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'Erbert's. This irritates 'Erbert. Without quite knowing what he's about, he scoops up a haymaker from off the floor and smacks Sergeant Mulberry in the midriff. It sounds just as if 'Erbert has struck a big drum.

Everyone cheers themselves silly, until they realize that Mulberry is still standing there, looking quite annoyed. There is a sudden hush. 'Erbert blinks in astonishment. Then he backs away.

Mulberry begins to advance, swinging his fist tentatively up and down. 'Erbert continues to retreat, muttering "Cor!"

Then everything seems to happen at once. Mulberry launches a punch which whistles through the air like a falling bomb. 'Erbert throws himself backwards to avoid

it. He thuds against the ropes, over-balances and lands with a crash on top of the prizes.

Pandemonium reigns for the next few minutes. The air is full of fish slices, knives and forks, sugar basins and fruit dishes. The yellow and red cruet smashes into a hundred pieces. The salad bowl becomes wedged on Ginger's head. It has to be cracked before it is removed.

'Erbert lies amongst the wreckage, holding the china bulldog tightly in his boxing gloves. Angry hands seize him and hustle him into the dressing room. His trousers are thrown in his face. Bitter things are shouted in his ear. But 'Erbert doesn't mind. He feels that, although the other boxers have to take home what is left of their prizes in little paper bags, he at least has the best prize of all.

Captains of the Clouds

By H. E. B.

We are apt to forget that the function of the cinema is to record as well as to entertain; and that now, at this present stage in the world's history, this function of recording great events for posterity is more than ever important.

After two and a half years of war, the historical yield of the cinema is not impressive. There have been a few documentaries of outstanding merit—*Target For To-Night* and *Ferry Pilot* come at once to mind—but history can also be wedded to fiction with advantage to both, and that is why *Captains of the Clouds*, the new film from Canada, is important.

The story, which is told in Technicolour, is nothing sensational. It does not come into the mighty epic class of wildest melodrama as did the early flying films such as *Hell's Angels* and *Wings*. There is no Clara Bow here to devastate the troops, or Jean Harlow to excuse herself while she gets into "something comfy". Rather has the director, Michael Curtiz, relied upon a simple plot with a notable background, and therein lies the strength of this film.

The background is Canada, now the chief nursery of British aviation, and it is Canada with its woods and lakes; Canada with its rolling plains and cloudless skies; and Canada with its mighty training schools like Uplands, Trenton and Jarvis which gives this film its spaciousness and its purpose. Canucks far from home will see these familiar scenes with nostalgia, but for the rest of us the film will provide a glimpse of a vast project of immeasurable importance to the war effort.

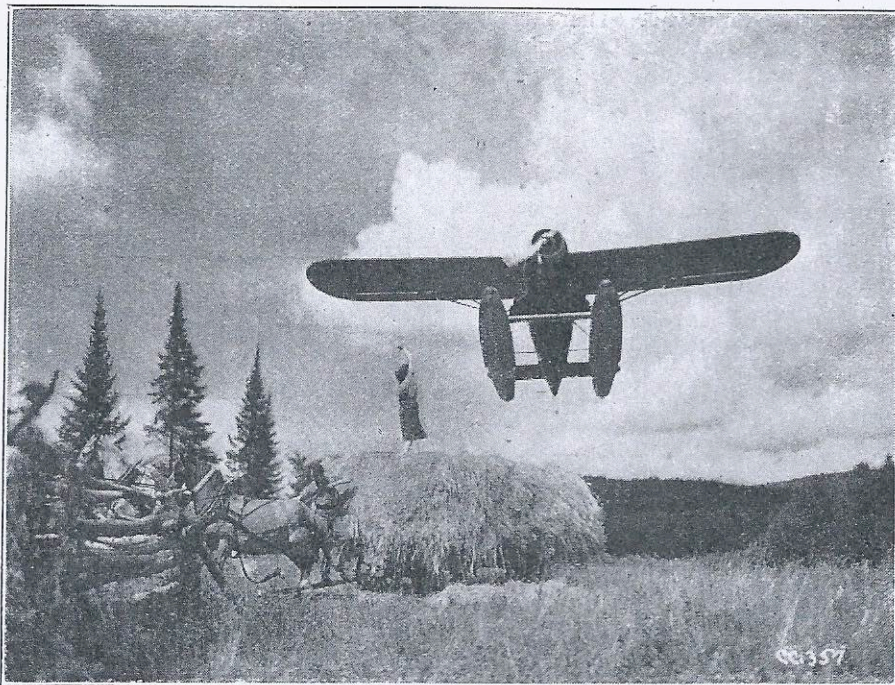
The Empire Air Training Scheme, or rather the J.A.T.P., as those in authority now wish it to be known, is history in the making, and it is to the great credit of Hollywood that it has treated this subject with an admiration that never becomes fulsome, and a sincerity that does not wear thin.

The plot can be quickly outlined. A little band of bush pilots are running a freight and ferry service in the Canadian wilds. One, Brian MacLean (James Cagney), is a braggart and a bouncer, out to do down the others by whatever means he can. There is

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a quarrel over a girl (Brenda Marshall), whom his partner loves although she is a baggage; and whom MacLean marries in desperation, because his partner will not see that she is only a gold digger.

chance. Near the Irish Coast an Me. attacks and is picking them off, one by one, when the Cagney kite rams it in the best Hollywood style, and exit the two of them into the drink.



The scene changes from the bush to Ottawa, where these pilots decide to join up in the R.C.A.F.; and at Uplands, Trenton and the B. and G. School at Jarvis they learn discipline and are taught the hardest lesson of all—that they are too old for operational flying and that the greatest service they can fulfil is to instruct the operational pilots of the future.

MacLean disgraces himself when he crashes with a pupil, and is given his bowler-hat (figuratively, for he is not the type to wear one), but in the end he makes good. A consignment of Hudsons has to be flown across the Atlantic, and he is given his

The operational boys may smile a little at this final sequence, and an Air Marshal or two will no doubt look askance at the treatment meted out to the imperturbable Billy Bishop, who nearly has his head taken off by Cagney during a ceremonial parade, but the flying scenes are often magnificent, and some of the colouring is superb. You will not readily forget the sight of the Cagney kite, bouncing across the lakes like a rubber ball; the endless lines of yellow Harvards at Trenton; and the squat white bellies of the Hudsons, moving slowly into position over the rain-soaked tarmac.