

SPEAKING CANDIDLY... REVIEWS of the NEW FILMS

History Hit By A Sandstorm

["Suez." 20th Century-Fox. Directed by Allan Dwan. Starring Tyrone Power, Loretta Young, Annabella. Just released.]

ADD to your list of major cinema disasters—which should already include the earthquake in "San Francisco," the fire in "In Old Chicago," and the South Sea hurricane which Sam Goldwyn conjured up for Dorothy Lamour—the Zobah-hah (or "devil wind of the desert") which sweeps, with the sound of souls in torment, through several hundred feet of Mr. Darryl Zanuck's latest picture, "Suez."

As seen here, a Zobah-hah resembles a preview of the Day of Judgment, consisting as it does of a mixture of sandstorm, earthquake, typhoon, and practically any other unpleasant upheaval of Nature that one can imagine. It represents the chief difficulty with which Tyrone Power, in his character of Ferdinand De Lesseps, has to contend while carrying out his ambition to dig a ditch as a short cut between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

To the tune of 250,000 dollars on the studio's production budget and shrieks from the thousands of canal-digging extras, the Zobah-hah advances across the desert in the form of a whirling, funnel-shaped column of sand. When it strikes the camp it tosses everything about like pieces of cardboard—including tents, human beings, donkeys, massive dredges, tall water-towers, Tyrone Power and Annabella. The city of Wellington may think it knows what wind is like, but Wellington has yet to experience a Zobah-hah!

While it lasts, this phenomenon blows everything out of mind, except admiration for a very remarkable piece of camerawork.



LORETTA YOUNG

Beautiful but not imperial

Only when the wind drops is one's critical faculty able to function normally again.

Respect For Facts

DARRYL ZANUCK is an ambitious man, and I admire him greatly for his oft-proven ability to produce tremendous screen spectacles. But I do suggest that when Mr. Zanuck decides to make an historical film he should show some respect for history. What Mr. Zanuck does to the facts about the Suez Canal and the career of Ferdinand De Lesseps is almost as cataclysmic as what his Zobah-hah does to Tyrone Power's ditch.

I shall refrain from going into details, except perhaps to point out that De Lesseps's father, whom the film shows as being mainly respon-

sible for Louis Napoleon becoming Emperor, had in reality been dead nearly 20 years when that happened. And where on earth did Mr. Zanuck get hold of that story about Disraeli and Palmerston, and about De Lesseps's agony of unconsummated love for the Empress Eugenie? Actually she was his cousin and at least 20 years his junior.

Change Of Heart

HOWEVER, apparently Darryl Zanuck himself has had a change of heart about this question of screen history, and has just announced that, in future, he will be more careful with his facts. This is cheering news, and in view of it I should be ungener-

SAVES HIS MONEY

A Celebrity Who Rides On A Bus

IN Hollywood recently, Aviator Douglas ("Wrong Way") Corrigan, when informed he was needed on the set after dinner for shots on his picture "The Flying Irishman," demanded and got 25 cents supper money.

In the past three months, Aviator Corrigan has netted some 75,000 dollars for acting and for writing an autobiography. Said to be the most parsimonious celebrity in Hollywood, he lives in a cheap hotel room, rides to work on a bus, lunches at a penny ice-cream bar, spends his weekends reining the brakes on his ten-year-old car.

ous if I did not acknowledge that, apart from the history and a few other things, "Suez" has a good deal to commend it.

As has been indicated, the main attraction is the Zobah-hah; but among the minor catastrophes with which De Lesseps has to deal is a sequence of a canal-cliff being dynamited by Turkish guerrillas, which is only slightly less impressive and exciting.

Some of "Suez's" vast panoramic scenes showing the construction of the canal are very realistic. Others are not so real; but generally speaking the spectacle scores all along the line.

Annabella Best

ON the acting side, the best performances are not those from Tyrone Power (who emerges from years of harrowing experience without a grey hair) or Loretta Young (who is beautiful, but not imperial, as the Empress Eugenie), but those from Annabella and Miles Mander.

Speaking much clearer English than heretofore, Annabella is quite convincing in character as the desert girl who tries to console De Lesseps for the loss of Eugenie. De Lesseps, however, is in love with his ditch, and Annabella chokes to death in the Zobah-hah with her passion unrequited.

As Disraeli, Miles Mander (who, by the way, used to have a sheep farm near Gisborne), looks sufficiently like George Arliss for his performance to be considered highly satisfactory.

Answer to Correspondent

"Wanting to Know" (Tauranga): Yes, "The Count of Monte Cristo" has been released again by United Artists. On its return to Wellington recently business was so good that the season was extended to two weeks.



Barbara Stanwyck and the bevy of Park Avenue beauties who help to make life miserable for the police in RKO's murder-mystery with mirth, "The Mad Miss Manton."

Gay Family Of Polite Bandits

["The Young in Heart." Selznick-United Artists. Directed by Richard Wallace. Starring Janet Gaynor, Douglas Fairbanks, jun., Paulette Goddard. First release: Auckland and Wellington, February 10.]

