

3rd Of A CENTURY ISSUE

VARIETY

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AWARDS WON BY THE LUX RADIO THEATRE 1935

N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM ANNUAL POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program)

RADIO STARS MAGAZINE AWARD
(for distinguished service to Radio)

1936

MOTION PICTURE DAILY POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program and best Hollywood program)

N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM ANNUAL POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program)

RADIO GUIDE MEDAL OF MERIT

1937

ANNUAL POLL OF HEARST RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program)

MOTION PICTURE DAILY POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program and best Hollywood program)

WOMEN'S NATIONAL RADIO COMMITTEE
(for best dramatic program)

N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM ANNUAL POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program)

1938

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WOMEN'S NATIONAL RADIO COMMITTEE
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MOTION PICTURE DAILY POLL OF RADIO EDITORS
(for best dramatic program and best Hollywood program)

LUX RADIO THEATRE

HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

DIRECTED BY CECIL B. DEMILLE • LOUIS SILVERS, Musical Director

MONDAYS, 9 P.M. NEW YORK TIME, WABC—AND COAST-TO-COAST COLUMBIA NETWORK

★
GENEROUS REACTION from the country's critics and an audience that grows apace! Across the continent, newspaper and magazine experts say, "Well done!" and more and more men and women gather around the loud speaker. In the four years of its existence, the Lux Radio Theatre has acquired the largest radio audience the drama has ever known.

The American public's absorbing interest in the stage, the screen and in Hollywood itself has been crystallized by the Lux Radio Theatre. Weekly, famous producers, stars, writers and technicians work together on a full-hour dramatic program that not only presents "the play," but brings to the entire country something of the fascinating aura that surrounds the theatre.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the performers, producers, writers, executives and those many others behind the scenes in Hollywood who have made all of this possible. It is our sincere intention to keep on bringing to the public the finest dramatic programs on the air, but we can do this only by continued cooperation from the leaders in the entertainment world. We are confident that this assistance will be forthcoming . . . We shall try to make our programs worthy of it!

★

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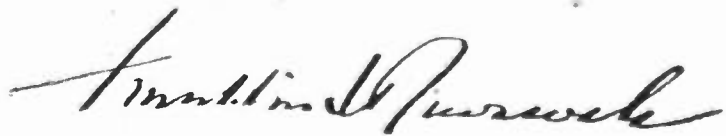
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 7, 1938

My dear Mr. Silverman:

The years that have passed since Variety first saw the light of day have witnessed many and striking changes in the amusement business. The files of your paper must therefore be a gold mine of history to those interested in the evolution and development of the art of amusement since the turn of the century. In extending hearty congratulations upon the completion of a third of a century of publication by Variety may I express the hope that your publication may go forward with progress to ever greater achievements in the years that lie ahead.

Very sincerely yours,



Mr. Sid Silverman,
Publisher and Editor,
VARIETY,
154 West 46th Street,
New York, N.Y.

RKO REORG OK SET FOR THURS.

Confirmation of the RKO reorganization plan is all set for Jan. 5 (Thursday). This was practically made certain last Thursday (29) at the hearing before N. Y. Federal Judge William Bondy who announced that he thought the plan fair and equitable to all concerned and that he was ready to sign it in the 'near future.' The court might have placed his okay on the papers at that time had not Col. Hamilton C. Rickaby, counsel for the Atlas Corp., chief proponents of the plan, introduced an amendment to the Rockefeller Center's part in the reorganization.

Rickaby's recommendation would eliminate the agreement between the Center and RKO in relation to the operation of the Music Hall and the Rockefeller Center theatre. It would also reduce the Center's participation in the new shares of the company to the extent of \$5,000,000. and would cut its common shares in the new company from 500,000 to 415,000. No objection was raised at the hearing to this amendment to the plan.

However, Judge Bondy fixed Thursday to hear any final argument on the plan. He explained the delay in confirmation by saying that he wanted to make sure as to the technical consents and to avoid all possibility of a reversal. Meanwhile, Rickaby was directed to draw up the technical form order which Judge Bondy will sign in confirming the plan.

At least two groups will appeal from the confirmation of the plan. These are Nathan Rosenberg, representing H. Cassel & Co., holders of \$175,000 of debentures, and John S. Over, on behalf of Ernest W. Stirn, of Milwaukee, holder of 1,234 shares of common stock who insists he is the only legitimate stockholder entitled to file protests or to have a say in the reorganization.

Pan Will Rogers Mural In P.O. as Too Theatrical

Claremore, Okla., Jan. 1.

Will Rogers mural in the new Claremore postoffice has been put on the giddle by local citizens who state the painting is un-lifelike and not true to the Rogers character as known to Claremore. The mural is a Federal Art Project, painted by Randall Davey, of Santa Fe, N. M.

According to Morton Harrison, treasurer of the Will Rogers commission, the mural cost 'just \$1,018 too much.' Government is reported to have paid \$1,020 to Davey for the work.

Complained that the characters include an orchestra and two many show people, and failed to capture Rogers' life as Claremore saw it. Davey states he attempted to show Rogers in all his various activities and not just as a cowboy.

THIRD OF A CENTURY

There was show business in Greece when Rome wasn't even a split week. Clear traces of professional, organized entertainment go back 3,000-4,000 years. Against which the paltry 33 years which this special issue celebrates is just a spot announcement. But with a difference; for between 1905 and 1938, which years coincide with the publication life of **VARIETY**, there have been more radical changes in show business than in all the rest of theatrical history.

These changes have been in the direction of mechanization, starting with the threading of strips of celluloid into an apparatus throwing a beam of light on a screen and now reaching a staggering feat of electronics whereby images are rescrumbled off the air and projected simultaneously in the home with the spoken word. In the process has emerged a kind of entertainment in which a whole array of special techniques and trained craftsmanship must be coordinated to produce the final result. Show business has therefore necessarily and inevitably become big business. Yet this is but a fraction of the social, political and economic implications of what has happened and is happening in the entertainment field. **VARIETY** in its columns for the past third of a century has unfolded, week by week, the history of this growth and change. But the past is merely an overture to the future. The drama of the business of drama becomes more complex.

Mechanization (films, radio and potentially television) bring show business ever closer to the man on the street. On the other hand entertainment for its own sake has now been supplanted and supplemented by entertainment for the sake of selling soap, improving public relations, winning elections, pressuring the government or the people. It is getting so that it is hard to tell where the showman and the business man separate. They're becoming more and more the same guy.

What bankers, sponsors, business men generally are slow to see in its true importance is the absolute reliance of all entertainment upon personality. Cameras are precision tools that can be made in factories; ditto microphones, transmitting antenna, the chemical apparatus of colors, and so on. But personality cannot be turned out or processed on a factory assembly belt basis. This is what makes entertainment impossible to standardize. Personality is unpredictable in its manifestations, longevity, timeliness. Entertainment embraces the personality of actors, singers, comedians who are seen and heard, the personality of an author in his craftsmanship, a composer

in his melody, a director in his deft touches, a designer in his sets.

Television, for example, is faced with an entertainment problem compared to which the engineering job is a snap. Far from opening easy new frontiers of public amusement, television merely complicates the old problem of personality. Electronics may also, as predicted, one day make the tonal harmonics of the old masters seem primitive and simple, but one thing is certain: the inventors won't be able to write or play this super-music of the dim future. Experience from 1905 to 1939 clearly shows that. However refined or wonderful the tools of entertainment become, they always just add up to a frame, stage, setting or distribution system for personality.

Business system too easily becomes the tail that wags the production dog. Blockbooking in films, for example, is a business man's device for fool-proofing the danger of losses on showmanship. System is not a complete triumph, for it tends to be maintained by penalizing the money-makers to protect the money-losers. It clogs the natural affinity of sock personality and sock boxoffice earnings by leveling off the good with the bad. It's an effort to deny 'inspiration' and exalt 'efficiency.' At the moment it is not all that's wrong with the film industry but it's probably a big clue.

Or take radio which is notoriously a borrower rather than a creator of entertainment. Its masterminds sense and fear the hazards of personality while appreciating the values. Radio's way out of this 'gamble' of possible loss is to pay peak premium prices for guaranteed favorites and to sidestep any creative experimenting. The importance of personality becomes almost psychopathic with the big sponsors. Expediency justifies the five-figure system and even turns out to be cheap. Meanwhile the miracle of broadcasting, as such, is by now, no attraction in itself. Personality is what counts. Similarly, few theatres any longer boast of the particular sound system.

All of which makes the news that makes **VARIETY**. Of this paper it may still be said it sells news to its readers and white space to its advertisers. And, to paraphrase a statement in the first issue, Dec. 16, 1905, it looks forward to the 51st anniversary edition to decide whether a non-osculatory trade paper is a good idea.

VARIETY has one or two fixed editorial ideas. It tries hard to be newsy, not very hard to be grammatical, dislikes censorship in any form and under any auspices, and listens regularly to 'Information Please.'

The next 33 years will be even harder.

U. S. and Italy Both Adamant On Pix Walkout; Others May Follow

With both the Italian government and the major American picture companies standing firm regarding distribution in Italy, any new development or change of front is not expected to be revealed until some time in January. Italy's government film monopoly was scheduled to become effective as of Jan. 1, 1939. The four U. S. major companies maintaining distribution setups in Italy were shuttering and withdrawing, according to latest information from overseas late Dec. 31, while the other four major distributors (Universal, RKO, Columbia and United Artists) were reported sticking with the other majors on the theory that they were being forced out of Italy.

Industry looks on Italy's move to put foreign picture distribution in the hands of E. N. I. C., government film monopoly, as being a test case which involves virtually the entire distribution alignment of American companies in Europe. Which not only explains the importance attached to the Italian situation but also why the industry has urged a solid front on the part of majors.

Representatives of foreign departments in New York believe that if Italy triumphs in the present move to nationalize all distribution, other countries in Europe will follow suit. It is no secret that other nations

have been watching developments closely because they see an opportunity to chisel in on American film profits.

American major companies have maintained that they are being forced from Italy, since elimination of percentage deals, outright flat rental buys and complete domination of distribution situation would take the profit out of operation for U. S. distributors and cut them off from having any individual or private say on their own product.

Meagre Film Choice

Rome, Jan. 1.

Now appears here that American companies will withdraw all distribution of their films in this country. Great Britain may do the same and France is not enthusiastic over the Italian film monopoly plan effective the first of this year.

This leaves only German and scattered European films for Italian theatregoers. Exhibitors predict it will be a slim 1939 unless some American product comes through.

Laurel Sued by No. 4

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

Vera Illiana Laurel, Russian dancer and fourth wife of Stan Laurel, filed suit for separate maintenance of \$1,500 a month. Basis of complaint was extreme cruelty.

Jas. Cruze Again Suing His Daughter on Deeds

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

James Cruze filed a second suit against his daughter, Julie Jane Cruze, demanding the return of deeds for \$150,000 worth of real estate.

Recently Miss Cruze won a decision in suit for the same property. This time her father asks the court to appoint a guardian for her.

Newsreel Cavalcade

Moving into line on the patriotic cycle, arrangements have been completed by RKO under which Pathe News will turn out a feature which will take the past 20 years as a background and attempts to illustrate the trend toward the future. RKO will release.

Given the tentative title of 'United We Stand,' the scenario for the newsreel picture is now being prepared by staff writers of Pathe News. It is hoped to have the feature ready for release some time in February.

Silverstone, Farnol West

Murray Silverstone and Lynn Farnol to the Coast Friday (6) on new product campaigns.

Both return to New York after annual stockholders' meeting in Hollywood, Jan. 12.

5TH AVE. SHOPS' NEWSREEL IDEA

After publicizing Fifth Avenue as being the shopping center of the world in connection with the forthcoming World's Fair in New York City, newsreels have been handed a slap in the face by a group of Fifth Avenue shops. Editors of the newsreels have received a blunt warning that Uptown Retail Guild would not permit photographing of merchandise unless the reels give direct credit to the store whose goods appear in the film.

In the notice to the executives of the reels, warning note points to the fact that such credit was received from fashion magazines and fashion pages after a similar resolution was passed about a year ago. Reaction among the film editors, however, is that if the Fifth Avenue shops insist on credits, they will be ignored by newsreels in the future. That has been their attitude with hotels and certain stores that previously insisted on screen credit before allowing their models or gowns to be photographed. They believe that such stipulations hinder 'freedom of the reels' and make them commercial propositions, whereas exhibitors pay for newsreel entertainment and not screen ads.

Newsreel editorial staffs often give credit to prominent establishments when it fits into the screen story. But they contend that the matter of whether or not any mention is given should be left strictly to the editors.

Note warning the newsreels was signed by John B. Swinney, managing director of the Uptown Retail Guild, which listed Bergdorf Goodman, Hattie Carnegie, Jay Thorpe, Saks Fifth Ave., Bonwit Teller, DePinna, Milgrim and the Tailored Woman, as stores involved in the resolution passed by the directors.

N. Y. Fair's Trailer Town for Visitors

Part of the housing situation for visitors to the New York World's Fair was solved last week when it was revealed that a giant trailer town, capable of handling 5,000 people and more than 1,200 trailers daily, was assured. Corporation representing an investment of \$1,500,000, called Trailer Town, Inc., is handling the project which will be located near the Whitestone bridge, now nearing completion.

Camp proposition is headed by Harry Rich Mooney. It will have all necessary facilities and will be virtually a complete community by itself. Ely J. Kahn, architect for Ford, will handle designing with World's Fair type of architecture carried into effect.

Donlevy's Brit. Veto

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Brian Donlevy turned down a \$25,000 one-picture deal with Mayflower Films in London.

Actor is slated for a featured role in 'Beau Geste' at Paramount.

ARRIVALS

Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Piscator, Irving Asher, D'Oyly Carte Co., Martyn Green, Sydney Granville, Marjorie Eyre, John Dean, Leslie Rands, Evelyn Gardiner, Darrell Fancourt, Richard Walker, William Summer, Margery Abbott, John Dudley, Helen Roberts, Viola Wilson, Isadore Godfrey, Nadia Boulanger, Alexander Omansky, Dr. H. J. Erlanger.

N. Y. to L. A.

Herb Crooker.
Robert Emmett Dolen.
Lynn Farnol.
Patsy Kelly.
Ritz Bros.
Murray Silverstone.

L. A. to N. Y.

Bruce Cabot.
James Cagney.
James R. Grainger.
Tom Harrington.
Edwin Knopf.
Nate Scheinberg.
Robert Sinclair.

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ROONEY '38 B. O. CHAMPION

HOW STARS RATE ROUND THE GLOBE

World's Market Boxoffice Leaders Differ from Domestic Grosses (U. S. and Canada)—Still Loyal to Old Faves

STRONG ALSO-RANS

By Mike Wear

The greatest money stars at the boxoffices around the world during 1938 (excluding domestic market of U. S. and Canada), in order of drawing ability, were:

1. Clark Gable.
2. Greta Garbo.
3. Gary Cooper.
4. Paul Muni.
5. Shirley Temple.
6. Jeanette MacDonald.
7. Charles Boyer.
8. Deanna Durbin.
9. Errol Flynn.
10. Claudette Colbert.

List represents stellar players who attracted the most business in the countries outside of the domestic field. It indicates stars who got the top money at the world's boxoffices.

VARIETY correspondents all over the globe surveyed their respective countries for a cross-section of the 10 best. Besides this data, the stars' boxoffice business as disclosed by the home-office reports on their films during the past 12 months, is the basis of the ratings. In a number of countries this meant that product released in U. S. after July 1 figured little or not at all in business reports, because many nations are that far behind American releasing schedule.

Standing was obtained by lining up local popularity against the business obtained in various sections of the world. While one star may be an ace boxoffice attraction for a particular company in some country, the actual amount of revenue might be negligible compared with the total foreign business enjoyed by a rival company in the same nation.

Past year's list of boxoffice champions is pertinent in its consistency, with six winners appearing in the first 10 in 1937. Newcomers are Charles Boyer, Deanna Durbin, Errol Flynn, and Claudette Colbert, while those crowded from the 1937 compilation are the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers team, Marlene Dietrich, Robert Taylor, and William Powell-Myrna Loy team. Even though illness kept Powell from making new films (one rated a weakie in the foreign territory), old popularity of this combo and their older co-starring efforts nearly enabled them to get into the money again.

Rise of Clark Gable from No. 3 to the ace spot is attributed to the consistent draw of 'Test Pilot' a. 1 'Too Hot to Handle,' plus returns still coming in on 'San Francisco.' Salesmen were inclined to rate the heavy grosses coming in on 'Too Hot' as a major test of the star's drawing power because the story itself was regarded below standard.

Greta Garbo continues in second place because foreign audiences went for 'Conquest' and 'Camille,' even though the former was not regarded as especially strong in domestic field. Revenues of these productions further attested to the fact that screen patrons in foreign lands are slow in breaking away from old favorites, once they are firmly entrenched.

Gary Cooper slipped from leadership to No. 3 because he had only one feature on which there was heavy response outside the U. S.—'Bluebeard's Eighth Wife.' 'Marco Polo,' besides running into bans in Italy and China, was comparatively lukewarm in foreign territories. His

(Continued from page 5)

Top Money Directors

Henry King
Michael Curtiz
George B. Seitz
Jack Conway
W. S. Van Dyke
Frank Capra
Victor Fleming

HICKS ABROAD ON PAR DISTRIB

John W. Hicks, Jr., head of Paramount's foreign department, sails for England today (Wednesday) where he will resume his contacting of important distribution centers on the continent. Hicks served as head of Paramount's operating company in Great Britain until David Rose was named permanent head. This work and other matters concerning the British situation occupied most of his time on his recent visit to Europe.

Now that the Great Britain setup is adjusted, Hicks will be able to devote more attention to other situations in Europe. He plans to be gone six or eight weeks this time.

LOEW STOCKHOLDERS' DECISION DUE IN FEB.

Decision in the Loew's stockholders' accounting will not be handed down by N. Y. Supreme Court Justice Louis A. Valente for at least six weeks and possibly two months, it was authoritatively learned last week. It is understood the Court is not inclined to rush the matter, holding that whatever decision is reached, it will not necessarily affect the new contracts scheduled for the first of the year.

Should the defendants lose, the contract would become void. If they win, the agreements become retroactive and payments of salaries and bonuses would start from the first of this year. It is understood briefs have been filed with Justice Valente as requested, and they are in possession of the judge.

M. Shubert Leaves WB

Hollywood, Jan. 1. Milton Shubert resigned as associate producer at Warners and leaves the lot at the completion of his two pictures, now practically finished.

Aside from a vacation at Sun Valley, Idaho, Shubert has no immediate plans.

'38 Top Pix Grossers

'Snow White' (Disney-RKO)
'Alexander's Ragtime Band' (20th)
'Test Pilot' (Metro)
'Chicago' (20th)
'Hurricane' (Goldwyn-UA)
'Robin Hood' (WB)
'Marie Antoinette' (Metro)
'Love Finds Andy Hardy' (Metro)

'TIME' MARCHES INTO FEATURES

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

March of Time goes into full-length feature production early this year, with the number of features to be determined by the success of the first venture, on which Sheridan Gibney is working.

Louis de Rochemont, producer-publisher, announced the new policy here after conferences with Gibney, Walter Wanger, Frank Capra, Walt Disney, Fred Quimby, J. R. McDougall and Howard Benedict. First feature, budgeted at \$250,000, is for RKO-Radio release.

ANALYSIS OF TOP FILMS AND STARS

**Temple Leads Femmes—
'Snow White' Top Pic with
\$6,500,000—King Fore-
most 'Money' Director—
Autry No. 1 Western Star**

NEW WICKET RATINGS

By Arthur Ungar

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

It's another youngster who, by leaps and bounds during the past year, working in 10 pictures at Metro and one outside pic at Republic, became the boxoffice champion as to draw power in 1938, Mickey Rooney, elevated to stardom by Metro, leads the entire contingent on his lot, including Clark Gable, Robert Taylor, Norma Shearer, Greta Garbo and the other stars who have been outstanding in exhib value for years. Young Rooney, with those 'Judge Hardy' repeaters, 'Boys Town' and various other pictures he was put into during the year, became hotter than a firecracker during the final six months of the year.

The femme contingent is again headed by Shirley Temple, who with her output reduced from four to three on the year, managed to still hold that b. o. power so far as the world market is concerned.

