

SPEAKING CANDIDLY... REVIEWS of the NEW FILMS

Low Ayres Starts Being A Doctor

["Young Dr. Kildare." M.G.M. Directed by Harold S. Bucquet. Starring Low Ayres, Lionel Barrymore. First release (approx.): Wellington, January 20.]

DOCTORS continue to vie with newspapermen for the honour of being the screen's most overworked characters. Yet, although there is no sign of the medical cycle ceasing to roll—in fact, it has been given fresh impetus—there is evidence that it is moving in a slightly different direction. Dr. Cronin's "The Citadel" (not yet seen as a film) is, I suspect, largely responsible both for the new impetus and the change of course.

Newest of the anaesthetic series is M.G.M.'s "Young Dr. Kildare" in which Low Ayres is starred. He is, in several ways, the American counterpart of Cronin's Dr. Manson. He has high ideals, he wants to be a diagnostician rather than a surgeon, he is beset by colleagues who think more of their dignity and their fees than of the Hippocratic Oath.

Contrary to screen tradition, however, and in keeping with the new trend, he is not involved in love affairs with blonde nurses. In fact, Dr. Kildare's own heart bothers him comparatively little, being but lightly pledged to an attractive country lass (Lynne Carver), who has the insight to see that, for the time being, Dr. Kildare's calling is his first love. Miss Carver can comfort herself however, with the thought—and



LEW AYRES

Dr. Manson's U.S. counterpart.

the public can take pleasure in the fact also—that "Young Dr. Kildare" is but the first of a series of films which M.G.M. are going to make about this likable young medico. There is thus plenty of time for him to fall in love with her.

A Year To Live

AT the most she will have but one year to wait for the wedding bells. That is the time limit the series has imposed upon itself by making the other central character—crusty, morose, brilliant Dr. Leonard Gillespie (Lionel Barrymore)—due to die of cancer within twelve months—unless, perhaps, young Dr. Kildare can discover a cure.

For twelve months, however, we can look forward to seeing the development of the relationship between famous Dr. Gillespie and his eager young protegee which is founded in "Young Dr. Kildare." It comes about when Kildare

defies the might of the mercenary hospital board in order to have truck with gangsters and thereby cure a millionaire's daughter whom self-important specialists have condemned to the mad-house.

Crusading Zeal

THE mystery element of the film, centring round the reason for the dark state of mind of the millionaire's daughter, is sufficient to hold the interest; not enough to



Glenda Farrell, Randolph Scott and Hope Hampton are the gay trio who appear in Universal's comedy "The Road To Reno."

detract attention from the central theme of Dr. Kildare's altruism and crusading zeal in conflict with hide-bound tradition, and his brushes with the fiery but admirable Dr. Gillespie.

Lionel Barrymore plays the latter in his best manner—but hardly a bedside one! Also taking an affectionate interest in the young medico's career, and adding weight to the entertainment, are his country-doctor father (Samuel S. Hinds), his Irish mother (Emma Dunn) and ambulance driver Nat Pendleton.

Welcome Back!

"**YOUNG DR. KILDARE**" marks about the third new picture in as many weeks in which I have encountered Low Ayres. When, as a juvenile, he made "All Quiet" and then faded out through bad handling, Ayres had forgotten more about screen acting than many present-day leading men have ever learnt. However, I feel like forgiving Hollywood for its bad mistake in neglecting him, since it now seems to be recognizing his great ability and giving him plenty to do.

So long as screen doctors can be portrayed as ably and as interestingly as Low Ayres does it in "Young Dr. Kildare," I shall refrain from wishing that they would chloroform themselves and the producers who are still pushing the hospital cycle.

Several Twists In "Road To Reno"

["The Road To Reno." Directed by S. Sylvan Simon. Starring Randolph Scott, Hope Hampton. Release: Date indefinite.]

ONE of the points of interest about "Road to Reno" is that it features what Hollywood is pleased to term a new screen personality. Whether there is any difference between a new screen personality and a new star, I don't

know, but at any rate, in "Road to Reno," Universal introduce one of the former.

She is Hope Hampton, who sings well, acts fairly well and contrives to look as though she had just come off the lid of a chocolate-box.

Miss Hampton sings just enough to make one wish she would sing some more. What she does sing is well varied, and includes an excerpt

from "La Boheme" and that tuneless western song, "I'm Riding the Trail to My Home."

Perhaps it's a low-brow confession to make, but I must admit I like her in the western better.

Married In Haste

THE story throws still further light on the great American institution of divorce, and just how the city of Reno has brought divorce within the reach of everyone.

Miss Hampton, married in haste to a Nevada rancher (Randolph Scott), who objects to her stage career, plans to divorce him, but is thrown into his company just long enough to make her decide he is a desirable husband after all.

Then Mr. Scott, to teach his wife a lesson, decides to divorce her, and from then on things develop as Hollywood thinks they should develop in a Hollywood comedy.

Not So Useless

RANDOLPH SCOTT, big and outdoor-looking, might have stepped straight from "High, Wide and Handsome." Several scenes are stolen by blonde Glenda Farrell, who knows how to get the most out of every situation, and by Alan Marshall as the city dude who isn't at all such a useless sort of guy on a ranch.

