

cherishing the precious things of the spirit when they might be drilling; which encourage such dreamers as Walt Disney in their midst; what chance, I say, have these nations against the regimented, hypnotised legions of Nazi and Fascist youth? Least comforting reflection of all, it is largely our own stupid, selfish, vindictive fault that Germany is what it is to-day.

Pure Genius

YOU can see I've got it pretty badly, and it's mainly because Messrs. RKO Radio Pictures chose a certain film on a supporting programme. Yet, if they hadn't chosen as they did, I might never have fully appreciated how great an artist this man Disney really is. Such is his genius, that the blackness of depression lifted before "Snow White" was five minutes old. The poignancy of the contrast, between the Germany that was and the Germany that is, remained and grew sharper as the film went on, but it was overlaid by a great and increasing thankfulness that such rare and joyous spirits as Disney can still find a place and a public in this world of ours.

But most of all, and politics and introspection right apart, there was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" to enjoy for its own delightful sake. What a picture it is—the most exciting, most enchanting experience the screen has given us since—well, since the coming of talkies. What possibilities it opens up!

Not For Infants

"SNOW WHITE" deserves all the enthusiasm one can give it. It is seven reels long, and all too short. I leave it to others to discuss it in terms of Art, with much high-sounding talk about "chiaroscuro" and comparisons with Rembrandt, Whistler or what have you. For most of us it will be enough that this film is an authentic masterpiece of entertainment—as thrilling as a western, as colourful and as beautiful as the unspoiled imagination of childhood—and as funny as a Walt Disney cartoon.

Yet I do not think it is a film for very young children. Those scenes of the Princess lost in the forest are the perfect symbolic representation of a child's nightmare—and if children must

AT LAST—

Leslie Howard as "Lawrence"

IT is reported that Paramount are going to make "Lawrence of Arabia" with Leslie Howard in the starring role. Production will be carried out in England.

It is over three years since Alexander Korda announced his intention of making this picture for London Films. He, too, had chosen Howard to play the role of Lawrence, but then Howard's American contracts came in the way, and so Korda stated that he would give the part to an unknown actor named Walter Hudd, whose physical resemblance to the Uncrowned King of Arabia was said to be remarkable.

But, like several other Korda ventures, the proposition was shelved. Now, apparently, Paramount have taken it over from him, and Leslie Howard goes back in the part which he has always wanted to play.

have nightmares it should be in bed. Disney must also have been thinking of adult audiences when he conceived the horror of the Wicked Queen's metamorphosis to a witch, and her final awful fate.

The Humans

JUST one thing bothered me a little in "Snow White"—the animation of the human characters, the Princess, the Prince, the Huntsman and the Queen. There is an unsteadiness, almost a shimmering, of outline about these drawings that is quite absent from the figures of the dwarfs and the birds and animals. Perhaps it is to be explained by Disney's unfamiliarity with the human figure in cartoons. At any rate, the fault grew less as the picture went on, marking the improvement that came with practice during three years of production on "Snow White." I doubt, however, if this explains the difference adequately. I think the artist may have been using a different

and not so successful technique for the human characters.

Nevertheless, Princess Snow White is a charming little lass, a typical American "cutie," but dignified withal, almost an idealised "Betty Boop," with more than a dash of pure Disney in her pen-and-ink veins. And Prince Charming is the idealised husky Hollywood hero—a compound of Gable, Taylor and the prince of all fairy tales.

The Dwarfs

IT is when we come to the docile, soft-eyed creatures of the forest, and the big-nosed, big-bearded dwarfs, that we find the real Disney, Walt the Well-Beloved. These dwarfs, creatures of line and colour, have personalities as clear-cut and individual as those of any flesh-and-blood stars. They are seven—Doc, Grumpy, Sleepy, Sneezy, Happy, Bashful and Dopey. Some of them possess the recognisable characteristics of certain well-known players, notably Doc, who has the fuddled gestures of Hugh Herbert, the adonoidal voice of Roy Atwell.

Most lovable of all is beardless Dopey, who did not know if he could talk because he had never tried. Most ferocious is Grumpy, who resents petticoat influence and will not wash his hands before dinner—until the others duck him forcibly.

All are the embodiment of folk-lore and child-like fun. Singing their catchy tune "Hi-Ho," they trudge home from work in the diamond mines, to find Snow White sheltering from her wicked stepmother in their house, which, with the aid of the wood-creatures, she has just spring-cleaned. Their timidity and playful scamperings are as amusing to watch as a basket of kittens; the humour of the whole piece as rollicking and incredibly brilliant and many-sided as only Disney humour can be.

The colour of "Snow White" soothes and delights with its fairy-like charm; music and dialogue weave a harmonious pattern; the enormous amount of separate, complex movement in each scene impresses one with the magnitude of the animators' task; and the gusty, spontaneous laughter blows even Nazi Germany into the limbo of things best forgotten.

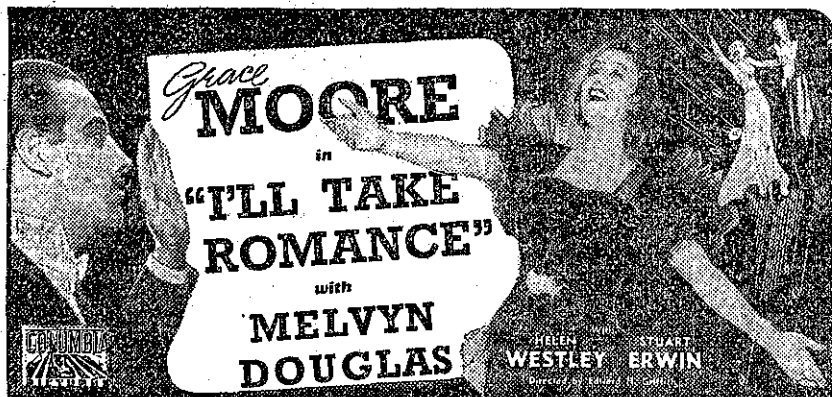
There's Still Hope!

IF, in this review, I seem to have given "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" some social and political significance, it is quite accidental, it does not belong to the picture itself.

Disney would be the first to affirm that view. The story is told that when Aldous Huxley went to Hollywood he tried to analyse just what it is that makes Walt Disney do such superlative work. Disney didn't help him much. "Hell, Doc," he said. "I don't know. We just try to make a good picture. And then the professors come along and tell us what we do."

And perhaps, after all, the future of the world isn't quite as black as it seemed when I saw that unfortunate "March of Time." Perhaps there may still be a glimmer of hope for civilisation if, when the Fascist legions march off for Armageddon, Walt Disney and his kind, and their dwarfs and wood sprites and soft, cuddly animals can find some nice bomb-proof, gas-proof dugout, and stay there for the duration.

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