With the passing of time many of the stellar names of the past 10 years are beginning to recede in value, newer blood as usual coming to the fore. Metro, 20th-Fox and Warners pushed plenty of the newer crowd to the foreground while, in other instances, several stars who had faded from the horizon made a comeback fight. Most outstanding was Janet Gaynor, who gives indications of again possessing drawing quality.

Productions released during 1938 saw an unusual number of remakes, both in the top money and program brackets. Studios just did not seem to show an unusual desire to experiment with new material when they could fall back on picture property which had proved itself in the past.

Series Pix Potent

Then, too, on the year, the series pictures became rather important factors. Metro hit best with its 'Kearny Family' series; 20th-Fox continues its 'Charlie Chan' and 'Jones Family,' also adding the 'Mr. Moto' series; Paramount has its 'Bulldog Drummonds,' Columbia is starting a 'Blondie' group, with RKO having started its 'Annabell,' but dropping out after the second due to loss of Jack Oakie. Likely that in an endeavor to get rid of the 'B' stigma, many of the companies will expand on the series, figuring them of potent draw value the same way as the exhibs did the weekly serials in the early silent days.

The western and outdoor picture became quite a factor also during the year with many of the stars in this realm outdrawing a great many of the dramatic luminaries on the same company program. Also noticeable on programs of the indie companies, as well as some of the majors, was that a great many stars and important featured players of three to five years ago are being used to balance casts of the medium-priced pictures.

No. 1 boxoffice winner for the year is Walt Disney's 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,' which, on worldwide distribution, will hit around the \$6,500,000 mark. Runner-up, 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' has proved itself a tornado at the international boxoffice. 'Test Pilot' with Clark Gable, Myrna Loy and Spencer Tracy came next. 'Chicago' ranked close alongside of it and 'Hurricane,' released late in 1937, is proving to be a great worldwide b. o. magnet. Containing relatively

(Continued on page 10)

British Films and the American Market

By Arthur Dent

London, Dec. 20.

My innumerable friendly contacts with the U. S. A. and the sympathetic receptions I have always enjoyed there, encourage me to talk frankly through the columns of VARIETY. I hope I shall not receive from America any parcels that explode when the string is untied.

It may surprise, but it probably won't impress New York and Hollywood, to have to remember that the basis of commercial film was laid in Britain when William Friese Greene patented his camera and projector and exhibited a film of Hyde Park Corner in 1890, and from that year until the Great War, British and American production stood on equal terms. Will Barker, Cecil Hepworth, Colonel Bromhead and Sir William Jury were all working hard about the time when American production moved to Hollywood from New York.

Simon and Harry Rowson were putting the big names of English literature and stage on the screen around the time when Adolph Zukor founded Famous Players; another British Company of pre-war days—prophetically named London Films, (not Korda's present outfit) made 'The Prisoner of Zenda' and 'Rupert of Hentzau' Both company and films died.

The war put a brake on production in England and America went ahead and stayed there. The war over, there were isolated pictures from C. M. Woolf and Herbert Wilcox, among others, but the Stoll Studios were the only producing organization of any size in the country. It was not until 1926 that the Elstree Studios were started as the first serious effort to reestablish film production in England.

I know that readers of this article have started to say 'so what?' This is the 'what.' Britain as a production source is in the running again and wants a better share of the American market than it has at present and the obstacles are very much those that existed in England prior to the Films Act of 1928, known commonly as the 'Quota Law.'

Main benefits to British films under the law were the establishment of a restricted booking period and the ban on block booking. Before, major American companies had the market practically sewn up with yearly contracts sold on a roster of titles and star names, whereas from 1928 onwards the home product began to compete on an entertainment value basis. A period of steady progress followed until Alexander Korda scored his deserved success with

'Henry VIII'. The grosses of that picture became almost legendary in the minds of promoters and investors in the mushroom companies that sprang up after 1934. The genial sun that helped the fungus to flourish was our old friend, the Films Act of 1928, which unfortunately was interpreted by some promoters to bestow a 'heads I win—tails you lose' chance on the British film producer. Production costs and salaries got beyond the telephone numbers stage and began to look like the calculations of an astronomer.

Some of those budgets started gloriously, but two years saw the majority expiring with a faint hiss as the last of the hot air escaped. Soon after the pre-boom producers resumed work on sane lines and some good product has resulted; the earnings in England on a successful picture will still pay well for a moderately priced production. The big picture with a six-figure budget in sterling requires a profitable American exploitation before it can show a profit, but relatively few British pictures have achieved that. Until they do further progress is difficult.

One of the main obstacles against that progress sounds almost like a line from a crazy comedy, but like all good comedy has a ring of truth in it...

'British films do not get bigger and better because they do not get American distribution; and they do not get American distribution because they do not get bigger and better.'

Viewed more closely, the situation shows that British films in America have to compete against something more than the quality of the Hollywood product. The key theatres are controlled by the major distributors and mutual booking keeps those theatres well supplied with product. To make a booking in the key spots an independent picture has to be not merely good, but an absolute world-beater. In these circumstances, only isolated British pictures get, at rare intervals, substantial revenue from American distribution and no British producer can afford to produce big

Deadline Jan. 1

This edition went to press Jan. 1.

Early deadline, because of the holiday's mechanical problems and the size of this issue, omits certain standard departments this week.

budget productions continuously in the problematic hope of American revenue.

Blind and Block Booking

Again blind and block booking fills theatre date books very swiftly and the picking up of odd dates would keep no distributor alive if his picture cost real money. Further British pictures, being regarded as 'foreign' product sold by a national distributor are subject to a special cancellation clause on exhibitors contracts which carves a big difference into the figures of contracts sold and billings for matured exhibitions.

Also, the day and date release system, though admirable enough for the major firms with its world coverage of publicity on a given date, puts the American film streets ahead of a British film in prominence in the public mind and is consequently valuable to the smaller theatres by reason of its established publicity. British films lack this asset.

Admittedly, the American exhibitor naturally prefers American product and can give very cogent reasons for doing so; also Britain has sinned in the past in sending to the U. S. A. and boosting heavily the wrong type of picture, technically good but unsuitable for Americans in theme and treatment.

There are points, however, where the British films will repay a good break from American distributors and here they are. Today, Britain has had considerable experience in production and an increasing stream of good product is issuing from the major studios. It is a definite fact that some of these pictures are ringing the bell with the British public which has been brought up for years on a film diet never less than 75% American. It is reasonable to suppose that these pictures should find some favor with American audiences.

Film quiz shows that American producers are seeking to do something more than make pictures on the established axioms of production. I suggest that a British picture of the right type in American schedules would add flavor to the staple fare and tickle the jaded appetite of the ticket buyer. Such a picture handled nationally by a big distributor without discrimination in cancellation clauses, would mean money for all parties.

Quotes Kennedy

I would like to quote your present extremely popular ambassador to England, Joseph P. Kennedy, who

(Continued on page 30)

\$1,000,000 IN 1938 FOR PHILLY'S NEW BLDG.

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Philly had a good average year during 1938 for building and complete remodeling. It was below 1937, but builders and equipment men here agreed that it was more than satisfactory from their standpoint in view of the general condition of the film industry. Total spent for erection of new houses and remodeling of old ones was just about \$1,000,000.

Nine new houses went up, adding 6,700 seats to the city's total, and 10 houses were renovated, representing about 10,000 seats. Latter brought about a rise of approximately 30% in equipment sales over the year before.

Among the more important of the new houses which were opened are the Alden, operated by Charles Goldfine, 800 seats; the Chelton, operated by Lewen Pizor and Charles Segall, 930 seats; Lane, Warner house, 700 seats; Crest, operated by Leo Posel, 900 seats; Adelphia, operated by Affiliated Theatres Circuit, 700 seats; and the Senate, Harrisburg, operated by Jay Emanuel, 700 seats.

Biggest of those given a thorough remodeling and modernizing job were the Tioga, Segall-Pizor operated, 1,400 seats; the Byrd, operated by Ward Greenfield, 1,800 seats, and the Stonehurst, operated by Charles Klang, 1,400 seats.

Kinney's Fourth in Charlotte

Charlotte, N. C., Jan. 1.

Plans for the new 600-seat picture theatre to be erected in a Charlotte suburb by the North Carolina Theatres, Inc., filed. Scheduled to be completed by April 1. To be named the Dilworth, it will be fourth house operated here by H. F. Kinney.

LIPSTONE VICE MORROS AS PAR'S MUSIC HEAD

Succeeding Boris Morros as music head at the Paramount studio, following latter's recent resignation, Louis Lipstone has resigned from Balaban & Katz in Chicago and is now on the Coast to take up his new duties.

Lipstone has been with B&K for 21 years. He started as an orchestra director and in later years took charge of all presentations production for B&K. On resigning he was in charge of all entertainment enterprises for the circuit formerly handled by A. J. Balaban.

Replacing Lipstone as booking manager of Balaban & Katz will be Max Turner, Chicago vaude agent. Dave Wallerstein and Nate Platt will sit in on respective vaude houses, Chicago and State Lake. Wallerstein also okaying Great States bookings.

Cantor Settles U. S. Tax

Surrender of Eddie Cantor, film comedian, to the long arm of the U. S. Internal Revenue Bureau was announced Thursday (28) as Cantor agreed to kick in an additional \$3,253 on income taxes of the Solax Holding Corp.

As transferee of the corporation, comedy star had been assessed \$15,381 in penalties and income and excess profit taxes.

Hays Meet Today (Wed.)

Adjourned session of the December quarterly meeting of the Hays office directors will be held today (Wednesday). Will Hays, head of Motion Picture Producers & Distributors Assoc., who went to Sullivan, Ind., his former home, for Christmas, returned last Thursday (29) in order to be present for this directors' meeting.

Hays plans to go to the Coast about Jan. 15 on his regular winter visit.

FAIRBANKS, ASHER SAIL

London, Jan. 1.

Douglas Fairbanks and Irving Asher sailed for New York Dec. 30. On the same boat were Doris Keane, Vera Bergman, Alexander Brailowsky and Arthur Rubenstein.

NEW FACES OF 1938

By Jack Jungmeyer

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Youth crowded into the star and near-star brackets in such numbers and with such boxoffice significance that their collective success was the outstanding feature of player achievement during 1938.

Scoring the greatest individual triumph was Mickey Rooney, Metro's self-assured and gifted adolescent, who cinched his stardom in a series of consistently impressive performances—'Love Finds Andy Hardy,' 'Out West with the Hardys,' 'Boys Town,' 'Stablemates'—and whose dominant share in 'Love Finds Andy' made that picture probably the most influential upon film trends during the season.

Born to show biz and earning his right to high place in it by his own efforts and through no freak, young Rooney seems to have weathered the usually difficult period between boyhood and young manhood in pictures, with his phiz still raw from his first shave. He's proved himself a top money maker, a delight to exhibitors, a pride to his studio and a splendid trouper, in the good graces of his fellow thespians.

On the same lot, two other juve prominents passed through what will probably be their most difficult year in the adolescent transition, to stellar rating. Judy Garland, already well established as an exceptionally talented youngster, was given top billing. She, too, profited by her role in 'Love Finds Andy Hardy,' and had several noteworthy additional credits. Freddie Bartholomew added to his consistently applauded acting honors while he added almost a half foot to his now gangling height. For these two there seems no break ahead, thanks to personal intelligence and careful handling.

Jane Withers deservedly made the stellar status as a consistent entertainer and money maker for 20th-Fox, also a product of wise handling, while the prodigious Shirley Temple, 20th-Fox's b. o. ace, held her own against the rapidly increasing juvenile competition on all sides.

The rise to box office prominence of the so-called Dead End Kids was phenomenal. Identified by their aggregate title, rather than individual names, Billy Halop, Huntz Hall, Bobby Jordan, Leo B. Gorcey, Gabriel Dell and Bernard Punsley impressed themselves definitely as top feature caliber from their introduction to films in Samuel Goldwyn's screening of the Sidney Kingsley play, through Warners' 'Crime School,' Universal's 'Little Tough Guys' to the Warners' smash hit, 'Angels with Dirty Faces,' together with several other pictures in which several or all appeared. Their composite performance, because of casting to established reputations, is pretty well standardized along the line of tough hoodlums, but has been kept so vivid and vital as to escape monotony by repetition.

Tommy Kelly and Ann Gillis were elevated to top levels in short order for performances in David O. Selznick's 'Adventures of Tom Sawyer.' It was young Kelly's film bow.

Jackie Cooper moved from 'White Banners,' an impressive role, into star rating at Universal in the forthcoming Boy Scout serial, 'The Eagle Scout.'

Terry Kilburn, diminutive son of a London cabby, made quick headway toward prominence in Metro's 'Lord Jeff,' after being a radio protege of Eddie Cantor, and followed with outstanding enactments in 'A Christmas Carol' and 'Sweethearts.'

Good Story Breaks

The kids profited, in general, by better stories than the grown-ups, and, as a rule, better direction and production preparation. Also, the demand upon youngsters coming into films now is for genuine skill as well as charm, and not mere cuteness or prettiness. To survive the climb to stardom they must have the stuff.

In the adult ranks the most sensational success for new faces was scored by Edgar Bergen with his little alter-ego, Charlie McCarthy, in Universal's John M. Stahl production, 'Letter of Introduction,' following their film debut in Samuel Goldwyn's 'Follies.' Bergen and McCarthy looked as good as they listened to the customers, already thoroughly primed by the radio. That, and the good script deal Bergen got in his rich role in 'Introduction' was enough.

On the distaff side, Hedy LaMarr got the heavy rave of critics and the star accolade by Walter Wanger in 'Algiers' for her romantic allure with Charles Boyer. Her first bid for attention—almost too much attention for the censors—came with her decorously nude display in the much ballyhooed import, 'Extase' ('Ecstasy'). Extent of her histrionic abilities still has to be demonstrated, but as a glamour girl there is no question in the executive mind of Metro, which has her under contract and is grooming her for its first line of b. o. shock troops.

Danielle Darrieux was new to this country, although a confirmed star in her native France, when she made the stellar grade with ease in Universal's 'The Rage of Paris.' She will be seen again during the coming year as a Universal contractee.

Milliza Korjus, Hungarian songster, imported on strength of her voice without having been seen by Metro, was more or less delicately induced to lose some 80 pounds before the producers had her face the cameras in 'The Great Waltz.' She scored vocally, but is likened to Mae West in her technique and physique.

Richard Greene, British stage leading man, imported by Darryl F. Zanuck on cable call for 'Four Men and a Prayer,' moved up fast at 20th-Fox to co-star billing with Sonja Henie in 'My Lucky Star' and carried on in John Ford's 'Submarine Patrol.' Studio has great hopes for his future. He has diligently lost all but the slightest trace of his English diction and has a heavy schedule for this year.

John Garfield at Warners copped a hit in 'Four Daughters' as the cynical young musician. He was recruited from the stage, has a distinguished style, a vigorous manner and resourcefulness which Warners

expects to capitalize with his star rating during the coming year.

Louis Hayward, seen advantageously with Miss Darrieux in 'Rage of Paris,' and previously in several RKO pictures, registered a decided hit in Edward Small's 'Duke of West Point' to give him a new rating and top billing in forthcoming Small productions for United Artists.

Bub Hope made the grade at Paramount in 'Thanks for the Memory,' having displayed a decided flair for light, romantic comedy in several pairings with Shirley Ross after initial appearance in 'Big Broadcast' last year.

Marie Wilson is to be starred this year at Warners after coming to the verge of it in 'Boy Meets Girl,' result of a careful buildup.

Ritz Bros. were officially rated stars at 20th-Fox in 'Kentucky Moonshine' and 'Straight, Place and Show,' although the faces have been around and in evidence for some time at that studio.

Paramount's glamorous Dorothy Lamour moved into the star bracket after 'Spawn of the North,' which gave her a straight acting role with George Raft, following a number of sarong-wrapped parts topped by her emergence to prominence in Samuel Goldwyn's 'Hurricane.' Jon Hall also won high acclaim in 'Hurricane,' which advanced him to current assignment in star billing for the title role in Alexander Korda's forthcoming 'Thief of Bagdad.'

Priscilla Lane demonstrated her ability so well in Warners' 'Four Daughters' that she took top billing, above Wayne Morris, in 'Brother Rat' and is to have choice assignments during 1939.

Nancy Kelly, who has the femme lead with Tyrone Power in 20th-Fox's 'Jesse James,' is being heavily touted by Darryl Zanuck. Former child star, now 18, has gone through a radio and stage interval. She showcased with Richard Greene in 'Submarine Patrol,' and is considered to have unusual skill and maturity for her years.

Ellen Drew came from a candy store to Paramount's stock company some 18 months ago. Scoring with Bing Crosby in 'Sing, You Sinners,' she is considered one of Paramount's brightest prospects for important roles in 1939. Frank Lloyd was impressed and gave her an important spot with Ronald Colman in 'If I Were King.'

Robert Preston is playing second male lead in Cecil B. DeMille's 'Union Pacific' (Par) as result of his showing in 'King of Alcatraz,' to which he came cold from Pasadena Playhouse, and also in 'Illegal Traffic' and 'Disbarred.'

More Prospects

Patricia Morrison is another young player regarded with favor at Paramount and looks like its best bet among the coming-uppers for the new year. She was recruited from Broadway after appearance in 'Two Bouquets,' and will be seen first in 'Persons in Hiding,' then in the Bob Burns picture, 'I'm from Missouri.'

Jeffrey Lynn, another who profited by 'Four Daughters,' is a fair-haired boy at Warners. They are working out an important schedule for the comparative newcomer who has shown exceptional promise.

Tried out in Metro's 'Good News' broadcast, Ruth Hussey commanded attention in 'Rich Man, Poor Girl.' She has the advantage of a radio-trained voice and works in a manner suggestive of Myrna Loy. Studio has announced it will groom her for important status.

Ann Rutherford, talented and attractive, got her breaks in the Hardy family pictures at Metro, and is highly esteemed by the studio as she is popular with audiences. She had a part in 'Benefits Forged' and a good assignment in 'Dramatic School.'

Dennis O'Keefe is another Metro protege who has taken good advantage of his opportunities to show flair for comedy drama and leading man qualities, following debut in 'Bad Man of Brimstone.'

In the sagebrush realm, Roy Rogers, Republic newcomer given an excellent original chance, made good with a bang-and-a-gallop in 'Under Western Stars.' Warbling cowboy has star rating.

John Payne, who moved over to Warners from Paramount, advantaged himself in 'Garden of the Moon' and clicked in 'Wings of the Navy,' a capable and resourceful actor being groomed for importance.

Lloyd Nolan, while not a newcomer, had his opportunity to make new headway when he was substituted for George Raft, as latter stepped out of 'St. Louis Blues' and as result was slated for program of other important assignments.

Helen Parrish and Constance Moore have made notable progress at Universal. Miss Parrish, elevated from stock to the Deanna Durbin starrer, 'Mad About Music,' showed to advantage in 'Little Tough Guy' and will be seen in the next Durbin picture, 'Three Smart Girls Grow Up,' as one of the trio. Miss Moore, 18, a songstress from Texas, has been elevated to leads through five pictures, including the Collegiate series entries, 'Freshman Year' and 'Swing That Cheer.' Joy Hodges also has progressed substantially at Universal, getting her best break as second femme lead with Constance Bennett in 'Service de Luxe.'

Others who attracted attention during a year that was kind and opportune for newcomers to the higher elevations are Andrea Leeds, Dorothea Kent, Lucille Ball, Joan Fontaine, Ann Miller, Whitney Bourne, Eleanor Hansen, Donald McBride, Frances Mercer, Kay Sutton, Richard Fiske, Jane Woodworth, Jack Carson, Lynn Bari, Jean Rogers, Robert Kellard, Evelyn Keyes, Donald O'Connor, Louise Campbell, Lana Turner, Ann Morrison, Arleen Whelan.

Those who survived and moved ahead are to be considered more highly complimented and rewarded for ability and definite promise, since 1938 was a year of heavy purging of studio player lists, especially for those moving into the better coin levels, because of threat of reduced income and mounting expenses to producers, with its resultant impatience for dubious talent.

See Par's Final Quarter Equal To Rest of the Yr.

The final (4th) quarter for Paramount and its subsidiaries, some of which are wholly owned, others in part, will equal or go slightly over the earnings shown for the combined three prior quarters of 1938 from Jan. 1 to Oct. 1, it is reported. For this period a net of around \$1,700,000 was shown. Poorest of the earlier quarters was the third.

