

the character. However Shakespeare viewed him, Brutus to modern eyes is a lightweight compared with his great ancestor — susceptible to gross flattery, eternally blethering about his sacred honour. That is the picture Mason gives us, but I feel it was involuntary.

I fully expected to be impressed by Gielgud and he was certainly superb, both in the lucidity of his lines and in the practised artistry of his voice. His Cassius fairly crackled with envy, spite and spleen. Yet it is Brando that I will remember most clearly. I can't quite explain this to my own satisfaction. His diction is not as good as Gielgud's—sometimes he almost chews his words—but he is (I can really find no other word) more dramatic. I suspect that Mankiewicz directed him more firmly than he did Gielgud and the latter has carried over to the screen some of the larger, the more extravagant movements of the theatre. Brando's effects come often from small causes—a bloody hand furtively rubbed against his toga, a quick sideways glance under lowered brows. These things are small and insignificant on the stage, but Mankiewicz knows well their potency in close-up. Brando's impact, however, comes mainly from the man himself. He is a centre of excitement—a charged battery—and he has only to appear on the scene to capture one's attention.

If you love Shakespeare, or if (in Orson Welles's words) you simply sit through it in order to recognise the quotations, I commend *Julius Caesar* to you. You may think, as I did once or twice, that it could have been better done, but no one can deny that it has been well done and honestly done. I raise my hat gratefully to the studio that produced it and hope that they will gain more than grace for their pains.

BENEATH THE 12 - MILE REEF

(20th Century-Fox)

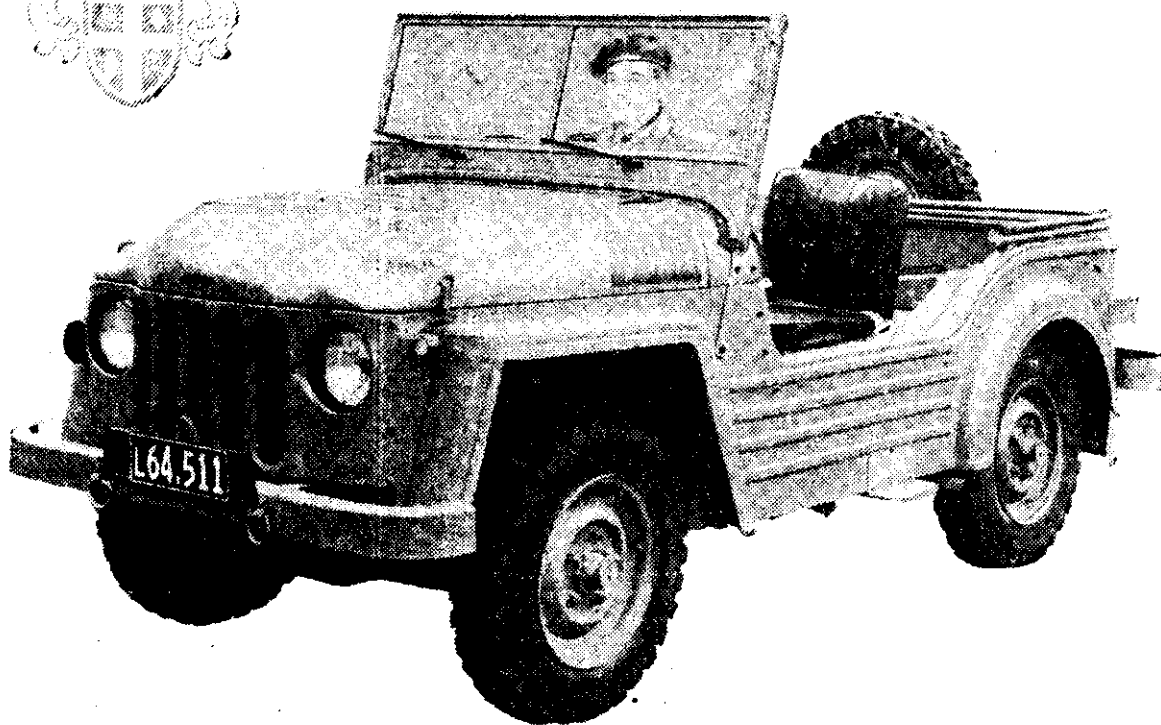
CINEMASCOPE, plus submarine Technicolor photography, seemed to promise something really three-dimensional from *Beneath the 12-Mile Reef*, but for an underwater picture the script was far too short-winded. Too much time is spent on the surface, or gallivanting about the Florida Keys where the scenery is cluttered up with feuding Greek and American sponge-fishermen. Oldsters Gilbert Roland and J. Carroll Naish head the opposing factions, youngsters Robert Wagner and Terry Moore seek to unite them. There are one or two short sequences showing the teeming life of the coral reefs, and a few longer ones palpably contrived in aquarium tanks, but as a film this is scarcely worth mentioning on the same page as *Julius Caesar*. The picture does achieve something, though. It gets close enough to an octopus to show the whites of its eyes, and no one (to my knowledge) has got that close before.

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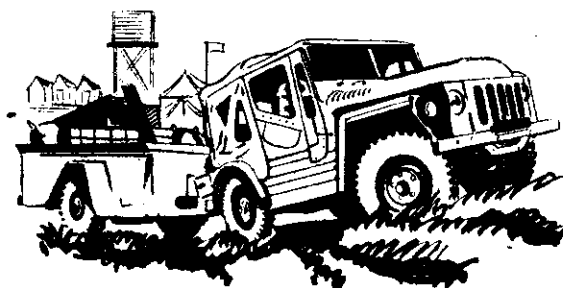
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