That was one point I liked about "Road to Reno." For once the handsome, rugged rancher doesn't win out all the time. Far from it. Mr. Marshall takes Mr. Scott up in an aeroplane and loops and zooms until Scott's stomach is in a very bad way. And when it comes to a swimming race in the icy waters of a creek, Mr. Marshall turns on a very pretty crawl stroke, and simply walks—or rather, crawls—away from his rival.

The final scene is treated with a levity which should once again impress the unsophisticated with the fact that it's easy come, easy go in Reno.

I liked the final shot, the judge pounding his bench with a gavel and crying, "Order! Order! Order! You can't make a fool out of this court. Or can you?"

George Formby In The R.A.F.

["It's In The Air." B.E.F. Directed by Anthony Kimmins. Starring George Formby. First release: Wellington, January 20.]

SOMEbody in an American magazine has recently discovered that a large percentage of British producers these days have dipped their fingers in the propaganda pie and are making pictures unofficially sponsored and approved by Whitehall, with the object of discreetly boosting suitable British institutions and traditions which, in the opinion of authority, need a little encouragement.

If this hadn't been discovered by an American magazine, it could quite easily have been discovered by an English one—except that few loyal English magazines would make such an indiscreet disclosure—for the trend is pretty obvious. We've had "Victoria the Great" and now "Sixty Glorious Years," dedicated to



GEORGE FORMBY

White-haired with Whitehall.

ing the fact that the death-roll in the R.A.F. in 1938 was the highest for nearly 20 years. "It's In The Air" makes much hearty by-play on the subject of ambulance men at the flying field who have been moping round for three months waiting for a job.

However, the social significance or propaganda content, or whatever you call it, of "It's In The Air" need not bother you much. The film is broad farcical entertainment cut to the formal Formby pattern of the oafish, well-meaning fellow who can do nothing right and leaves a wake of trouble whenever he moves. It is embellished with the usual Formby songs and the inevitable Formby ukulele.

In Hot Water

"**IT'S In The Air**" flies true to type even in ... subsidiary theme of conflict with the crotchety sergeant-major and romance with the sergeant-major's daughter.

But the manner in which the bewildered hero is made to fall perpetually foul of the sergeant-major, even when his intentions are of the highest, reveals richly comic invention, and is actually one of the best passages of sustained humour in all Formby's films. Julien Mitchell, as the military menace with three stripes and a crown, is an excellent foil to the inanely-grinning comedian.

For a high-paced finale, the film launches the raw recruit, solo, in a test flight 'plane from which he emerges, after a dizzy series of unintentional stunts, to win the approval of the Air Ministry.

If you like George Formby, "It's In The Air" won't let you down.

IT HAD TO HAPPEN

Films About The Martian Scare

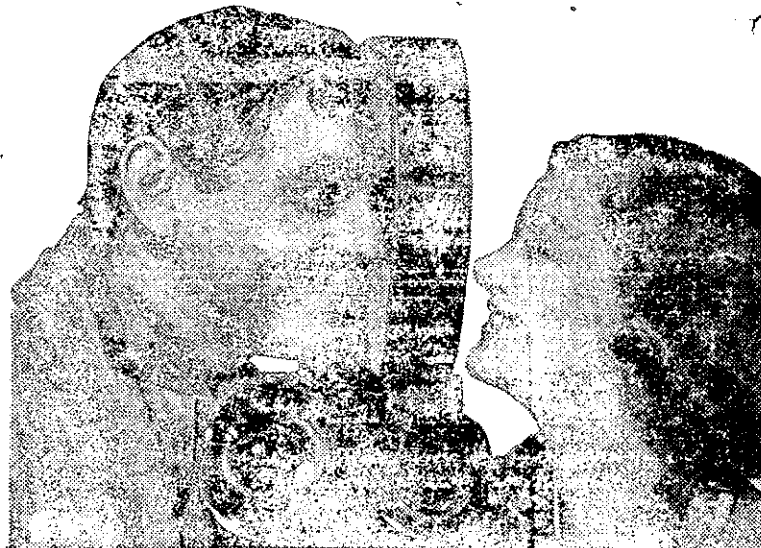
ALREADY the outbreak of hysteria following America's broadcast of H. G. Wells's "War of the Worlds" is having repercussions in Hollywood.

Universal are rushing out the release of a "Buck Rogers" serial based on a similar theme. All the newspapers are fighting for advance stiffs from the picture showing weird aeroplanes and weapons of fifty years on.

royalty; "The Drum" glorified the Empire-builders and white men's burden-carriers; George Formby did his bit for the Physical Fitness Campaign in "Keep Fit"; and nobody needs to ask what "Our Glorious Navy" is all about. And now comes "It's In The Air," in which British Empire Films and George Formby (who must be a particularly white-haired boy with Whitehall) help to spread the idea that life in the Royal Air Force is just about all beer and skittles—and not a crack-up in a month of bad flying days.

Formal Pattern

PROPAGANDA in British pictures is seldom subtle, blithely ignor-



In M.G.M.'s "Too Hot to Handle," Clark Gable is a news-reel cameraman who chases trouble—and Myrna Loy—all over the globe.