Announcement of the fourth quarter's earnings for the three months ending Dec. 31 will probably be made at a board meeting some time in January. This meeting may be held about the middle of the month, it is said, rather than on the last Thursday of each month when regular sessions are held.

Vast improvement has been shown by Paramount on the fourth quarter not only in film product and rental returns but also in the theatres, with business in latter for the final quarter running only around 5% behind the same quarter in '37.

In order to get in the earnings of many theatre subsidiaries in which the parent company participates, the subsid and Paramount h.o. executives on the various boards, have been busy toward the end of the year declaring dividends where they were justified by the business shown.

W-T's \$105,844

Sydney, Dec. 15.

Williamson-Tait's net profit for the year ending June 30 ran to \$105,844. Previous fiscal year's net profit totaled \$109,844.

B. & D.'s \$350 Net Profit

London, Dec. 20.

British & Dominions Film Corp., owners of Pinewood Studios, has issued its annual report, showing a net profit of \$350 against a loss of nearly \$30,000 in 1937 and \$500,000 in 1936.

A new company with a total share and debenture capital of \$8,000,000 is being formed to amalgamate Pinewood and Denham studios. The share capital will be \$3,750,000 divided equally between the two interests, and there will also be \$4,250,000 of first mortgage debenture stock.

REP'S FIVE BIG 'UNS WILL COST \$2,500,000

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Starting this week, Republic launches a program of five anniversary specials representing an investment of more than \$2,500,000. First is 'Wagons Westward,' a \$750,000-budgeter, rolling Thursday (5).

Others to follow as rapidly as possible are 'Doctors Don't Tell,' bracketed at \$750,000, and 'Two Years Before the Mast,' 'One Woman's Family' and 'Evangeline,' each rated at better than \$500,000.

'U. P.' Preview First Pic in Mormon Temple

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

First full length feature to be shown in the Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, is C. B. DeMille's 'Union Pacific,' slated for a special preview there about April 1.

Heber J. Grant, president of the church, is arranging the showing for railroad, state and city officials.

Studio Contracts

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Al Duffy inked scripting ticket at Columbia.

20th-Fox renewed Arthur Arthur's writer pact.

Joseph Schildkraut drew a new ticket at 20th-Fox.

Laraine Johnson signed to player contract at Metro.

Warners renewed Bobby Jordan's pact.

Frederic Tozere, actor, signed by Warners.

Paramount handed Shirley Logan a player contract.

20th-Fox lifted options on the Brewster Twins.

June Gale's player option lifted by 20th-Fox.

Gale Page signed player ticket at Warners.

SHOW BUSINESS 33 YEARS AGO

By Epes W. Sargent

Thirty-three years is a long time on any calendar. It is a-third-of-a-century, nearly half man's allotted threescore and ten, and the age of VARIETY, which first saw the light Dec. 16, 1905 in an office in the Knickerbocker Theatre Bldg., Broadway at 38th street.

The paper was founded on an idea, an ideal, a grudge and \$1,500. The money did not last very long. The grudge faded with the years, but the idea was sound, as was also the ideal—the absolutely impartial recounting of all the news, regardless of whose toes were trodden upon. That ideal has persisted until this day and is the cornerstone on which the success of VARIETY was built. There have been times when, following that ideal, it cost advertising patronage, but these have not been many. There have probably been times when pursuance of that policy brought real regret to Sime, but the following of the policy, as exemplified in the first issue of the paper, was almost a religion with him. Generally it worked out beneficially in the long run, as all sound policies must.

The grudge was against William Eugene Lewis, editor of the N. Y. Morning Telegraph, who had fired Sime with the advice that he never would get anywhere unless he learned to conform his writings to the dictates of advertising.

The Old N. Y. Clipper

There was no paper particularly catering to the then large vaudeville element. The N. Y. Clipper, the most formidable opposition in point of circulation, was still being brought out in the same format that had served since its foundation. It had no sense of news values. It carried no headed items. The most important vaudeville news was carried in a department with the single column head, 'Vaudeville and Minstrels.' It might run three or four columns under this single heading; or, if the exigencies of makeup required, it might be split to fill out the bottoms of columns. But always with the standard head. And the most important news of the week, could be found sandwiched between such items as, 'Sadie Glutz has just completed five successful weeks on the Gus Sun time' and 'Ed Gillette lost one of his dogs last week.' There was not the slightest effort to build up an item to accord with its importance.

The reviews were pallid and inoffensive. There was no constructive criticism; merely a recital of the acts listed with such favorable comment as could be applied. Poor acts were glossed over. To criticize might be to lose a \$5 or \$10 ad in the anniversary issue. And that was unthinkable.

The Dramatic Mirror used headed items, but without full coverage and the reviews were no more critical. The Telegraph did a little better, but vaudeville was regarded as more or less unimportant except from an advertising revenue point of view. Blakeley Hall had lost control of the sheet and Lewis made no particular effort to keep up the old standards.

B'way Shows Still on B'way

It was a vastly different show world that the windows of VARIETY looked out upon that December day. Broadway shows were still on Broadway, for the picture theatres had not yet grown so great they could chase the drama down the side streets and vaudeville up the alley. The Clipper of even date with the first issue of VARIETY listed 438 road shows, and probably did not get them all. Of these perhaps 20% were traveling stock companies, generally referred to as 'rep shows,' hypnotists, lesser magicians and the like. There were about 100 major road shows, playing the first class houses. First class houses were those charging not less than \$1 top. Most of them got \$1.50, which was regarded as the road limit in price except for the most extraordinary attractions.

In addition there were 80 musical troupes listed, 12 minstrel companies, and in the summer there were sometimes as many as 90 circuses of all sizes. In the season Archie L. Shepard toured six picture outfits, staging the pictures with sound effects and giving a 90-minute to two hour show. Lyman Howe also had one of two touring companies, but did not list his route.

Chicago had 10 major theatres and about 15 more played the lesser road combinations. Philadelphia and Boston had eight each and Washington, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and San Francisco boasted five each. Even the smaller towns had at least one theatre playing the top attractions and had no trouble keeping the houses lighted for a 35-40 week season.

25 Legits Then

In New York there were 25 legitimate houses playing top attractions. In VARIETY's natal week the attractions included Fritz Scheff, Forbes Robertson, Grace George, Blanche Walsh, Mrs. Fiske, Maude Adams and Amelia Bingham. Most of the theatres were on Broadway and still below 42d street for, although Oscar Hammerstein had broken down the invisible barrier supposed to extend along that cross street, there were only the New York and Criterion, which had formed the ill-fated Olympia; his Victoria, originally the home of musicals, but now given over to vaudeville; the Hudson, and the Belasco, also Hammerstein-built, which was originally known as the Republic and which was in 42d street, just back of the Victoria. Only recently Klaw & Erlanger had opened their New Amsterdam and Liberty across the street, and there was, of course, the long standing American, now given over to road combinations. Broadway theatres mostly charged \$1.50, though now and then upped to \$2 when they thought they could get it.

Vaudeville Tops

Vaudeville was at the top of the pile, with Hammerstein's Victoria the leader. Percy G. Williams had the Colonial and Alhambra, Keith's Union Sq., Proctor's 23rd, 58th St., Fifth Ave. and 125th St., Hurtig & Semon's. Pastors, and, by courtesy, the Atlantic Garden, though this latter was properly a beer hall. In Brooklyn there were Williams' Orpheum, Hyde & Behman's Adams St., Keeney's, the Amphion, the Imperial (former Montauk), East New York, and Gotham, the last two lesser houses owned by Williams. In the summer there were the Brighton Beach (still in the Brighton Beach enclosure), Henderson's, at Coney Island; Morrison's and Deimling's, at Rockaway, all playing standard acts. Also in the summer there were the Hammerstein, New York, Madison Sq. and Metropolitan roof gardens; the latter in the Bronx. The Casino Roof, daddy of them all, was in disuse. It did not have the capacity to permit it to fight the Hammerstein and New York roofs.

For burlesque there were the Dewey, Gotham, Circle, Miner's Bowery and 8th Ave.

Following the first White Rat strike the Keith booking office had gone on the downbeat. F. F. Proctor had withdrawn and so had many of the out-of-town managers, who did not relish the idea of being denied headline attractions merely because these had played for the opposition in New York. The result was that from a formidable setup, the Keith office was down to its own houses in Boston, Provi-

dence, Pawtucket, New York, Philadelphia and Cleveland (Prospect); Grand Opera House, Pittsburgh; Chase's, Washington; Kernan's, Baltimore; the Shea houses in Buffalo and Toronto, the James Moore theatres in Rochester, Detroit and Portland, Me.; the Park, Worcester, and the Grand Opera House, Detroit. Of these only about half a dozen could pay full salaries. Only one, the Union Square, was in New York.

Bill Morris' Booking Array

On the other hand William Morris was advertising 12 weeks in New York without a repeat. His string included the Williams houses, the Orpheum, Colonial, Alhambra, Novelty, Gotham and Bergen Beach, a summer booking; Poli theatres in New Haven, Hartford, Worcester, Springfield, Waterbury, Bridgeport, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, the Proctor string, including the 23rd St., 58th St., 125th St., Fifth Ave., all in New York, and houses in Troy, Albany and Newark, Wilmer & Vincent's Utica, Reading and Allentown, and a half a dozen smaller spots, not to mention some summer bookings. Morris was a great hand to develop new spots. Some of them lasted, some did not, but it was worth the effort.

When Klaw & Erlanger moved its offices to the New Amsterdam, Morris quit his old office at 6 West 28th street to move into his former quarters at 1440 Broadway. Later in the year he was to open a Chicago office with Jesse L. Lasky in charge.

There were innumerable small agents and in the issue of March 17, 1906, the Commissioner of Licenses announced that vaudeville agents would take out licenses by May 1, or he would come and get them. This grew to be an annual gag, but this year (1938) it looks as though Commissioner Moss is about to get somewhere. None of his predecessors ever did.

Early in the new year VARIETY carried a brief announcement to the effect that J. Austin Fynes had resigned as general manager for F. F. Proctor. This occasioned little comment from those in the know, for it was no secret that relations were strained. It was inevitable that a break should come. It was merely the expected happening. But that innocent appearing news item was to be the first of a series of stories with wide-flung consequences. It was the opening paragraph in a chapter that rewrote the history of vaudeville. The next item announced that B. F. Keith had acquired the lease of the 5th Ave. theatre, Proctor's flagship.

Fynes, smarting under his treatment by Proctor, tipped Keith off that the lease was due for renewal. He stood in pretty solidly with the Gilsey Estate, owners of the property, and aided Keith in getting the lease. Proctor had given the matter little thought. The Gilsey Estate at a proper time would probably send over the new lease for his signature. He was badly taken aback when, one evening, one of the service staff brought the information that Keith and Fynes were sitting in the Gilsey box. Under the terms of the lease the box at the left hand side of the stage was perpetually reserved for the use of the Gilsey family and its friends. Proctor lost no time in hurrying to welcome his unwelcome guests and receive the bad news.

Keith and Proctor

There was little love lost between Keith and Proctor, though Proctor's attitude was rather negative. He merely disliked Keith on general principles. On the other hand Keith had a very active hatred for Proctor who had brought the Keith idea of continuous vaudeville into New York a year or so ahead of him. This dislike was increased when Proctor took Fynes from Keith's Union Sq. to be his general manager, and Fynes fed the flames by taking over a number of Keith-trained men for his service staff.

When the Booking Office was in process of formation in Boston, Proctor declined to come over, and the supporting managers insisted that Keith go to New York. It took a couple of days to whip him into line and just when the matter was adjusted Fynes took Fred Watson away from Keith. Watson was the piano-orchestra of the Boston house, but actually a headliner in his own right. He was as popular with Boston patrons as Mike Bernard was with the Pastor crowd, with the difference that Watson appealed with straight selections. He could rag it with the best of them, but Boston preferred the more popular classics, and many went to Keith's more to hear him play than to see the acts.

When Keith learned of the kidnapping, they had to sit on his head to quiet him. It was the final straw. Now the two managers were sitting in the same box and making a pretense of friendliness: a situation which Fynes hugely enjoyed. Inside of a week it was 'Fred' and 'Ben' between Keith and Proctor. The latter went down the bay in Keith's yacht and Keith went up the Hudson in the Proctor auto. The upshot was the merging of the two interests, which was announced in the issue of May 19, 1906. Later on when Proctor sued to dissolve the Maine corporation, Fynes was his most valuable witness. Fynes confided to friends that he helped Proctor in sheer contrition for what he had done to him. He expected Proctor to be trimmed. He wanted him to be trimmed. But he did not anticipate the thorough skinning to which Proctor was subjected.

In the same issue announcing the formation of the Keith & Proctor Co., it was announced that Sylvester Z. Poli had joined the Keith Booking office. Poli had recently grown ambitious. Starting with an upstairs house in New Haven, he had entered Bridgeport without apparent objection from Keith. He had built a handsome new theatre in New Haven and had taken over houses in half a dozen New England towns in addition to slopping over into Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. He had put the roof on the new New Haven house without mortgage or lien, but it had left him short of ready cash. He had experienced no difficulty in obtaining loans, for his reputation was of the best. Now he suddenly found the banks closed to him. The Keith people had visited every bank and warned it that it would build in opposition to Poli in every town. There was but one thing to do—and Poli had to do it.

This double defection removed 16 houses from the William Morris agency. It was a body blow, but Morris took it in stride. He arranged with the Shuberts to take over some of their houses for Sunday shows and to put a weekly bill into others. The latter experiment was short lived and eventually the Sunday shows were also cut out as unprofitable, but he kept his acts working until he could open up new spots.

Meanwhile, Keith was making overtures to Percy G. Williams, but that showman was not easy to handle. He had the top hand still, and wanted to run his shows his own way. There were numerous conferences, but the deal was chilled when Williams demanded a cut on the booking office commissions.

In the spring there were numerous conferences among the Keith faction, the Western Vaudeville Assn. and Klaw & Erlanger, who were sitting up and taking notice of vaude-

ville. The conferences amounted to nothing, largely due to the influence of Max Anderson, of Cincinnati, who was interested with the Shuberts in certain ventures. There was a later result, however, when the Keith people effected a deal with the western men. This gave them a combined total of about 100 houses of which about half could pay good, if not top salaries.

The Western Assn. included the Orpheum houses in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Kansas City and Omaha. In Chicago they had the Chicago Opera House, the Olympic and Haymarket. Other operations were Orpheum, Denver; Orpheum, Minneapolis; Columbia, Cincinnati; Columbia, St. Louis; Grand Opera House, Indianapolis; the John D. Hopkins houses in Louisville and Memphis, and a lot of smaller fry.

Percy Williams took the war into the enemy's camp by entering Boston, taking over the Music Hall, which had been operated by a realtor named Allen. It was considerable of a shock to Keith, who long had regarded Boston as his private property. He did not so much mind Allen, who was a local man, but Williams promised more active opposition. It was one of the factors which later on resulted in the sale of the Williams interests to the Keith office.

Opposition

Opposition promised to develop from another direction. Mark A. Luescher, who had followed Fynes as Proctor's general manager, gave up his position and effected a combination with Felix Isman and Harry A. Levy, both of Philadelphia. It was announced that a circuit would be formed with houses in Pittsburgh, Newark, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, Baltimore and Washington. Offices were opened in New York, but the sole result was a brief season at Albaugh's, Baltimore. With the aid of William Morris, Luescher offered stronger bills than Keith was able to afford; Kernan's, but the towners were not used to going to Albaugh's for their vaudeville shows, so they didn't go, and the venture closed in just two months.

It was in this year that Luescher put into effect William Hammerstein's dream of a mystery act. It was Hammerstein's idea to bill the 'Countess X.' Luescher sent to Paris a local dancer known as La Belle Daizie bringing her back as 'Le Domino Rouge.' She wore a red mask off the stage as well as on, and quite a little interest was whipped up. She was even mentioned for the Metropolitan Opera ballet. She grew tired of the continual masking after a time and gave it up. Luescher sold the title to a burlesque manager, who did not do much with it. Incidentally she was Mrs. Luescher.

Clifford C. Fischer, then American manager for H. B. Marinelli, the French agent (originally Marinelli was an American juggler), announced his determination to go it alone. Originally his idea had been to go to the Hippodrome as booking man for Thompson & Dundy, but complications arose and he broadened his scope. As events proved, he did right well by himself in making the change.

J. Austin Fynes bobbed up in another direction. Always interested in real estate on the side, he moved in on the motion picture shows. He formed the International Amusement & Realty Co. and the Nicolette Amus. Co., his idea being to develop houses to be sold as going concerns.

Picture Shows

Picture shows were no novelty to New York. A few years before half a dozen had blossomed almost overnight; crude flups in vacant stores, with a program running about 45 minutes. Originally they were able to obtain only short lengths, running up to around 300 feet, but the success of 'The Great Train Robbery' had changed production methods, and films now ran from 800 to 1,000 feet. The investment called for a projection machine, a screen and some folding chairs. Sometimes an automatic piano was used for a bally-hoo. If the spot did not prove profitable it was a simple matter to move to another location. The admission was uniformly 5c. The original handful had increased to 200 or 300 and some exhibitors were considering raising the admission to a dime.

Fynes spotted his locations carefully, made a more permanent installation with cheap veneer opera chairs instead of the folding camp chairs, got the house going and sold out. In one of his more ambitious spottings he spent \$1,500 in making over the structure, an old church, got his investment back the first couple of weeks, and sold out, the purchase price being clear velvet. Picture shows took a sudden spurt. It did not all happen in VARIETY's initial year, but it got its impetus then. It was some years before the picture theatres invaded the theatre section, but Paramount took over the old Victoria, rebuilding the house as cheaper than fixing up Oscar Hammerstein's rather peculiar building ideas and renaming the spot the Rialto. It was the head of the camel entering the tent. In a few years pictures took over Broadway.

Another development of the year was the initiation by the Music Publishers Assn. of a movement to secure an amendment to the Copyright law giving royalties on the performances on mechanical devices. That went over and eventually led to the formation of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, though the latter did not become active until 15 or 20 years later, but it was all an indication of the many changes the business was to see initiated in the year which saw the birth of VARIETY.

12 Hour Benefit Show

This was the year of the San Francisco fire and a benefit for the sufferers was staged at the Metropolitan opera house. It commenced at 11:30 a.m. and ran without a hitch for 12 hours and 20 minutes. Harry Leonhardt was the stage manager and almost every act in New York put in an appearance, for San Francisco enjoyed a warm spot in the actors' hearts those days, when it was one of the liveliest cities in the country.

It was in this year, too, that Harry Thaw shot Stanford White on the Madison Sq. roof garden. Walter Plimmer, a vaudeville agent, had taken over the roof for what was practically a burlesque show. In the usual course of events it would have closed the first week, but the opening night of 'Mlle. Champagne' was the closing night of Stanford White's career.

After the crowd had been herded downstairs Lionel Lawrence, the stage manager, looked around for Plimmer and found him in a dark corner with the tears streaming down his face. He had put all of his coin into the venture and now it was as good as closed. To the contrary people thronged the roof nightly. It was in this show that Maude Fulton made her New York bow and scored a hit.

VARIETY ended the year with an anniversary number of 64 pages with special stories by Bert Green, James J. Morton, Max Berol Konorah, Harry Mountford, Walter deFreece (Vesta Tilley's husband), Tony Pastor, Fred Niblo, Harry Houdini, Fred Mozart, Ernest Hogan, Charles Robinson, Guy Rawson, L. Lawrence Webber, Will D. Cobb, Miss Daizie, Charles Leonard Fletcher, Al Filson and Jack Norworth.

Big \$602,658 Award Vs. Metro On 'Letty Lynton' Pic May Force Sharp Revision of Copyright Law

In an opinion confirming the report of Special Master Gordon Auchincloss in the Edward Sheldon-Margaret Ayer Barnes plagiarism suit against Metro concerning 'Letty Lynton,' Judge Vincent L. Leibell in U. S. district court entered judgment against Metro and affiliated corporations for a total of \$602,658. An income tax claim of \$16,445 to which Metro took exception was disallowed by Judge Leibell. Metro will appeal from the finding, having retained John W. Davis as counsel for this move. Appeal can only be on the extent of the damages, and not against the proved plagiarism.