FROM Hollywood's point of view, I understand, "The Young in Heart," is notable for several reasons, among them the fact that Paulette Goddard (rumoured Mrs. Charles Chaplin) speaks from the silver screen for the first time; also that it introduces to the silver screen two new personalities in Richard Carlson, who hails from Broadway (where he appeared in the play "Whiteoaks") with Ethel Barrymore) and famed stage veteran, Minnie Dupree.

From the point of view of the man in the street, that almost legendary figure to whose judgment the film industry (and sometimes film critics) inevitably has to defer, "The Young in Heart" stands out because it isn't the least bit crazy, as so many recent comedies have been, but is a distinctly pleasant and entertaining show.

Fortune-Hunters

STORY concerns the adventures and gradual reformation of a charming family bunch of banditti, the Carletons, who wander round the pleasure resorts of Europe taking everybody down as busily as they can.

Colonel Anthony Carleton, "late of the Bengal Lancers," is a very "pukka sahib," as his wife is careful to explain, but really he was born in Canada and learned about sahibs from stage shows. The colonel and his wife are Roland Young and Billie Burke, both excellently cast.

The colonel plays very competent poker, but the serious business of fortune-hunting is left to the son (Douglas Fairbanks, jun.), and to the daughter (Janet Gaynor)—as carefree and likeable a couple of young rascals as one could hope to meet.

Fate Is Kind

UNMASKED by the Riviera police, the Carletons are returning to London penniless, the colonel (one is glad to say), keeping a stiff upper lip, and living up to the best stage and army traditions.

Fate then throws into their lap a dear old lady (Minnie Dupree) who

is just begging to be picked up by somebody like the Carletons, and, who, above all, is very wealthy.

So it naturally happens that the Carletons take the dear old lady under their rapacious wing, waiting on her hand and foot, and licking their lips in anticipation of the killing to come.

But she is such a dear old lady, and the Carletons find they are not really as hard-boiled as they thought they were, though to each other they studiously keep up the old front.

It Warms Up

THE colonel even secures a job selling a super-automobile, the Flying Wombat—selling lots of them, too; son Fairbanks gets a job at two pounds a week sorting letters for an engineering firm, and falling in love with his boss, who is Paulette Goddard; and the quaintly-named daughter, George-Ann, falls in love (a) with the dear old lady, and (b) with a dour, persistent young Scotsman, who is the new "personality," Richard Carlson.

Though the comedy steps off at a dignified tempo, it livens up, and is good fun all the way. All the principals do well, especially Roland Young and Fairbanks, who are well cast and well directed.

Paulette Goddard is an intriguing personality, possessed of charm,



JANET GAYNOR

... Two loves has George-Ann

definite character, and a melodious speaking voice.

Most amusing scene of all, I thought, was the one where Young and Fairbanks stand aimlessly watching some workmen in a busy street, and discuss, in the abstract, the strange phenomenon of toil.

Miss Manton Was Mad And Merry

["The Mad Miss Manton." R.K.O. Directed by Leigh Jason. Starring Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda. Released this week.]

UNLESS I'm mistaken, the average girl, walking into a dark room in an empty house, and finding a particularly messy corpse, would be cured of any further desire to investigate murders. But not the mad Miss Manton.

The mad Miss Manton, of course, had a rather special reason for staying on the scent. When she summoned the police to view her corpse, the latter (i.e., the corpse) had inconveniently disappeared; and the police thought it was just another of the mad Miss Manton's girlish Park Avenue pranks.

So did the editor, young and handsome, of a certain newspaper. Therefore, rather bitterly, he wrote up Miss Manton as a social parasite, who had nothing better to do with herself and her money than annoy the police. Which more or

OLD FAVOURITE

Over The Hill For The Third Time

UNIVERSAL would like to re-make "Over the Hill" if they can get the story rights from Twentieth Century-Fox and Actress Minnie Dupree from Selznick.

The story of the aged mother threatened with the workhouse was made as a silent with Mary Carr, and as a talkie in 1932 with Mae Marsh.

less put the mad Miss Manton on her mettle to discover her disappearing corpse and make the editor eat his words.

Bunch Of Beauties

THIS is what constitutes the theme of "The Mad Miss Manton," another of those films in which Hollywood demonstrates that crime is a laughing matter. Sometimes the joke is a bit laboured, but it's amusing enough and exciting enough if you keep your tongue fairly firmly in your cheek and don't try to worry too much about solving the mystery. Leave that to the mad Miss Manton, or rather to Barbara Stanwyck.

She's assisted by a bunch of Park Avenue beauties who are more decorative than useful, and what with one thing and another, they manage to make life pretty desperate for Sam Levens, who's the detective in charge of the case, and for Henry Fonda, who's the editor who begins by abusing Miss Manton and—how did you guess?—ends by marrying her.

If you like a thriller with plenty of corpses, "The Mad Miss Manton" has at least the preliminary requirements, for there's one in the ice-box and one in the back seat of a car—not to mention the one that disappeared (though come to think of it, I'm not sure that wasn't the same one as turned up in the car. Or was that the one in the ice-box?).

For A Change

ON most previous occasions when I've seen Barbara Stanwyck she's been breaking her heart over (a) marrying a man she doesn't love, (b) losing a baby she does; so this time it was rather a pleasant surprise to find her in a comedy—even if it was a crazy one.