John Carradine, Gestapo chief, becomes suspicious. That night Dorn places Joan and Wayne in the care of two Nazi Generals and a Gestapo agent. The party reaches the border just as the guards are warned by radio to watch for three escaped British prisoners. To Joan's surprise, her escorts are the Britishers. They overcome the guards, and proceed to a field where a British plane meets them. The fliers inform Joan that Dorn was really a patriot, and that he had helped hundreds to escape. All board the plane except Joan. Meanwhile in Paris, Carradine seeks to arrest Dorn because he had procured the passes for Joan, who was missing, and had been seen with the escaping Britishers. With Joan's arrival Basserman scoffs at Carradine, and Dorn is cleared of suspicion.

Jan Lustig, Marvin Borowsky, and Marc Connelly wrote the screen play, Joseph L. Mankiewicz produced it, and Jules Dassin directed it. In the cast are Reginald Owen, Odette Myrtil, Howard Da Silva, J. Edward Bromberg, Ann Ayars, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

*Released as
REUNION IN FRANCE

"Madame Spy" with Constance Bennett and Don Porter

(Universal, December 11; time, 62 min.)

Mildly entertaining program fare. This is just another one of those fabulous Hollywood spy tales, which are about as convincing as a Hitler promise. There is more dialogue than action, making the picture slow-paced, and the plot is quite obvious, causing one to lose interest in the outcome. Despite their reasonably good performances, the players are handicapped by the poor material; for that reason they fail to make their respective roles impressive. It deserves no better than lower-half billing:—

In Russia, Constance Bennett marries Don Porter, American foreign correspondent. En route home, their ship is torpedoed, but the newlyweds are rescued, and welcomed home by Edward Brophy, a friendly taxi-driver. Porter becomes mystified at Constance's friendship for Nana Bryant, a shady character, and becomes angry when she proposes that they dine with her. Neither can he understand Constance's dislike for Edmund MacDonald, a naval intelligence officer and his old friend. Because of her strange movements, Porter pretends to leave town, and details Brophy to follow her. He learns from Brophy that Constance was meeting secretly with MacDonald; Nana and John Litel, a conspirator; and John Eldredge, a stranger. When MacDonald is found murdered, and the police suspect a woman of the crime, Porter becomes convinced that Constance was a spy. Together with Brophy, Porter trails Constance and Eldredge to a farm-house hideaway where he catches them sending wireless code messages. But Litel sneaks into the room unnoticed and, at gun-point, captures Porter and Brophy. Constance acts pleased and leaves with Eldredge while Litel ties the two men to chairs. Just as Litel prepares to shoot them, he himself is mysteriously shot. A farmer releases the two men, and they rush to town to inform the FBI. As Porter telephones the chief agent, Constance and Eldredge enter the room. The FBI chief informs Porter that Constance was a U. S. agent, and Eldredge, her aide, and that through her the spy ring was captured.

Lynn Riggs and Clarence Upson Young wrote the screen play, Marshall Grant produced it, and Roy William Neill directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"The Daring Young Man" with
Joe E. Brown and Marguerite Chapman**

(Columbia, October 8; time, 72 min.)

This slap-stick comedy is pretty silly, but it is good for many a hearty laugh, particularly in crowded theatres; it should make a very good supporting feature where something light is needed to round out a double bill. Joe E. Brown is in good form as the failure who becomes a champion bowler by means of a radio-controlled ball. He also portrays his own grandmother, an old lady with a gambling complex. To add to the hilarity, Brown becomes entangled with Nazi spies. It is a nicely directed picture, fast-moving and full of gags, the sort that will leave your audience satisfied that they had been amused:—

Joe E. Brown, an air-conditioning expert, is put out of business when the shop next door to his is blown up by Lloyd Bridges, Don Douglas, and Claire Dodd, Nazi spies. Marguerite Chapman, a newspaper reporter, suggests to Brown that he enlist, but none of the services will accept him because of his poor physique. To help Brown build up his physique, Marguerite induces him to take up bowling. Brown bowls miserably. He is about to give up when William Wright, a gambler, offers to make him an expert bowler in twenty minutes. Unknown to anyone, Wright had perfected a radio controlled ball, which he controlled by means of a mechanism under his vest. Within twenty minutes Brown becomes an expert bowler, and Wright wins a small fortune betting gullible spectators. Meanwhile, the spies discover that the interference with their short wave broadcasts was caused by Wright's radio device. They become friendly with Brown and Wright, and utilize Wright's mechanism to transmit their messages, speaking in bowling game numbers whenever Brown played. An FBI agent traces the spies to the bowling alley and, in the confusion caused by their getaway, the radio-ball hoax is discovered. When the crowd learns that they had been bilked, they close in on Brown; Wright had escaped with the spies. When Brown wakes up in the hospital, he is visited by Marguerite. She loathes him for his trickery, but he convinces her of his innocence. Brown escapes from the hospital, and makes his way to the spies' apartment. After a merry chase he leads them into the arms of the police. Brown's happiness is complete when he receives a letter from the War Department requesting that he report for duty.

Karen DeWolf wrote the screen play, Robert Sparks produced it, and Frank R. Strayer directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Andy Hardy's Double Life" with
Mickey Rooney**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

The popularity of the "Andy Hardy" series will undoubtedly put this picture across. In entertainment values, however, it is not up to the standard of the previous pictures, and the action is at times somewhat slow-moving; many patrons will feel that the series is wearing thin. Following a pattern familiar to the other pictures, the story concerns itself with the predicaments Mickey Rooney gets himself into as a result of his romantic adventures, and his dealings with his friends. In their "man to man" talks, this time "Andy" reverses the process by giving his father a "talking to." There is considerable human interest and much laughter in some of the situations:—

Just before leaving for college, Mickey Rooney sells his car for twenty dollars to his friends, who promise to pay him on the following day. Pleased with the sale, Mickey goes home where Cecilia Parker, his sister, asks him to finish her ironing so that she could keep a date with her boyfriend. Unknown to Mickey, his pals photograph him while ironing. Lewis Stone, Mickey's father, informs Mickey that

he will accompany him to college and introduce him to the faculty. Mickey feels that this would give him a wrong start with his future school chums, but does not tell his father so, lest he hurt him. Ann Rutherford invites Mickey to a swimming pool party where he meets Esther Williams, who calmly kisses him within ten minutes of their introduction. She is a psychology student, and in conspiracy with Ann to teach Mickey a lesson about women. That is Mickey's first catastrophe of the day. The second arises when Mickey's pals damage a store front with the car, and the store owner demands twenty dollars damages from the car's owner. Mickey refuses to accept responsibility, but he is compelled to acquiesce when his pals threaten to expose the ironing episode. Everything turns out well after Mickey has a "man to man" talk with his father, who understandingly agrees not to accompany Mickey to college. Mickey's aunt gives him twenty dollars to pay for the damages, and Ann and Esther confess their conspiracy. En route to college on the train, Mickey makes the acquaintance of Susan Peters, a co-ed. A new romance blossoms.

Agnes Christine Johnson wrote the screen play, and George B. Seitz directed it. In the cast are Fay Holden, Sara Haden, William Lundigan, Bobby Blake, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Lady from Chungking" with Anna May
Wong, Harold Huber and Mae Clarke**

(Producers Releasing Corp., December 21; time, 69 min.)

The unconquerable spirit of the Chinese, and their struggle against the Japanese invader is portrayed in this war melodrama, which should prove to be acceptable program fare in its intended playing zones. Anna May Wong is cast in the role of a high-born Chinese woman, leader of a guerilla band, who deliberately becomes the companion of a ruthless Japanese general, securing military information that results in the destruction of his forces, as well as himself. The film is slow-paced and void of virile action, but it manages to maintain the interest fairly well, despite the familiarity of the plot:—

While planting rice under the supervision of a Japanese soldier, the attention of Anna May Wong and a group of Chinese coolies is attracted to an air battle between an American bomber and three Japanese planes. As the bomber starts to fall, Paul Bryar and Rick Vallin bail out. As they float to earth, the soldier shoots at them, wounding Bryar. At a signal from Anna, the coolies overcome and strangle the soldier. The coolies succeed in hiding Bryar, and Anna attempts to hide Vallin. But Japanese Lieut. Ted Hecht catches them and imprisons Vallin. He releases Anna, commenting on her beauty. Meanwhile in the village, Louis Donath, a German innkeeper, prepares for the arrival of Harold Huber, a Japanese General. Seeking to better himself in the eyes of Huber, Hecht asks Anna to pose as a famous Chinese aristocrat, and to become Huber's companion. She quickly agrees. Huber becomes infatuated with her, and she soon gains his confidence, learning that troop trains would arrive on the following day. Hecht suspects Anna's motives, but dares not tell the General of her identity. With the aid of Mae Clarke, an entertainer at the inn, and the Chinese coolies, Vallin and Bryar escape and rejoin their squadron in time to participate in the attack on the troop train. As the attack starts, Anna enters the General's room and shoots him with his own gun. As he lies dying, he orders her execution. When Hecht enters the room for orders, Huber shoots him. With his dying breath, Huber orders the soldiers to fire on Anna. Fatally wounded, she tells the Japanese soldiers that China will live forever.

Sam Robins wrote the screen play, Alfred Stern and Arthur Alexander produced it, and William Nigh directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"China Girl" with Gene Tierney, George Montgomery, Victor McLaglen and Lynn Bari

(20th Century-Fox, December 1; time, 95 min.)

Despite the good production values, this war melodrama is only a fair entertainment, no better than program grade, and it should find its best reception among the action fans who care little about the plausibilities of a plot so long as the Hollywood heroics are plentiful. The action takes place in Burma, previous to the Pearl Harbor attack, and deals with the adventures of an American cameraman who is troubled by Japanese spies. The story follows a beaten path, and the treatment is quite ordinary. Moreover, its running time is much too long. Although the sufferings of the Chinese are vividly portrayed, dramatically, it is ineffective. The outstanding performance is that of Bobby Blake; he is an appealing youngster, and he shows great promise:—

George Montgomery, an American cameraman, is imprisoned by the Japs in China, and offered \$20,000 to film the Burma Road. His cellmate, Victor McLaglen, soldier of fortune, is visited by Lynn Bari, a girl-friend, who deftly slips him a gun as she says farewell. With the aid of the gun, the two men escape and, meeting Lynn, steal a Jap plane to make their getaway. They land at a Flying Tiger base in Mandalay where Montgomery refuses to join the "Tigers"; he preferred to remain a cameraman. Montgomery makes a deal with Lynn and McLaglen to get him a camera, giving them a half interest in whatever he films. He strikes up an acquaintance with Gene Tierney, a Chinese girl, who, together with her father, aided the stricken Chinese. When she repulses his love-making, Montgomery returns to his hotel where he romances with Lynn. But he soon drops Lynn when Gene comes to apologize. She warns him that Lynn and McLaglen were Jap agents, and that his escape had been planned so that he could film the Burma Road. Montgomery chases Lynn and McLaglen out of Mandalay, but the Japs order them to return and bring him back. Meanwhile Montgomery is heartbroken; Gene had left for Kunning to teach Chinese school children. In love with Montgomery, Lynn comes to his room to warn him against McLaglen, and asks him to accompany her to New York. Montgomery refuses her offer. When McLaglen arrives, he quickly disposes of him. Montgomery is given a plane ride to Kunning, arriving there in the midst of an air raid to find Gene and the children trapped in a bombed building. He aids in the rescue work, but Gene, mortally wounded, dies. In the midst of falling bombs, Montgomery and a Chinese boy man machine guns and fire at the planes.

