Progressive teachers will find dependable advice in these estimates on current film releases. Recognizing that one man’s meat may be another man’s poison, the National Committee on Current Theatrical Films gives three ratings: A, for discriminating adults; Y, for youths; and C, for children. These estimates are printed by special arrangement with The Educational Screen, Chicago.

ACCENT ON YOUTH (Herbert Marshall, Sylvia Sidney) (Para.) Smartly produced, well-acted comedy of middle-aged playwrite and his young secretary. Action mostly mental, hence “talky.” Intelligent entertainment despite some extraneous scenes and perhaps too many arbitrary reversals in conduct.

(A) Interesting (Y) Little inter. (C) No inter.


(A) Pleasing (Y) Excellent (C) Very good

ALIBI Ike (Joe E. Brown) (Warner) Hilarious baseball picture with garrulous hero, a small-town pitcher, saving day for national league club. Impossible facts on diamond, rollicking absurdities in dialog and action, and a comical romance, make a thoroughly laughable combination.

(A) Very good of kind (Y) Excel. (C) Excel.

ALICE ADAMS (Katherine Hepburn, Fred Stone) (RKO) Skillful screening of very human Tarkington story of girl of humble home fighting for happiness. Mistaken tactics bring her endless embarrassment, often painful, relieved by genuine comedy and sudden happy ending. Fine roles by Hepburn and Stone.

(A) Interest’g (Y) W’thwhile (C) Beyond them

BECKY SHARP (Miriam Hopkins) (RKO) (Technicolor) Elaborate and careful screening of famous play based on Vanity Fair, distinctively acted, covering chief events of checkered career of this great character. Gorgeous sets and costumes in full color. Opinions on the color will differ.

(A) Notable (Y) Mature (C) Little interest

BLACK FURY (Paul Muni, Karen Morley) (Warner) Powerful picture, with incredible moments, of struggle between miners, tricked into strike, and mine-owners tricked into brutal resistance. Muni splendid as lowly strike-kader, winner of his roundings for captivating little star and full sway of this great character. Gorgeous sets and costumes in full color. Opinions on the color will differ.

(A) Fine of kind (Y) Grim (C) By no means

CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT (Warner Oland) (Fox) Complex murder mystery centered in valable Egyptian tomb found by scholars, and in the curse supposedly upon them. Weird atmosphere, many false leads, but Oland, in characteristic Chan role, solves all. Some incongruous comedy and pale romance.

(A) Gd. of kind (Y) Good (C) If not too strong

CHASING YESTERDAY (Anne Shirley, O. P. Heggie) (RKO) Delightful adaptation of sentimental story by Anatole France about fine old French professor who adopts and brings happiness to lonely, engaging little orphan. Notable for expert direction, fine characterizations, quiet charm and humor. Not for the blase.

(A) Charming (Y) Excellent (C) Very good

CURLY TOP (Shirley Temple, John Boles) (Fox) Sentimental story, mere variation of “Daddy Long Legs”, but wholesome, appropriate surroundings for captivating little star and full sway for her remarkable talents. She and older sister, taken from orphanage, find happiness and romance in wealthy bachelor’s home.

(A) Pleasing (Y) Very good (C) Very good

DINNY (Jackie Cooper, Mary Astor) (Warner) Simple, wholesome little story. Manly young hero is cadet in military academy till mother’s misfortune lands him in nearby orphanage temporarily. Shows convincingly that character, not mere possession, is the important thing in life.

(A) Pleasing (Y) Very good (C) Very good

DOG OF FLANDERS (Frankie Thomas, O. P. Heggie) (RKO) Softened version, fairly well acted, of Ouida’s poignant story of Dutch boy’s struggle between poverty and ambition to become a Rubens. Unconvincing spots, but human appeal is there and the dog is adorable. Very sad at times.

(A) Fair (Y) Good (C) Probably good

DOUBTING THOMAS (Will Rogers, Billie Burke) (Fox) Sausage-making hero fights small-town amateur theatricals which are upsetting his stage-struck wife and daughter-in-law-to-be. He tricks them out of it by hilarious methods and wins limelight for himself. Typical Rogers picture.

(A) Good of kind (Y) Amusing (C) Good

ESCAPE ME NEVER (Elizabeth Bergner) (British) (U.A.) Highly artificial plot built merely to make dramatic moments for Bergner as waif mother, unmarried, gay in adversity, fighting wealth and society to hold her worthless lover, and winning a pitiful success. Notable only for Bergner role.

(A) Unusual (Y) Decidedly not (C) No

EVENSONG (Evelyn Laye) (British-Gaumont) Wistful, poignant story of Irish girl with great voice, giving up love for operatic career, learning her mistake only in twilight of life. Cast not perfect and lovely music deserves better sound reproduction, but picture has much charm.

