

# AT CITY THEATRES

REGENT

## TENSE DRAMA

"CAPTAINS OF THE CLOUDS":

Hollywood's vivid tribute to the Canadian Air Force; tense, dramatic, forceful and completely successful.

"Captains of the Clouds" is a grand piece of cinema, exciting and stirring, ardently patriotic in the refreshingly unrestrained manner of Hollywood at its best, and of a technical excellence which should be appreciated by everybody. Colour takes its rightful part as background to human emotions, as a natural landscape does, never distracting our attention from the admirable story.

James Cagney could hardly go wrong as the tough, bumptious flyer who, after flying thousands of miles over Canada, gets a job ferrying Lockheed bombers over to London. The vital scenes at the RAF training school in Canada stir one's blood at the sight of gallant youth adventuring; and for dramatic tenacity it would be hard to beat the scene in the Canadian bar-room just after Dunkirk, with Churchill's voice on the radio delivering his "We shall never surrender" speech.

There is not space here to write of the film's many excellences. But one remembers many things. Australia's own "Billy" Bishop, VC, his face a mixture of rugged strength and gentleness; the Englishman in the bomber who would not take his turn at sleeping because England was so near and he might miss the first glimpse of her; the tense, tight-lipped sadism in the face of the German pilot of the Messerschmitt as he prepares to slay his hapless rivals one by one; the English officer, "too old at 28," who did not go home because his home had been in Coventry. All such details help to build up one of the best films seen for some time.

D. L. WARAKER.

## Repertory Play

Ibsen's brilliant drama, "Hedda Gabler," was produced last night by Barbara Sisley for the Repertory Society. Here is a delicately flavoured feast of psychological penetration, of insight into human emotions. "I will not look upon sickness and death, I loathe ugliness," says the hateful central character; yet this highly complex woman, who professes a worship of beauty, sees it not in the kindly characters of those who find joy in service.

This difficult piece was extremely well acted. Daphne Roermann played Hedda with a sure cleverness which would have been a source of pride to some professional companies. Hedda might perhaps have occasionally masked her malice a little more subtly, possessed more light and shade in personality; but the performance remains memorable.

Gladys Parkinson, always one of the society's most appealing players, fully understood the contrast of softly feminine outlook with the steely hardness of her rival's forceful determination. Their scenes, together, are among the best which this dramatic group has given us.

Alan Denby's impersonation was mature, rich in innuendo of glance and gesture, and W. Williams was quietly successful as the guileless husband. Edith Black was sure and satisfying as the sort of gentle aunt who has also vanished with the period (her modern prototypes are striding about on golf links and in industry). W. F. Tully always brings sincerity and personality to his work, and Mollie McLean played with grace of voice

F. Tully always brings sincerity and personality to his work, and Mollie McLean played with grace of voice and movement, a pleasant little maid-servant. The dressing helped greatly to give the play its atmosphere.

D. L. WARAKERS

**EMBASSY** Dorothy Lamour and Jon Hall are co-starred in "Alma of the South Seas" which is filmed in technicolour. The film has some spectacular sequences, notably those which depict the disastrous eruption of a volcano. Also on the programme is "Mary Names the Day," one of the best of the Dr. Kildare series.

**CARLTON** Of special interest at the present time is the film, included in the new programme at the Carlton showing various aspects of life on the Solomon Islands, and close-ups of the natives. Another interesting short subject gives a comprehensive picture of the flourishing city of Buenos Aires capital of the Argentine. Newsreels covering many items of interest show air crews setting out on the 1000 bomber raid on

## WINTERGARDEN

### Author's Lady

"BEDTIME STORY." — Playwright and actress stage several matrimonial scenes from comedy to farce. Funny in spots.

"ALIAS BOSTON BLACKIE." — Chester Morris, prominent of chin and of determination, in another of his amateur detective stories. He gets his man.

Bedtime stories are supposed to have a sedative effect, but it is unlikely that "Bedtime Story"—at the Wintergarden—will put anybody to sleep, for its characters behave in such a hectic and excitable manner. It is good to see again Fredric March, in the role of a playwright with few social principles, a passion for practical jokes, and a deep and not entirely selfless appreciation of his wife's ability as an actress. It is all very irresponsible, but money will find it quite amusing. Loretta Young plays that somewhat unusual character, the actress who, after seven years of matrimony with the one partner, longs for domesticity (still with the same man) and retirement to rustic surroundings. The prospect of an audience of one left her undaunted—a somewhat rare type, surely. These two romp their way through the piece very light-heartedly. Loretta wearing a series of stunning frocks and March his air of injured innocence whenever he has been least injured and is furthest from innocence.

Robert Benchley and Allyn Joslyn handle their lines so skilfully that they appear wittier than they are, and Joslyn has to play one of the silliest scenes for a bridegroom ever written. To his credit as an actor, he looks just as silly as his author intended.—D. L. WARAKER.

**METRO** "Honky Tonk," a Western melodrama with its setting in an American gold mining town of the eighteen-nineties gives Clark Gable opportunity for doing good work in the role of an unscrupulous card sharper. The film has the familiar background of smoky saloons and crowded gambling houses, with their tinkling pianos. The cast includes such well known players as Lana Turner, Claire Trevor and Frank Morgan. The Metro's programme also features "Main Street on the March."

**ST JAMES** There is a freshness and charm about "Remember the Day" which makes for delightful entertainment of the type which should appeal particularly to women. Claudette Colbert is admir-

ably cast as the little school teacher, whose life story makes a patchwork of happiness and sorrow. The film opens in 1918, during the first World War. "The Smiling Ghost" is tense and dramatic, and has all the eerie thrills anyone could wish for.

**MAJESTIC** Lyrics and music are featured on the new programme at the Majestic. "Sleepytime Gal," Judy Canova's latest film, is a bright parody on crime dramas. In "What's Cookin'," the Andrews sisters share honours in the musical numbers with charming little Gloria Jean, whose clear soprano is heard in "Lo, Here the Gentle Lark."

**REX** Especially suited to the talents of Bette Davis is the role she plays in "The Little Foxes." As Regina, avaricious wife of a kindly bank manager, she builds up a characterisation as unpleasant as any top-ranking film star has been asked to portray. Her work holds the interest throughout the film. "Margie" featuring Mischa Auer and Nan Grey, completes the programme.

**LYCEUM** "Hellzapoppin'" certainly has that "something different" so often sought by Hollywood. Having practically no story, the film features a series of the craziest goings on imaginable, sprinkled with numerous musical numbers and novel dancing interludes. Contrast in entertainment is provided by the drama, "The Return of Frank James," which is filmed in technicolour.

**HIS MAJESTY'S** In "Inter-Squadron," Ronald Regan is well cast as a dasher, devil-may-care test pilot who does his bit in a RAF squadron composed of men of many nationalities, who fight for revenge on the Germans or to seek adventure in the skies. Particularly well done are bombing raids on London. They are terrifying in their realism. "The Body Disappears" is about a scientist at an American university and his experiments. A fair share of comedy is provided by Edward Everett Horton.

**CIVIC** Mystery and adventure are featured in the new programme at the Civic where "Wings of Destiny," starring Marshal Crosby, and "Ship of Wanted Men," with Dorothy Sebastian and Fred Collier, are now showing. The first-named picture is a