

parked in a "No Parking" area of a city street. He paints pictures, but can't bear to part with them. His closest friend seems to be a pub-keeper called Spike, who calls him to the telephone by the simple expedient of firing an air-rifle at a gong hanging in the trailer window. He has been a soldier of the Foreign Legion, a tourist in Paris, and somebody's husband; and when the story of "Double Wedding" opens he is pretending to be a film director.

Quite frankly Mr. Powell admits to Myrna Loy that he is what he supposes most people would call a cad. But so far as the eye of the audience can see, his caddishness merely consists of

BAD FOR BUSINESS

He Didn't Want Any More Horrors

THIS is the story of a film salesman who was peddling his company's product in an out-of-the-way part of the North Island the other week. He approached the manager of the theatre in a small town where the population was largely Maori.

"First of all," said the manager, "are you trying to sell me any horror pictures?"

"Well, as it happens I'm not," replied the salesman. "But why?"

"Because the last horror picture we showed here was 'Frankenstein,' and there were two Maoris who were so frightened by it that they wouldn't come out at night to go to the pictures for three weeks afterward. No more horror films for me, if you please."

knocking some starch and stuffiness out of Miss Loy, who is called on to portray a smug and severely practical business woman.

Miss Manager

MISS LOY is very much the managing type. She manages a dress shop and the lives of everyone around her, including her sister (Florence Rice), and her sister's spineless fiancé (John Beal). But she cannot manage the eccentricities of Mr. Powell, who nearly wrecks the romance of Miss Rice and Beal, besides shocking Miss Loy to her deepest depths. Believe it or not, Miss Loy smiles only once during the whole picture, and then rather frigidly. And she has such a nice smile, too!

The trouble with "Double Wedding," as with most crazy comedies, is that everybody has to try terribly hard to be funny. Mind you, they succeed more often than not; but once Powell and Miss Loy have been established as direct opposites you know that they will quarrel heartily until the final scene, when they will end in one another's arms. The main interest, therefore, lies in wondering what sort of a glorious mess they can get themselves into for the finale.

Loud Laughs

AS I said at the beginning, it is the finale which makes "Double Wedding" worth your time and money. The wedding staged in Powell's car-

van produced some of the heartiest laughter I've ever heard from a hardened bunch of previewers, and I rejoice to think what it will do in a full theatre. In a way, it's not unlike the finale of "Big City," only crazier—and completely in keeping with the general tone of the picture, which the finish of "Big City" certainly wasn't.

I didn't collect any of the wise-cracks, which aren't quite up to "Thin Man" standard; but here are three pronunciations of Christian names which struck me as quaint (only may be I'm old-fashioned).

"Irene," pronounced "Ireen," to rhyme with "seen."

"Hermione," pronounced "Hermoin."

"Margot" with the "t" sounded.

["Double Wedding." M.G.M. Directed by Richard Thorpe. Starring William Powell, Myrna Loy. First release: Wellington, May 13.]

True Confession

PORTRAYING a congenital liar in her latest film, Carole Lombard pokes her tongue into her cheek as a sign to the audience whenever she is preparing to tell a tall one. If I were a less conscientious critic, that is where my own tongue would have to be while I write this review. But the title of the film is "True Confession," and I regard that as a challenge. A true confession? So be it.

There was a time—how long ago!—when I thought the "fey" performances of Carole Lombard were extremely clever. So they were—then. That was before she had acted the identical giddy

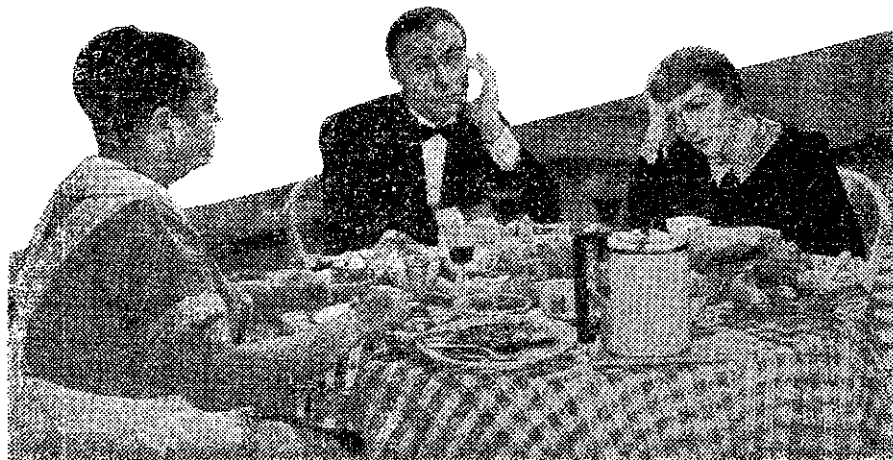
hasn't been paid for, she stalls him off with the tale that her husband has gone off his head with grief and thinks the machine is his dead baby. Naturally, her husband (Fred McMurray), an honest and struggling young lawyer, is annoyed when he hears about it.

The heroine's passion for falsehood leads her into more serious trouble when she becomes involved in a murder, and, by a rather curious mental process, decides that the best thing to do is plead guilty. Her husband defends her, gets her off, and the publicity makes them famous and wealthy as authoress and lawyer. Then the truth rears its ugly head in the person of another lunatic—a genuine one this time—who knows that the girl didn't commit the crime and is out for blackmail.

The trial scene is correctly described by the prosecutor (Porter Hall) as resembling a three-ring circus. When the farce is at its wildest, he shouts: "With every ounce of decency in me, I protest!"—a sentiment I very nearly applauded audibly.

Gleams Of Sense

TREATED with more sanity, this "tale told by an idiot" might have been effective, rather macabre, comic melodrama, for even the manner in which Miss Lombard and McMurray behave throughout like a couple of silly, spoiled kids, does not quite obscure the sinister, nightmarish feeling of two humans who are in a horrible mess, and at the mercy of a madman's whim. There is, I suppose, nothing



Charles Boyer and Claudette Colbert seem off their food in this scene from the Warner Bros.' film "Tovarich."

goat six or seven times running. Yet to-day Miss Lombard receives the highest salary per picture (150,000 dollars) of any female star. So may be I'm the crazy one.

As it would-be authoress in "True Confession," Carole complains: "My stories aren't selling." Replies Una Merkel, "Of course they aren't—the people in them are crazy."

If it weren't for cold, hard monetary fact—150,000 cold, hard facts—I'd say that Hollywood, through Miss Merkel, had never uttered a truer word.

Three-Ring Circus

CAROLE plays the role of a young wife who tells picturesque lies because she can't help herself. They just pop out. For instance, when the man comes to collect the typewriter that

inherently wrong in making fun of murder, deliberate falsehood, and "trying" in the electric chair, but the humour of "True Confession" lacks the spontaneity which would have made such jesting palatable.

It is only fair to point out that the general lunacy is occasionally redeemed by some very clever touches of direction and acting. It's a bright moment when Porter Hall, as the jack-rabbit of a prosecutor, warmly railing in his shirt sleeves against the buffoonery of the defence, calls for his coat to be brought him—and laughs down the sleeve!

Meat Or Poison?

WHEN John Barrymore first appeared on the scene as a man who has come down in the world, I thought it a rather appropriate role; but when