Ben Hecht wrote the screen play and produced it. Henry Hathaway directed it. The cast includes Bobby Blake, Sig Rumann, Philip Ahn and others.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Time to Kill" with Lloyd Nolan and Heather Angel

(20th Century-Fox, December 22; time, 61 min.)

If the previous "Michael Shayne" program detective melodramas have pleased your patrons, this one, too, should satisfy them, for, in entertainment value, plot construction, and action, it is no better and no worse than the other pictures in the series. Lloyd Nolan portrays the role of the private detective who mystifies a blundering police lieutenant while he goes about the business of solving the crimes. The story is somewhat illogical and confusing, but it manages to hold one's interest fairly well:—

Having lost a rare coin, Ethel Griffies, an elderly widow, employs Lloyd Nolan, and bluntly informs him that she expected him to prove that it was stolen by Doris Merrick, her daughter-in-law and night-club singer, who had separated from James Seay, her son. As Nolan leaves, he notices the jittery attitude of Heather Angel, the widow's secretary. Events move swiftly. Nolan incurs the enmity of Ralph Byrd, who resents his questioning of Shelia Bromley, Doris' girl-friend; Ted Hecht, a stranger, who had followed

him is murdered; and Lester Sharpe, an old coin dealer, who had intimated he might locate the missing coin, is shot dead. A meeting with Doris convinces Nolan of her innocence. His suspicions are aroused when the widow orders him to drop the case; she had found the coin. He learns that Seay had stolen the coin to pay a debt to Byrd, but that Byrd had returned it. He learns also that Byrd knew Hecht. When Heather visits him and hysterically declares that she had just murdered Byrd, Nolan rushes to Byrd's apartment where he finds and pockets a photograph. As he investigates. Seay enters the apartment and attempts to kill him, but Nolan floors him. When Police Lieut. Richard Lane arrives, Nolan clears up the murder. Seay had conspired with Byrd and Hecht to counterfeit the coin, then killed Sharpe and Hecht to avoid detection, and murdered Byrd to escape blackmail. Eight years previously, Byrd had snapped a photograph of the widow pushing her husband out of a window, and all these years Heather had been led to believe that she, while hysterical, had committed the crime. Heather had continuously brought blackmail money to Byrd, given to her by the widow. Always afraid of him, she had become hysterical when he was shot, and believed that she murdered him.

Clarence Upson wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Herbert I. Leeds directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Life Begins at Eight-thirty" with Monty Woolley and Ida Lupino

(20th Century-Fox, December 25; time, 84 min.)

Very good mass entertainment. Adapted from the stage drama, "Yesterday's Magic," which was a melancholy affair, this screen version has been given a gayer mood without sacrifice of its dramatic impact; it is by far superior to the play. Monty Woolley is excellent. As the aged broken-down but proud actor, who causes his crippled daughter no end of grief because of his fondness for drink, Woolley is cast in a role that suits his personality to perfection, and he makes the most of it, to the delight of the spectator. His dialogue is extremely witty. As the crippled daughter, Ida Lupino is quite charming, and one feels sympathy and not pity for her. There is considerable human interest and a pleasant romance:—

The chronic drinking habits of Monty Woolley, one-time great actor, loses him many a job, and is the cause of much suffering to Ida Lupino, his crippled daughter. Cornel Wilde, a music composer, who lives in Woolley's apartment house, falls in love with Ida. Sara Allgood, Wilde's wealthy aunt, who acted with Woolley and admired him in his hey-day, arranges with J. Edward Bromberg, a producer, to offer Woolley the lead in King Lear. Elated at the opportunity, Woolley swears off drink, and works hard at rehearsals. Believing her crippled foot to be the result of a congenital condition, Ida shunned marriage. Wilde learns from the doctor who attended her at birth that she had been born a perfect baby, but that Woolley had dropped her while in a drunken stupor, and even to this day was unaware of what he had done. Her fears gone, Ida accepts Wilde's proposal. Knowing that Woolley was dependent on her, and not wishing to upset his comeback, Ida does not inform him of her plan to marry. But Woolley accidentally learns of it on opening night, and comes to the theatre too drunk to go onstage. Realizing that his drinking had ruined her life, Ida rages at him. Miss Allgood, too, is hurt, but she still loves Woolley, and offers him marriage. He refuses sarcastically. Woolley overhears Ida tell Wilde that she cannot leave her father and, when Wilde remonstrates with her, Woolley learns that he was the cause of Ida's crippled condition. Leaving her a farewell note, he goes to Miss Allgood and reluctantly agrees to marry her.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it. Irving Pichel directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain.... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
 35c a Copy

1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1942

No. 50

Hollywood's Attitude Towards Originators of Story Ideas

Those who conceive original ideas and develop them into picture stories must first earn a reputation elsewhere before Hollywood will pay any attention to them, no matter how fine is their story material. There may be an exception now and then, but such is the Hollywood attitude in the main.

You would think that, in determining whether a story is or is not suitable material for a motion picture, the production executives would be guided by their own judgment, the result of their experience. But such does not seem to be the case; they prefer published works of famous writers, or successful stage plays, often paying fabulous sums of money for the screen rights. The fact that a novel, or a stage play, is not suitable screen material, or that the action in a stage play does not move fast enough to satisfy picture audiences, does not seem to matter; they buy it, and then hand it to their best writers and ask them to go to work to make something out of it. Thus it often happens that the story is changed completely, and as often the title — nothing is left of the original work.

Hollywood does not trust its own judgment; it prefers the "tried and true" rather than to trust its own judgment and bring into pictures an idea that is far different from the ideas heretofore adapted in pictures.

Occasionally a producer does trust his own judgment. In such an event, excellent results are attained. Take, for example, the case of Joe Pasternak, who developed Deanna Durbin into a box-office sensation: Mr. Pasternak did not rush to buy a novel, or a stage play, to bring out Deanna Durbin's talent—he resorted to original stories.

It is true that, in Deanna Durbin, Mr. Pasternak had a personality; but it required suitable story material to establish her. And he found that material in the brains of idea originators. With weak story material, it is unlikely that he would have attained the same success with her.

As said often in these columns, the late Louis J. Selznick used to say that he could make a star with only one good story. And that is what Mr. Pasternak did—he brought out the talents of Deanna Durbin with only one story, and enhanced her popularity by subsequent good stories.

The point is that Mr. Pasternak did not resort to the "tried and true" methods; he went to the creators of ideas, put them to work, and by collaborating with them and inspiring them he got what he wanted. That is how great pictures should be made and new personalities developed—by encouraging creators of original ideas.

The practice of the picture producers of using the

judgment of publishers of books and magazine stories, or that of producers of stage plays, as their proving grounds, from which to select their material for important motion pictures, has many pitfalls. Too often a successful stage play is for select audiences, or a great novel is for a literary clientele, and is hardly suitable material for motion pictures, which cater to the masses.

Frequently a picture producer authorizes the production of a picture because a top-ranking director recommends it, and therein very often lies another mistake, for in many cases a director is not necessarily endowed with the qualification of selecting stories successfully. Possessing the judgment of directing actors with skill does not always go hand-in-hand with the judgment of story choosing. Selecting story material for motion pictures with a general appeal is an art by itself.

The attitude of Hollywood has done much to choke off the conceiving of original stories for important motion pictures. Because of the difficulty of selling to a studio a story, no matter how good, many a writer has been discouraged.

The blame for discouraging creative talent does not lie with the producers alone; it lies partly with the Screen Writers Guild itself, for according to the Guild's agreement with the producers the name of the creator of an original story is subordinated to that of the adaptor, or screen play writer when it comes to giving screen credits. Part of the agreement reads:

"The intention and spirit of the reward of credit being to emphasize the prestige and importance of the screen play achievement. . . ."

In other words, the man who conceives the idea for a story, or writes the story, is held by the Screen Writers Guild to be less important in the picture than the man who, as a good mechanic, takes the parts the creator has conceived and puts them together to form the screen play, which the director takes and puts onto the celluloid. It is, as you see, an injustice, tending to discourage men who have the ability to create.

If the producers want an abundance of story material, they should encourage the creators, not only by giving them due credit, but also by paying them what their creation is worth, and not pay them a pittance because their work has not been either published as a novel or magazine story, or acted on the stage.

The problem of encouraging creators of original ideas is as much an exhibitor, as well as a producer and distributor problem; it means the difference between a large number of meritorious pictures as against the few that are produced nowadays.

"A Man's World" with Marguerite Chapman and William Wright

(Columbia, September 17; time, 62 min.)

Other than plenty of action, this routine melodrama has little to offer; as entertainment it is more to the taste of the action-minded fans, and best suited for the lower half of a mid-week double bill. The story is ridiculous; it has been given some timely angles, but it is all quite familiar and does not maintain one's interest. There is some comedy, romance, and suspense, but in neither way does it impress one. There is little the players could do with the poor material:—

When Marguerite Chapman, a nurse, witnesses a gang murder in a hospital, Roger Pryor, the gang leader, kidnaps and sends her to a mining town in a strange country from where she could not escape. Marguerite is given room and board at a dance palace owned by Wynne Gibson. The palace is a hangout for miners who worked in a chromite mine operated by William Wright, a hard-bitten engineer, and Larry Parks, his younger brother. When Parks falls in love with Marguerite, Wright objects strenuously; he believed her to be one of the brothel girls. The two brothers fall out. Meanwhile, Wright is troubled by mysterious forces that are constantly hampering the work at the mine, delaying valuable chromite shipments needed for national defense. One day Parks is shot, sustaining a serious wound, while headed for the mine with badly needed explosives. When Wright finds the mine doctor too drunk to operate, he goes to the palace seeking Marguerite's help. She saves Parks' life with a successful operation. Wright softens toward her. He apologizes for his attitude and offers to take her dancing. Before the evening is over, both fall in love. Marguerite prepares to return home when news comes over the radio that Pryor and his gang had been wiped out. A sudden explosion causes the mine to cave in. A dying miner confesses that two of Wright's trusted workers were Nazi agents who had set off the blast. Marguerite changes her mind about leaving, deciding to remain and nurse Wright, who had been injured in the explosion.

Edward T. Lowe and Jack Roberts wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Gorilla Man" with John Loder and Paul Cavanaugh

(Warner Bros., January 16; time, 64 min.)

