

WOE BE UPON TAUPO'S TROUT!

Victor Jory, HOLLYWOOD Star, Coming Here To Fish

(Special Interview with ROBIN HYDE.)

IS it right for a hard-boiled reporter to admit instantaneous liking for a screen star? Having interviewed musical, stage and film celebrities in almost every mood and mode—Mark Hambourg in black woollen mittens and elastic-sided boots, Joseph Hislop in a temper, Helen Twelvetrees at something darned near a reception for minor royalty, Margaret Rawlings in a barber's chair, Balocovic in an incredible dressing-gown aboard a millions-looking yacht—I still think Victor Jory, who, last week passed through Auckland en route for Queensland and six weeks' work on location on Columbia's picture, "Rangle River," is one of the most interesting of all.

To begin with, though the cocktail party was in full swing, everybody manipulating olives, and I arrived out of a thunder-shower, steadily dripping pools of water on carpets and chairs, Mr. Jory suffered himself to be lured into a corner and hag-ridden by yet another journalist, though doubtless the day had been full of 'em. The "Rangle River" film is a Zane Grey plot and device, and Victor Jory knows little about it yet, except that there's sure to be a fish in it somewhere, if not more than one. He has come prepared for the best, for fishing is his favourite pastime, just one ahead of riding and swimming. Whether Zane Grey and the Columbia producers are going to match him against big-game fish or mere trout he does not know, but as soon as the work in Australia is over he is coming back to New Zealand, not for a day or a week, but for as long as he feels so disposed, and the trout at Taupo continue to pop up. He has been reading everything he can get hold of in the way of books concerning this part of the globe, and goes to Queensland knowing all about the blacks and butterflies, but unlikely to be sold a prickly-pear plantation or a treacle mine. Over in California, New Zealand is still more of a fish story than anything else, and it's the ten-pound rainbows who, from afar, have seemed particularly winning to Victor Jory. But he's interested in the surrounding country as well, and means to enjoy as much travel as possible.

THAT thoroughness of study seems to be typical of Mr.

Jory. He is the only film star I have yet encountered who has looked around and through his job, and out at the other end. For years, before going to Hollywood and finding the talkies a fortunate field, he was a legitimate stage actor, playing major roles in hundreds of New York plays. His favourite was an Italian drama, titled "The Jest," in which he took the leading part of Nerl. This isn't surprising. He is very tall, very dark, and although French-Canadian, and not Italian, blood accounts for his complexion and an accent which has never quite acclimatised

itself to Hollywood, my first thought was, "There's somebody who ought to play in Sabatini films." Mr. Jory thought that the idea wasn't a bad one... but Errol Flynn, after the "Captain Blood" success, would be likely to be Sabatini's chief card. I pointed out that whilst Errol Flynn was all right for the Irish Peter Blood, he couldn't very well dye his eyes and alter his whole cast of countenance for the more numerous Italian roles. "They'll do it somehow," said Mr. Jory philosophically, and left it at that.

HE has one criticism to make on screen life, not from the public's point of view, but from that of the actor. "The more you get to know, the better you are acquainted with screen art, the less value you really are to your producers. Hollywood doesn't capitalise experience, it capitalises youth, looks and personality. After a run of perhaps four or five years, it wants somebody fresh, even if the actor has improved his acting in the meantime."

This recalled the murmur of Frank Woody, Helen Twelvetrees' ex-husband: "If you don't look out, you're left holding a hatful of buttons."

Victor Jory, however, is perfectly philosophic about the short run usual to a star's popular life. "The screen is definitely the people's entertainment to-day, the stage is merely a sort of little court." He is certainly returning to the legitimate stage when he feels that he has had enough of the talkies. In his view, the directors of to-day are entitled to quite as much credit as their stars for the success of famous talkies. He thinks the American directors quicker, more fluent, the Germans almost mathematical, their every move and idea worked out with a parade-ground exactitude. "Some of their films have been magnificent, but there's a sort of tense, difficult feeling in working under them. There's nothing left for the actor to do." I mentioned "Midsummer Night's Dream," and he said that, fine though Max Reinhardt's production had been, the work of a man barely mentioned, Baerlie, had contributed almost as much to its success. Far more thought and science is going into the talkies than ever shows on the surface presented to the public. Among the actors, he thinks James Cagney is one of the most interesting and thorough of all. "He's an embryo philosopher."

MR. AND MRS. VICTOR JORY and their small daughter, whose name started out to be Jean, but quickly became "Ed.", so that it wouldn't clash with the Christian name of slender, fair-haired and pretty Mrs. Jory, don't live in Hollywood (Continued on page 58.)