The judgment of \$602,658 includes award of \$532,153 to Sheldon and Mrs. Barnes, authors of the play, 'Dishonored Lady,' which it was held was infringed by 'Lynton'; \$5,500 in counsel fees to O'Brien, Raftery & Driscoll, attorneys for the complainants, and \$15,505 as fees to Special Master Auchincloss. The award made in the case carries interest at the rate of about \$100 a day.

In his finding, Judge Leibell modified the figures slightly, holding that the profits made by Metro on 'Letty Lynton' totaled \$532,153, instead of \$587,000, as found by the special master. The court also held that each corporation identified by Metro is liable for its own profits, but that since Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Distributing Corp. and Culver Export Corp. are merely agents of Metro, the latter is jointly liable for them.

'Letty Lynton,' released in 1932, grossed \$1,655,269, while the cost of production and distribution totaled \$1,067,644. It was assertedly based on a novel of the same name written by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes and based on the same theme, rights to which were bought for \$3,500.

Leibell's Opinion

Judge Leibell makes an interesting note concerning damages permitted under the copyright laws, and adds, 'In my opinion it is punitive and unjust to award all the net profits of 'Letty Lynton' to the complainants in this case; yet under the wording of the Copyright Act as interpreted by the decisions of the appellate courts, I can do nothing else.'

He also said, 'Evidence from experts and other sources was presented to establish that the maximum average contribution of a play such as 'Dishonored Lady' to the moving picture, 'Letty Lynton,' could not possibly amount to more than 10% of the net domestic profits of the picture.'

It is possible that Judge Leibell's opinion in the 'Lynton' case may lead to changes in the law. He indicated that 'if we are to avoid instances of grotesque injustice, then we must adopt some working rule similar to that employed in patent infringement cases.'

In elaboration of his opposition to the basis of the award Judge Leibell wrote: 'If the complainants get all the profits of the picture, they are receiving the profits that Joan Crawford and Robert Montgomery made for the picture by their dramatic talent and the drawing power of their reputations as motion picture stars. The direction of the picture and the technical skill required in its production also had a large part in the accumulation of profits.' The award could be justly set at 25% of the profits.

Of the amount awarded, Metro must pay \$307,665; Loew's, \$84,210, and Culver Export, \$140,278.

Award handed down in the 'Lynton' case recalls the sock that the same film company got in 1933 as result of the slander action which the Prince and Princess Yousopoff brought in connection with the M-G picture, 'Rasputin.' The judgment in that instance amounted to \$250,000 and, until the 'Lynton' award, rated as the record sum received in a damage suit, either copyright or tort, from any film company. The Russian twosome had charged that incidents depicted in the picture did personal injuries to their names and reputations.

Since this libel award, film companies have been prefacing all pix with a title disclaiming 'any similarity to persons living or dead.'



PETE SMITH

"I feel that the only short subjects aside from Disney cartoons, that are better than FitzPatrick Traveltalks, are Pete Smith's Specialties."

(Signed) James A. Fitz Patrick.

FAIRS, EAST AND WEST, VERY PICTURE-MINDED

Although 'Cavalcade of America,' historical feature which is being made under the supervision of the Hays office, is the main industry gesture to the New York World's Fair, it will be far from the only motion picture on exhibition at the fair next year.

One of the first features to be set for production will be 'I'll Tell the World,' being made by Macfadden Publications, for showing in its exhibit in the Communications building. It goes before the cameras on the Coast some time next month. Herb Crooker, manager of Macfadden's fair exhibit, wrote the story, and will produce. Lynn Shores directs. Patricia Murray the femme lead.

Jed Prouty, Betty Ross Clarke, Frank Albertson, Ethelreda Leopold and the Mauch Twins already have been signed.

The world's fair itself is picture-minded and will finish cutting on its two-reel, non-theatrical short, before the end of the year. Picture gives concise pictorial outline of what has been accomplished thus far at the expo, showing the fair to be about 60% finished. Film will be shown gratis throughout the world.

'Cavalcade of America' will give a graphic story of the highlights in American history as the industry's exhibit at the New York exposition. It will be shown in the Federal Bldg. at the fair under the auspices of the U. S. Commission.

Material was secured from 211 features and 24 shorts. It will be in 15 main episodes, outline of which was made by Dr. James T. Shotwell, director of economics and history of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, at the request of Will Hays.

Another pictorial history, which will stress the development of the west, is being made for similar exhibition at the 1939 San Francisco fair.

Le Roy's 'Oz' at Fair

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Mervyn LeRoy completed negotiations to operate a 'Wizard of Oz' concession with 116 midgets at the New York World's Fair.

Entire Minchkin Village set, now in use on the Metro lot, will be shipped in sections to Flushing.

NO CUT, 20TH DROPS 18 WRITERS; ECONOMY

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

20th-Fox is letting options on 18 writers lapse, in line with its economy program.

Most scribes were dropped for refusal to waive a pay hike called for in their contracts, 20th offered continuance at present coin.

FILM PRODUCTION TRENDS

By Jack Jungmeyer

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

It is obvious—and none knows it better than the showman—that popular preference for particular kinds of pictures is not definitely calculable to anything like a dependable degree. If it were otherwise, picture making would be a golden cinch and exhibition a bonanza.

Purveyors of screen entertainment have been trying to dope out the problems of seasonal and sectional likes and dislikes ever since the first flicker begot the nation's fourth largest industry.

The bulk of the product, the several hundred annual run-of-the-mine features, must necessarily please the steady stream of customers at least mildly to maintain the fairly stable production and prosperity level of the industry. But these more or less standardized staples of the business—the bread and butter items in the film larder—are not first in the minds of producer and exhibitor when they indulge their box-office dreams. There must be some magic yet unexplained, some will-o'-the-wisp not yet quite identified or captured, by which the public might be constantly beguiled to flood the tills; by which the majority of pictures might bring smash returns. If only the secret of seasonal preference could be anticipated, or shrewdly moulded, so that the entertainment wares would coincide with the primary interests, the practical or romantic hungers of the ticket-buying masses, what a swell world this would be as viewed through the lobby wickets.

Every year, in its film business records of outstanding successes or floperous, has some answer to these b.o. yearnings and conjectures. The year 1938 had its positive indications. And because it was a season of more careful and selective film shopping by the customers, the verdict of actual preference was more clearly defined than in several preceding years of undulating b.o. The record, viewed in perspective, is of value to producer and exhibitor in as much as its indications will carry over into the coming season as to the present amusement temper of the populace.

'Snow White,' Walt Disney's long shot, now thoroughly extolled and well beyond the \$4,000,000 gross, with the dwarfs still beating a pleasant work song on the cash registers, was the fabulous wonder of the year. This astonishing fairy tale didn't necessarily indicate an entertainment trend, but it proved how rich the pickings still may be in the field of genuine novelty, if the innovation also has heart appeal. 'Snow White' was a surprise, an animated, feature-length cartoon, which, the industry predicted, would be of mild and limited interest only; a jolt and a challenge to the industry's creative brains. Only reason why it wasn't followed up by a flood of similar cartoon features, merely on the basis of its astonishing grosses, was that elaborate animations of this kind are so staggeringly expensive to make.

The Disney masterpiece will find its echoes in the coming year. It has unquestionably exercised a stimulating effect on the proposed production of plastic animations in 'The Lost Atlantis' and other scheduled fantasies reminiscent of the pioneer, 'The Lost World,' of the silents.

The Family Series

One of the genuinely significant b.o. demonstrations, soundly confirmed during the past year, is the popularity of the series pictures with their sustained group characters, especially the family series topped by Metro's 'Judge Hardy' domestic group and 20th-Fox 'Jones Family.' Both these repeaters scored notable successes in 1938, 'Love Finds Andy Hardy' taking the laurels for Metro; the Jones' 'Down on the Farm' hitting for 20th-Fox. Metro repeated its Hardy par with 'Out West With the Hardys,' and 20th with 'The Jones Family in Hollywood.' Having gone through a process of trial and improvement for the past two years, these productions have found the groove for sustained popularity and a public demand still far from any indicated decline. Their essence is intimate, human commonplace, presented from the mellow, humorous angle, paralleling the average customer's own domestic experiences. Reception of 'Love Finds Andy Hardy' brought attempted emulation in several studios.

The 'Hopalong Cassidy' pictures which Harry Sherman produces for Paramount, in the series category since they play the same top names throughout, continued their popularity level during the year. Twentieth-Fox's 'Charlie Chan's' interrupted by the death of Warner Oland, resumed their decidedly profitable and widely distributed offerings late in the fall with Sidney Toler in the title role. The same studio's 'Mr. Moto' series has been coming along steadily as runner-up to the Chans. Warners has a comfortable profit-maker in the 'Torchy Blane' series.

WB's Patriotic Shorts

Warners also has settled its patriotic Technicolor shorts into the series category, projecting at least two for release during the next few months in a new four-reel length. 'The Declaration of Independence,' a two-reeler, brought in over \$100,000 in rentals. Based on the reception of the patriotic briefies, studio in the coming year will launch another similar series dealing with the heroic figures of both the Americas.

Universal launched its Collegiate series with 'The First Year' as initial of four pictures in the group. Monogram, following the popular trend, is starting a 'Tailspin Tommy' series. Universal's 'Little Tough Guys in Society' and a third coming up, U's 'Crime Club' pictures, are of the same ilk.

With the public having offered definite proof of preference for the repeaters, provided they like the characters and the pictures are well made, 20th-Fox and Warners have each been experimenting with still other

series during the year. These are still more or less in the trial stage, although the Sports feature at 20th seems to have caught on and Warners' 'Secret Service' is considered to have promise.

Berlin's 'Alexander'

Among the individual money makers of the season 20th-Fox's 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' was, next to 'Snow White,' the smash entry. Hit of this picture was all the more phenomenal because it triumphed in a season which quite definitely saw the general run of film musicals on the downbeat. 'Alexander' was not, in the ordinary sense, a film musical, being a romantic, musical drama, but it had to overcome the waning popular interest in films featuring music.

Growing popular indifference to the stereotyped musical or comedy with music is attributed to the monotonous repetition of same basic formula, with frothy fripperies unequal to task of sustaining or properly supplementing the ear appeal of a few evanescent songs. 'Ragtime,' Irving Berlin's song cavalcade, drove straight to the heart of vast audiences with its legitimate sentiment and nostalgic wallop. Darryl F. Zanuck will attempt to repeat with another cavalcade coming up, and several other studios have projected musical offerings which will be governed somewhat by the Berlin pattern, but a new approach to the film musical drama seems necessary to garner satisfactory returns.

There were positive indications, especially during the latter part of the season gone, that public taste was again turning more strongly toward vigorous, tough drama, both emotional and action type. Outstanding examples in winning b.o. approval were 'Old Chicago,' 'Angels with Dirty Faces,' 'Alcatraz Island,' 'Buccaneer,' 'Hurricane,' 'Jezebel,' 'Algiers,' 'Marie Antoinette,' 'Spawn of the North,' 'Boys Town,' 'Test Pilot,' 'Sisters' and 'Four Daughters.'

In the romantic drama classification the public singled out for notable approval 'If I Were King' and 'Robin Hood.'

End of Screwballs

Comedy preference was more toward the legitimate, credible behavior and character manifestation type, with the screwball concoctions going out after a long cycle. Topping was Columbia's Frank Capra production, 'You Can't Take It With You.' While that has its zany features, it is essentially a morality play couched in comic sugar-coating—a satiric preachment. In the same category, as to substance and merit in production, is David O. Selznick's 'The Young in Heart.' They represent the trend. And here again, the homely comedy stressed in the Hardys and Jones Family is pertinent. So also is the essential comedy in the Deanna Durbin starrers from Universal, pictures in a class by themselves and with rising b.o. strength as shown in 'Mad About Music' and 'That Certain Age.'

An astonishing thing, based on a freak or hunch showing in a Beverly Hills theatre—astonishing to producers and exhibitors—is the b.o. clean-up of reissues of Universal's 'Frankenstein' and 'Dracula,' played all over the country as a twin bill. Horror pix were presumably dead. But a double dose of the goosefleshers brought the thrill-hungry customers in hordes. Universal has practically had a patent on this type of chiller over many years. They were discarded when the Carl Laemmle regime stepped out. Now, on the strength of the surprise business done by the double reissue, U is hustling into production with 'The Son of Frankenstein.'

Horror is one of the basic passions about which the picture biz has been more or less in doubt as to how it may be catered to. Apparently its b.o. possibilities have been overlooked for the past few years.

Crimes in Vogue Again

Pictures dealing with crime and prison continue to have strong appeal, despite the censorial handicaps thrown against them. Warners, specializing in prison yarns, chiefly through the Bryan Foy unit, and having had several outstanding successes in this classification, at comparatively low cost, are preparing to carry over into the new year with more of the same kind. Released during 1938 from this studio were 'Over the Wall,' 'Crime School,' 'Alcatraz Island,' 'Girls on Probation,' with 'Blackwells Island' coming up. Columbia also released a number of prison pictures, made by Larry Darmour, for profitable showing in their budget class, as did RKO. Latter had 'Reformatory,' 'Crime Ring,' 'Penitentiary,' 'Women in Prison,' 'Condemned Women,' while Paramount made 'Prison Farm,' Universal 'Prison Break,' and Republic 'Prison Nurse,' with Monogram also in on the prison cycle.

The tough kids, stemming from stage and film versions of 'Dead End,' had a big inning this past year and look like they're going to provide a degree of b.o. favor during the coming months. Warners features its 'Dead End Kids,' and Universal its 'Little Tough Guys.' Well behaved youth, needing no reformation, seem to be in eclipse in the current film vogues.

Crooning Corralers

Westerners seem to be running more and more to guitar strumming and vocalizing dude cowpokes, with the passing (regrettably to the older school of rootin'-tootin' action addicts) of the tougher and perhaps homelier hombres of the saddle. Women audiences for the sagebrushers have, however, picked up materially since the cowboys turned troubador, as producers of westerns were quick to note and capitalize.

Serials did well the past year, especially Universal's 'Flash Gordon,' and Republic's 'Lone Ranger,' and there will be an increase of cliffhangers this year.

There was no lack of support for the good pictures in any classification during the past year, but many of the hits, sporadic, didn't necessarily indicate or fall into any definite production trend.

Bell Labs Increase

Albany, Jan. 1.

Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc., has increased its capital stock from \$100,000 to \$5,000,000. Papers filed with the Secretary of State at Albany by J. W. Farrell, New York City.

Organization tax and filing fee totaled \$2,475, one of the largest recently noted.

Murray's Legit

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Ken Murray, playing Stanley here, will most likely go into vaude comedy, 'Take A Bow,' which tried out recently in Boston as 'Flying Ginzburgs.' Comic also has another picture to make for U under a new deal.

WB Execs Powwow West

Gradwell L. Sears, S. E. Morris Sam Schneider, Carl Leserman and Mort Blumenstock leave New York Jan. 14 for conferences with H. M. Warner, Hal Wallis and Jack L. Warner at the WB studio.

Final details of the full '39-40 season lineup of pictures will be gone into.

The Year In Pictures

By Roy Chartier

Investigation of the record reveals that the past year has been notable for troublesome developments in the picture industry but, in retrospect, it appears to have been no more disturbing than most former years though perhaps differing somewhat in the character of the problems which arose. Cost troubles, economic difficulties, legislative nervousness, b. o. uneasiness, administrative alarm and other factors of one form or another, borne by the calendars of the past, are not new, but as in the past they must be met whether by new or old means of approach.

Every year has brought forth things that frighten, just as 1938 was the unhappy harbinger of the U. S. anti-trust suit against all major producer-distributors.

It is incontrovertible that the Government suit, production panic, distributor dilemmas, exhibitor eruptions, foreign fears and a miscellaneous collection of problems concomitant to these represent undisguised scares at the moment. That the best efforts of the industry must be put forth to parry with them goes without saying.

Improvement in public, political and trade relations, sadly lacking for an industry which has blindly and indifferently disregarded the value of such relations, may be a step in the right direction in tackling the task that lies ahead.

The administrative burdens of the picture industry branch out into three principal limbs of activity, each with its relation to the other, and each with its distinct problems. These are production, distribution and exhibition.

Production, Lifeblood of the Biz, a Big Worry

The lifeblood of an industry which, it is said, represents an investment of more than \$2,500,000,000 and, in the United States alone, reaches a market of over 80,000,000 consumers—the perishable, fragile ribbons of film that go all over the world in tin cans—flows from a source, mainly Hollywood, which suffers from all sorts of cardiac convulsions. If it isn't one kind of attack, it's another, and doctors, on the ground as well as those called in from home offices, banking circles or elsewhere, are on the job regularly to watch the patient. This year they are more concerned than ever over the state of the blood pressure, the causes of the heartburn or the nature of excesses indulged, latterly in most cases the money eaten.

Manufacturing, under conditions that apply to no other form of product, several hundred feature pictures yearly, the expense for each ranges from less than \$100,000 to over \$2,000,000. The \$1,000,000 picture may show a profit of anywhere from 10 to 100% when it has gone to market or it may show a loss of the same range or greater. The same holds true for the \$100,000 picture and no one, to this day, has been able to figure out which type of picture represents the best business judgment in the long run, nor why there should be such great variance in the negative costs of pictures of comparable value as viewed on paper and as demonstrated at the boxoffice.

One thing the bankers have strained to understand, against basic business principles they have been taught, is why \$500,000 is spent on a picture when the likely market potentialities for it suggest a return of less than this amount; why \$1,000,000 should be chanced when for that picture the gamble for a profit is not clearly and safely with the producer; nor why between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000 should be placed on the same roulette wheel. In no other business does the manufacturer take the same chance of overshooting his mark.

A member of the New York banking fraternity, unaccustomed to a long-shot way of considering business adventure, pointed out recently that if a picture made, possibly in the east, at \$200,000, and, although this picture wasn't a gem of rare cut, if it grossed \$300,000, to show a good return on the investment, possible even for a 'dog', then this was good business practice. The same picture, made in Hollywood at perhaps \$500,000 and still grossing only \$300,000, would, in this man's justifiable opinion, be bad business practice.

Exhib Does All Right, But—

The books for the past year show that too many pictures, though making money for the middle-man (the exhibitor), have not been worth their cost to the producer. Inference to be drawn is that the exhibitor is the better business man. If he can take a cluck, pay what that cluck deserves in film rental and come out showing a profit, though small, he is operating correctly, but if the proper rental, which he returns to the producer is not enough to also provide a profit for the latter, then he, the producer, has suffered bad business balance.

In too many instances there is no doubt that pictures have made money from the source they are supposed to make it—the public—but after negative, sales, printing and advertising costs have been written off, the amount brought in has resulted in a loss. This occurs not only for the so-called 'B' product but also for the \$1,000,000 pictures. The pictures themselves have not been flops; they have merely been too costly to the maker.

There are instances in all probability where an exhibitor is getting an edge on rentals, enabling him to show a profit out of ratio to the chances for the producer to show gain, but on the whole the cry for more rentals is predicated on costs that may be as much out of line as the theatre's normal ability to reap profit against such inflated rentals. Any marked increase in rentals, to offset careless investment in manufacture or waste, would be tantamount to expecting that the exhibitor relinquish the basis for marginal profit, suggested by his own market potentialities, on which he operates. He can't get any more from—nor afford to pay more for—pictures of comparative grossing value, whether one costs \$500,000, another \$1,000,000 and a third \$1,500,000. If they all are of the same quality and draught, then, as an exhibitor views it, he should pay no larger rental for one than for the others.

That the mistakes of the producer should not be visited upon the exhibitor, nor for that matter upon the public, is incontestable as a matter of good business procedure. That the producer, regardless of whether he is guilty of wanton waste, bad judgment or lavish laxity, should put his own house in order, is equally irrefutable.

Those Budgets

The men who stand guard over the film factories and those engaged in manufacture are presumably making an effort to correct the faults that lie at the source, hence the talk to cut. Since the pudding is in the eating, it remains to be seen what economies will be effected to meet present market conditions, including the restricted income from foreign buyers of film. Almost anyone familiar with production and what goes on in that branch will attest to charges of fantastic spending that still exists and suggest, that if pictures must cost so much as they do, there is something wrong somewhere along the line.