Ordinary program fare. Not only does this melodrama have a cast that means little at the box-office, it has also a story that means even less. The picture is just another one of those meaningless and exaggerated Hollywood spy concoctions, typical of the much too many similar films now cluttering the market and exhausting the patience of the public. This time two Nazi spies wander about England with the greatest of ease, committing murders and convincing military and civil officials that a British Captain is a homicidal maniac in order to discredit him. The title would indicate this to be a horror film, but there is nothing in it to scare anybody. The direction and acting are nothing to brag about:—

Nazi agent Dr. Paul Cavanaugh, owner of a sanitarium, and Dr. John Abbott, his assistant, are notified by radio to intercept Capt. John Loder, Commando leader, who, wounded, was expected to land on the coast near the sanitarium. Loder carried an important message. Abbott meets the Commandos' boat, and persuades Lieut. Richard Fraser, second in command, to bring Loder to the sanitarium. Loder is given overdoses of opiate, but, when Fraser visits him, he gasps that he must see General Lumsden Hare of Home Defense. When Hare arrives, the two Nazis listen on a dictaphone and hear Loder report that the Germans planned to invade England within two weeks. To discredit Loder, Cavanaugh informs the General that in addition to shock, Loder was mentally deranged. Believing him, the

General insists that Loder remain at the sanitarium. When Loder accidentally learns that he was in the hands of spies, he asks to be permitted to visit the widow of one of his men. Aware that Loder had found them out, Cavanaugh orders Abbott to kill the widow immediately after Loder's visit. They succeed in getting Loder arrested for the crime and confined to a mental hospital. To kill Loder on the outside, the Nazis help him to escape, but a warning from Mary Field, Cavanaugh's persecuted nurse, puts Loder on his guard. Loder makes his way to the General's home where Ruth Ford, the General's eldest daughter, refuses to admit him, despite the pleas of Marian Hall, her younger sister. After Loder leaves, Abbott strangles Ruth. Loder is suspected once again. Loder returns to the sanitarium and persuades the nurse to visit the General to tell all she knows. Sneaking into the General's home, Loder is hidden by Marian. While the nurse waits to speak to the General, Cavanaugh and Abbott find and kill her there. With Marian's help, Loder proves them guilty of the crimes.

Anthony Coldeway wrote the screen play, and D. Ross Lederman directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Over My Dead Body" with Milton Berle and Mary Beth Hughes

(20th Century-Fox, January 15; time, 68 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. This murder mystery-farce has a few amusing moments, mainly due to the antics of Milton Berle, who, cast in the role of an undeveloped mystery story writer, deliberately implicates himself in a murder, only to find himself standing trial for the crime. A comical sequence is the one where Berle, in an attempt to establish an alibi, disguises himself as a wealthy French Baron and employs a retinue of French servants. Some of the gags are good. Too much dialogue slows up the action considerably, but it should get by as a supporting feature in most situations:—

The marital life of Milton Berle and Mary Beth Hughes is a turbulent one, because of Berle's inability to complete the mystery stories he writes. Meanwhile, in the office where Mary works, Charles Trowbridge, her boss, threatens to expose as crooks Reginald Denny, Milton Parsons, and William Davidson, his partners, unless they return monies they had stolen from investors. The following day Berle visits Mary's office and overhears the three partners discussing Trowbridge's suicide; they were worried lest the district attorney examine the firm's books and discover their thievery. Berle is amazed; their discussion follows the plot of his latest story. Revealing himself, Berle offers to make the suicide appear like a murder. He guarantees them enough time to fix up the books, and is willing to risk being called the "murderer." They agree to pay him \$15,000 for his work. Berle visits Trowbridge's apartment, and upsets the furniture to make it appear as if violence had taken place. He pockets a suicide note the dead man had written. As he leaves, Berle makes sure that the elevator boy takes a good look at him. He goes to a swanky shop and dresses as a French nobleman. Berle's plan was to visit the hotel in this disguise, and have his picture taken tipping the elevator boy. The following day he would return in his regular clothes and, after the elevator boy identifies him as the murderer, he would produce a picture of the nobleman, thereby discrediting the boy's identification. But Berle's plan fails; the elevator boy sees through his disguise and accuses him of the murder. By changing his clothes with a drunkard, Berle escapes from jail. After many episodes in which he goes about gathering clues and evading the police, Berle is arrested and made to stand trial. Acting as his own attorney, Berle proves through the suicide note that Trowbridge did not commit suicide, and that Denny was the murderer.

Edward James wrote the screen play, Walter Morosco produced it, and Malcolm St. Clair directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"American Empire" with Richard Dix,
Preston Foster and Leo Carrillo**

(United Artists, December 13; time, 81 min.)

An ambitiously produced western-drama, which should satisfy not only the western picture fans, but general patronage as well. The action takes place in Texas, immediately after the Civil War, when herds of stray ownerless cattle roamed the plains, and could be had for the roping. The story is interesting; it deals with a young adventurer who builds a Texas empire for his wife and son, only to find his happiness shattered by his greed and callousness. The rough and tumble action is interspersed with moments of domestic tenderness, comedy, and pathos. The closing scenes in which the cattlemen have a pitched battle with a band of rustlers are highly exciting:—

Richard Dix and Preston Foster, co-owners of a river boat, agree to transport cattle owned by Leo Carrillo, a notorious French Creole, who explains that he had obtained the herd by rounding up ownerless steers. When Carrillo refuses to pay them for the transportation, the partners toss him and his men overboard, keeping the cattle. They sell their boat and go into the cattle business. Buying acres of land, they lay claim to all the stray cattle found in their areas. Foster marries Frances Gifford, Dix's sister, who had come to live with them. As the years pass the partners increase their holdings. Foster has visions of leaving an empire to Merrill Guy Rodin, his young son. Despite the pleas of Frances and Dix, Foster becomes overly aggressive. He does not permit the neighboring ranchers to drive their herds across his land to water and market. Faced with huge losses, the ranchers decide to buck him. This leads to a skirmish and stampede in which Foster's son is trampled to death. Embittered, Foster seeks to invoke further hardships on the ranchers. Frances and Dix leave him. At the railroad station Dix overhears the ranchers plotting to lynch Foster. He rushes back to warn him. Meanwhile in town, Frances receives word that Carrillo and a gang of outlaws were headed for the town with intent to pillage, seeking revenge for Foster's having jailed him. Realizing that the women and children in town were defenseless, because the ranchers had left to lynch Foster, Frances sends an emissary after the ranchers, and rushes back to Foster, pleading with him to head off Carrillo. Foster and his men ambush Carrillo's gang, and a fierce fight ensues. The ranchers arrive in time to help win the battle. Wounded, Foster realizes his stubbornness, and the ranchers forgive him.

J. Robert Bren, Gladys Atwater, and Ben Grauman Kohn wrote the screen play. Harry Sherman and Dick Dickson produced it, and William McGann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Behind the Eight Ball" with the Ritz
Brothers, Carol Bruce and Dick Foran**

(Universal, December 4; time, 59 min.)

Although the story is a hodge-podge of nonsense, this comedy with dancing and music is more than satisfactory program fare. Instead of concerning himself too much with the nonsensical murder mystery story, the director has wisely given most of the footage over to the musical numbers, which are of the popular variety, and the hilarious routines and slapstick clowning of the Ritz Brothers, whose antics are mainly responsible for the film's entertainment value. The music is tuneful, and Miss Bruce should please with her rendition of a few popular songs. There is some romantic interest, but it is unimportant:—

The murder of two guest stars by shooting, at the Shady Ridge Summer Theatre operated by Carol Bruce, threatens to close the musical show, "Fun For All." Carol, its singing star and producer, hoped to stage the production to impress a few Broadway producers who had promised to attend the performance. Together with Dick Foran, her fiance, who shared ownership of the theatre with her, Carol goes to New

York in search of new guest stars. She finds the Ritz Brothers, entertainers in a cafe, who are reluctant to accept the engagement because of the murders. When they are told that it might lead to a Broadway appearance, they change their minds quickly. While rehearsals are in progress, Sheriff William Demarest and his deputies track down clues to solve the double killing. On opening night the Ritz Brothers prove sensational, and the show has all the ear-marks of a huge success. During the final act, Harry Ritz does an imitation of Ted Lewis, using the clarinet of Richard Davies, a member of the orchestra. Davies becomes panicky and attempts to leave. Demarest and his deputies, however, nab the musician who confesses that a gun is concealed in the clarinet Harry was tooting, and that it would go off with a high "C" note. Despite everyone's signals, Harry, carried away by his performance, continues with his song. Fortunately, the gun is fired into the ceiling. It is disclosed that Davies was a new member of the orchestra, and that he was a secret operator of a Nazi spy ring with radio transmitting apparatus hidden in the barn.

Stanley Roberts and Mel Ronson wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Edward F. Cline directed it. Included in the cast are Grace McDonald, Johnny Downs, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Mountain Rhythm" with the Weaver
Brothers and Elviry**

(Republic, January 8; time, 70 min.)

Aided by a timely subject, this latest of the Weaver program comedies is one of their best efforts to date; it is good wholesome entertainment, and should please in other than its normal playing zones. This time the Weavers aid the war effort by forsaking their personal pleasures to harvest badly needed crops and to sell war bonds, and in the process convert a group of class-conscious snobbish students into youngsters eager to do their bit. In addition to its being amusing and having plentiful human appeal, the story is inspiring in its own modest way. They sing a few songs in their customary style, but their hill-billy antics are minimized:—

Answering a government appeal for agricultural workers to come to the west coast to harvest crops on farms formerly owned by Japanese families, Leon Weaver and June, his wife, together with Lynn Merrick and Sally Payne, their daughters, and Frank Weaver, Leon's brother, go to California and buy a farm situated next to an exclusive preparatory school headed by Frank M. Thomas, a smug headmaster. Thomas and the students make no effort to conceal their contempt for the Weavers. A climax comes when a group of the students headed by Dickie Jones and Billy Boy try to use a melon patch as a polo field, claiming they had obtained permission from the previous tenants. To settle the dispute, the Weavers wager the students that they will sell more war bonds than the school's band at a bond-selling contest in town on the following day. If the students win, they get the use of the melon patch; but if the Weavers win, the students must help with the harvest. The Weavers are victorious, but none of the students, except Billy, comes to the farm. Leon, however, threatens to give the story to the newspapers and, to avoid unpleasant publicity, the boys pay off the debt. When the students meet to plan revenge on the Weavers, Joseph Allen, Jr., a young professor, interrupts the meeting and gives the boys many telegrams congratulating them for aiding the war effort. Ashamed, the boys undergo a change and offer to help save the Weavers' crops from frost. To stop the students, the headmaster calls in some of the students' fathers. Much to his surprise, they side with their sons, and pitch in to help. The crops are saved, and the headmaster is revealed to be a subversive agent.

Dorrel and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Pittsburgh" with Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne and Randolph Scott

(Universal, December 11; time, 91 min.)

