



A grim moment from Columbia's drama, "Penitentiary," in which the stars are Walter Connolly, John Howard and Jean Parker. The same story was filmed some years ago as "The Criminal Code."

begins. In between there is little of that sense of repose, of dreamy Mississippi days, which I seem to recollect in the book, and which would have been so useful as a connecting link in the film. And I must admit that the show was a few thousand feet advanced before I was fully under its sway.

Unspoiled Youth

WITH that, my fault-finding is practically exhausted. All that remain on the debit side are a few quibbles unworthy of mention. On the credit side, however, the score is impressive, being headed, in my ledger at least, by the superbly natural performances of Tommy Kelly, as Tom Sawyer, and Ann Gillis as Becky Thatcher.

I know of no more depressing screen experience than watching fledgling players trying to act; but when, as here, they can act without trying, I know of none more delightful. We suffer much from infant prodigies on the screen to-day: I recommend Tommy Kelly, Ann Gillis, Jackie Moran (Huckleberry Finn), and most of the other children in "Tom Sawyer," to your notice as examples of genuine natural talent. See them now, before Hollywood has any chance to spoil them.

Ann Gillis particularly. That display of hysterics in the cave after the horrible death of Injun Joe should be envied by every adult star who claims to be an emotional actress. Incidentally, the scene of the chase between Indian Joe and Tom provides some of the finest moments of unalloyed suspense I can remember.

Calf-Love

THE treatment by Norman Taurog, the director, of the calf-love between Tom and Becky, which is such

WOODS' GREAT PEPPERMINT CURE
For Influenza Colds.

an important part of the story, appeals to me as being particularly significant.

Hollywood these days is increasingly occupied with the dangerous subject of adolescent romance—dangerous because it can be so thoroughly obnoxious if handled precociously. Comparisons being odious, I shall mention three films in which the subject is treated with complete success and real enjoy-

AMBITIOUS

Entire Bible To Be Filmed

A SCREEN version of the entire Bible, in colour, to cost £400,000, is now being prepared by Vogue Film Productions, England.

It is proposed to produce the Bible story, Old Testament and New, in three separate parts, each under the control of a world-famous director.

No names are yet available, however.

The promise is given that the most reverential treatment will be maintained by the scenarists, who will follow the Bible "in its original form throughout."

Vogue Film Productions made a £60,000 musical film, "Kicking the Moon Around," at Pinewood recently.

ment to the onlooker—in "Mad About Music," in a new M-G-M film called "You're Only Young Once," and in "Tom Sawyer."

Yet one feels that the callow canoodling between Tom and Becky, and the flirtatious advances of Amy Lawrence (Cora Sue Collins) are thoroughly acceptable only because the characters

are decked out in the dresses of another and more innocent age.

Pervading Charm

FOR saying that I shall probably incur the charge of being a very superior and "precious" person; but undoubtedly a great deal of the charm of "Tom Sawyer" rests in its atmosphere of old-fashioned, wholesome sentiment. Old May Robson is made the channel through which much of this sentiment flows, in the role of Aunt Polly—a warmly endearing, richly human characterisation.

Coupled with the sentiment is the humour. Spontaneous and gay with youth, it comes like a breath of fresh air after the artificial, brittle wisecracking to which we are accustomed.

Oh, yes, before I forget it, the film is in colour. The fact that it almost escaped my notice is the best proof I can give that the colour is good.

Don't Miss It!

MY own enthusiasm for this picture would seem to suggest that—unlike the friend who accompanied me to the preview—one does not need to be a Tom Sawyer addict or a Huckleberry fan by upbringing to appreciate it. This, in turn, ought to mean that it will prove popular with the average New Zealand audience. Yet theatre men tell me that this will be a particularly hard show to "sell" to the public, though they feel that most people will enjoy it if only they can be coaxed inside the theatre. I am not sure about the first point, but I am reasonably certain about the second. Which is why I hope I have succeeded with this review in doing my small share of the coaxing.

["The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," Selznick-United Artists. Directed by Norman Taurog. Starring Tommy Kelly, Ann Gillis, May Robson. First release; Wellington, May 20.]

Powell And Loy

THE last ten minutes or so of M-G-M's "Double Wedding" prevent it being just another crazy comedy and turn it into a show from which you should come away feeling very happy. I suppose one should also acknowledge the debt to William Powell and Myrna Loy, who would make any film interesting, though they have made some others much more interesting than "Double Wedding."

There is not the suave light comedy that we have come to expect from the "Thin Man" combination. Instead, they fall in with the prevailing knock-about fashion and go completely nutty, ending up by knocking each other unconscious. A line from the dialogue provides a clue to the type of picture this is. Myrna Loy asks for advice on how to handle William Powell, and is advised to "try and make up her mind that she is in a lunatic asylum and married to the head warder."

So This Is Art!

IN point of fact, Powell is supposed to be an artist, and if you think artists are eccentric and Bohemian you haven't seen anything yet.

He wanders round in striped underwear, or, alternatively, a fur coat and beret. He lives in a motor-trailer