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and so easy
to make.



FILM REVIEWS, BY F.A.J.

The Hills, the Bush and the Sea

THE MOUNTAIN

(Paramount)

G Cert.

MONEY rather than the mountaineer's subtler rewards is the motive for the big climb in *The Mountain*. On the great peak above the village where Zachary Teller and his young brother Chris live, an airliner has crashed. From the air there's no sign of life, and winter makes difficult an ascent on foot. When Chris decides to attempt it for the loot that must lie in the wreckage, his horrified brother, a former guide, sets out also simply because he is used to taking care of him.

The corrupting influence of wealthy outsiders on the younger Teller, the relations between the brothers, the character and way of life of Zachary in his home in the quiet village, come across strongly in the opening sequences; and it's in the village again that the story ends. But the climb's the thing, and this one with its fatigues, dangers, fears you'll make with pounding heart. I can vouch from my own experience for the authentic feeling of the first few thousand feet in the early morning. But it's higher that the greatest dangers lie, and without lapsing into melodrama the film captures them in some exceptionally fine VistaVision photography.

The Mountain is a study of character even more than an adventure story, and this it conveys equally well. As the ageing, craggy Zachary, Spencer Tracy plays as well as he has ever done—with a lesser actor some of the quieter passages might have become tedious—and Robert Wagner is impressive as the sullen, ruthless brother. Among other, less familiar faces Claire Trevor is a widow who wants to marry Zachary.

This is not the greatest climbing film ever—it hasn't the sustained, almost unendurable tension of *White Hell*—but it is a very good piece of work. Based on

BAROMETER

FAIR TO FINE: "The Mountain."
FAIR TO FINE: "Rebellion of the Hanged."
MAINLY FAIR: "Boy on a Dolphin."

Henri Troyat's novel, it is directed by Edward Dmytryk with Franz Planer behind the camera

REBELLION OF THE HANGED

(Jose Kohn—United Artists)

R: 13 years and over

IN many ways an impressive film which might be even more so in its original Mexican, *Rebellion of the Hanged* is a picture of life in a Mexican mahogany cutting camp just before the revolution of 1910-11. This English version is marred by some particularly unpleasant American voices; and some scenes, especially those dealing with the lusts of the American bosses, seem rather melodramatic. Nevertheless, my overall impression is that Alfredo B. Crevenna, who made the film from a book by B. Traven (author of *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*), has tried to present an honest picture of the lot of men no better off than slaves. The "hanged" are the timber-cutters who are hanged by their wrists as punishment—by no means the only sadistic cruelty encountered in this stark film. The only player well known in New Zealand is Pedro Armendariz, who gives a fine performance as a farmer tricked into going to the camp with his two children and his sister.

The photography, by Gabriel Figueroa, is generally striking.

BOY ON A DOLPHIN

(20th Century-Fox)

G Cert.

"WHIPPED up corn" is how a young friend of mine described *Boy on a Dolphin*, but he could stand, he added,

a good deal of corn if Sophia Loren was part of the dish. This is a viewpoint I'm inclined to share. Miss Loren is not a great actress, but on fire she looks a bit like a younger, more conventionally beautiful Anna Magnani; and up from a spot of skin diving her efforts to get her breath back are a treat to watch. I hope to see more of it. The other attraction is the location—Greece and the sea around it—beautifully photographed in good colour. Unfortunately it doesn't breathe the spirit of place as, say, Venice did in *Summer Madness*; and since the story—about the rivalry of Clifton Webb and Alan Ladd for a treasure Miss Loren has found on the sea bed—is thoroughly predictable conventional romantic drama, the film as a whole is not very exciting. Jean Negulesco directed.



SOPHIA LOREN