Good mass entertainment. In addition to having stars with marquee value, this melodrama has also an interesting story, which, aside from its fictional part, is of a timely and informative nature. Informatively, the picture deals with the development of coal by-products, the strife between labor and capital, and the unity they achieved in the interests of the nation's war effort. Fictionally, the story deals with the rise of two coal miners, who, spurred by their mutual love for a beautiful woman, become industrial tycoons, but one becomes drunk with power, repudiates his friends, and eventually loses his fame and fortune. As the three principals, Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne, and Randolph Scott are in very good form; their characterizations are such as will please their admirers. It is a colorful presentation with plenty of vigorous action, considerable human interest, and comedy. It should do very well at the box-office. The story unfolds in a flashback manner:—

John Wayne and Randolph Scott, happy-go-lucky coal miners, make the acquaintance of Marlene Dietrich, when they use her car to rush to a mine cave-in, in which Dr. Frank Craven, their old friend, was trapped. Marlene aids in the rescue. Wayne learns that Marlene was the daughter of a coal miner who had lost his life in a cave-in. To escape the hopeless existence of the coal mines, she had joined up with a crooked fight promoter. Both Scott and Wayne are attracted to her. Spurred by her assertions that their future was hopeless, the two men quit their jobs. Using a forged contract, which was to supply coke to Samuel S. Hinds, head of a huge steel mill, Wayne and Scott trick John Wilson, owner of a colliery, into financing them. Hinds grants their new company a genuine contract. With Marlene at their side, the two men rise rapidly. Eager for more power, Wayne marries Louise Allbritton, Hinds' daughter. Marlene is heartbroken, but she soon becomes devoted to Scott. Wayne's greed for power separates him from his friends. He ousts Hinds from the presidency of the steel company, and ignores the working conditions of his employees. Scott intervenes for the men, staging a fierce fight with Wayne. Marlene is seriously injured in an attempt to stop the fight. Wayne and Scott split. Deserted by his wife, alienated from his friends, and hated by his employees, Wayne's fortune collapses. Marlene recovers and marries Scott. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, Scott's firm is swamped with war orders. Wayne secures employment with Scott's firm under an assumed name. Marlene, however, discovers this, and induces Scott to put him in charge of all production.

Kenneth Gammet and Tom Reed wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Lewis Seiler directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Stand By for Action" with Robert Taylor, Brian Donlevy and Charles Laughton

(MGM, no release date set; time, 108 min.)

Very good! Exhibitors might well take their cue from the title and stand by for action at the box-office, for this is one war melodrama that is sure to please the masses, as well as to inspire them. The film is a thrilling portrayal of the part our Navy is playing in the war and, despite the highly melodramatic action, it is quite within the realm of possibility. Most of the action takes place aboard an antiquated destroyer, recommissioned for war duty, and the story is filled with considerable human interest, comedy, and a few dramatic moments. Highly amusing are the scenes where the commander and the crew are baffled when they find it necessary to tend the needs of twenty babies and two expectant

mothers, survivors of a torpedoed ship. Their panic will give the audience many a laugh. The closing scenes in which the destroyer saves the convoy by sinking a Japanese battleship are most thrilling and realistic; the battle maneuvers will enthrall the spectator. Well directed and engagingly performed, the picture is consistently entertaining throughout its long running time:—

When repair work on his ship is unduly delayed, Lieut. Commander Brian Donlevy complains to Rear Admiral Charles Laughton. Pretending anger, Laughton promotes Donlevy to command the Warren, an old recommissioned destroyer. Lieut. Robert Taylor, Laughton's aide, laughs at Donlevy's discomfiture, only to have Laughton appoint him second in command. When Taylor and Donlevy board the Warren they meet Walter Brennan, the ship's former chief yeoman, now a civilian caretaker. Brennan wants to ship again, but Donlevy rejects him because of his old age. Taylor secretly suggests that he dye his hair, and manages to get him accepted. While on its shakedown cruise, the Warren is ordered to join a convoy. During a storm Brennan saves Taylor from going overboard, but is himself seriously injured. Matters become complicated when the Warren rescues a lifeboat with twenty babies and two women. As executive officer, Taylor is placed in charge of their welfare. His troubles increase when the two women give birth. When the destroyer reaches the convoy, Laughton, aboard his flagship, is amazed to see a baby crawling on the Warren's deck. A Japanese bomber suddenly attacks the Warren, but Taylor, in charge of a gun crew, shoots the plane down. A Japanese battleship appears, shelling the Admiral's flagship out of commission. Donlevy orders a smoke screen to protect the convoy, planning to double back through the smoke and to attack the battleship. Taylor objects to the suicidal plan, but, when Donlevy is wounded, carries out his orders. The battleship is taken by surprise and sunk. During the fighting Brennan had left his sick bed to pilot the Warren to victory. The Warren proudly brings the convoy to port, towing the Admiral's flagship behind her.

George Bruce, John L. Balderston, and Herman J. Mankiewicz wrote the screen play, and Robert Z. Leonard and Orville O. Dull produced it. Mr. Leonard directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"We Are the Marines"

(20th Century-Fox, January 8; time, 65 min.)

"We Are the Marines" is a feature length factual film produced by the March of Time, and is one of a group of five pictures included in block six of the 1942-43 season.

It is an interesting and inspirational picture extolling the U. S. Marine Corps, its intent being to give the spectator the feeling of living briefly as a Marine, and to present the Marines as they really are, and as they would prefer to see themselves portrayed—void of Hollywood heroics. Beginning with the Marines as recruits, the action takes them step by step through the various stages of training and maneuvers to the point where they are ready for actual combat. The importance of the Marines as the first of our fighting men to go into actual combat is stressed. The picture was made with the cooperation of the U. S. Marine Corps, and all the players are actual Marines, most of whom have already seen battle action, and many of whom have already died in action.

No fault can be found with the production, for the subject has been dramatically presented with accuracy and sincerity, but it is not strong enough to be run singly; it should, however, be an acceptable supporting feature.

James L. Shute, J. T. Everett, J. S. Martin, and Lieut. John Monks, Jr., U. S. M. C., wrote the screen play. Louis de Rochmont produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:
 United States\$15.00
 U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50
 Canada 16.50
 Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50
 Great Britain 15.75
 Australia, New Zealand,
 India, Europe, Asia 17.50
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1270 SIXTH AVENUE
 Room 1812
 New York, N. Y.
 A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors
 Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
 Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
 Publisher
 P. S. HARRISON, Editor
 Established July 1, 1919
 Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1942

No. 51

Let Us Not Befuddle the \$25,000 Issue

We, the people, sit back and criticize the Government's edict on the \$25,000 net salary limit and recommend modifications that are worse than the evil itself.

The wrong method of approach, or the wrong people advocating an adjustment, can serve only to hinder, and not help, the situation.

For example, according to *Daily Variety*, the Screen Actors' Guild has endorsed the American Federation of Radio Artists' plea to the Government that the ruling be altered to enable high-salaried artists to give their excess earnings, above the \$25,000 net now allowed, to certain charitable institutions. Such a recommendation is made at a time when the Government needs every dollar for the conduct of the war and is ransacking every corner to find where it could put on either new or additional taxes.

No screen actor, radio artist, or any other high-salaried tax-payer, for that matter, could expect to win the public's sympathy for complaining that he is refused the privilege of earning more than \$25,000 net a year. Just try to obtain a curb-stone opinion so as to acquaint yourself with the representative viewpoint of the 140,000,000 people of this country and you will find that the percentage of those favoring the viewpoint of the high-salary earning persons will be very small. The representatives of our Government have their fingers on the pulse of the masses and they know when a question is unpopular.

The Government's edict on the \$25,000 net salary limit is unpopular in the motion picture industry, because a good percentage of the high-salaried individuals affected are within its confines, and because the inequities that exist in the ruling will seriously cut the production schedules of the producers. Exhibitors, too, are none too happy at the prospect of fewer pictures for exhibition. But, before the Government may be induced to modify its ruling, the request for its modification should be made from the point of view of benefitting the Government, as well as the general public, and not the individuals concerned. Requests that are illogical or that the Government cannot grant should be brushed aside and in their places should be made the kind of requests that the Government can grant.

First and foremost in our minds should be to prove

to the Government that this limitation upon the earning capacity of those who can earn big salaries is wrong, in that the nation stands to lose millions of dollars in taxes every year, not only from direct taxation but also from indirect taxation.

The losses from indirect taxation, insofar as our industry is concerned, will come from the fact that the ruling may kill, among our top-ranking stars and writers, from whom you get the top-flight pictures, the incentive to make more big pictures per year. If you should get fewer big pictures, the box-office receipts will be reduced, and the Government will get fewer admission taxes and fewer profit taxes from you, the exhibitors.

So far HARRISON'S REPORTS has not heard of the stars complaining because they will not be allowed to earn more than \$25,000 net a year; but it has heard that these stars, after earning the limit, are unwilling to work for nothing. And no one can blame them. They would not squawk if they could contribute their excess earnings to the Government in the form of high taxes, but they have expressed reluctance to work for the producers for nothing. In fairness to the producers, it should be mentioned that they are willing to pay the stars for their services, but, under the ruling, they are not permitted to do so.

The pleas to the Government, for a modification of the ruling, should be confined to a recommendation that the high-salaried persons should be permitted to earn all they can, but that they should be made to pay most of their excess earnings in additional taxes so that the higher earnings may go to the Government instead of either to the picture producers or to the radio sponsors.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that the motion picture industry's movement for the modification of the ruling be undertaken by those who are least interested in the high-salary limit involved—the exhibitor organizations. Unless it is undertaken by such bodies, it is feared that the publicity that would follow if it were to be undertaken by either the actors, the writers or the directors, or by the producers and distributors, would be very unpleasant. It would then lead the public to believe that the industry—in its entirety—is prompted to take such a stand from unpatriotic, or selfish, motives. The harm that would be done to it, then, would be incalculable.

Harrison's Reports offers to its readers and subscribers the greetings of the season.

"Ice Capades Revue" with Ellen Drew, Richard Denning and Jerry Colonna

(Republic, Dec. 8; time, 79 min.)

Produced on a more lavish scale than the 1941 "Ice-Capades," this version, too, is a good mass entertainment, but not quite strong enough to be exhibited on a single feature basis. Following the treatment given the other picture, this one, too, has a story that is neither novel nor exciting, and it combines romance and comedy with spectacular skating sequences. One is fascinated by the ease and grace with which the "Ice Capades" company execute the skating routines. Barbara Jo Allen and Jerry Colonna furnish the comedy:—

Representing himself as an agent of Harold Huber, a "philanthropist," Richard Denning offers Ellen Drew, a New England girl, \$5000 for a near-bankrupt ice show, left to her by a late uncle. Ellen is about to accept, but the members of the skating troupe warn her that, in reality, Huber was a racketeer who owned a rival ice show, and who controlled the best ice rinks in the country; he had bankrupted her uncle. Barbara Jo Allen, Ellen's aunt, arrives in the midst of this turmoil, bringing with her Jerry Colonna, who promises to finance the show with the fortune he was to receive from a tobacco company. When Colonna and the skaters go to Ellen's farm, Denning follows them. He wins Colonna's friendship by pretending to share his interest in astrology and, despite Ellen's objections, is allowed to remain. Failing in his efforts to persuade Ellen to sell the show, Denning eventually falls in love with her, and decides to help her. Angry at Denning, Huber breaks up the romance by convincing Ellen that Denning was trying to trick her. The same day Ellen learns that Colonna's expected fortune was no more than a hope that he would win a tobacco company's radio "jackpot." She is about to close the show when Denning makes it appear as if Colonna had won the prize. On the basis of this, Ellen is able to buy costumes on credit. But on opening night the creditors seize the costumes when Huber arrives on the scene with the real "jackpot" winner. By a clever ruse Denning manages to get the costumes back. The show is a great hit, and the president of a rink association signs the troupe for a long tour. Ellen forgoes Denning.

Bradford Ropes and Gertrude Purcell wrote the screen play, Robert North produced it, and Bernard Vorhaus directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Great Impersonation" with Ralph Bellamy and Evelyn Ankers

(Universal, December 18; time, 79 min.)