(A) Unusual (Y) Mature (C) Beyond them

FARMER TAKES A WIFE (Janet Gaynor, Henry Fonda) (Fox) Rural comedy of Erie Canal in 1840, well acted, beautifully set, and with genuine historical flavor. Fistfights and liquor, no wise-cracks or profanity. heroine, for canal vs. rail-
road, hero, for farm vs. canal, make engaging human and dramatic material.

(A) Very good (Y) Excellent (C) Probably good

FLAME WITHIN (Ann Harding, Herbert Marshall) (MGM) Strong, clinical romance of woman psychiatrist who cures and saves another woman's lover, but gets so seriously involved with patient as to threaten her's. Not wholly convincing but tense and splendidly acted.

(A) Very gd. of kind. (Y) Mature (C) No int.

HEI TIKI (Maori cast) (First Division) Presents legend of the love charm, with all-Maori cast, in picturesque New Zealand settings. Interesting for tribal life, beliefs, customs and costumes, with violent and primitive battles between rival tribes for climax. Voice accompaniment.

(A) Powerful of kind (Y) Mature but gd. (C) Little int.


(A) Powerful of kind (Y) No (C) By no means

JAVA HEAD (English cast and Anna Mae Wong) (1st Div.) Picturesque portrayal of old New England life in days of clippers. Tense romantic complications, when hero brings home Chinese princess as his wife, solved by her suicide. Notable in acting, dialog, diction, and genuine historical flavor.

(A) Interesting (Y) Mature but gd. (C) Little int.


(A) Pleasing (Y) Very good (C) Probably good

LADY TUBBS (Alice Brady, Alan Mowbray) (Univ.) Light, human, laughable farce-comedy unworried over probabilities. Alice Brady, as dominating railroad-camp cook, has to save her niece from snubs of English aristocracy, and succeeds by extraordinary, elaborate and comical methods.

(A) Amusing (Y) Very good (C) Good

LES MISERABLES (Fredric March, Charles Laughton) (U.A.) The great story greatly filmed, with all leading roles notably acted. March fine as pitiful victim of brutal injustice. Laughton superb as implacable, merciless Javert. Hard to imagine finer dramatizing of great novel within two hours.

(A) Notable (Y) Excellent (C) Mature

LIFE OF ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (Italian production) Elaborate portrayal of history and legend in St. Anthony's life, against careful 12th Century backgrounds, sincerely done. Distinctly illuminating on life of period. Bilingual titles, the Italian much better than the English translation.

(A) Interesting (Y) Good of kind (C) Hardly

LOVE ME FOREVER (Grace Moore, Leo Carillo) (Columb) Fine musical film, with superb solo and ensemble singing, including almost entire two acts of "La Boheme." Heroine's fine love, for ex-gambler responsible for her success, is hardly plausible but provides entertaining drama and humor.

(A) Fine of kind (Y) Exc'lt (C) If it interests

MY HEART IS CALLING (Jan Kiepura, Marta Eggerot) (British-Gaumont) Lively, engaging musical, laid on shipboard and in Monte Carlo. Stranded opera troupe wins over many obstacles by tenor's fine voice. Comedy sometimes labored, but charming romance, lovely music and settings compensate.

(A) Enjoyable (Y) Excellent (C) Good

RICHELIEU (George Arliss) (UA) Another polished portrayal of historical personality by Arliss against lavish background of 17th Century France. Lytton's play modernized to advantage. Certain liberties with history compensated by convincing roles and sustained interest of plot and dialog. Fine cast.

(A) Excellent (Y) Very good (C) Beyond them

SANDERS OF THE RIVER (Leslie Banks, Paul Robeson) (UA) Colorful, dramatic story, not always convincing, with real African background, native tribesmen as actors. Robeson fine as loyal chieftain, aide to British commander in handling trouble-making rival chief. Thrilling climax.

(A) Interesting (Y) Probably gd. (C) Doubtful

SHANGHAI (Charles Boyer, Loretta Young) (Para) Colorful, exotic, finely acted story of high finance and true love. It reeks with wealth but is mostly sincere and convincing. Russian-Chinese hero, a power in Shanghai, and American heiress meet, love, but separate when racial barrier is discovered.

(A) Fine of kind (Y) Mature (C) No

TEN DOLLAR RAISE (E. E. Horton, Karen Morley) (Fox) Pleasing little picture about timid, pin-saving bookkeeper, without raise for 16 years. Hopelessly in love but unable to marry on salary, he falls into wealth and buys out his boss. Horton's customary skillful comedy.

(A) Amusing (Y) Good (C) Perhaps