Explores Earth’s Center . . .

Jules Verne Flick--Credible? Why Not!

By REED MARTIN

Another of the amazingly accurate predictions of nineteenth century author Jules Verne will reach theatre audiences this holiday season. It treats a hypothetical “Journey to the Center of the Earth.” This is one of Verne’s most perspicacious works for it delves into a field which, even 80 years later, we still know very little about.

Problem of Credibility

A great problem of credibility arises with the filming of this saga. Verne’s accurate predictions of the first atomic submarine (he even guessed the right name) and aqua-lungs in “20,000 Leagues” and the speedy, international travel in “Around the World” have been realized in our generation. Therefore, present audiences view them as good adventure stories, while in 1880 these stories were thought of as foolish, groundless trash.

In “Journey” a problem as foreign to us as aqua-lungs were in the 1880’s is vividly enacted. Our national preoccupation with space has bred an amazingly scientifically inclined populace that won’t stand for what they consider too much fiction in their science-fiction. Thus, one of Verne’s most elaborate predictions may receive the unenthusiastic reaction accorded to poor science-fiction.

Tax Audiences Faith

A few events will tax the audiences’ faith. Lovers of action may overlook them, but a real slap in the intelligence is the comfortable atmosphere in the center of the earth which we think should be at least warm. But who knows?

As an entertaining technicolor-cinemascope epic, this should be tops in your holiday viewing. The scenery is spectacular. We wondered where such a fantastic spectacle could be filmed and were sincerely disappointed when at the end a screen credit was given to Carlsbad Caverns.

Mason, Boone Star

James Mason does a fine job as a scientist so excited with the possibility of undertaking this journey that he never seems to realize that it would be impossible to survive it. Pat Boone plays an inquiring student, a fine adventuresome Scot (the story is set in Edinburgh) whose lack of scientific method precipitates many of the more perilous events of the show.