A fairly entertaining program spy melodrama, which not only is improbable, as is most pictures of this type, but is highly imaginative as well. One is asked to accept the premise that two men—a lazy English aristocrat and a ruthless German Baron—unrelated, are so alike that even their own wives cannot tell them apart. The story is one of espionage and counter-espionage, which remains intriguing for about half its length, for even the spectator is in a quandary as to which character Bellamy is portraying. Once that is established, the action reverts to the usual melodramatic clap-trap in which our side comes out on top with the greatest of ease:—

An unconscious man is found in a small boat, which drifts to the landing of an isolated African outpost where Baron Von Ragenstein (Ralph Bellamy), a Nazi agent, recognizes the man as Sir Edward Dominey (also Ralph Bellamy), his exact double, with whom he had gone to school in England. Von Ragenstein plots to kill Dominey, and then to impersonate him. First he learns about Dominey's broken marriage to Muriel (Evelyn Ankers), whose uncle, Sir Ronald (Aubrey Mather), was head of Home Defense. In Berlin, Von Ragenstein's superiors are enthused over the plan, and send him to England. Muriel is delighted with the change in Dominey, who had a reputation as a wastrel; he was now a serious-minded man. Sir Ronald, too, is pleased, and he gives Dominey a confidential position in his department. The situation is complicated by Bardinnet (Edward Norris), who admired Muriel, and who like Von Ragenstein, was under the orders of Seaman (Henry Daniell), chief enemy agent. Another difficulty is Baroness Stephanie (Kaaren Verne), who, too, was a spy, and who loved Von Ragenstein. Bardinnet jealously informs Muriel that Dominey was an impostor, and she in turn gives this information to Sir Ronald. Questioned by the police, Dominey reveals that actually, in Africa, it was Von Ragenstein who was killed, and that he had been posing as the dead

man in order to ferret out the enemy agents. After Bardinnet, Stephanie, and Seaman are captured, Dominey goes to Berlin with a fake set of Home Defense plans in order to deceive the enemy. His mission is unsuccessful, but he manages to escape to England where Muriel and he start a new life.

W. Scott Darling wrote the screen play from the novel by E. Phillips Oppenheim. Paul Malvern produced it, and John Rawlins directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Man of Courage" with Barton MacLane, Lyle Talbot and Charlotte Wynters

(Producers Releasing Corp., January 4; time, 66 min.)

Mediocre program entertainment. Dealing with crime and domestic tragedy, this melodrama directs some human appeal, but the story is trite, and in some parts even unpleasant. Since there is nothing original in the treatment, and the outcome is quite obvious, it fails to hold one's interest. Moreover, the action is slow and, because of this, it is doubtful if even the followers of this type of entertainment will find it acceptable fare. The players try hard, but they are hampered by the poor material:—

Charlotte Wynters, a hard-boiled cafe entertainer, persuades Lyle Talbot, a gambler and drunkard, to leave Dorothy Burgess, his wife, and Patsy Nash, his five-year-old daughter. Through a series of circumstances, Dorothy is accused and convicted of killing Talbot for insurance money, when the body of a tramp is found some four months later, and it is falsely identified as that of Talbot. Unknown to district attorney Barton MacLane, Forrest Taylor, his political sponsor, had furnished perjured evidence against Dorothy, so that her conviction would make MacLane the next Governor. When MacLane becomes Governor and refuses to bow to Taylor's demands, Taylor reveals how he had become Governor and threatens exposure. MacLane jails Taylor and the perjured witnesses, pardons Dorothy, and resigns the governorship. In making amends, MacLane falls in love with Dorothy, and they set a wedding date. Meanwhile Talbot, in a distant city, learns of the forthcoming wedding and plans to stop it unless he is paid to keep silent. To help carry out his scheme he kidnaps his child, despite the objections of Charlotte, who by this time is unhappy with him. Charlotte succeeds in getting Talbot very drunk and, while he is in a stupor, she returns the child to Dorothy. Talbot follows her. Armed and feeling vicious, he arrives at Dorothy's apartment, only to be taken into custody by the police, who were awaiting. Charlotte, too, is taken to jail, but MacLane promises to exert his efforts in her behalf. Dorothy, MacLane, and Patsy settle down to a new life.

Arthur St. Clair, Barton MacLane and John Vlahos wrote the screen play, C. A. Beute and Lester Cutler produced it, and Alexis Thurn-Taxis directed it.

Not for children.

"Quiet, Please—Murder" with George Sanders, Gail Patrick and Richard Denning

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

Good program entertainment for the followers of crime melodramas. Fast moving and filled with suspense, the action revolves around the cunningness of a private detective, a Nazi agent, and an expert forger of rare books and manuscripts, all of whom are played against each other by a beautiful scheming woman, who seeks to double-cross all three men. There is no mystery involved since the spectator is well aware of the motives of each character. Nevertheless, it holds one's attention well due to the interesting manner in which the doings are presented. The story is set against the background of a public library. There is little comedy relief, and the romantic interest is subdued:—

Gail Patrick, a rare book dealer and secret partner of George Sanders, a murderous book forger, sells a fake rare book to Sidney Blackmer, an agent for Nazi interests, who had gunmen at his disposal. Sanders orders Gail to return the money and retrieve the book; he considered Blackmer too dangerous. Gail disregards Sanders' warning, only to find herself threatened by Blackmer, who had discovered the forgery and recognized it as Sanders' work. He demands that she produce Sanders. Gail's troubles increase when Richard Denning, a private detective, traces another forged book to her. Scheming to get out of her difficulties, Gail informs Denning that Sanders had forced her to sell the books, and agrees to lead him to Sanders. She then arranges for Blackmer and Denning to meet at a public library,

each to believe that the other is Sanders. She also informs Sanders that Denning was after him, and that he would be at the library that evening. She does not, however, tell him that Blackmer, too, would be there. Posing as a police inspector, Sanders goes to the library and murders Blackmer in the belief that he was Denning. When the library is thrown into confusion, Sanders takes charge, orders the doors closed, and telephones "headquarters"—his own men dressed as policemen. When Denning offers his services, Sanders first realizes his mistake, but continues the masquerade. Denning, however, sees through the scheme when Sanders orders the librarian to place all rare books in the hands of the "police." By a clever ruse, Denning manages to hide the books. A sudden blackout alarm causes the library lights to be extinguished. A cat-and-mouse game between Sanders and Denning is brought to an end when a frightened library clerk turns on the lights during the blackout, and the real police come to investigate. Sanders and his men are caught, and Gail, who, too, had been in the library, is strangled by one of Blackmer's men soon after she leaves.

John Larkin wrote the screen play, and Ralph Dietrich produced it. Mr. Larkin directed it. The cast includes Lynne Roberts, Byron Foulger, and others.

Not for children.

"City of Silent Men"

with Frank Albertson and Jan Wiley

(Producers Releasing Corp., Oct 12; time, 64 min.)

Dealing with the rehabilitation of ex-convicts, this melodrama turns out to be a moderate, though somewhat sombre, entertainment. It should, however, prove to be an acceptable supporting feature in its intended market. The action revolves around a small-town mayor, himself an ex-convict, who is opposed by a bigoted citizenry when he attempts to aid these men, only to have murder and mob violence complicate his efforts. The story has considerable human interest and some suspense, but the outcome is obvious, lessening one's interest:—

Unable to pay for their dinner in a lunchroom which Dick Curtis and Jan Wiley, his stepdaughter, operated, Frank Albertson and Emmet Lynn, ex-convicts, are haled to court. Mayor William Gould intervenes, requesting that the two men be paroled in his custody. Sympathizing with their difficulties in obtaining work because of their criminal records, the Mayor sets them up in business in a disused cannery factory, instructing them to hire ex-convicts who are willing to work. The Mayor meets with much opposition from the townspeople, but he refuses to back down. Jan falls in love with Albertson, as does June Lang, the Mayor's daughter. Richard Clarke, the Mayor's son, who had once jilted Jan, resents Albertson. His attempt at a reconciliation with Jan fails. When two notorious killers escape from prison, they come to the cannery to hide. Jan, who had seen them, inadvertently informs Curtis, who notifies the police. But before the police arrive, Albertson and his men, after a fight, succeed in getting the killers out of the cannery. To save Albertson from suspicion, Jan informs the police that Curtis had lied. When Jan determines to leave home, Curtis accidentally kills her. Terrified, he hides her body. The police announce the finding of the body at a protest meeting against the ex-convicts. Curtis falsely accuses Albertson of the murder, inciting the townspeople to head for the cannery. The Mayor and June rush in a car to warn Albertson, but he refuses to leave town lest his friends suffer. The Mayor attempts to stop the mob by confessing that he, too, was an ex-convict, but to no avail. Meanwhile Albertson lures Curtis into the cannery and forces a confession from him. The townspeople endorse the Mayor's policy.

Joseph Hoffman wrote the screen play, Dixon R. Harwin produced it, and William Nigh directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Saludos Amigos"

(RKO, Jan 8; time, 41 min.)

Excellent! Depicting phases and customs of life in the South American countries, "Saludos Amigos" ("Hello, Friends") should be received by American audiences warmly. The dialogue is in English. The picture introduces a new technique—partly natural and partly cartoon action, and from both an artistic and entertainment viewpoint it ranks with the best of the Walt Disney productions to date. About the only complaint that one may find with the picture is its short running time. The film is composed of four episodes, each introduced with brief live-action scenes in Technicolor. The episodes deal with a tour of South America made by the Walt Disney cartoonists.

The first episode presents Donald Duck as a typical cocky

American tourist on a visit to Lake Titicaca, the world's highest inland waterway, on the border between Bolivia and Peru. Donald becomes interested in the details of native life, and takes a llama for a trip into the Andes. After many hilarious incidents, the trip ends disastrously on a shaky suspension bridge over a deep canyon.

The second episode is a tribute to Disney's imaginative genius. It is about "Pedro," a baby plane at a Chilean flying field. When the papa plane and the mama plane become too ill to make the regular run to Argentina for the mail, little "Pedro" takes over the task. He crosses the towering Andes safely and picks up the mail pouch, but on his way back he runs into a storm and has a harrowing experience passing the frowning Mt. Aconcagua. He finally returns home safely, much to the great relief of his frantic parents.

The third episode presents Goofy, a lazy Texas cowboy, who is whisked to the Argentine pampas where he is attired in gaucho costume. With the assistance of his horse, Goofy learns the customs and habits of the Gaucho, how to use their riding equipment, and swing a bolas. Goofy is introduced to several native Argentine dances and is finally transported back to Texas, amazed by what he had seen.

The last episode is a thing of beauty, and probably the best work that the Disney studios have ever done. Titled after Brazil's current song favorite, "Aquarela do Brasil," or "Watercolor of Brazil," this episode introduces Jose Carioca, a brightly-hued and sporty parrot who, speaking in rapid Portuguese, and then switching to accented-English, offers to show Donald Duck the sights. He teaches Donald the "Samba," a Brazilian native dance, and takes him to Rio's leading night spots, sidewalk cafes, and scenic points. Throughout this sequence the backgrounds, in beautiful brilliant colors, are formed by a paint brush as the characters move about. The picture ends with a farewell view of Rio's picturesque harbor.

