



The Secret of Vigour

Say what you like about whiskers, the secret of Samson's strength was simply vigorous health. In these modern days, too, health and vigour depend upon a system that is functioning smoothly — and that means Andrews Liver Salt. Andrews promotes Good Health because FIRST, the sparkling effervescence of Andrews helps to refresh the mouth and tongue; NEXT, Andrews soothes the stomach and relieves acidity, one of the chief causes of indigestion; THEN, Andrews acts directly on the liver and checks biliousness, and FINALLY, Andrews gently clears the bowels, correcting constipation.

For Vigorous Good Health take

ANDREWS

LIVER SALT



Scott & Turner Ltd., Andrews House, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England.

1/8

MISS GWEN PARKER Auckland

Another Prize Winner in the
Listerine Smile Competition.

LISTERINE

The TOOTH
PASTE WITH
A PURPOSE...

TO CLEAN TEETH BETTER

Different! . . . you taste the difference the minute you use Listerine Tooth Paste . . . the tooth paste made for the purpose of cleaning teeth better . . . use it and SEE how much better Listerine cleans your teeth. IT CONTAINS NO SOAP.

The Lambert Pharmacal Co. (N.Z.) Ltd., 64 Ghuznee Street, Wellington.



Film Review, by Jno.

The Documentary that Wasn't

SCHOOL FOR SECRETS

(Rank-Two Cities)

THIS is a film which I found good and bad by turns, and though on balance the good (which is very good) materially outweighs the bad (which is only bad by comparison), I was left with the feeling that the most notable thing about *School for Secrets* was the way in which a magnificent opportunity had been lost. For this could have been the most dramatic and exciting of all war documentaries—the story of radar. Lest anyone think that an exaggerated opinion, let us remember that not even *The Bomb* played such a crucial part in the Second World Crisis, whatever the latter's significance is in the Third. Without radar, the few to whom the many owed so much would have been crushed by sheer weight of numbers.

It would appear that Peter Ustinov, who both wrote and directed *School for Secrets*, started off with the best of intentions—the film is more than half documentary—decided, on second thoughts, that truth had not sufficient human interest to succeed at the box-office, and ended with a half-hearted compromise between reality and realism. It is not a fatal compromise. The film is still a good one, but with a little more faith in the intelligence of the public it could have been twice the film it is.

The human interest of the story is provided by the "boffins"—the research scientists whose work gave the R.A.F. the critical advantage over the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain, and who enabled that advantage to be maintained during the period of night bombing attacks which followed the failure of the daylight offensives, and subsequently in the massed attacks mounted by Bomber Command against Germany itself. There are five of these backroom boys—played by Sir Ralph Richardson, Raymond Huntley, John Laurie, Ernest Jay, and David Tomlinson—and the story opens in July, 1939, on the very eve of war, with the summoning of these five to special duties.

Their assignment is to improve and develop radar, then already in existence in a primitive form, and with the qualifications of four of them—physicists, and electronics and radio experts—I had no quarrel. But I found it difficult to swallow the reasons for the appointment to the team of Richardson who is, we are told, a world authority on zoology (lizards and axolotls appear to be his forte), and who is selected for this highly technical assignment solely because he possesses an enquiring mind and a penchant for asking thought-provoking questions. I should have thought that an enquiring mind was part of the necessary equipment of any scientist—the others all seem to fulfil that criterion—and the only sustained piece of questioning which Richardson gets to do in the film (the interrogation of a Jerry boffin, salvaged from a submarine) does not get the action much further forward.

Again, perhaps I underestimate the adaptability of the scientific mind, but I cannot imagine a simon-pure zoologist

BAROMETER

Fair to Fine: "School for Secrets"

becoming so familiar with advanced radio and electronics (even in the five years spanned by the story) that he can accompany a commando raiding-party to the German-held French coast, give a German radar-station the once-over, and supervise the dismantling of its vital parts in the space of about half an hour—with the aid of a pocket-torch and to the accompaniment of bursts of Bren and Sten fire. True, all the other boffins in the cast had gone into action at one stage or another in the story, and it would have been a revolutionary departure from screen tradition if the star hadn't done likewise, but I wish it had been arranged with more respect for probability. In the case of any less capable actor this blunder—it goes much deeper than miscasting—would have been nothing less than sabotage. That Richardson manages to invest his part with plausibility is a better index of his quality as an actor than many of his successes have been.

Nor could I accept the presentation of the five Big Brains of the back room and four wives (among the scientists Richardson is also subtly differentiated as a bachelor) being billeted together in the same private house. Apart from the psychic tensions which inevitably result—in all the best films—from such contiguity, I should have thought the Security people would have kept the wives out of the picture altogether, even if they did keep the rest of the eggs in the same basket.

But having made these criticisms—and I hope they won't be dismissed as wholly captious—it is pleasant to turn to those extensive sections of the film which were obviously made with the advice and assistance of the Services. Here the work done by the director, the cameramen and the cast is entirely praiseworthy—and in the cast I include those men and women usually grouped under the nondescript classification of "Service personnel."

In the documentary sequences the smallest details will stand the closest scrutiny. There is, for example, a passing reference to the Beaufighter as the plane being used to test the first airborne radar installation, and so far as I have been able to discover the Beaufighter was indeed the first night interceptor to be so equipped. On another point I thought I had found an error. On the morning after the first 1000-bomber raid on Cologne we find the boffins in their lodging-house sitting-room. They have been up all night, and the last plane has just been accounted for. "Well," says one, "we can go to bed now. It's five a.m.," and with that he pulls back the curtains and the bright morning sunshine streams into the room. Ha, I thought, surely Cologne was a winter-time raid—and there would be precious little sun at five of a winter's

(continued on next page)