

For Quick Summer Desserts
Serve Summer Fruits with
EDMONDS
'Sure-to-Please' CUSTARD



T. J. Edmonds Ltd.,
Christchurch.

PLENTIFUL SUPPLIES NOW AVAILABLE



PALMOLIVE BRINGS YOU
All-over Loveliness

The modern girl can afford to be happy because she knows that Palmolive contains a special blend of olive and palm oils to give her skin a daily beauty treatment. Palmolive cleanses her skin and keeps it "schoolgirl complexion" all over.



PL10.6

KEEP THAT SCHOOLGIRL COMPLEXION

Film Reviews, by Ino.

Noisy Echoes From the Silent Era

THE PERILS OF PAULINE

(Paramount)

MY only recollection of the original Pearl White, whose life and hard times this picture chronicles, is of one fadeout which left her hanging head-down, in the process of being kippered over a slow and smoky fire. I didn't see the next thrilling episode — my film-going was more intermittent around about 1920 than it is now—but it did not take a Nostradamus to predict the formalised pattern of hair-raising adventure and last-minute escape which characterised the original *Perils of Pauline*.

The 1947 version is by no means so predictable from reel to reel—and nowhere quite so exciting. There is a good deal of noise, and a lot more sentimental syrup than my palate could stand, but the film has its bright moments. These would be sufficiently numerous to keep the whole show on a passably high entertainment level if they were evenly spread, but being concentrated more in the earlier sequences, the story bogs down rather badly about two-thirds of the way through and this time there is no last-minute miracle to ward off the sticky end.

So long as the picture is telling the story of the original *Perils* and how they were filmed it is good fun. This, you feel, is *How Things Began*—these reconstructions of the old screen sets, where half-a-dozen different shows were filmed simultaneously, cheek by jowl, in an atmosphere thick with custard-pies, six-gun smoke, and the invective of leather-lunged and megaphoned directors, are both believable and enjoyable. And there are just enough scenes in the original Pauline tradition to make one wish there were more.

But when the story leaves the not-so-silent studios of the silent era it seems (paradoxical as this may sound) to lose reality. This probably stems — as the Americans themselves would say—from two causes. The first of these is the personality of Betty Hutton who, to my mind at least, both looks and sounds unmistakably of this day and age. However hazy may be my mental picture of Pearl White, Betty Hutton coincides with it only when she is handling one of those old-time Western revolvers (the only weapon I've ever come across in which the cyclic and effective rates of fire coincided), or lies tied to the tracks as the express thunders round the bend. As soon as she opens her mouth, or cuts a caper, time marches on and takes twenty years in its stride. The second cause is the apparent determination of the producer to exploit Miss Hutton's talent for raucous comedy and overripe sentimentality, rather than tell a credible story.

John Lund, as the stage actor who supplies the sentimental interest in the story, is not much of an advertisement for the legitimate stage (this may be subtle Hollywood propaganda), but William Demarest, as an old-time director, delighted me; Billy de Wolfe is good for a chuckle whenever he appears, and in the earlier scenes Constance Collier, as an elderly stock actress, gets

BAROMETER

Fair, but becoming overcast: "The Perils of Pauline."
Cloudy: "The Long Night."

caught up in some broad farce. In the closing stages of the picture, the sentiment is as technicoloured as the film and the final scenes are both physiologically and psychologically absurd, but what goes before is, on the whole, pretty good fun.

THE LONG NIGHT

(RKO-Radio)

HENRY FONDA, who has occasionally acted extremely well, suffers badly at the hands of Anatole Litvak (director) and John Wexley (script writer) in this confused and indecisive story of a reluctant murderer. He is not the only one who suffers. The entire cast take it on the chin, a good deal of the time, and most intelligent filmgoers will flinch occasionally as well.

The film opens well enough—with a bang, in fact—when Fonda, as a young factory-hand depressed by doubts about his girl's fidelity, is goaded into shooting the elderly waster who sows these doubts in his mind. In these first sequences the cameras are well handled and there is an organic unity in the scenes which promises well. But this promise doesn't blossom in performance. The story is told by the flashback method, returning between times to Fonda's upper room where he smokes innumerable cigarettes (it looked at one stage as if he would run out of matches), thinks aloud on the sound-track, or just sits in a sheltered corner while the police spray the room with machine-gun fire from the top of the building opposite. Each flashback leaves the story slightly more muddled than it was before, and the only thing one is sure about in the end is that the poor young fellow will get a New Deal at the hands of judge and jury—he finally gives himself up—because he is a Veteran (possibly suffering from battle neurosis), and anyway it's not only the French who understand *crime passionnel*.

Incidentally, the French film classic, *Le Jour Se Lève*, was the source of the present film-story. Since I have not seen the French film, I cannot make any invidious comparisons. But *The Long Night* is invidious enough on its own.

NATIONAL FILM UNIT

A SPECIAL issue of the National Film Unit's Weekly Review for the week beginning January 9 is "Backblock Medical Service," which deals with the work doctors and nurses are doing in the North at Hokianga. It is an intensely moving and interesting subject, and an added interest lies in the fact that the background music was specially written for the picture by Douglas Lilburn, and played by 20 members of the National Symphony Orchestra under his direction. This is the first time music has been specially written for a New Zealand film (see photograph on front cover).