The goodwill that his picture will build between the South American countries and ourselves is of inestimable value. Walt Disney has wisely seen to it that we, and not our South American friends, are made the butt of the humor.

"The Payoff" with Lee Tracy, Tom Brown and Evelyn Brent

(Producers Releasing Corp., Jan. 21; time, 72 min.)

Better than the usual run of PRC product, this newspaper-gangster melodrama is as good, and better, than many similar type program pictures produced by the major studios. The film marks the return of Lee Tracy to the screen in a role the public best remembers him by—a flippant, wise-cracking newspaper reporter. Although the story offers little that is novel, it moves along at a rapid pace, holding one's interest all the way through. Tracy performs very well, and his antics should more than satisfy the "action" trade. The supporting cast is good:—

When the city's special prosecutor is murdered on the eve of his exposing a crime ring, Lee Tracy, ace reporter, uncovers evidence that John Maxwell, a gambler, had committed the crime under orders from Jack LaRue, a night club owner. Learning that Tracy was on his trail, LaRue orders Maxwell to murder him. Meanwhile Forrest Taylor, a disbarred attorney and the dead prosecutor's former assistant, sends Tina Thayer, his daughter, to Tracy with an envelope containing marked money that will help him trap the criminal. Fearing that he, too, may be murdered, Taylor seeks Tracy's help. That night Tracy finds Maxwell murdered, and realizes that the person who had ordered Maxwell to kill the prosecutor had also ordered Maxwell's death. Together with Tom Brown, cub reporter and son of Robert Middlemass, his publisher, Tracy accompanies Tina to her home, only to find that her father had been kidnapped. Tracy goes to LaRue's night club and deliberately changes one of the marked bills, which LaRue recognizes. At the bar Tracy meets Evelyn Brent. Although aware that she was LaRue's accomplice, Tracy is attracted to her. LaRue sends Evelyn to Tracy's apartment in search of the money, but Tracy surprises her there. He talks her into working with him, and forgetting LaRue. Summoning Tracy to his home, publisher Middlemass reveals himself as the head of the criminal ring. He prepares to take Tracy to a warehouse to be shot upon entering, but Tracy gets the upper hand when he reveals that Middlemass' son was headed for the same warehouse to rescue Tina's father. Middlemass frantically hurries to save his son from the trap, only to fall into the trap himself. For the sake of Tina and Brown, Tracy does not print the true story.

Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Jack Schwartz and Harry D. Edwards produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Keeper of the Flame" with Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy

(MGM, no release date set; time, 99 min.)

A very good drama! It is not a cheerful entertainment, and the story seems suited more for the classes than for the masses, but the popularity of the stars, coupled with their fine acting, should put it over also with the masses. It is an attention-arresting picture, filled with intrigue, and the doings of the characters hold one in suspense. Throughout the action the heroine remains an enigma. Suspected of having murdered her husband, a famous patriot who had been idolized by his countrymen, she does not reveal until about the end that, because she had discovered him to be the secret leader of a subversive movement, she had been desperately trying to shield his "good" name so that the millions who loved him would not be disillusioned. Spencer Tracy awakens warm sympathy by his portrayal of the newspaperman seeking material to write the great man's biography. The direction is sympathetic, and the supporting cast very good. The screen play is based upon the best-selling novel by I. A. R. Wylie:—

Upon the tragic death of a famous American, Spencer Tracy, famed newspaperman, decides to write the great man's biography. Learning that Katherine Hepburn, the widow, refused to see anyone, Tracy manages to get into her mansion through Darryl Hickman, the gatekeeper's young son. Katherine refuses to answer Tracy's questions, and asks him to leave. Warned by Richard Whorf, her husband's secretary, that Tracy may become suspicious, she follows Tracy to his hotel and, apologizing, offers to help him with the story. Tracy spends many days at the estate collecting material, but he felt that Katherine was withholding information. Other incidents confuse him: Whorf seems anxious that he should not speak with Katherine; Margaret Wycherly, the dead man's insane mother, openly accuses Katherine of having murdered her son; and Forrest Tucker, Katherine's cousin, warns Tracy to stay away from her. Tracy frequently sees Katherine and Tucker together, and becomes convinced that there had been a plot against her husband, who had died when his car had run onto a damaged bridge on the estate. One day Tracy finds Katherine in an old blockhouse, which her husband had used as an office. In the fireplace he discovers evidence indicating that Katherine had Nazi leanings. He accuses her of having deliberately let her husband die by not warning him of the damaged bridge. Katherine admits this, explaining that she had done so because she had learned that her husband was a disciple of fascism; she wanted to keep this information from the people who loved him. Meanwhile Whorf, who had overheard her confession, sets fire to the blockhouse and shoots Katherine dead. Tracy is saved from the burning building by Tucker, who kills Whorf. Depicting Katherine as a courageous woman, who had made a supreme sacrifice, Tracy writes the true story of her husband's life.

Donald Ogden Stewart wrote the screen play, Victor Saville produced it, and George Cukor directed it. The cast includes Frank Craven, Horace McNally, Percy Kilbride, Audrey Christie, Donald Meek, Howard da Silva and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tennessee Johnson" with Lionel Barrymore and Van Heflin

(MGM, no release date set; time, 103 min.)

Although the accuracy of the historical facts portrayed in this biographical drama are debatable, it is, nonetheless, a very good mass entertainment. The story deals with the turbulent political life of Andrew Johnson, who, though a backwoods tailor, was elected Vice President of the United States, succeeding to the Presidency following Lincoln's assassination. Johnson is shown as a sympathetic character, one who idolized Lincoln, and who, as President, tried to carry out Lincoln's policy of "malice toward none," despite the opposition of Thaddeus Stevens, depicted as a ruthless, hard-fighting politician, who headed a movement for Johnson's impeachment. In his Senatorial days, it is shown that Johnson was branded a traitor by his constituents when, as the lone Southern Senator, he refused to secede from the Union, and then led the Union Army in its fight against the Confederacy. In contrast to Johnson's tumultuous political life, it is shown that his family life was one of tenderness, and that his wife, played by Ruth Hussey, softly guided him throughout his career. Van Heflin's portrayal of Johnson is excellent. His speech before the Senate during his impeachment trial is a dramatic highlight. As Thaddeus Stevens,

Lionel Barrymore is cast in an unsympathetic role, but his handling of it is first rate. The picture depicts an interesting period in American history—the Reconstruction. Although it is a lengthy film, the action moves quickly, and it holds one's interest from beginning to end. The production values are fine, and the settings of the period have been reproduced faithfully:—

Andrew Johnson (Van Heflin), an illiterate runaway tailor's apprentice, comes to Greenville where he is befriended by the villagers, who persuade him to remain as the village tailor. Eliza McCordle (Ruth Hussey), the village librarian, takes an interest in Johnson, teaching him to read and write. Through her he discovers the glories of the Declaration of Independence, and sees to it that his neighbors do the same. Johnson marries Eliza and, spurred by her faith in him, awakens the Tennessee villagers to the fact that ownership of property was not the only criterion for voting power. When the political leaders of the town resort to violence in an attempt to stop Johnson's teachings, the townspeople become aroused and elect Johnson as sheriff. Thus starts his political career that makes him President of the United States. As President, Johnson meets with violent opposition from Thaddeus Stevens (Lionel Barrymore), stormy leader of the House, creator of the abolitionist movement, and proponent of a radical plan for the Reconstruction. Stevens brings Johnson to trial for the violation of the Tenure of Office Act. In a turbulent Senate hearing, Johnson is acquitted by the slim margin of one vote. After completing his term of office, Johnson returns to Washington many years later as the Senator from Tennessee.

John L. Balderston and Wells Root wrote the screen play, J. Walter Ruben produced it, and William Dieterle directed it. The cast includes Marjorie Main, Regis Toomey, J. Edward Bromberg, Grant Withers, Charles Dingle, Noah Beery, Sr., Montagu Love, William Farnum and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Underground Agent" with Bruce Bennett and Leslie Brooks

(Columbia, December 3; time, 68 min.)

Just another one of those spy melodramas, which, as Lowell Mellett recently put it, "has no more relation to reality than a newspaper comic strip"; but it should prove to be satisfactory program fare for those who like action regardless of story values. The story is without much originality, and the treatment follows a formula. The action revolves around a telephone company's "trouble-shooter," who tracks down an Axis spy ring gleaming vital information by tapping telephone cables under the streets. There is some human interest and comedy, and the romantic interest does not hamper the tense action:—

When Axis agents, disguised as telephone repair men, listen in on important conversations between defense plants, Addison Richards, telephone company chief, requests that Bruce Bennett, the company's best "trouble-shooter," be detailed to combat the situation. Through misunderstanding, Bennett inadvertently causes Leslie Brooks, telephone operator in a defense plant, to lose her position. She comes to Bennett's office to remonstrate with him, only to remain as his secretary, much to the annoyance of Frank Albertson, Bennett's assistant, who was in love with her. With the aid of Albertson, George McKay, and Julian Rivero, Bennett's close friend and helper, Bennett makes changes in the telephone lines, only to have the spies discover the changes as fast as they are made. Unaware that Rys Williams, head of a vegetable farm, was in league with the spies, Bennett and Leslie join Rivero's family on a picnic at the farm, where Rivero's dog gets caught in a poison gas chamber. The dog is saved, but his hair turns white. Bennett develops a voice scrambler for telephone conversations, which completely stymies the spies. Meanwhile McKay, who had accidentally discovered Williams' connection with the spies, is killed in the gas chamber, and his body thrown into the sea. The body is found some weeks later, and it is identified by Bennett, who notices that McKay's hair had turned white. Bennett and Rivero hurry to the farm, only to be captured by the spies who try to torture the "scrambler" plans from them. Bennett manages to send a message to Leslie, who sends telephone men to his aid. The spies escape, but they are finally captured after a chase through the cable underground tunnels. Leslie marries Bennett, who then joins the Army.

J. Robert Bren and Gladys Atwater wrote the screen play, Sam White produced it, and Michael Gordon directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain	15.75
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Room 1812

New York, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXIV

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1942

No. 52

DON'T MONKEY WITH THE BUZZ SAW!

By what right or reason does a motion picture trade paper point at a publicity stunt, if it is such, with the cry "Propaganda!"? The very nature of our business requires that our every act be performed in a colorful manner so as to attract the public's attention. Why should, then, *The Hollywood Reporter* point its editorial finger with scorn at a member of the British House of Commons because he censures our censors for their having eliminated from the English picture, "In Which We Serve," certain objectionable words, accusing this Parliamentarian of having done it for the purpose of exploiting the picture in this country?

"In Which We Serve" was obviously designed to bolster the morale of the people of the United Nations, and this paper feels that the British have done a fine job of it. For such a picture to be made in England in the midst of tense war activities, utilizing essential war materials, is proof that England's war leaders had recognized its great value as a morale builder.

England's war efforts are our war efforts, as they are those of every member of the United Nations.

England's war leaders recognize that the motion picture screen is the most powerful medium for influencing public opinion. In sanctioning the production of "In Which We Serve," then, they recognized that it is a good entertainment, and that propaganda pictures must primarily be entertaining in order that they might be acceptable to the public—a requirement often lacking in many of the pictures that are either produced or sponsored by our own government.

