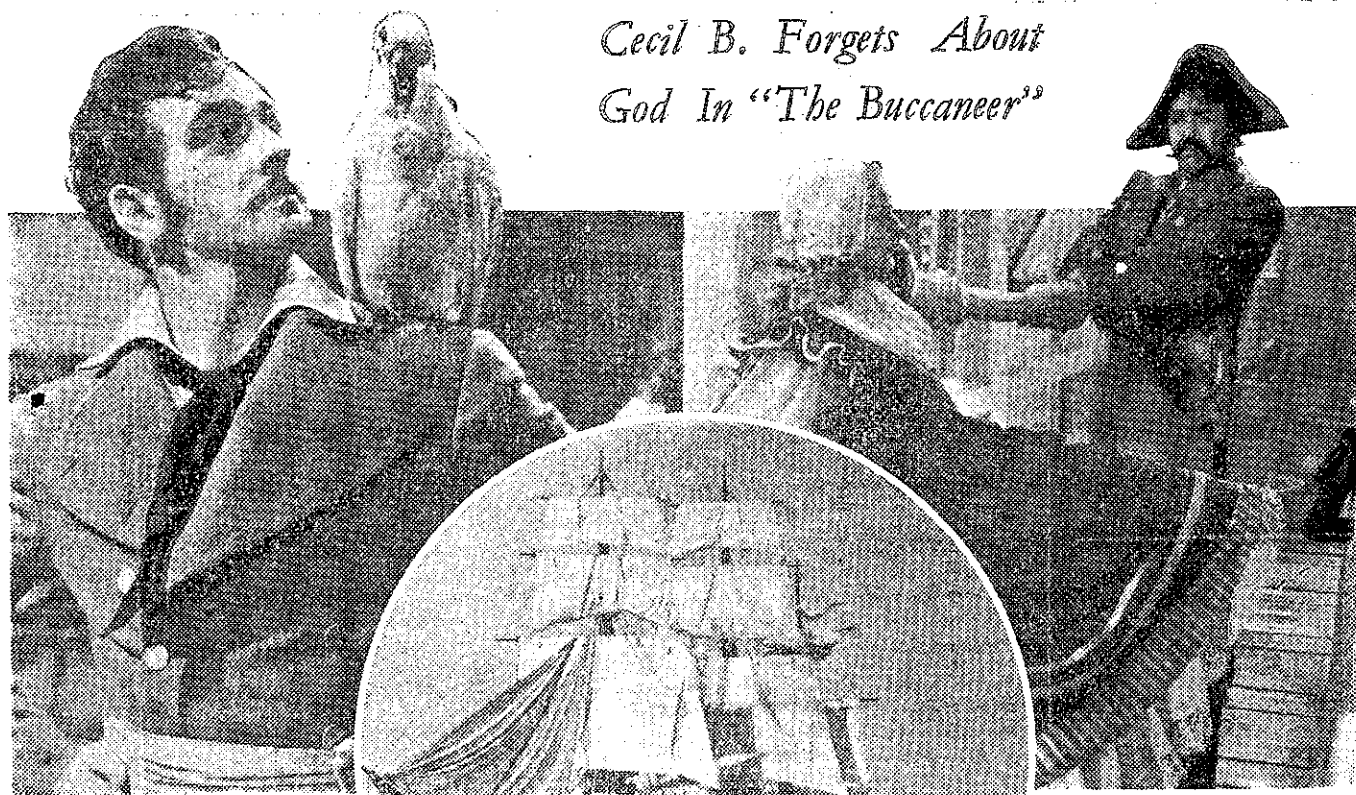


Film Record—by Gordon Munn

DE MILLENIUM!

*Cecil B. Forgets About
God In "The Buccaneer"*



SPEAKING as a film critic, I'm glad that Cecil B. de Mille has forgotten about God.

That may sound irreverent, but is only my way of recording satisfaction at this director's escape from the quagmire of hotch-potch religious spectacle in which he seemed to be bogged, to the firmer ground of American history. Mr. de Mille is more at home among the annals of his own country than among those of the Holy Land.

"The Buccaneer," his latest effort, isn't as good as last year's "Plainsman"—which I thought was excellent—but it is sounder entertainment than "The Crusades" or "The Sign of the Cross."

Looking It Up

DE MILLE'S method of dealing with history is to tackle it low, and in the resulting melee, history usually emerges a poor second best. But I was sufficiently intrigued by "The Buccaneer" to look up a few facts about Jean Lafitte, the pirate hero of this new Paramount production. Without being persuaded to accept Mr. de Mille's verdict that Lafitte saved the United States, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that he really did most of the other things Mr. de Mille says he did in the now practically forgotten war between England and America round about 1812.

Whether Mr. de Mille has advanced the concord of nations by digging up

Scenes from Paramount's "The Buccaneer." Top left: Fredric March as Pirate Jean Lafitte. Right: Franciska Gaal and Akin Tamiroff have an argument. Inset: Lafitte's flagship.

these old facts may be another matter, but he has certainly turned out a picture which, with a few qualifications, I can thoroughly recommend to most boys, as well as to those adults who can still enjoy boys' stories about piracy on the high seas, walking the plank, and gory battles on terra firma.

Patriotic Pirate

IT may come as something of a shock to you to learn, early in the picture, that the British were once guilty of burning down the Capitol and White House at Washington, and that later they tried to bribe a pirate king—with an offer of £30,000 and a commission in the Royal Navy—to fight for them. But Jean Lafitte turned them down—which was surprising in view of the fact

that his free-booting kingdom of Barataria in the bay-ous of old New Orleans had just been blown off the map by an American fleet.

Yet, beneath the ruffled shirt of Pirate Lafitte beat the heart of a true American patriot, and not even the ingratitude of his adopted country could dampen his ardour—with the result that we see him—or rather Fredric March—manfully waving the Stars and Stripes forever, while American grape-shot whistles through his curls and smashes his buccaneering fortress to matchwood.

The Other Cheek

AND, mind you, this excess of patriotism—or it may have been prophetic knowledge of which way the wind would eventually blow—is not caused by the de Mille imagination working overtime, for I have it on no less an authority than my old friend, the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," that Lafitte, swallowing his natural resentment at the scurvy treatment meted out by the American fleet, turned the other cheek and sent details of the British bribe to the authorities at New Orleans, and at the same time—in return for a free pardon—offered the services of his tattered legions to General Andrew Jackson in the defence of that city against the impending British attack. (Cont. on next page.)