

OLD FAMILIAR FACES

JUST FOR YOU

(Paramount)

IF you could close your ears to the scream of the 3-D promotion campaign moving into second gear, life was pretty quiet in the Wellington neon-light area last week. Old familiar faces in situations even older and more familiar seemed to be the rule.

Just for You, which brings back that Sinatra of the Gay Nineties, Bing Crosby (this time in company with Jane Wyman), is one of those musical productions which the Hollywood assembly line shoots out in handy manageable 10,000-foot lengths. If Hollywood hadn't shown us on various occasions (*On the Town*, *An American in Paris*, and the like), what an imaginative and enterprising team could do, one might be less critical of the production-line jobs. They are, after all, technically proficient, highly polished affairs—rather like American cars. Only they don't run quite so well. The photography is generally good, the timing is neat, the big set-pieces are adroitly handled. What they too often lack is, however, the very essence of the good musical—the quality of gaiety. *Just for You* has some gay moments, to be sure, but in between an over-sentimental story makes the going heavy.

Without Crosby it would be much heavier. So much attention has been paid to his voice that there has been a tendency to overlook his capacity as an actor. Within limits he is more than competent. He has an easy unbuttoned style, apparently casual and relaxed but in fact precisely adjusted to the demands of the camera and microphone—and, of course, to the kind of easy-going story that he so often figures in. This time, however, the going is not always so easy. As a Broadway producer of bright musical shows he is quite in his element, and I enjoyed what I saw of his stage production, but he is also simultaneously the widower father of a couple of problem children ("Somewhere along the line I've lost them and I've got to get them back"), and here he does not manage things quite so successfully. Strictly speaking, he does not succeed at all in parental capacity. He wins back the affection of his socially ambi-



BING CROSBY
Deceptively casual and relaxed

BAROMETER

MAINLY FAIR: "Just for You."
OVERCAST: "Affair in Trinidad."

tious 'teen-age daughter by backing her social ambitions instead of curing her of them, and it's left to the United States Air Force to make a man out of his soft-centred, self-pitying son. However, with both offspring taken care of, he is free to marry his leading lady, who has been hanging round for a good hour and a half waiting for him.

Jane Wyman is leading-ladylike up to a point. She sings brightly (though "Zing a Little Zong" is already losing some of its gloss), she shapes well in the sort of abbreviated rig-out that can be worn only by those who are well shaped, but I had the feeling that after a run of sober roles she was having a little difficulty in re-orientating herself.

AFFAIR IN TRINIDAD

(Columbia)

THE last time we saw Rita Hayworth on the screen—before her temporary abandonment of Hollywood—was, if memory serves, with Glenn Ford in *The Loves of Carmen*. In *Affair in Trinidad* she is again teamed with Ford, but not this time as a snare Andalusian. She is a simple American girl who delights the patrons of the Caribbee, a Port of Spain night-spot, with her simple uninhibited dancing. When the story opens, her husband has been conveniently murdered (foreign agents from Farther East have been plotting against our security) and she has just been pressed into the counter-espionage service by the local chief of police—played with un-British ruthlessness by Torin Thatcher. Mr. Ford, however, arrives in time to take charge of the unofficial operations, enjoy the routine sequence of misunderstandings with the star, and (of course) eventually carry her home to the freer air of the United States. I can't say that I was impressed by *Affair in Trinidad*, but if I seem to be looking down my nose at Miss Hayworth I can only plead that that is the angle her *couturière* seems to have had in mind.

Correction

I DON'T mind being accused of a bias against everything British (since it seems to prove that a congenital prejudice in favour of the British attitude and outlook is being kept well under control), but I hate to be caught out in a mistake that I haven't made. A correspondent, who desires to remain anonymous, writes: "Regarding your wisecrack (on *Plymouth Adventure*), '... it's pretty free and easy history,' the same applies to your knowledge of history. The Mayflower started her voyage from Plymouth. . . Any fourth form child knows that she did not start from Southampton."

It is, of course, a long time since I was in the fourth form, but it is only a few minutes since I checked myself against the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (American edition). There the enquiring reader will discover that it was the Pilgrim Fathers who made the mistake of sailing from Southampton. Fortunately, they discovered their error in time, put back and set off again, this time from Plymouth. *Plymouth Adventure* correctly recorded this initial backing and filling.

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