We have no proof to substantiate Wilkerson's charge that the British member of Commons who set off the fire-cracker in the controversy did so with the purpose of exciting newspaper criticism of our censorship, either self-imposed or state-imposed, thus attracting the public's attention to the picture, but if such were his purpose then we, in the motion picture industry, should bow to his purpose and acclaim his showmanship, acknowledging that he had merely taken a leaf from the Hollywood book.

We must bear in mind that, in producing "In Which We Serve," England's purpose is to build morale, and whatever the British do to cause the picture to be seen by as great a number of people in this country as possible is justifiable. To scoff at such a worthy aim is, then, like criticizing the radio programs of our own Treasury Department in its efforts to induce the public to buy more war bonds and savings stamps. Certainly it is propaganda, but it would be considered bad taste for any one of us in this industry to condemn these efforts as being unadulterated propaganda.

It is sheer bad taste to accuse our Allied leaders of unworthy motives, even if it were true that their intention was to promote the circulation of a morale-

building picture; nothing is gained and much is lost, particularly since it is the desire of every one of us that the picture be seen by as great a number of people as possible.

As far as the exhibitor is concerned, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to state that, regardless of the propaganda message that the picture carries, "In Which We Serve" is a picture that would do honor to our screens even if it were released after the war—it is an outstanding production.

EXHIBITORS SHOULD LEAD IN THE \$25,000 SALARY LIMIT ISSUE

A number of film executives have gone to Washington for the purpose of convincing the Government that the \$25,000 net salary edict is wrong, but their cause is weakened by the fact that there are no exhibitor leaders amongst them.

If the Government does not modify its unwise edict, the ones who will suffer the most from it are the exhibitors. And when the exhibitors suffer, the Government, too, will suffer, for the smaller are the exhibitors' box-office receipts the smaller will be the Government's tax collections from this source.

The industry's plea to the Government to reconsider its edict would have had a better chance of success had it been delivered by the exhibitors—it would have more power, by reason of the fact that, since the majority of the exhibitors do not even reach that salary limit, it would have sounded less selfish than it sounds when it comes from the heads of large picture corporations. It is the belief of HARRISON'S REPORTS that the public would be more favorably inclined had their cause been taken up by the exhibitors, who would naturally stress their losses that will result in a reduced number of star pictures instead of stressing the salary losses of the stars. And favorable public opinion in such a controversy is indispensable.

When other than exhibitors present the plea, the public may get the impression that the stars are guilty of unpatriotic motives.

As far as this paper knows, no star has yet complained about the net-salary limit of \$25,000; they merely point out that they are unwilling to work for nothing after earning their allowed limit. Most of them are willing to work provided they get paid and are permitted to turn over their extra earnings to the Government in the form of extra taxes. Their motives are admirable, but their cause may be easily twisted by improper representation in Washington.

The exhibitor organizations—particularly Allied States Association—should appear in the case now; it will be too dangerous to invite them after the issue has been confused. And the essence of the plea to the Government should be: "Cancel the edict so that we may pay to the Government more taxes instead of less."

"Johnny Doughboy" with Jane Withers and Henry Wilcoxon

(Republic, December 31; time 63 min.)

A nice program comedy with music. The story is neither exciting nor novel, but it should offer most patrons a pleasant hour's entertainment, for the musical numbers, which are of the popular variety, are tuneful, and the performance of Jane Withers, who has blossomed into young womanhood, is charming. Cast in a dual role,—as a juvenile movie star, and as the winner of a prize for being the juvenile star's closest double—Jane is ably supported by a group of former child stars including Bobby Breen, "Spanky" McFarland, "Baby" Sandy, Cora Sue Collins, and Robert Coogan—all of whom seek her aid in putting on a "Junior Victory Caravan" show. The production values are good:—

Ann Winters (Jane Withers), famous child motion picture star, runs away from home when Harry Fabian (William Demarest), her agent, insists that she continue to appear in child parts instead of grown-up parts. Simultaneously with her departure, Penelope Ryan (also Jane Withers), comes to Ann's home for a vacation, having won the trip as a prize for her resemblance of Ann. Because of the studio's insistence that Ann start a new picture, Fabian conceives the idea of substituting Penelope for Ann. He tests his scheme by sending her as "Ann," to meet a delegation of former child movie stars, headed by Johnny Kelly (Patrick Brook). The youngsters planned a junior show to entertain soldiers, as well as to prove that they are still good entertainers, even though grown up. Needing at least one star name to put their plan across, the youngsters appeal to the girl they think is "Ann," but Fabian rejects the idea, arguing that Ann cannot afford to be identified with "has-beens." Meanwhile the real Ann Winters has lost her way in the mountains, and she is given refuge in the mountain lodge of Oliver Lawrence (Henry Wilcoxon), a middle-aged playwright, with whom she falls in love. Sympathizing with the youngsters, Penelope learns from "Biggy," Ann's secretary, where Ann is hiding, and goes there to plead the youngsters' cause. Engrossed with her "romance," Ann at first pays little heed to Penelope's plea. Lawrence, realizing for the first time the extent of Ann's infatuation, discloses to her that he is the father of an eighteen-year-old girl, and that his interest in Ann is only platonic. Ann forgets him by joining the youngsters and helping make their show a huge success.

Lawrence Kimble wrote the screen play, and John H. Auer produced and directed it. The cast includes Etta McDaniel, Ruth Donnelly and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"London Blackout Murders" with John Abbott and Lloyd Corrigan

(Republic, January 15; time, 58 min.)

Fair program entertainment. After building up one's interest to an appreciable degree, this murder mystery melodrama ends in a confusing manner, leaving the spectator in doubt as to the motivation of the crimes. Before it reaches this unsatisfactory conclusion the story is developed in a logical and interesting manner. There is no mystery as to the identity of the murderer, the audience having been made aware of his identity almost from the beginning. But this fact does not detract from the interest, since one does not know the reasons for his crimes. John Abbott, as the murderer, gives an effective performance. The comedy relief is negligible, and the romance is of no importance:—

When Mary McLeod loses her home and her parents in a bombing raid, a relief organization settles her in a room above a tobacco shop owned by John Abbott, a former surgeon wanted by the police for murdering his wife twenty years previously. Although Abbott is kind to her, Mary has reason to fear him. A series of murders had taken place during blackouts, and the crimes had been committed with

a hypodermic needle. One day Abbott had dropped his pipe, and Mary had noticed a hypodermic needle hidden in the pipe's stem. She confides in Louis Borell, her soldier-fiance, who discounts her fears. Inspector Lloyd Corrigan investigates the most recent murder, questioning Lester Matthew and Frederick Worlock, the victim's business associates. Both react in a suspicious manner, refusing to shed any light on the dead man's affairs. Meanwhile Abbott continues his killings, murdering Worlock on a train. Corrigan, who had been guarding Worlock, notices Abbott and follows him to his shop. While questioning him, Corrigan cleverly secures Abbott's fingerprints. An examination of the fingerprints disclose that Abbott is the surgeon the police had sought for twenty years. A trial is held, and Abbott readily admits to all the murders, stating that his only defense was the unwritten law. He had killed his wife because she had been a wicked woman, and had caused the death of his two best friends. Of the recent murders, Abbott proves that the men he had killed had been sabotaging Britain's war effort, and that they could not be punished under the ordinary processes of law. The Judge recommends that the jury treat his case with leniency.

Curt Siodmak wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Rhythm Parade" with "N.T.G.," Gale Storm and Robert Lowery

(Monogram, December 11; time, 68 min.)

Filled with pretty girls, dancing, singing, popular music, and comedy, "Rhythm Parade" is one of the better Monogram productions, and a very good mass entertainment; it is strong enough to top a double bill in many situations. Presented in the manner of a nightclub revue, the musical numbers are gay and tuneful, and they present the entire floor show of Hollywood's famed Florentine Gardens, with "N.T.G." (Nils T. Granlund) acting as master of ceremonies. Added attractions, which should enhance the picture's box-office value, are the Mills Brothers and Ted Fiorita and his orchestra. The story is extremely thin, serving merely as a filler between musical numbers, but little footage is wasted on it because of the abundant musical numbers. "Candy" Candido, viola player with Fiorita's band, is very good in two specialty comedy songs. The production values are lavish:—

Gale Storm, singer in N.T.G.'s nightclub, gets her big chance to appear on Broadway when Cliff Nazarro, producer of a show and Robert Lowery, his leading man, "catch" her act. Nazarro is impressed, and promises to give her a contract. Chick Chandler, Gale's agent, warns her to say nothing of her eight-months-old nephew, whom she was taking care of for her sister, who had gone to Honolulu; Chandler felt that Nazarro might think the baby her own, and that he might get the wrong impression. Jan Wiley, another singer in the club, is jealous of Gale; she deliberately sees to it that Nazarro finds the baby in Gale's dressing room. Everyone in the club tries to help Gale by claiming the baby as their own, but this only complicates matters and places Gale in a bad light. Nazarro refuses to give her a contract. Chandler manages to bring Nazarro back to the club, gets him intoxicated, and has him "catch" Gale's act again. But this time Gale sings under a fictitious name and wears a blonde wig. Jane spoils Gale's chances once again by revealing the hoax to Nazarro. At that moment, however, Lowery arrives with Margaret Dumont, Nazarro's sister, who was backing the show, and they bring with them a woman who claims to be Gale's sister and the mother of the baby. With the misunderstanding cleared up, Nazarro gives Gale her new job.

Carl Foreman and Charles R. Marion wrote the screen play, Sydney Williams produced it, and Howard Bretherton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Jacare"*(United Artists, November 27; time, 65 min.)*

Unless the spectator had never seen an animal picture, he will find this one quite tiresome; except for one or two short sequences, there is nothing about the picture that has not been seen many times. As a whole, it is a draggy affair.

The picture is a record of an expedition made by James M. Dannaldson, a young explorer and zoologist, who, accompanied by Miguel Rojinsky, a seasoned jungle hunter, and a safari of native Indian river boys, goes into the wild game country of the Amazon in search of man-killing Jacares, giant South American alligators. During his trip Dannaldson bags various types of animals and birds of prey. He does not kill the animals, but captures them as specimens for shipment to the United States.

There are but two brief thrilling episodes throughout the action. One is where Dannaldson is attacked by a monstrous Anaconda python, which buries its poisonous fangs into his arm, and wraps itself around his body; the other is where one of the Jacares capsizes Dannaldson's canoe, and he comes to grips with the animal, killing it by plunging his knife into its belly. The producers maintain that these sequences are the real thing, and not staged drama. But one might question the veracity of such a statement, since it is obvious that the cameras were all set up for this action, and were able to shoot it from various angles. Even if it were staged, however, it does not detract from its exciting nature. The manner in which the native boys catch the Jacares alive is interesting.

The action was not filmed with sound, but there is recorded narration by Frank Buck, whose style of delivery adds nothing to the entertainment values.

It is a Mayfair production.

"The Powers Girl" with George Murphy, Carole Landis and Anne Shirley*(United Artists, January 15; time, 93 min.)*

This gay comedy with music will certainly be welcomed by the younger set, because of Benny Goodman's tuneful "swing" music; but their elders, too, will find it to be a completely satisfying entertainment, since the "jitterbug" music makes up but a small part of the action. Always fast-moving, the picture is filled with sparkling dialogue and amusing situations, with George Murphy turning in a surprisingly good performance in a comedy role. As a fast-talking photographer, he becomes involved with two sisters,—one a demure school teacher, and the other a glamour girl aspirant—both of whom fall in love with him. The picture is not without its eye-pleasing side; in addition to the lavish production values, there is a parade of feminine beauty and charm in the form of John Powers' models, all of whom are not difficult to look at. Dennis Day, of the Jack Benny radio show, sings a few numbers and contributes to the comedy. Two sequences in particular will give the audience many a laugh. They are where Murphy seeks an interview with John Robert Powers, played by Alan Mowbray, and where the "jitterbugs" dance in a pouring rainstorm:—

While crossing a muddy road at a State Fair, Anne Shirley, a small-town school teacher is photographed in a compromising position by George Murphy, a magazine photographer. Anne is dismissed by the school board when the picture is published. She goes to New York to join Carole Landis, her sister, who hoped to become a Powers model. Learning that Anne's picture was published without authorization, Carole plans to capitalize on the situation. She storms the magazine's offices where she meets Murphy. Pretending to know John Powers (Alan Mowbray), Murphy offers to introduce Carole to him if she will get a release from Anne. Carole agrees. Murphy manages to worm his way into Mowbray's office and, by a clever ruse, induces him to enroll Carole in his training class. While Carole com-

pletes her training period, Murphy and Anne fall in love. Carole, too, is smitten with Murphy. Making her debut at a swanky nightclub, Carole is crowned the top model of the year. While Carole and Murphy join the table of a wealthy manufacturer, Anne goes home to prepare a surprise party for her. Murphy promises Anne that he will follow with Carole in a little while. But Murphy becomes intoxicated, and Carole has to take him to his home. When he fails to show up at Anne's apartment, she telephones his home and hears Carole's voice answer. Her worst suspicions are aroused. The following morning Murphy learns that the photographic division of the Air Corps had accepted him as a Lieutenant. Murphy's friends give him a farewell party, and Anne attends with Raphael Storm, whom she hired to pose as her fiance. Murphy starts a fight with Storm, getting himself thoroughly beaten. Due to report to the Air Corps himself, Storm learns that he had licked his Lieutenant. He begs Murphy's forgiveness, and admits the hoax. Anne and Murphy marry prior to his leaving for camp.

E. Edwin Moran and Harry Segall wrote the screen play, Charles R. Rogers produced it, and Norman Z. McLeod directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Arabian Nights" with Jon Hall, Maria Montez and Sabu*(Universal December 25; time, 86 min.)*

A good picture of its kind, but it is hampered by a weak story. The masses, however, should find it a satisfying entertainment, for it is an exciting, fast-moving extravaganza, combining virile action, comedy, and romance. Lavishly produced, and beautifully photographed in Technicolor, the fable is set against the colorful background of ancient Bagdad with its desert warriors, harem girls, and slave traders. Most of the laughter is provoked by a circus troupe, headed by Billy Gilbert, who aid a deposed Caliph regain his throne and win the love of a beautiful dancing girl. The cast lacks popular names, but it is a picture worth exploiting:—

Because of his love for Maria Montez, a dancing girl, who promised to marry him if he becomes Caliph, Lief Erikson seizes the throne from Caliph Jon Hall, his half-brother. Erikson orders his men to kill him, but Hall escapes and is given refuge by Sabu, an acrobat with Billy Gilbert's circus troupe. Others in the troupe were Shemp Howard, John Qualen, and Maria. None knew of Hall's identity but Sabu, who agrees to keep it a secret. Unknown to Erikson, Edgar Barrier, his aide, sells Maria into slavery lest she become Queen and take away his power. The circus troupe, too, including Hall, is sold. During their imprisonment, Maria falls in love with Hall, although she knows him only as a commoner. Meanwhile Erikson, furious at Maria's disappearance, orders Barrier to find her. Barrier goes to the slave market where he buys Maria from the slave trader. As he carries her off, Hall and the troupe escape from their slave pit and attack their captors. Hall frees Maria and, together with the troupe, seeks refuge in a small fishing village. Securing horses, they ride into the desert, but they are intercepted by Erikson and his soldiers. Taking them to his desert tent city, Erikson prepares a sumptuous feast in honor of Maria, and promises protection to her companions. Barrier, however, recognizes Hall as the real Caliph, and secretly commits him to a torture chamber. Meanwhile Sabu goes to Bagdad and notifies Hall's loyal troops of their leader's predicament. They arrive in time to free Hall and rout Erikson's followers. In a bitter sword fight, Hall kills Erikson, regaining his throne and claiming Maria as his bride.

Michael Hogan wrote the screen play, Walter Wanger produced it, and John Rawlins directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Queen of Broadway" with Rochelle Hudson and Buster Crabbe

(Producers Releasing Corp., March 8; time, 64 min.)

A pleasant program entertainment; it has human appeal, comedy, and pathos. The story is in the Runyon manner, reminiscent of "Little Miss Marker," and the action revolves around a woman betting commissioner who seeks to adopt an orphaned street urchin, despite the opposition of "blue-nose" investigators. Although the story is not novel, one's attention is held because of the sympathy Rochelle Hudson, the heroine, awakens by her love for the child. Donald Mayo, a newcomer to the screen, is an appealing youngster, and his performance gives rise to a promising future. A romance is worked into the plot:—

Rochelle Hudson, famous for her accurate predictions about sporting events, operates a successful betting commission business. Buster Crabbe, owner of a professional football team, is in love with her, although constantly in disagreement with her predictions. When Donald Mayo, a six-year-old boy, comes to Rochelle's office to place a bet for his sick mother, Rochelle sends Paul Bryar, her bodyguard, to investigate. Bryar finds the boy's mother dead. Rochelle takes Donald home with her and, becoming fond of him, decides to adopt him. The court grants her temporary custody, pending an investigation of her background. After visiting Rochelle's office and her home, the investigators submit an unfavorable report to the court, claiming that she was in an undesirable business, and that she associated with shady characters. The court denies the adoption, and sends Donald to an asylum. Determined to get Donald back, Rochelle sells her business. Meanwhile Crabbe endeavors to adopt Donald, but he is denied the privilege because he is single. Crabbe rushes Rochelle to a justice of the peace where they are married. Both legally adopt Donald. Believing that Crabbe had married her only to help her get Donald back, Rochelle treats their marriage lightly. They part after a quarrel. Overhearing the quarrel, Donald feels that he had come between them, and runs away from home. After a frantic search, Crabbe locates the boy and returns him to Rochelle. Through Donald's efforts, Rochelle and Crabbe forget their misunderstanding and reunite.

Rusty McCullough and George W. Sayre wrote the screen play, Burt Sternbach produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Commandos Strike at Dawn" with Paul Muni

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 98 min.)

Although it is a good mass entertainment, this war drama fails to reach impressionable dramatic heights. It may, however, do better than average business at the box-office, because of its attractive title, and that fact that Paul Muni heads the cast. The title would indicate this to be a story about the Commandos, but the story has little to do with them, and they do not enter the action until toward the finish where they take part in a thrilling and exciting raid, which is the outstanding feature of the film. Except for a few brief sequences in England, all the action takes place in a Norwegian village where the townspeople, subjugated by the Nazi invaders, determine to "kill or be killed." The picture is an exemplification of the Norwegians' determination to combat their Nazi captors, and there are several pathetic moments, but the inadequate screen play does not do justice to the material offered by such an impressive theme. Throughout the action an air of excitement and mounting suspense is maintained. The production values are very good, and no fault can be found with the performances:—

Early in the summer of 1939, Admiral Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Anna Lee, his daughter, and Robert Coote, his son, vacation in Norway where Anna is attracted to Paul Muni, village meteorologist, a widower with a six-year-old daughter (Ann Carter). The villagers, celebrating the marriage of Elizabeth Fraser and Richard Derr, are in a festive mood,

all but Ray Collins, who warns of impending war. Anna returns to England, promising Muni that she will return on the following summer. By then, the Nazis invade Norway and take over the village. One of their first victims is Collins, who, taken away, returns to the village and to Lillian Gish, his wife, beaten and broken. Muni and his friends pledge themselves to "kill or be killed." Muni slays the commanding Nazi Colonel, and flees into the hills with his daughter, whom he conceals with a friendly neighbor. In the woods he stumbles across a secret Nazi airport. Muni steals back to the village, and arranges to escape to England to warn the British of the Nazi plans to bomb ship convoys to Russia. Reaching England, Muni asks to be taken to Hardwicke, to whom he reveals the Nazi plans. The Admiralty places Hardwicke in charge of a Commando group headed by his son. Muni and Anna agree to get married when he returns from the raid. With Muni as their guide, the Commandos land in Norway and wipe out the Nazi airport. Learning that Muni's daughter was held hostage in the village, Coote orders the Commandos to attack. They wipe out the Nazi garrison, freeing the townspeople and Muni's daughter. Muni and Coote are killed during the fight. Hardwicke takes the villagers and Muni's daughter back to England.

Irwin Shaw wrote the screen play, Lester Cowan produced it, and John Farrow directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"When Johnny Comes Marching Home" with Gloria Jean, Allan Jones and Jane Frazee

(Universal, January 1; time, 73 min.)

Despite a thin story, this musical with dancing and comedy shapes up as very pleasant program fare, the sort that makes one leave the theatre humming. The producer has wisely utilized the talents of the cast to the best advantage by giving most of the footage over to the musical numbers. In addition to the always pleasant vocalizing of Gloria Jean, Allan Jones, and Jane Frazee, there is the very fine band music and chorus singing of Phil Spitalny's All Girl Orchestra, long a radio favorite. A talented youngster who will bear watching is seventeen-year-old Donald O'Connor; his performance is exceptionally good, and he seems to improve with each picture. Miss Frazee and Jones furnish the romantic interest:—

Arriving home on furlough, soldier-hero Allan Jones soon becomes annoyed with the pampering accorded him by the town's dignitaries. He requests and is granted permission to change to civilian clothes. Jones slips back to his former rooming house where he meets Jane Frazee, a cabaret singer, who, with Gloria Jean, her younger sister, lived at the rooming house. Jane and Jones fall in love. Donald O'Connor and Peggy Ryan, Gloria's friends, become friendly with Jones. The other rooming house folks, however, suspect Jones of being AWOL, because he had changed to civilian clothes. Jones is unaware of their beliefs. Meanwhile the town dignitaries, seeking Jones, send the police to find him. He is traced to the rooming house, but the three youngsters protect Jones by convincing the police that he did not live there. Jane believes that Jones is a deserter, and shuns him. Learning her reasons, Jones is amused. He tries to win her back without revealing that he is a hero. The youngsters, who had worked up a song and dance routine, are invited to appear at a social event for which Jones is sought as an honored guest. Fearing that Jones would be caught by the police, the youngsters try to dissuade him from appearing. Jones, however, insists upon going. Believing Jones to be in danger, Jane realizes her love and rushes to the event, hoping she would arrive in time to stop him. She arrives just as Jones is acclaimed, and it becomes obvious to her that he was not a deserter. Both are reunited.

Oscar Brodney and Dorothy Bennett wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

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Funded by a donation from
Matthew Bernstein