

enough to speak with a faint but easily recognisable American accent.

See this picture if you like the type. It is one of the most entertaining exercises in the higher criminality that Hollywood has turned out for months.

"Arsene Lupin Returns." M-G-M. Directed by George Fitzmaurice. Starring Melvyn Douglas, Warren William, Virginia Bruce. First release, Wellington, May 27.

Thoroughbreds

EVERYBODY who counts at all is a thoroughbred, and everybody keeps their chins up and their upper lips tied.

"DEPLORABLE"

Bad Advertisement For N.Z.

Production of films of the "On Our Selection" type, featuring Dad, Mum and Dave, is to be stopped, presumably on the ground that they are a bad advertisement for Australia. Certainly, overseas audiences seeing these films might be excused for thinking that all Australians are semi-moronic.

It is a pity that something similar was not done about the New Zealand-made film, "Phar Lap's Son," which I see by a recent issue of the English "Kinematograph Weekly," is due for release in England by Columbia Pictures. It is thus described by the reviewer of that paper: "Bankrupt of entertainment, the picture must regretfully be written down as deplorable in every department. . . . It is impossible to find a single favourable factor in this witless and wearisome concoction. . . . One wonders why time and money was spent on making it at all. . . ."

At the time "Phar Lap's Son" was shown in New Zealand it was strongly urged in some quarters that official action should be taken to prevent it leaving the country. We spend thousands of pounds attempting to entice tourists to this country, and then send overseas a film which cannot help but create a shockingly bad impression of New Zealanders.

mendously stiff, in M-G-M's "Thoroughbreds Don't Cry." Quite frankly, my first natural inclination would be to dismiss this racing melodrama with a cynical horse-laugh, were it not for the fact that it is an Important Picture.

From our point of view, it's particularly important. When Freddie Bartholomew, like a P. G. Wodehouse character, was having trouble with his aunt, M-G-M. gave his role in "Thoroughbreds" to New Zealand's own Ronnie Sinclair (ne Ra Hould)—and that's certainly something not to be sneered at. Not only does it make this an Important Picture, but it will also very likely make it "big at the box-office"—so perhaps I'd better be careful what I say.

However, I am going to say that I don't think America is doing right by Master Ronnie. Here New Zealand gets its first big chance to be cinematically famous, and blow me if all the American papers I've seen don't refer to

our Ronnie as an Australian or a Tasmanian. And instead of letting him develop a personality of his own, the studio has gone out of its way to make him a pale reflection of Freddie B. (note the "trailer" of the show—and, incidentally, that Freddie's voice is breaking). The comparison with the more experienced young actor can't help being unfavourable.

But that's not all.

Gross Libel

WHILE there is nothing inherently the matter with Ronnie's acting—except that he badly needs a hair-cut—was it fair to him (or New Zealand) to make him the instrument for the gross-est libel on the English schoolboy ever perpetrated by Hollywood?

Shades of Little Eric! Master Roger Calverton (the character played by Ronnie) is sententious in speech, effeminate in manner and a prig to boot. Oh, very much a prig to boot. My own boot just itched to do it—though ordinarily I despise this method of inculcating manliness.

Its Own Back?

YET you may excuse such a barbarian impulse if I quote a few of the pompous platitudes which drip from Roger's young lips, as follows:—"I say, how spifficating"; "I shall proceed to take boxing instruction immediately and

challenge you at the earliest convenience"; "Unless you treat the Pookah gently—the Pookah being the horse—"I shall crack you over the knuckles with my whip"; "I hope you know exactly what I think of you and your kind"; and "It's going to be rather hard Pookah, to keep our chins up."

Do schoolboys—even English public school boys—talk like that?

Perhaps it were kindest to believe that Hollywood is just getting some of its own back for the libellous nonsense about American children and American speech frequently found in British pictures. One could excuse that.

Much Is Good

WHAT I mustn't overlook, though, is that many people may not look upon "Thoroughbreds" as being a libel at all. They may regard this ineffable young prig as being just too, too sweet and manly. Good luck to them—they'll like this picture, all of it.

Let me say that I did enjoy some of it very much. In his way, C. Aubrey Smith is almost as true-blue British as Master Roger—but he can get away with it. He's Sir Peter Calverton, who takes his thoroughbred grandson and his thoroughbred racehorse (the Pookah) to America to retrieve the family fortunes, and there encounters dirty work involving Master Mickey Rooney, a 100 per cent. American

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Adventures
OF
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