There are certain fixed costs in production which are undebatable, including union labor which has impressively increased the negative bills against pictures. However, this

represents a minority portion of the money spent in manufacture. The economy must be effected elsewhere if pictures are to have a fair chance of earning a profit on the investment they represent. There isn't any trouble with the distribution departments, nor with the exhibitors, nor with the public. The trouble lies with a tendency to put much more money into a product than its market, though big as it is, will warrant.

At a recent board meeting at the Motion Picture Producers & Distributors of America, Inc., in New York, which Harry M. Warner, Harry Cohn, Joseph M. Schenck and others came east to attend, a stern warning was sounded that picture costs must be controlled. From all exterior signs, that's as far as the warning has gone. Not a single studio has made a move the scope of which would impress the trade.

For the 1938-39 season, it has been estimated officially that about \$165,000,000 will be spent by the major producers in turning out the year's supply of film. A total of around 450 features has announced for the season, 20 of them in color.

\$2,800,000 for 'Antoinette'

So far the highest investment in any single feature for the 1938-39 season is the \$2,800,000 assertedly spent in making 'Marie Antoinette'. When cost of distribution and printing is added to that, it will virtually be necessary to bankrupt most exhibitors in order to get enough money back to show a profit. On the year there will probably be between 35 and 40 pictures costing \$1,000,000 or more to make. Unless they are worth what they're costing, and the \$500,000 films are also worth what they're eating up, bankruptcy will be no word for it.

Producing pictures isn't like manufacturing automobiles, where carbon copies figure, but just as styles change frequently in that field so do they change in pictures. During the past year, producers thus have sought to avoid styles that are getting tiresome. They are also weeding out supervisors, directors and artists who aren't seemingly earning their pay but though they are dropped by one studio many usually show up at another.

The average producer has a childish reluctance about letting some people go for fear a competitor will grab them and do something with them. Sometimes this happens, but not often. Whenever it does, there has been something wrong somewhere. More talent in various branches of production has been stubbornly retained, despite the results obtained, than in any other business.

Changes in the taste of the candy that pours out of Hollywood have included a very definite trend away from screwball comedies during the past year. This occurred early in the spring when a deluge of this type of picture finally started keeping people out of the theatres, with some very worthwhile comedies in this class going down to ignominious defeat at the boxoffice.

Bread 'n' Butter Pics

Along with a determination by Hollywood that it must get out better B's, the family type of picture, sometimes called bread 'n' butter entertainment, came into prominence. Wall street immediately approved of this type of picture due largely to the low cost. Various series have led to further experiment in this direction. Serials, meantime, have begun to indicate a revival of popularity to the extent that some of the larger chains and better class independent theatres are beginning to use them. This use is partly due to improvement in the type of serials being put out by the lesser companies.

Clambake musicals went into sharp decline this year but a good musical will always do business. At the same time, music has started creeping into westerns in an important manner to lend them a somewhat different flavor.

Before the 1938-39 programs were set up last spring it became evident that the public appetite was ripe for more pictures of the spectacle, outdoor type, including those of an historical or biographical type. 'Zola', the season before, had been voted the best of the year by the Academy and numerous spectacles or biographical had outdistanced the business expected of them in contrast to the disappointing showings made by the screwball comedies, clambake musicals and drawing room dramas. Hence, the change in raw materials at the factories.

More Cycles and Trends

There was a flurry, too, over cartoon features and their possibilities following the tremendous success of Disney's 'Snow White' but after the dust had cleared away only one company, outside of Disney who is continuing in the field, decided to try its hand at the actorless drama. Paramount's Max Fleischer has not advanced far on the project but the plan still stands to turn out a full-length pen-and-ink. Similarly, 'Alexander's Ragtime Band', second only to 'Snow White' as the best rental-getter of the year, made the producing fraternity cavalcade-minded. It is yet to be seen how far this interest will extend.

The past year has seen attempts to cash in on Dewey's warfare against organized crime in New York much to the prosecutor's dislike but on film it hasn't paid so well, although the gangster picture has weathered the storms generally with fair success. Stories flavored with horse racing or pugilism have also flourished, and the rag-to-riches and the poor-girl-rich-boy theme remains an occasional weakness, even if as dated as the player piano. Apparently the screen vamp has vanished also. 'Angel,' Dietrich's last for Paramount, at \$200,000 for this picture, settled the argument, if there was any.

Kid pictures have not done so well as in 1937 and other years but Mickey Rooney has been built into doughy boxoffice material by being well cast in the 'Judge Hardy' series plus 'Boys Town' and 'Stablemates'. The technique in building up Rooney has differed from that employed for Shirley Temple, Jane Withers and others.

Newspapermen screen cycle portrayed the business in a light that is calculated to do the industry no good with the average editor. In a recent tour of several states in the east to discuss pictures with editors, a representative of the Motion Pictures Are Your Greatest Entertainment campaign was astonished to learn how much the average Horace Greeley resented the manner in which newspaper life was Hollywood-handled.

Distribution Problems

The sales branch of pictures, representing costly operation but entailing expense on the whole that is more easily justified than that which is incurred in Hollywood, is always in the middle—between the producer and the retailer—with the result that it is constantly struggling between two forces.

They are forces generally which have small appreciation of the distributor's problems.

Many are the worthless pictures that able salesmen have been able to dispose of, getting the producer some profit or reducing the loss that otherwise might have been sustained, and many are the instances where the exhibitor, a chronic squawker, has demanded adjustments whether justified or not. Trying to please the producer and the exhibitor at the same time makes the lot of the distributor a singularly tough one.

In selling pictures the distributor is selling promises. They are not his promises, but the promises made his department by the factory, where anything can happen during a year ahead, and where nearly everything does in the usual course of things. However, when the promises made to the retailer, upon which contracts and terms therein are based, are not fulfilled, it is the distributor who must bear the brunt of the complaint. He may be compelled to make adjustments, permit cancellations or be forced to make peace with his accounts in some manner or other that is likely to affect his books for the season and, thus, lay him open to burning attack from above in his own company.

There are many cases in industry history where a sales head has had to resign, or has been forced out because he couldn't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear in terms of rentals. Advertising and publicity men have also been subjected to blame because exploitation and merchandising, no matter how far it has been extended, failed to do the same thing.

The bankers and other outsiders in picture companies, as well as the presidents, v.p.s and producing heads who have been reared in it, seldom consider the problems of selling or the difficult relations existing between the seller and the buyer.

The Doughty Salesman

Give a \$100-a-week salesman a car, a portfolio full of promises he himself hardly relies upon, and a flock of instructions on merchandising the new season's product, subject to all sorts of home office approval, and the gentleman is going forth on one of the toughest of missions. He is bearding the lion in his den, but, armed doubtfully to resist him, stalks in dauntlessly to do battle.

No matter what has happened during the past year, he is going to have to parry plenty of objections raised against pictures in general and no doubt his in particular, sold with the same glowing promises which the salesman again has under his arm. He has been ordered to get higher rentals—was there ever a year when the sales force wasn't told that?—and he has to get more playing time, preferred dating, a deal on the shorts and trailers, if carried, and other things.

He takes it on the chin handsomely, checking his pride somewhere else, restrains himself as best he can when he and his company are called bad names, and many times wines or dines the exhibitor far beyond what his expense account will allow in order to land a contract.

Since they have to face the facts and fight hard for what they get, as well as acquire the technique of a Philadelphia lawyer in mastering the highly-complicated provisions embodied in contracts and exhibitor relations, it is no wonder that so many men have come up through the sales branch to occupy key positions in the industry. Two such men are company presidents today, Sidney R. Kent and George J. Schaefer. Murray Silverstone, without that title as yet, virtually runs United Artists. He also came up through distribution. James R. Grainger was elected president of Republic's distribution branch early in 1938, and Al Lichtman is assistant to Nicholas M. Schenck, president of Loew's. Others in major companies within a stone's throw of the top administrative offices, are now v.p.s as well as board members and may get there, among them Neil F. Agnew and Ned E. Depinet.

It has always taken a salesman to sell pictures but not always a producer to get into the production branch. This may account for the fact that fewer persons, through politics or otherwise, get into sales and that there are fewer vacancies in that branch, with the majority holding their jobs or through ability moving forward in their department. There are more promotions from within in sales—an admirable policy and one that selling forces admire—than in any other field of industry activity.

Need for Reforms

This policy will probably continue, but in other ways in the face of exhibitor agitation, the Government's anti-trust suit, State theatre divorcement moves and scattered civil actions, the distributor realizes that 'the old order changeth, yielding place to new.' The distrib also recognizes that the change must be slow in order to be healthy, no matter if the tendency is to hurry. Nearly every change that the world—or the industry—has witnessed has been slowly, almost imperceptibly wrought. Even if the U. S. Government, down to the smallest independent exhibitor, is howling for a maximum of action and reform, it might be considered safer in the long run to change the old order of thought and procedure by evolutionary rather than by revolutionary methods. Otherwise the advantages to some and the disadvantages to others might be too pronounced.

Remembering this, it would be desirable that the reforms which are justified in producer-distributor and exhibitor relations be achieved carefully, while reforms that are confiscatory, dangerous, internecine or impractical be avoided just as carefully. Thus, it's desirable that the pendulum swing in a smaller arc.

The distributor has much to lose and so has the exhibitor, as well as anyone, including stockholders, landlords and creditors interested in either or both, if the new order over which much agitation is being waged, is not created with complete appreciation for all the elements involved, and with a sense of restraint which takes into consideration the potential losses as well as the potential benefits.

There is no gainsaying that many evils exist which should have been corrected before, nor that the signs of the storm which has broken could not be seen. The picture industry, however, not unlike others of great strength and high investment doing business over the world, is not alone in the abuses with which it has been charged. Although indifferent to the warning signals, it is a gigantic business which now is becoming a little frightened over the measures that are being brought to force it to correct alleged wrongs. Some may be real, some may be fancied, but time will settle that.

The Government suit, filed last summer, is drastic in many particulars as well as very upsetting at this time. Among other things it declares for complete divorcement of production and distribution from the ownership or control of theatres. This feature affects five major companies, Paramount, 20th-Fox, Loew's, RKO and Warners.

Another summer blow was the failure of distributors to

(Continued on page 48)

Top Films and Stars

(Continued from page 5)

little dialog, it hit well over the \$2,000,000 mark in all-around take. 'Robin Hood' and 'Marie Antoinette' also are headed for over the \$4,000,000 mark in world boxoffice.

Many pictures turned out late in the year are headed for important money, especially 'Angels with Dirty Faces' and 'Boys Town.' However, they will do far better in the domestic than the foreign market. 'Sweethearts,' released on the tail end of '38, gives indications of being potent b. o. in 1939. 'Gunga Din,' also sked for January release, may also be an unusually heavy world-wide coingetter during the new year.

King 'Money' Director

On the directorial end Henry King gets the plum for coin pictures, with 'Chicago' and 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' both for 20th Century-Fox. Michael Curtiz is right alongside him, having turned out four at Warners, besides having remade and finished a number of pictures started by other directors for which he did not get screen credit. His pictures of the year were 'Robin Hood,' 'Angels with Dirty Faces,' 'Four Daughters,' and 'Four's a Crowd.'

George Seitz also proved a most profitable coin procurer for Metro with the 'Hardy' series. This group of pictures gives indications of healthy returns on the company production investment, with two of them headed for better than the \$2,000,000 mark. He also made another, 'Yellow Jack,' starring Bob Montgomery.

Jack Conway, another consistent money director at Metro, ranks next for having turned out 'Too Hot to Handle' and 'Yank at Oxford.' Alongside of them come three others: Woody Van Dyke, who made 'Marie Antoinette' and 'Sweethearts'; Frank Capra, whose 'You Can't Take It With You' ranks as an unusually important grosser on the year, and Victor Fleming, who made 'Test Pilot' as well as having 'Treasure Island,' which he megged, reissued by Metro.

Pictures turned out during the year were below the 1937 total, as up to Dec. 1 about 100 less features had been recorded than the previous year. In proportion, however, there were plenty of the \$1,000,000-plus pictures turned out, top cost going for Metro's 'Marie Antoinette,' at around \$3,000,000. That company, as usual, had quite a large number which hit over the \$1,000,000 mark, such as 'Girl of the Golden West,' 'Test Pilot,' 'Too Hot to Handle,' 'Mannequin,' 'The Citadel,' 'Great Waltz' and 'Yank at Oxford.'

Heavy Sugar Cargo

Heavy priced group running in excess of the \$1,000,000 mark at 20th-Fox had 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' 'Chicago,' 'Suez' and 'Submarine Patrol,' as well as a couple of expensive Sonja Henie pictures.

Warners, in that category, had 'Hollywood Hotel,' 'Jezebel,' 'Robin Hood,' 'Gold Is Where You Find It' and 'The Sisters.'

Paramount camp came forth with 'Spawn of the North,' 'If I Were King,' 'Buccaneer,' 'Bluebeard's Eighth Wife,' 'The Texans,' 'Big Broadcast of 1938' and 'Men with Wings' as its higher-bracket product, with latter costing around \$2,000,000.

Universal ran up \$1,250,000 on its 'Letter of Introduction,' and bordered the \$1,000,000 mark with 'Rage of Paris,' 'Mad About Music' and 'That Certain Age.'

Columbia had just one, 'You Can't Take It With You,' which hit around \$1,500,000, while RKO, in the \$1,000,000 bracket, had 'Having Wonderful Time,' 'Carefree,' 'Radio City Revels' and 'Bringing Up Baby.' For United Artists release, Sam Goldwyn turned out 'Cowboy and the Lady.' Hal Roach, on his first for UA, 'There Goes My Heart,' laid out a little better than \$1,000,000, and Selznick-International close to that figure with 'Adventures of Tom Sawyer.'

Few Musicals

Musicals were very much on the downbeat on the year with indications that during 1939 there will be still fewer. Metro, of course, will stick to its operettas; 20th-Fox may do one or two, with Warners figuring on abandoning them, and other companies including Paramount and RKO possibly doing one each.

Pretty much of the costume, period and fantastic in production will be eliminated with the new year. Another thing also to be shunned will be the endeavors by ambitious producers to make those 'Academy award' productions. Pictures will and must be made for the boxoffice, and not for vanity. Producers who want the approba-

tion of the industry at large must make 'em commercially artistic in the future.

Down to earth and biographical yarns will be pretty much the trend in 1939, with topical subject matter being injected as circumstances warrant. With the intent of the industry to ignore the foreign dictation as to what not to make, it is quite likely that considerable story matter which has been shelved due to fears of diplomatic disfavor will be brushed off. A number of the companies will do quite a bit of salvaging in this way. Also with the trend to economize, much story material that has been worked on and left by the wayside will be put into work to appease the budgeteers.

With An Eye to the B. O.

Plenty of attention will be paid to the wants of the theatre operators. With Universal having proved itself, through the operation of the Blumberg-Fox-Work combination; Metro having gotten its guidance through the liaison work done by Al Lichtman; George J. Schaeffer coming into the guidance of production from distribution for RKO, and Y. Frank Freeman lending his hand at Paramount, it seems quite obvious that the 'boxoffice' wishes will be the keynote for 1939-40 production. Likelihood is that more relishable boxoffice fodder will be turned out than has been since the advent of dialog pictures.

Another progressive move that has been in the making will manifest itself strongly in the bringing into the top production ranks players, writers and directors who have been groomed in the 'B' division at a number of the studios for the past few years. Metro and 20th-Fox have made the best strides in this direction during the past two years, with the other companies planning on setting aside funds for experimentation and training of new blood in these divisions of the creative end of the industry.

Hollywood, though it is reluctant to admit it, knows that it must prepare itself for the fading out of established elements in the creative division, some of it through arbitrary cost, others through vanishing interest on the part of the public, and still others on account of incapability. In its stead must be replacement of new and reliable talent that can keep the motion picture on an entertainment level that will provide encouraging financial returns.

The independent producers, such as Republic, Monogram and Grand National, with ambitious programs for the year, are making themselves more important here than ever in the past, and many of the majors have been watching their product and personnel with a view to availing themselves of the top calibre talent.

Ritter Crowds Autrey

In the western field, where musicals still are the important and potent coin elements, Gene Autrey still leads his field although Tex Ritter is coming along in fast strides. Republic has another star in that sphere, Roy Rogers, whom it is grooming for stellar b. o. George O'Brien and Richard Dix are more than holding their own in the outdoor action stuff with the Harry Sherman 'Hop-a-Long Cassidy's,' starring Bill Boyd, being jumped in production budgets as well as earnings. Paramount has taken Buck Jones into its fold also, for action stuff. Metro is going in for action-ers to be turned out by Nat Levine, budgeted around the \$175,000-\$200,000 mark. Columbia is doing oke on Larry Darmour's Jack Holt pics and the Charlie Starrett westerns.

Many Freelancers

There still are the great number of freelance players who do not appear in the studio records as to b. o. value, unless they have made a number of pictures during a year at an individual plant. Many of these people are stars of yesteryear and potent in giving importance to productions both as to name value and performance. Then, too, there is the large contingent of players who get the two and three day bits and parts in pictures. These people earn important money running from \$100 to \$500 a day, but are neither publicized nor billed. There are at least 2,000 who gain screen credit this way.

Metro Continues With

Top Roster of Stars

Metro again continues to lead as far as important personalities in the star and featured brackets are concerned. The policy during the past



AL GOODMAN
A Happy New Year
to All My Friends

two years has been to nurse along important talent and then to use it in spots most beneficial to company and individuals. During the past year two youngsters have been added to the star roster—Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. Rooney proved to

METRO

Stars

MICKEY ROONEY
CLARK GABLE
SPENCER TRACY
MYRNA LOY
ROBERT TAYLOR
NORMA SHEARER
JOAN CRAWFORD
JEANETTE MACDONALD
WALLACE BEERY
NELSON EDDY
GRETA GARBO
LIONEL BARRYMORE
ROBERT MONTGOMERY
LUISE RAINER
JUDY GARLAND
FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW
MARGARET SULLAVAN
ROBERT DONAT
ROSALIND RUSSELL
***ELEANOR POWELL**
***WILLIAM POWELL**
***HELEN HAYES**
***HEDY LAMARR**
***MARX BROS.**

*No pictures starring these people released during 1938 by Metro.

Featured

Lew Ayres
Melvyn Douglas
Robert Young
Virginia Bruce
James Stewart
Lewis Stone
Maureen O'Sullivan
Dennis O'Keefe
Frank Morgan
Walter Pidgeon
Florence Rice
Fay Holden
Cecilia Parker
Buddy Ebsen
Reginald Owen
Nat Pendleton
Reginald Gardiner
Una Merkel
Virginia Weidler
Rita Johnson
Sara Haden
Ray Bolger
Mary Howard
Lynne Carver
Franchot Tone
Charley Grapewin
Miliza Korjus
Guy Kibbee
Henry Hull
George Murphy
John Beal
Ann Rutherford
†Robert Benchley
Josephine Hutchinson
Ruth Hussey
Robert Morley
Edna May Oliver
Gale Sondergaard
Sophie Tucker
Stanley Morner
Janet Beecher
Madge Evans
Billie Burke
Ilona Massey
Jo Ann Sayers
Lana Turner
Anthony Allen
Virginia Gray
***Fanny Brice**
Allan Jones
***Johnny Weissmuller**

†Featured in Metro shorts.

*Not used in any 1938 releases by Metro.

be the sensation of the organization, going far ahead of the expectations of the company execs who have had him under wraps for several years. Rooney had been figured as just a worthwhile youngster who would fit nicely into spots created for him. However, the boy's sparkling and zestful performances in the 'Hardy' series, 'Boys Town,' 'Stablemates' and the other pictures in which he was used made him a dynamic force at the b. o.

Result was that on the year Rooney topped the list of stars at the studio.

Gable Still a Draw

Clark Gable, though in two pictures on the year, still manages to be in the vanguard of the other established stars at the plant. William Powell, who headed the contingent last year, when teamed with Myrna Loy and individually, does not figure as a '38 coin-getter. Reason, of course, was illness which kept him off the screen during the period.

Spencer Tracy galloped ahead on the b. o. draught angle from last year, with Myrna Loy heading the femme contingent. She took the laurels away from Jeanette MacDonald, the topper last year. Miss MacDonald only has one pic to her credit this year, which accounts for her dip. Robert Taylor, though given fitting material, did not make the b. o. impression that studio had expected, as is shown by the improvement in the rating of Spencer Tracy over him. Norma Shearer had just one, 'Marie Antoinette,' while Joan Crawford appeared to have waned a bit at the b. o., mostly in the key centers. Wallace Beery showed strong improvement with the product he had as his vehicles, and indications are that with proper casting he may hit the 'first five' category in the coming year. Greta Garbo, though not a strong factor in this country, still holds the strength abroad and is virtually the most potent coin-getter for the company, per picture, outside of the American market.

Luise Rainer, even though owner of an 'Oscar,' did not seem to prove a magnet with those who purchase their entertainment through the wicket. Her type of pictures on the year, so far as entertainment was concerned, did not bring about a great deal of audience enthusiasm. Lionel Barrymore, the old warhorse, was impressed into service aplenty, and, though not an outstanding magnet with the buyers, always proves to be potent enough to attract attention to the pictures he works in. Studio has ambitious plans for Judy Garland on the new season, and it's expected that the youngster will climb to a dominant spot within the next year.

Freddie Bartholomew is rather hard to fit with material currently. Studio had him doing plenty of personal appearance work of late.

Margaret Sullivan, new acquisition to the starring contingent, will need plenty of sales pressure to set her up in the foreground. Her value proved quite negligible on the year, as did that of Rosalind Russell, who has been in the top billing fold for past couple of years. Robert Montgomery, though giving acceptable performances, does not seem to get much response from the b. o. angle.

Stars Without Pictures

Eleanor Powell, who was well up on the list with William Powell last year, does not figure at all in 1938 due to being out of pictures. Her last was 'Rosalie,' made in 1937. Hedy Lamarr, added to the stellar contingent after a loanout to Walter Wanger for 'Algiers,' did not face the camera. Helen Hayes, though on the starring sked again, had no picture on the year and Marx Bros., who again returned to the Metro fold, were in same spot.

Another new member of the Metro group leads the featured contingent. Lew Ayres, who first came to the fore at Universal in 'All's Quiet on the Western Front,' appears to be the outstanding player in this contingent, with indications that he will return to stardom within the course of the year. Melvyn Douglas, featured at this lot and starred at Columbia, is next fave for b. o. purposes, with Robert Young, a relative oldster in the outfit, also moving up fast in value, and likely to find himself in the star ranks.

Virginia Bruce heads the femme featured group, and may find herself topmounting casts within the next year. James Stewart, who led the feature column last year, did not impress as strongly for a repeat. Lewis Stone, veteran star, is still a very potent factor in casts and on the support end of a marquee.

Maureen O'Sullivan proved to be

the second choice among the femmes, being frequently used in important pictures. Dennis O'Keefe, a newcomer, is moving along fast, as well as Walter Pidgeon, another newcomer on the lot, who has had numerous important assignments during the year.

The group of players who were mainly used for musicals and revues did not get much in production assignments with result that their b. o. value for the year remained almost negligible.

There was considerable acquisition of new blood in the feature group on the year that will undoubtedly show itself impressively during the next 12 months. One of them, Miliza Korjus, who made her debut in 'Great Waltz,' Metro calculates to figure potentially in time.

A great number of the featured people on the Metro roster did not reach proportions of billing or production on the year, being primarily used for the company's weekly radio show. Topper of this contingent is Fanny Brice, who had no pic assignment, but is qualified as an outstanding ether asset. Also missing from the screen were Allan Jones, featured chanter, and Johnny Weissmuller.

Shirley Temple No. 1

B.O. Star at 20th-Fox

Shirley Temple continued to be the outstanding asset at the b. o. during '38 for 20th-Fox. Though there were only three releases for the year, her individual draw value proved tops. On this lot the younger blood were the real money producers, as Tyrone Power forged ahead with tremendous strides and Alice Faye proved another outstander as far as the revenue on her pics was concerned; performance in 'Chicago' and 'Alexander' the standouts.

Skates None Too Sharp

Jane Withers also was a most wholesome contributor with her series of homey pictures. Sonja Henie, though doing okay earlier in year, sort of receded with her last picture of the year. Warner Baxter continued to hold his own, while Loretta Young, who rated among the toppers the year previous, was not so forte this semester. Warner Oland, who had starred in the 'Charlie Chan' series, was well up in front at the time of his death. Another series star quite potent is Peter Lorre in the 'Mr. Moto' group. Ritz Bros. on their own proved oke, with Don Ameche giving indications of increasing b. o. strength in the forthcoming year. William Powell and Fred Allen each did a solo for the studio as well as the Dionnes. The Quints doings are not as interesting with continuation of their growth in life as were the earlier ones, however.

Gracie Fields, whose strength in England is tremendous, will possibly get an American following if type of pictures continue along lines of her last. Annabella and Simone Simon were strictly washouts on the star list.

Featured division of this studio is being greatly strengthened with indications that number of those now in grooming stages will wind up the year by becoming rather important in marquee value during the new year. Gloria Stuart, who has starred for several years at Universal, proved the outstander in the featured division.

Halley Tops Division

Jack Halley, aided by his radio work, forged to the fore, and tops the male group of featured players. Plenty of strength is obvious with such potent players as Adolphe Menjou, Jack Oakie, Victor MacLaglen and Herbert Marshall, each in for one of the program. Tony Martin did not fare as well at b. o. as one might figure with his radio draught, but likely that during this year his assignments will be tailored for a b. o. buildup. Several new ones 20th has great confidence in are Binnie Barnes, Richard Greene, David Niven, Nancy Kelly, Arlene Whelan and Jean Rogers. These are being carefully placed with purpose of building them to the heights.

Slim Summerville continues to be potent as far as draw power with fans is concerned. Brian Donlevy, who forged ahead very quickly, stood in important position before starting his freelance career. Others who can be rated of unusual consequence in important castings include Jed Prouty in the 'Jones Family' series; Joan Davis, John Carradine, Claire Trevor, Michael Whalen, Arthur Treacher, Key Luke and Phyllis Brooks. As the Zanuck studio is always on the lookout for new blood, there is also a fadeout process going on in feature division. This year such players as Jean Her-

sholt, June Lang, Louise Hovick and Bill Robinson disappeared from the contract group, but, well established, they are freelancing successfully.

In perusing the list of featured players here many of those who are just listed will undoubtedly next year be in the upper brackets of the company's coin-getters.

20TH-FOX

Stars

SHIRLEY TEMPLE
TYRONE POWER
ALICE FAYE
JANE WITHERS
SONJA HENIE
WARNER BAXTER
LORETTA YOUNG
***WARNER OLAND**
PETER LORRE
RITZ BROS.
WILLIAM POWELL
DON AMECHE
DIONNE QUINTS
GRACIE FIELDS
ANNABELLA
FRED ALLEN
SIMONE SIMON

*Deceased.

Featured

Gloria Stuart
Jack Haley
Adolphe Menjou
Victor McLaglen
Joan Davis
Herbert Marshall
Jack Oakie
Tony Martin
Richard Greene
Slim Summerville
Brian Donlevy
Jean Hersholt
Jed Prouty
Binnie Barnes
Joan Davis
David Niven
John Carradine
Arthur Treacher
Claire Trevor
Michael Whalen
Nancy Kelly
Cesar Romero
Marjorie Weaver
Phyllis Brooks
Rochelle Hudson
June Lang
Key Luke
Ethel Merman
Bill Robinson
Joseph Schildkraut
Borrah Minevitch
Helen Westley
Leah Ray
Arleen Whelan
Louise Hovick
Sidney Toler
Spring Byington
Wally Vernon
Paul Hurst
Dixie Dunbar
Douglas Scott
Florence Rober
Douglas Fowley
George Sanders
J. Edward Bromberg
George Barbier
Jane Darwell
Chick Chandler
Robert Allen
Lon Chaney, Jr.
Ruth Terry
Sidney Blackmer
Jean Rogers
Sidney Fields
Lynn Bari
Eddie Collins
George Ernest
Joan Gale
Pauline Moore
Paul McVey
Sig Rumann
Osa Massen
Joan Castle

Colbert, Gary Cooper Set Paramount Pace

Paramount, with a rather small star contingent, had as its leader Claudette Colbert, with Gary Cooper heading the male contingent here, as well as for Sam Goldwyn. Bing Crosby came up considerably in rating, breaking about even with Jack Benny. Ronald Colman, in a one-pic deal, ranks high, while Dorothy Lamour, inducted into the star fold, proved rather important in draw value. Mae West had one pic on the sked and it became evident that her magnetism had faded considerably as had that of Harold Lloyd, who also made one on the year. George Raft still has considerable domestic draught and is reckoned as quite important in the foreign markets. William Boyd, who is starred in the Harry Sherman actioners, proved himself very



JACK OTTERSON
ART DIRECTOR

Completes three years in April at New Universal Studio with "Three Smart Girls," "Mad About Music," "Letter of Introduction," "That Certain Age" and "Rage of Paris" to his credit.

Now working on "You Can't Cheat an Honest Man," "Three Smart Girls Grow Up" and "Son of Frankenstein."

potent in the nabes and hinterland.

Bob Burns, a new star on the list, shows evidence of unusual value, with Ray Milland and Bob Hope, also new in the star division, making fave impressions with fans and exhibs. The Burns and Allen combo coasted along nicely during the year, but will be missing as a team in future productions, with Miss Allen continuing for one on her own. Fredric March had just one on the lot, "The Buccaneer," with Sylvia Sidney likewise doing one on the year, made in the east. Gladys Swarthout did not register strongly and fades from the new year group of stars, as does Joan Bennett. Anna May Wong starred in the B's coming from the Harold Hurley division, and did not prove important at all. Isa Miranda, recent importation, did not face cameras for the year's releases and likewise Irene Dunne. Carole Lombard, Barbara Stanwyck and Don Ameche, all of the latter having one-pic commitments. Frances Farmer, busy with her New York legit career, did not find time to do any cinematic work, either. Buck Jones, recently added to the Paramount fold, will get first of his under way early in 1939.

Lynn Overman, in stock for number of years, proved to be the outstander in the featured group. He was used aplenty in important pictures during the year. J. Carroll Naish, getting plenty of workout, also came next, with Martha Raye heading the femme contingent.

Players to Be Watched

Edward Arnold, in for solo, rated excellently, with John Barrymore, though without his star designation, still proving a valuable asset to the numerous productions he worked in. Shirley Ross progressed nicely, with Akim Tamiroff coming strongly to the fore in a couple of important assignments on the year. Another newcomer to the fold giving signs of impressive rating is Louise Campbell, who graduated from the "Drummond" series to femme lead in "Men With Wings." Studio plans on sending her quickly to important stellar rating.

Balance of the featured group is the standard supporting type, utilized considerably because of their box-office teaser aide. In this aggregation are Randolph Scott, Basil Rathbone, John Boles, Charles Butterworth, Gene Raymond, Porter Hall, Charles Bickford, Madeleine Carroll, Roscoe Karns, Elizabeth Patterson, Mary Carlisle, Gene Raymond, Gail Patrick, Ben Blue, Edmund Lowe, Yacht Club Boys, Tito Guizar, Heather Angel, Colin Tapley, Cecil Cunningham, Henry Fonda, Mary Boland, Judith Barrett, Harvey Stephens, Douglas Dumbrille, Barlowe Borland, Benny Baker, Bert Roach, Claire Dodd, William Henry, Grace Bradley and Harriett Hilliard.

Paramount, during the past few months, also rid itself of a lot of the feature and stock players, and indications are that more will vanish from the horizon within the next few months. In the meantime studio has garnered large crop of youthful talent of both sexes and will make a strong effort to enhance their sales value through spotting in important productions. Studio feels that with its limitation on star material it must speedily develop new blood to click with the exhibs in the next few years.

PARAMOUNT

Stars

CLAUDETTE COLBERT
GARY COOPER
BING CROSBY
JACK BENNY
RONALD COLMAN
DOROTHY LAMOUR
MAE WEST
BOB BURNS
GEORGE RAFT
WILLIAM BOYD
HAROLD LLOYD
W. C. FIELDS
FRED MacMURRAY
BOB HOPE
RAY MILLAND
GEORGE BURNS—GRACIE ALLEN
FREDRIC MARCH
SYLVIA SIDNEY
GLADYS SWARTHOUT
JOAN BENNETT
ANNA MAY WONG
SHIRLEY ROSS
***IRENE DUNNE**
***CAROLE LOMBARD**
***BARBARA STANWYCK**
***DON AMECHE**
***ISA MIRANDA**
***FRANCES FARMER**
***BUCK JONES**

*Made no pictures for 1938 release by Paramount.

Featured

Lynn Overman
J. Carroll Naish
Martha Raye
Edward Arnold
Lloyd Nolan
John Barrymore
Shirley Ross
Akim Tamiroff
Edward Everett Horton
Frances Dee
Louise Campbell
Randolph Scott
Basil Rathbone
John Boles
Charles Butterworth
Mary Livingstone
Gene Raymond
Porter Hall
Charles Bickford
Charles Ruggles
Madeleine Carroll
William Frawley
Elizabeth Patterson
Mary Carlisle
Roscoe Karns
Ben Blue
Henry Fonda
Eleanore Whitney
Edmund Lowe
Betty Grable
Yacht Club Boys
Tito Guizar
Anthony Quinn
Glenda Farrell
Leif Erickson
Benny Baker
Douglas Dumbrille
Gail Patrick
John Howard
Franciska Gaal
Heather Angel
Mary Boland
Colin Tapley
Archie Twitchell
Russell Hayden
George Hayes
Rufe Davis
Judith Barrett
Ellen Drew
Cecil Cunningham
Barlowe Borland
Larry Crabbe
Harvey Stephens
Ian Keith
Lucien Littlefield
Jackie Coogan
Claire Dodd
Dorothy Howe
Edgar Kennedy
Donald O'Conner
Evelyn Keyes
Marie Burton
Billy Cook
Dolores Casey
Johnny Downs
Harriett Hilliard
Joyce Matthews
Billy Lee
Louise Platt
Irene Hervey
William Henry
Luana Walters
Bert Roach
Pat Wilder
Grace Bradley
Francis MacDonald
Florence George
Sheila Darcy

Bette Davis the No. 1 Star at Warner Plant

Bette Davis was the fair haired child on the Warner Bros.-First National roster. She took the top honors away from Errol Flynn, who changed places with her on the

rating of the previous year. Paul Muni continued to hold the second spot in the Warner fold, as well as taking away the male draw value from Flynn.

Cagney Starts Climb

James Cagney, back in the fold, follows Flynn in value and should he get a couple more pics like "Angels With Dirty Faces" he will re-attain his former top ranking. Another back in the fold is Edward G. Robinson, who is rated on par with Cagney. Pat O'Brien, though obviously very popular with exhibs, had no immense productions, being coupled with others, so therefore he rates behind the other two.

Wayne Morris, newly added to the star roster, made an exceptionally fine showing. He eclipsed Dick Powell who, at end of 1938, obtained a final divorce decree from the Warner lot. Humphrey Bogart,

WARNER BROS.-F.N.

Stars

BETTE DAVIS
PAUL MUNI
ERROL FLYNN
JAMES CAGNEY
EDWARD G. ROBINSON
PAT O'BRIEN
WAYNE MORRIS
DICK POWELL
HUMPHREY BOGART
GEORGE BRENT
OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND
KAY FRANCIS
ANITA LOUISE
***MIRIAM HOPKINS**

*Not used in 1938 releases.

Featured

John Garfield
Dead End Kids
Priscilla Lane
Frank McHugh
Allen Jenkins
Hugh Herbert
John Payne
Joan Blondell
Donald Crisp
Ann Sheridan
Glenda Farrell
Rosemary Lane
Bonita Granville
Ronald Reagan
Jeffrey Lynn
John Littel
Eddie Albert
Claude Rains
Gale Page
Lola Lane
Margaret Lindsay
Jane Wyman
Marie Wilson
Fay Bainter
Jane Bryan
Janet Chapman
Jerry Colona
James Stephenson
Dick Foran
Johnny Davis
Melville Cooper
Penny Singleton
Gale Sondergaard
Hugh O'Connell
Barton MacLane
Lana Turner
Mabel Todd
Dick Purcell
Ian Hunter
Gloria Dickson
Henry O'Neill
Veda Ann Borg
Isabel Jeans
Patric Knowles
Anderson Lawlor
Marcia Ralston
Gloria Blondell

for type of pictures in which he is used, showed up in splendid style, proving of more value than George Brent, Olivia de Havilland and Kay Francis, the latter another fadeout after long and profitable service to the company.

Anita Louise, also listed in the star group, did not seem to radiate strongly so has disappeared from the WB roster. Another on the list for one picture, Miriam Hopkins, made no release on the year.

John Garfield and the Dead End Kids, newcomers into the fold, are the trailblazers of the featured contingent. Studio has great faith in Garfield's future and likely that this recruit from Broadway legit will be among the starring contingent when the 1939-40 product announcement is made.

Priscilla Lane, one of the three Lane sisters, is leader of the femme group on the featured list, with her sister, Rosemary, down on the rating and the other sister, Lola, though more experienced in screen work, out of the lineup. Frank McHugh and Allen Jenkins, WB vets, are still up there, as is Hugh Herbert, who left to pursue a freelance career. Studio has considerable faith in ability of John Payne, re-

cently added, and who, should the studio decide to make anything musical, will substitute in lead roles formerly assigned to Dick Powell.

Pushing Three Femmes

Ann Sheridan, a new ingenue, is being groomed for potent billing as well as Jane Bryan, who has had a couple of tryouts under her belt for the year. Marie Wilson also is highly thought of by the front office, desirous of pushing her to the fore but having a hard task obtaining suitable material for her.

Joan Blondell's b.o. strength did not appear potent this year with result she decided to try elsewhere for her 1939 screen labors. There are plenty of established stellar players in the contingent, who with performance and marquee value, always prove desirable for theatre revenue. In this group are Donald Crisp, Claude Rains, Margaret Lindsay, John Littel, Fay Bainter, Melville Cooper, Patric Knowles and Gale Sondergaard.

Studio also has quite a bit of new talent which, though of little b.o. consequence currently, may break out and become marquee assets during 1939.

Ginger Rogers Heads Starring List at RKO

Though it had plenty of star commitments, both under term contract and for individual pictures, RKO had nothing sensational during the year in production and, as its main marquee asset, depended on Ginger Rogers' production. Fred Astaire had just one that was released on the year with Miss Rogers, while she had two others tucked away under her b.o. belt. Cary Grant and Irene Dunne, on one-pic deals,

RKO-RADIO

Stars

GINGER ROGERS
FRED ASTAIRE
CARY GRANT
JACK OAKIE
IRENE DUNNE
MARX BROS.
JOE PENNER
GEORGE O'BRIEN
KATHARINE HEPBURN
BARBARA STANWYCK
RICHARD DIX
LUCILLE BALL
DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, Jr.
BOBBY BREEN
***JOHN BOLES**
***BOB BURNS**
***EDDIE CANTOR**
***CLAUDETTE COLBERT**
***DOUGLAS CORRIGAN**
***VICTOR McLAGLEN**
***BURGESS MEREDITH**

*Made no pictures for 1938 release.

Featured

Ann Shirley
Sally Eilers
Preston Foster
Chester Morris
Ruby Keeler
Milton Berle
Victor Moore
Joan Fontaine
Ann Sothern
Edward Ellis
Ann Miller
Parkyakarkas
James Ellison
Louis Hayward
Helen Broderick
Allen Lane
Paul Guilfoyle
Donald McBride
Sam Levene
Jack Carson
Lee Bowman
Richard Lane
Jack Arnold
Lee Patrick
Whitney Bourne
Billy Gilbert
Walter Abel
Bradley Page
Vicki Lester
Bruce Cabot
Rita Oehman
Irene Dare
Thelma Leeds
Joan Woodbury
Kay Sutton
Frances Mercer
Leona Roberts
June Travis

proved to be very potent for the company, as was Jack Oakie, who has left the fold.

Marx Bros., with one, were okay, while Joe Penner and George O'Brien proved to be more profitable to the company than Katharine Hepburn, who has vanished from RKO listing. Barbara Stanwyck,

(Continued on page 22)

L. A. Mighty Despite Racing And Football; 'Sweethearts' Heading For Smash, More 'Pyg' H.O.s Assured

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

Big takes for locals. This despite opening of Santa Anita race track on Saturday. Tournament of Roses parade and Rose Bowl game at Pasadena. All first runs staged midnight shows Saturday, at upped prices. Town's leader is easily 'Sweethearts,' single billed at State and Chinese.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Chinese (Grauman-F-WC) (2,024; 30-40-55-75)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Looks mighty big. Last week 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G), neat \$10,700.

Downtown (WB) (1,800; 30-40-55-65)—'Going Places' (WB) and 'Devil's Island' (WB). Last week, 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Nancy Drew' (WB) (2d week), \$10,000.

Four Star (F-WC-UA) (900; 40-55)—'Pygmalion' (M-G) (2d wk). Momentum of initial week's \$8,000 should keep this Shaw opus going for six to eight stanzas.

Hollywood (WB) (2,756; 30-40-55-65)—'Going Places' (WB) and 'Devil's Island' (WB). Last week, second stanza of 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Nancy Drew' (M-G), \$9,000.

Orpheum (Bway) (2,280; 25-30-35-40)—'Sharpshooters' (20th) and vaude. One of the strongest shows of the season and looks sweet. Last week 'Bulldog Drummond' (Par), first run, and 'Annabel' (RKO), plus vaude, fair \$8,000.

Pantages (Pan) (2,812; 30-40-55)—'That Woman Again' (Col) and 'Newsboys' Home' (U). Last week 'Blondie' (Col) and 'Girls' School' (Col), fair \$6,200.

Paramount (Par) (3,595; 30-40-55)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and stage show. Last week 'Tom Sawyer' (Par) and stage show, very disappointing at \$10,000.

RKO (2,872; 30-40-55)—'That Woman Again' (Col) and 'Newsboys' Home' (U). Last week 'Blondie' (Col) and 'Girls' School' (Col), okay \$8,000.

State (Loew-Fox) (2,414; 30-40-55-75)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Holiday biz has house topping 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' and sweet gross in sight. Last week 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G), better expectations with close to \$13,000.

United Artists (F-WC) (2,100; 30-40-55)—'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G). Looks big. Last week 'Goes My Heart' (UA) and 'Up River' (20th), \$2,700.

Wilshire (F-WC) (2,296; 30-40-55-65)—'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G). Last week 'Goes My Heart' (UA) and 'Up River' (20th), weak \$3,700.

BUFF BRISK; 'WOMAN,' 'KY,' 'SWEETHEARTS' OK

Buffalo, Jan. 1.

New Year's sellout midnight performances sent this week's grosses skyrocketing. All houses are being helped by strong holiday attractions and a cold New Year's weekend is driving up the grosses to peak figures. 'Sweethearts' is showing extraordinary strength, with 'That Woman' also clicking and 'Kentucky' running strong.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Buffalo (Shea) (3,500; 30-35-55)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Looks great. Last week, 'West with Hardys' (M-G) very nice \$19,000, nine days.

Century (Shea) (3,000; 25-35)—'Going Places' (WB) and 'Devil's Island' (WB). Last week, 'Angels' (WB) (2d wk) excellent \$10,000 in 10 days.

Great Lakes (Shea) (3,000; 30-50)—'Kentucky' (20th). Last week, 'Artists and Models' (Par), bettered expectations for good \$7,500.

Hipp (Shea) (2,100; 25-40)—'Trade Winds' (UA). Last week 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) slow \$5,000.

Lafayette (Ind.) (3,300; 25-35)—'That Woman Again' (Col). Another natural. Should click. Last week 'Storm' (U) and 'Swing, Sister' (U), sloughed off to fair \$7,200.

Port. Celluloid Spells Coin; 'Sweethearts' H. O.

Portland, Ore., Jan. 1.

'Sweethearts,' in its second week at Parker's UA, is a smash winner that will hold longer. Another money maker is 'Dawn Patrol' at the Hamrick-Evergreen Paramount.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Broadway (Parker) (2,000; 30-35-40)—'Trade Winds' (UA) and 'Girls

on Probation' (WB). Last week 'Dr. Kildare' (M-G) and 'Flirting with Fate' (M-G), okay \$4,500.

Mayfair (Parker-Evergreen) (1,500; 30-35-40)—'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G). Fourth week still above par. Third week nice at \$3,000. First two weeks at the UA cleaned up good \$9,000.

Orpheum (Hamrick - Evergreen) (1,800; 30-35-40)—'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Next Time Marry' (RKO). Last week 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Pecks Bad Boy' (RKO) went over strong for \$5,000.

Paramount Hamrick-Evergreen (3,000; 30-35-40)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Blondie' (Col) (2d wk). First week clicked big with \$5,600.

Rivoli (Indie) (1,100; 20-25)—'Algiers' (UA) and 'Speed to Burn' (20th) (reissues). Last week 'Three Loves Has Nancy' (M-G) and 'Keep Smiling' (20th), good enough \$1,600.

United Artists (Parker) (1,000; 30-35-40)—'Sweethearts' (M-G) (2d wk). Will hold longer. First week wowed 'em for great \$7,300.

'KY.' AND VAUDE BEST BET, DETROIT

Detroit, Jan. 1.

Plenty of good product, aided by New Year's Eve and extra holiday price-sked, brightens film row here currently. Top coin-getter should be the Fox, with 'Kentucky' and Tony Martin returning to head stage show following smash two-week sesh at same spot last spring.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Adams (Balaban) (1,700; 30-40)—'Up River' (20th) and 'Thanks for Everything' (20th). Last week, 'Man Remember' (RKO) and 'Breaking Ice' (RKO), \$4,100.

Fox (Indie) (5,000; 30-40-65)—'Kentucky' (20th) plus Tony Martin-Lola Lane topping vaude. Last week, 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) plus stage show, okay \$18,300.

Michigan (United Detroit) (4,000; 30-40-75)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Comet Over Broadway' (WB). Last week, 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Say French' (Par), good \$16,500.

Palms-State (United Detroit) (3,000; 30-40-50)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB) (2d run) and 'Mysterious Rider' (Par). Last week, 'Heart of North' (WB) and 'Bulldog Drummond' (Par), okay \$7,000.

United Artists (United Detroit) (2,000; 30-40-65)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Last week, 'Snow White' (RKO) (3d wk) (reissue) \$5,000 after \$10,000 and \$5,000 in previous two weeks.

Jane Withers' P.A. with 'Blondie' Gives Pitt 2 Flesh Spots; B.O. Big

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Town dressing its windows with flock of ace attractions. Additional shows at upped prices bolstering takes considerably. Business started off at a breakneck pace and it looks like a sock session everywhere.

Alvin has a flesh display for the first time in more than two years, Jane Withers p.a.ing along with 'Blondie,' and giving Stanley, which has had a monopoly on presentations, a little competish. Latter playing 'Young in Heart' and Bob Crosby's band. Penn expectations high with 'Sweethearts' behind big advertising push. 'Out West with Hardys' looks good at Warner after strong session at Penn. Fulton catching what it can with indie 'Children of Wild,' house being still strapped for product, and ditto Senator with town's only holiday dual in 'Smashing Spy Ring' and 'Freshman Year.'

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Alvin (Harris) (1,800; 25-40-60)—'Blondie' (Col) and Jane Withers on stage. First flesh for this spot in more than two years. Last week 'Thanks for Everything' (20th), one of season's big disappointments at



JOHN CARRADINE

After an exciting part in 20th Century-Fox's "Jesse James," the versatile thesp just completed a still more interesting role in Walter Wanger's "Stage Coach," both attractions being readied for release early in the new year.

K. C. Product Strong Enough to Drive Out Duals and Vaudeville

Kansas City, Jan. 1.

Film attractions in all straight picture houses on the strong side, and general drawing power improved over last week.

'Sweethearts,' at the Midland, one of the few films of the year considered strong enough to take the week solo, as only about half a dozen throughout the year have played single in this big house. Film doing itself justice, giving house one of its bigger weeks. Looks to lead the town.

Newman likewise is okay with 'Artists and Models' and heading toward one of its fairer figures. 'Kentucky' day and date in the Esquire and Uptown, broke in couple of days early, with Wednesday opening. Certain of a few extended days, and may stay on for a couple of weeks. Nine days at least.

Theatre row returns to its usual single stage show at the Tower after some flesh competition from the Newman during December. Frankie Masters and Joy Hodges making a dual headliner at the Tower this week.

Last week failed to live up to expectations, figures being noticeably under anticipations in general.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Esquire and Uptown (Fox Midwest) (820 and 1,200; 10-25-40)—'Kentucky' (20th) day and date on early Wednesday opening. Giving good account of itself. Last week, five days for 'Thanks for Everything' (20th), making 12-day total, looked up to \$2,750.

Midland (Loew's) (3,573; 10-25-40)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Solo here in strict contrast to usual policy. Healthy start looks to hold. Last week 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) \$12,000, good, but little off from expectations.

Newman (Paramount) (1,900; 10-25-40)—'Artists and Models' (Par). Returns the house to straight film fare, and also to 40c top price from (Continued on page 52)

Weather, Competish, Lack of Sock Product Put Damper on Mpls.

'DUKE,' 'TRADE WINDS' AUGUR WELL, LINCOLN

Lincoln, Jan. 1.

With midnight shows helping on New Year's eve, film biz spurts into 1939 on a tail wind. Expected to lag after the two-day holiday, but is sufficient to give all houses a good currency flow.

'Trade Winds' looks better than average at the Stuart, while 'Artists and Models' is the Lincoln's strong point. 'Duke of West Point' having three good opening days, for a nice week's prospect.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Colonial (NTI - Noble - Monroe) (750; 10-15)—'Red River Range' (Rep) and 'Shadows Over Shanghai' (Rep) split with 'Rio Grande' (Col) and 'Tough Kid' (Mono). Just the ticket for this house. Last week 'Early Arizona' (Col) and 'Life Returns' (Indie) split with 'Under Western Stars' (Rep) and 'Higgins Family' (Rep) \$900, okay.

Lincoln (LTC-Cooper) (1,600; 10-25-35)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Storm' (U). Last week 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) \$2,800, all right.

Stuart (LTC-Cooper) (1,900; 10-25-40)—'Trade Winds' (UA). Last week 'Sweethearts' (M-G) did okay with \$4,700.

Varsity (NTI-Noble) (1,100; 10-25-35)—'Duke of West Point' (UA). Last week 'Heart of North' (WB), nice \$2,600.

'SWEETHEARTS,' 'KY.' SOLID IN FRISCO

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Two color pictures, 'Sweethearts' and 'Kentucky,' look set for the best biz in town this week. 'Pacific Liner,' which got its world preem at the Golden Gate, also is sailing along at a good clip. Although Christmas week was way below expectations, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day hitting new lows for many houses all over town, most of the boys on the main stem have hopes of the New Year starting more auspiciously than the last few weeks of 1938 ended.

Most of the screen fare last week rated more attention than it got from the public, but balmy spring weather in December and brilliance of outdoor Christmas trimmings all over town was too much competish for the deluxers, as well as the nabes.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Fox (F-WC) (5,000; 35-55-75)—'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Chan in Honolulu' (20th). Last week 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Up River' (20th), healthy \$20,000.

Golden Gate (RKO) (2,850; 35-55)—'Pacific Liner' (RKO) and vaude. Top of \$1.10 for this show on New Year's eve. Last week 'Little Tough Guys' (RKO) and vaude, fine \$17,000.

Orpheum (F&M) (2,440; 35-55)—'Can't Take It' (Col) (7th wk). Amazing strength of this picture has all the boys gasping. When biz started to sag at the Orpheum last week, along with practically everything else in town manager Hal Neides started thinking in terms of his next attraction. However, Frank Capra picture is going into its seventh inning. Last week (6th), \$7,500.

Paramount (F-WC) (2,740; 35-55-75)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Sons of Legion' (Par) (2d wk). After a bad start, new Benny picture has taken hold. Last week 'Artists and Models' (four days) and 'Dramatic School' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) (three days), disappointing \$11,000.

St. Francis (F-WC) (1,470; 35-55-75)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Up River' (20th). Last week 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Dr. Kildare' (M-G) (3d wk), closed to \$4,500.

United Artists (Cohen) (1,200; 35-55-65)—'Young Heart' (UA) (2d wk). Last week \$10,000, which wasn't bad, considering.

Warfield (F-WC) (2,680; 35-55-75)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). After taking it on the chin during the past month, the Warfield is staging a big comeback this week with the MacDonald-Eddy operetta. Last week 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Nancy Drew' (WB), very bad at \$8,000.

Minneapolis, Jan. 1.

Sub-zero weather, snowstorms and icy roads are doing plenty of damage to box-offices that were none too healthy under more favorable weather conditions. Many potential customers apparently prefer to hug the firesides under present conditions. And the bowl football radio broadcasts loom tougher opposition every year.

Fact that the film houses were sans stage shows or particularly outstanding attractions mitigated against especially heavy returns at the New Year's eve midnight performances. Houses have such midnight performances every Saturday, anyway. Night clubs and hotels, as well as some parties, imposed a heavy drain on box-offices.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Aster (Par-Singer) (900; 15-25)—'Law West of Tombstone' (RKO) and 'Nancy Drew' (WB), dual first runs, split with 'Down on Farm' (20th) and 'Storm' (U), also dual first runs. Fairly satisfactory anticipations. Last week, 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and 'Annabel' (RKO), dual first runs, split with 'Flirting with Fate' (M-G) and 'Frontiersman' (Par), also dual first runs, \$1,500, pretty good.

Century (Par-Singer) (1,600; 25-35-40)—'West with Hardys' (M-G). Moved here from State after good seven days—all things considered—there. Still an ace for family trade and in a spot where it should get good matinee play.

Gopher (Par-Singer) (998; 25)—'Up River' (20th). Good holiday attraction for this spot. Lack of cast names only fly in the ointment. Should struggle through to fair results. Last week, 'Service de Luxe' (U) \$2,500, fair.

Orpheum (Par-Singer) (2,800; 25-35-40)—'Thanks for Everything' (20th). Good light entertainment for this season of year, but not powerful enough to overcome numerous adverse influences. Looks light. Last week, 'Brother Rat' (WB), \$6,500, pretty good, but plenty disappointing for such a highly praised picture.

State (Par-Singer) (2,800; 25-35-40)—'Artists and Models' (Par). Musical revues of this type haven't been clicking so well in this town. Well liked, but box-office prospects not regarded any too favorably. Last week, 'West with Hardys' (M-G) \$9,000, good, but under expectations.

Time (Berger) (290; 15-25)—'Gangster's Boy' (Mono). A first-run for a change and title and star, Jackie Cooper, spell dough. Should breeze through to nice results. Last week, 'Drums' (UA) (2d run) \$700, fair.

Uptown (Par) (1,200; 25-35)—'If King' (Par). First neighborhood showing and looks pretty good. Last week, 'Stablemates' (M-G) \$2,600, mild.

World (Steffes) (350; 25-35-40-55)—'To the Victor' (GB). No cast names, but should build in this class spot. Looks like fair results. Last week, 'Moonlight Sonata' (Indie) (5th wk) \$1,000, light.

'River'-Blondie' And 'Sweethearts' Aiming For Denver Records

Denver, Jan. 1.

Business looks to equal or pass same week last year. Weather is helping.

'Up the River' and 'Blondie' broke opening day record at the Paramount. 'Sweethearts' will threaten the Orpheum house records.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Aladdin (Fox) (1,400; 25-40)—'Trade Winds' (UA), after a week at the Denver. Last week, 'Submarine Patrol' (20th) fair \$3,000.

Broadway (Fox) (1,100; 25-40)—'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and 'Flirting with Fate' (M-G), after a week at the Orpheum. Last week, 'Dramatic School' (M-G) and 'Law West of Tombstone' (RKO), nice \$2,000, both having been at the Orpheum a week.

Denham (Cockrill) (1,750; 25-35-40)—'Tom Sawyer' (Par) and 'Adventures of Chico' (Indie). Last week, 'Frontiersman' (Par) and 'Orphan Annie' (Par) were yanked after doing only \$1,500 in four days.

Denver (Fox) (2,525; 25-35-50)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB). Last week, 'Trade Winds' (UA), good, considering business at most other first runs, closing with \$9,000.

Orpheum (RKO) (2,600; 25-35-40)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Last week, 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and 'Flirting with Fate' (M-G), best in town with \$10,000.

Paramount (Fox) (2,200; 25-40)—'Up River' (20th) and 'Blondie' (Col). Last week, 'Hard to Get' (WB) and 'Storm' (U), fair \$3,000.

Rialto (Fox) (878; 25-40)—'Submarine Patrol' (20th), after a week at each the Denver and Aladdin, and 'His Exciting Night' (U). Last week, 'Angels with Dirty Faces' (WB), after a week at Denver and Aladdin, and 'Dr. Meade' (Col), \$2,000.

New State-Lake Policy With 'Crime' Strong in Chi; 'Honeymoon,' 'Tarnished Angel' Also Clicky

Chicago, Jan. 1.

With the New Year's eve session at a dollar straight in nearly all the loop houses the downtown spots had a foundation of beaucoup coin on the week. And plus the weight of the best general week in the year, the total grosses at all the places are sufficient to mean plenty of profits all down the line.

Not much to choose from on the picture angle, with 'Paris Honeymoon' rating as the only picture with any noteworthy boxoffice ability on its own. Other major theatres, such as the Oriental, State-Lake and Palace, are relying almost completely on their stage line-ups.

Also only one holdover though 'Artists and Models' moved into Garrick following a meek week in Chicago. 'Trade Winds' continues in the Roosevelt. While 'Shining Hour' wound up in the United Artists, with 'Sweethearts' succeeding Sat. (31). Apollo same day opened 'Dramatic School'.

Palace, insisting on its position as the traditional vaudeville spot of the town, came through with a special line-up of talent for the New Year's eve midnight show, adding five acts to the regular bill and sold the ensemble on its traditional reserved seat set-up for the special show.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Apollo (B&K) (1,200; 35-55-65-75) 'Dramatic School' (M-G) opened Saturday (31). Last week, 'Snow White' (RKO) \$5,200, good.

Chicago (B&K) (4,000; 35-55-75) 'Paris Honeymoon' (Par) and stage show. Powerful but aided neatly by those buck-top shows on New Year's eve. Last week 'Artists and Models' (Par) \$25,600, mild.

Garrick (B&K) (900; 35-55-65-75) 'Artists and Models' (Par). Hitting rapid pace. Last week 'Say French' (Par) and 'Gangster's Boy' (Mon) meek \$4,800.

Oriental (Jones) (2,200; 25-35-40) 'Tarnished Angel' (RKO) and vaude. Show lines up as a house-built unit currently. In the zoom with everything else. Last week 'Secrets of Nurse' (U) managed okay \$16,200.

Palace (RKO) (2,500; 35-55-65-75) 'Up River' (20th) and vaude. With special New Year's eve reserved seats gets into the respectable figures. Last week, brutal \$14,100 for 'Spring Madness' (M-G).

Roosevelt (B&K) (1,500; 35-55-65-75) 'Trade Winds' (UA) (2d wk). Brilliant showing after fine \$13,400 last week.

State-Lake (B&K) (2,700; 25-35-40) 'Crime Takes Holiday' (U) and vaude. House has caught on with its eight-act policy, at low-priced set-ups. Will go into great money. Last week, for six days, 'Confessions' (Par) got house away in great style with \$14,000.

United Artists (B&K-UA) (1,700; 35-55-65-75) 'Sweethearts' (M-G) opened here Saturday (31). Should perk on New Year's session. Last week was off at \$8,000 on second week of 'Shining Hour' (M-G).

'ANGELS' H.O. PACING FOR B'KLYN RECORD

Brooklyn, Jan. 1.

Splendid lineup of talent on stages and first rate film attractions will give downtown deluxers whooping grosses for New Year's week. Socko biz at every theatre with Fabian Paramount ahead of everyone else and likely to set new record. Paramount holding 'Angels with Dirty Faces' second week and due to garner magnificent gross. Strand with George Jessel on stage and 'Adventure in Sahara' on screen also strong. Fabian Fox in chips with 'Artists and Models Abroad'.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Albee (3,274; 25-35-50) 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Sharpshooters' (20th). Last week, 'Up River' (20th) and 'Annabel' (RKO), \$16,000, good.

Fox (4,089; 25-50) 'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Secrets of Nurse' (U). Last week, 'Heart of North' (WB) and 'Cipher Bureau' (GN). Okay \$16,000.

Met (3,618; 25-50) 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Last Warning' (U). Last week, 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Strange Faces' (U), \$17,000, good.

Paramount (4,126; 25-35-50) 'Angels' (WB) and 'Down on Farm' (20th) (2d wk). Last week, this pair drew wonderful \$27,500.

Strand (2,870; 25-50) 'Adventure in Sahara' (Col) and vaude with George Jessel heading bill. Last week, 'Shadows Over Shanghai' (GN) and vaude, \$14,500, okay.

PROV. GROSSES PERK WITH GOOD PRODUCT

Providence, Jan. 1.

Increased biz at all stands has main stemmers smiling after seasonal Xmas week drop. State closing late-show trial period on Monday. Ten-day period helped draw late parties and may be resumed later. Blackstone on Albee stage for week's run.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Albee (RKO) (2,200; 25-35-50) 'Newsboys' Home' (U) and Blackstone on stage. Last week 'That Woman Again' (Col) and 'Peck's Bad Boy' (RKO), so-so \$5,000.

Carlton (Fay-Loew) (1,400; 25-35-50) 'Brother Rat' (WB) and 'Nancy Drew' (WB) (2d run). Last week, 'Goes My Heart' (UA) and 'Spy Ring' (Col) (2d run) had heart-failure with \$2,500.

Fay's (Indie) (2,000; 25-35-40) 'Up River' (20th) and vaude. Last week, 'Freshman Year' (U) and Bowes' unit on stage slowed to fair \$5,000.

State (Loew) (3,200; 25-35-50) 'Sweethearts' (M-G). Last week, 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G), whopping \$12,500.

Majestic (Fay) (2,300; 25-35-50) 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Swing, Sister' (U). Last week, 'Brother Rat' (WB) and 'Nancy Drew' (WB) surprised with swell \$8,500.

Strand (Indie) (2,200; 25-35-50) 'Paris Honeymoon' (Par) and 'Storm Over Bengal' (Rep). Last week, 'Artists Models' (Par) and 'In Old Mexico' (Par) proved pushover for swell \$9,000.

HUB B.O.S HOT, H.O.S LOOM STRONG

Boston, Jan. 1.

Film b.o.'s responding well to the holiday rush, with 'Out West with the Hardys' smashing away to very hefty gross at Loew's Orpheum and State.

'Thanks for Everything' looks good at the Memorial, and 'Paris Honeymoon' medium at the Met. 'Kentucky' and 'Up the River' dualled, playing both the Met and the Paramount New Year's Eve. Other houses will offer their current bills. Advance on holiday eve shows very good all over town.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates

Boston (RKO) (3,200; 20-30-40) 'Freshman Year' (U) and 'Juvenile Court' (Col) plus vaude, for four days: 'Suez' (20th) and 'Man Remember' (RKO) (2d runs) without vaude, three days. Last week 'Crime Holiday' (Col) and 'Little Adventure' (Col), plus vaude, good \$10,000.

Fenway (M&P) (1,332; 25-35-40-55) 'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Tom Sawyer' (Par) (2d run). Last week 'Sub Patrol' (20th) and 'Thanks for Memory' (Par), \$7,000.

Keith Memorial (RKO) (2,907; 25-35-40-55) 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Last Warning' (U). Last week 'Goes My Heart' (UA) and 'Always Trouble' (20th), nine days, okay \$22,000.

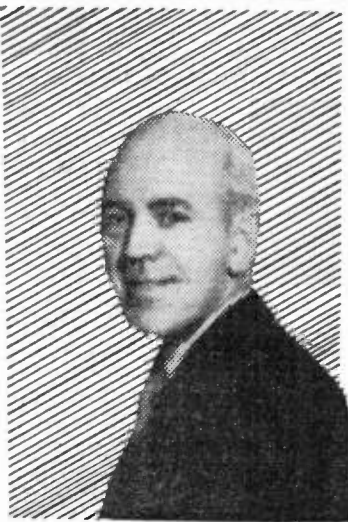
Metropolitan (M&P) (4,367; 25-35-40-55) 'Paris Honeymoon' (Par) and 'Storm Over Bengal' (Rep), with 'Kentucky' (20th) for midnight show. Last week 'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Tom Sawyer' (Par), \$14,000.

Orpheum (Loew) (2,900; 25-35-40-55) 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Dr. Kildare' (M-G) (2d wk). Tally for 11-day run, including New Year's eve will be in vicinity of \$28,500, socko.

Paramount (M&P) (1,797; 25-35-40-55) 'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Tom Sawyer' (Par) (2d run) with 'Kentucky' (20th) for midnight special. Last week 'Sub Patrol' (20th) and 'Thanks for Memory' (Par) (2d run), adequate \$10,000.

Scollay (M&P) (2,538; 25-35-40-50) 'Sub Patrol' (20th) and 'Thanks for Memory' (Par) (3d run). Last week 'Angels' (WB) and 'Down on Farm' (20th) (3d run), tepid \$6,000.

State (Loew) (3,600; 25-35-40-55) 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Dr. Kildare' (M-G). Held over for four extra days, including midnight show. For 11 days about \$19,000, very big.



JIMMY McHUGH

Composer

Best wishes to all of my friends and an especial greeting to those with whom I was associated during 1938-1939 in Deanna Durbin's 'Mad About Music' ('I LOVE TO WHISTLE'); Deanna Durbin's 'That Certain Age' ('MY OWN'); and Alice Faye's 'You're a Sweetheart' ('YOU'RE A SWEETHEART').

NICE PRODUCT, UPPED PRICES, PHILLY

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

With two extra performances at well-tilted prices all along the line and fairly strong product, aggregate figure hung up this sesh will without a doubt register tops for the year. Extra midnight performances were given on both Saturday and Sunday nights, playing as in past years to mobs on their feet in almost all houses. Tap in 75-cent top houses was pushed to 86 cents from 7 p. m. on both nights, with the vaudeville Earle, which ordinarily gets a maximum of 68 cents, getting shoved up to 99 cents.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Aldine (WB) (1,303 42-57-68-75-86) 'Duke of West Point' (UA). Opened on Saturday (31) to catch holiday biz, which gave 'Trade Winds' (UA) two extra days on its second lap. Later reached fair \$11,000 for the nine days.

Boyd (WB) (37-57-68-75-86) 'Sweethearts' (M-G) (2d wk). Aided by pleasant w. of m., after being given an initial draft by the crit that got it off for \$23,000 last session.

Earle (WB) (2,758; 25-37-42-57-68-75-99) 'Girl Downstairs' (M-G) and Ken Murray, Lionel Stander, Eleanor Whitney and Gene Austin on stage. Strong show in town this turn, with two extra shows at upped prices. Last week, Ritz Brothers p.a.ing and 'Swing, Sister' (U), sockeroo \$31,000 for six days, plus \$3,100 extra at Stanley, Camden, on Sunday.

Fox (WB) (2,423; 37-57-68-75-86) 'Kentucky' (20th). Last week, 'Thanks for Everything' (20th), with 'Ferdinand' (RKO) to hypo, failed to show much strength at \$13,700.

Karlton (WB) (1,066; 37-42-57-68-75) 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Ferdinand' (RKO) (2d run). Last week, 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) (2d run), not bad at \$4,100.

Keith's (WB) (1,870; 37-42-57-68-75) 'Trade Winds' (UA) (2d run). Opened on Saturday (31). Last week, 'West with Hardys' (M-G) (2d run), fair \$4,200 following two weeks at the Stanley.

Stanley (WB) (2,916; 37-57-68-75-86) 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) (2d wk). Got \$19,200 in the initial take-off.

Stanton (WB) (1,457; 26-42-57-68) 'Devil's Island' (WB). Saturday opening (31). Last week, 'Spy Ring' (Col) punko \$3,900.

'SWEETHEARTS' LOOKS SWEET IN BALTIMORE

Baltimore, Jan. 1.

Quite a decided spurt here this week-end, indicating a brighter turn from recent spotty going. Nice line-up of product and extra late shows by all downtowners, all helping. 'Sweethearts' started them coming early and continued consistent pace, pointing to biggest take for Loew's Century in recent weeks. Strong stage lineup pushing combo Hipp to front with 'There's That Woman Again'.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates
Century (Loew's-UA) (3,000; 15-25-35-40-55) 'Sweethearts' (M-G) and Ken Whitmer stage presentation. Looks like biggest thing here in months. Last week, 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and stage show held a steady pace to \$11,300.

Hippodrome (Rappaport) (2,205; 15-25-35-40-55-66) 'That Woman Again' (Col) leaning on extra strong

'Topper' Looks to Top 'Xmas Carol's' \$107,000; Extra Shows, Upped Scales Boom B'way; Whiteman-'Heart' Big

When the figures for New Year's week are in, it is expected they will compare favorably with the same holiday stanza a year ago, in spite of the fact that the majority of the Broadway theatres held over their Christmas shows. Last year all houses but one ushered in fresh pictures for the New Year crowds.

Receiving an unprecedented heavy play between Christmas and New Year's eve, with business startling the street on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (27-28-29-30), virtually all houses finished their Xmas weeks strong and started out on the New Year lap in smash fashion. In view of the upped prices for New Year's eve, with most of the larger first runs at \$1.50 top, and the scheduling of extra shows, most managers found that the pictures held over started better on their current (2d) week than on the first (Yuletide) sessions.

The only theatres not increasing prices Saturday night (31) were the Music Hall, where the orchestra price of 99c and the loge scale of \$1.65 was not disturbed; the Rivoli, where the top is 99c, and the Cap, which gets 99c. orch and \$1.25 for loges. In all houses midnight shows were scheduled, with the push of business to determine how far into the morning they would grind, while in others very late complete stage and screen shows were put on. The Paramount, Strand and State went to a new high of seven complete stage shows. State scheduled its last complete program at 1:30 a. m., while the Par and Strand set 2 a. m. as the time for the final show, with screenings of the picture to continue after that as long as business warranted.

Crowds from out of town have been larger than anticipated, which, together with kids relieved of school chores, brought continuous lobby holdouts during the entire past week. The estimate on New Year's travel in and out of the city was that it would run about 10% higher than last year. An advantage this year was that Christmas and New Year's provided a three-day weekend at the titled scales.

The only 'A' first run to change shows for the New Year stanza is the Music Hall, which brought in 'Topper Takes a Trip' Thursday (29), and is pacing briskly. 'Topper' will beat the showing made by 'Christmas Carol' over the first of the holidays, latter having finished powerfully at \$107,000.

'Ride a Crooked Mile,' which entered the Criterion, a secondary first run Thursday (29), and two reissues, 'Black Cat' and 'Dark House,' at the Rialto, are the only other new shows, except at the second-run State. They are up against very tough competition, especially from stage-show houses, which always get the biggest portion of the out-of-town play.

Of the two leading straight film first-runs that also must face this oppositional angle, Capitol and Rivoli, the latter is, however, overcoming the handicap in usually fine style. Having brought in 'Beachcomber' Xmas eve (24), the Riv went to \$36,000, terrific, on the first week and should equal or surpass that figure for the New Year's tally.

'Sweethearts,' at the Capitol, mounted a pretty good \$30,000 over Christmas and is pacing satisfactorily on the holdover, although taking a back seat to the smaller Rivoli, as well as the Roxy, Strand, and Paramount, which also held their shows. The Globe, with 'Lady Vanishes,' a stout business-getter for this small 'B' first run, is also on a holdover. All these holdovers are very strong.

'Kentucky' went to \$55,100 over Christmas week at the Roxy after a very slow start, while 'Dawn Patrol,' with Abe Lyman band, which left the gate much faster at the Strand, finished the Yuletide lap at over \$50,000, smash business. But for having opened two days ahead of Christmas, with Saturday (24) also under expectations for all of Broadway, 'Patrol' and Lyman would have cracked the record under the present policy of \$51,800 established the week of Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving week). Starting its holdover week very briskly, over New Year's there

vaude layout featuring 'Gang Busters,' Jane Pickens and Red Skelton. Last week, 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and Benny Davis unit, \$12,200.

Keith's (Schanberger) (2,460; 15-25-35-40-55) 'Artists and Models' (Par) (2d wk). Same film not so forte last week at \$4,300.

New (Mechanic) (1,558; 15-25-35-55) 'Kentucky' (20th). Opened Tues. (27) and catching on after good reception by crit.

Stanley (WB) (3,250; 15-25-35-40-55) 'Dawn Patrol' (WB). Last week, 'Going Places' (WB) fell down badly to \$4,400.

is a chance this figure may be hit or bettered.

Paramount got a fine \$47,000 over Christmas with 'Artists and Models Abroad' and Glen Gray Casa Loma band. With business toward the end of the week maintaining a powerful pace, plus seven shows for New Year's eve, predictions were that this figure would be substantially increased on the holdover.

The second-run State, which never holds over Christmas shows, pushed forward to a smart \$29,000 over that holiday with 'Out West with Hardys' and a vaude bill, including Dinty Doyle and Jane Pickens. For New Year's it brought in 'Young in Heart' and Paul Whiteman Thursday morning (29). This show is likewise strong.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates

Astor (1,012; 25-40-55-65) 'Pygmalion' (M-G) (4th week). Hit over \$15,000 last week with aid of the Christmas holiday, best showing to date, and continues strongly. Remains indefinitely.

Capitol (4,520; 25-35-55-85-125) 'Sweethearts' (M-G) (2d-final week). Severe competition and lack of wide interest holding this one down to what amounts to fairly good showing; last week over Christmas it went over \$30,000.

Criterion (1,662; 25-40-55) 'Ride Crooked Mile' (Par). Opened here Thursday (29) and started off well for what will probably add up to a much better than average week. In ahead 'Blondie' (Col) floundered badly, less than \$5,500.

Globe (1,274; 25-40-55) 'Lady Vanishes' (20th) (2d week). Started holdover week Saturday (31) in time for the New Year's push after snarling more than \$10,000 over the Christmas stanza, swell. If business does not fall off sharply toward end of this week, it may be held a third.

Palace (1,700; 25-35-55) 'Angels with Dirty Faces' (WB) (2d run) and 'Annabel Takes Tour' (RKO) (1st run), dualled. This bill above average and will probably go eight days, with new show coming in Thursday (5). In ahead, 'Brother Rat' (WB) (2d run) and 'While New York Sleeps' (WB) (1st run), \$7,500, only fair.

Paramount (3,664; 25-35-55-85-99) 'Artists and Models' (Par) and on stage, Glen Gray band, Andrews Sisters and others (2d-final week). Pulled 'em in over Christmas for a fine \$47,000 and will beat that considerably over New Year's week, with seven shows Saturday (31), upped scale and long grinding. New show of 'Zaza' (Par) and Benny Goodman for Wednesday (4).

Radio City Music Hall (5,980; 40-60-84-99-165) 'Topper Takes Trip' (UA) and stage show. Opened very stoutly Thursday (29) and is certain to beat the smash \$107,000 run up over Christmas by 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) and a two-part Yuletide stage show which had been held a second week. 'Topper' will probably go a second week.

Rialto (750; 25-40-55) 'Black Cat' (U) and 'Dark House' (U) (reissues) opened here Friday (30). In ahead, 'Heart of North' (WB) held for nine days, getting good \$9,000.

Rivoli (2,092; 25-55-75-85-90) 'Beachcomber' (Par) (2d week). British-made Laughton starrer went to \$36,000, very big, over Christmas week and started on holdover Saturday night (31). Chances are good it will top this figure over New Year's, one angle being that people, including out-of-towners, who are piling into the stage show spots first, will then get around to this picture. It will be held a third week under plans.

Roxy (5,836; 25-40-55-75) 'Kentucky' (20th) and stage show (2d-final week). Inaugurated holdover very steadily after forging through to fancy \$55,100 over the first of the two year-end holidays. Will not be held third week.

Strand 2,767; 25-55-75) 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and Abe Lyman band (2d-final week). A strong New Year's week will follow the smash business of over \$50,000 scored over Christmas, nearly all the house can accommodate and close to the record under the stage show policy here set Thanksgiving week by 'Angels' and Ted Lewis, \$51,800. New Year stanza for 'Patrol' and Lyman with seven shows Sat. (31) and a scale of \$1.50 top, might equal or better this figure, however. 'Going Places' and Louis Armstrong, Bill Robinson, others follow Friday (6).

State (3,450; 35-55-75) 'Young in Heart' (UA) (2d run) and Paul Whiteman. Off Thursday (29) for an excellent week. Over the Yule week house went over earlier expectations to get \$29,000, very good, with 'Hardys' (M-G) and Dinty Doyle, Jane Pickens and others on stage.

ZAZA

(WITH SONGS)

Hollywood, Dec. 29. Paramount release of Albert Lewin production. Stars Claudette Colbert; features Herbert Marshall and Bert Lahr. Directed by George Cukor. Screenplay by Zoe Akins from play by Pierre Berton and Charles Simon. Songs by Frederick Hollander and Frank Loesser. Asst. director, Hal Walker; camera, Charles Lang, Jr.; special effects by Gordon Jennings; editor, Edward Dmytryk; production consultant, Alla Nazimova; dances, LeRoy Prinz. Previewed at Westwood Village Dec. 28, '38. Running time, 83 mins.

Zaza.....Claudette Colbert
Dufresne.....Herbert Marshall
Cascart.....Bert Lahr
Anais.....Helen Westley
Nathalie.....Constance Collier
Florianne.....Genevieve Tobin
Malardot.....Walter Catlett
Toto.....Ann Todd
Bussy.....Rex O'Malley
Marchand.....Ernest Cassart
Simone.....Janet Waldo
Mme. Dufresne.....Dorothy Tree
Fouquet.....Monty Woolley
Henri.....Maurice Murphy
Rug Dealer.....Frank Puglia

'Zaza' has always been an actor-proof role, whether on stage or screen. Original play produced by David Belasco made Mrs. Leslie Carter famous; first film version turned out by Paramount in 1915 gave impetus to Pauline Frederick's screen rating; and remake in 1923 did the same for Gloria Swanson. Claudette Colbert takes full advantage of those basic opportunities to provide a most vivid, vital and realistic characterization, a performance that ranks with the tops of the season.

At the boxoffice 'Zaza' will hit solid business in the keys, and roll on that momentum through the sub-sequents for profitable returns. Basically, it's a great attraction for the women with a strong theme of lover's sacrifice.

In the latest presentation of the play, first time as a talker, Paramount has retained basic fundamentals of the original, but adaptation by Zoe Akins injects new treatment of the early 1900 story to freshen it up materially, with retaining the uniqueness and flavor of the original settings.

Zaza is a mischievous and flirtatious vaude soubrette teamed with Bert Lahr in small time bookings in France. Forcing introduction with Herbert Marshall, pair fall in love and launch an affair that goes as far in innuendo and action as the Hays code allows. After quitting the act, Zaza discovers Marshall is married, and gives him up to finally become the hit of Paris. Knowing Marshall is present at her opening, Zaza sings a song of parting for him to know all is over between them.

Claudette Colbert hits the peak of her screen career with a sincere and scintillating portrayal of the frivolous and tempestuous Zaza. Her coy flirtation with Marshall, and later dramatic passages in giving him up to go on to success, are a finely tempered characterization that greatly increases entertaining factors of the picture.

Marshall capably handles the role of the husband who falls in love with Zaza, but is greatly overshadowed by Bert Lahr, Helen Westley and Constance Collier. Lahr, in his first dramatic film role, is notably impressive as Zaza's partner and counselor. He will undoubtedly be called on for straight parts in the future. Miss Westley and Miss Collier also gain attention in prominent character roles.

Little Ann Todd, in brief sequence with Miss Colbert, gives a sparkling performance in handling a most important passage in story development. Others in supporting cast were nicely fitted to their respective roles, and excellently spotted.

The two songs are by Frederick Hollander and Frank Loesser. 'Hello My Darling,' sung by Miss Colbert, has a good chance of gaining pop and radio attention. 'Zaza' is used as an early comedy number by Lahr and Miss Colbert.

Production has been mounted with all-around excellence. Sets and costumes carry plenty of eye-appeal, and the dance numbers fitted nicely into the action. Photography by Charles Lang, Jr., is highly meritorious, and Miss Colbert's closeups are top achievements in the camera art. Special photographic effects by Gordon Jennings are particularly fine.

Director George Cukor presents all of the fine flavor and dramatic intensity of the original play, adding dignity and humanness in his guidance. