

In the Air

by CONSTABLE P. W. HARCOURT

ALTHOUGH THE work of a member of the Force in the air is usually considered "a nice soft job" by the "dismounted" men it may be of interest to describe a typical day of a constable-observer with one of the Royal Canadian Air Force planes which are attached to the Marine Section for observation purposes.

We take off in the early morning and start off reeling out 300 feet of aerial. We then get in touch with the Radio station, reel in aerial and proceed on patrol.

For the next five hours or so, the Observer has a fairly easy time. All that he has to do is to look about him continually, including straight up and down; be able to classify water craft as schooners 1, 2 or 3 masted, power boats, steamers, coastwise and otherwise, and the countless fishing smacks powered with one-lung gas kickers which go sputtering up the coast line. The resultant condition is known as "A Rum Runner's Paradise". If the boats appear to the Observer to be at all suspicious, the aircraft proceeds immediately to look them over at close range, pick up the name, description and location.

Other duties which are likely to keep the Observer busy during his spare time in the air are, to reel in and out the 300 feet of aerial with a 1½ pound weight on the end twice every fifteen minutes, and keep in touch with the base by radio; to write out messages to the cruisers and to know the position of the aircraft at all times.

When the plane returns off patrol it has to be gassed up and placed in the hangar. Then reconnaissance reports are sent to the Officers Commanding of the various Subdivisions, and the personnel go off to have a combination breakfast and lunch.

After lunch we go right back to service the aircraft for the evening patrols.

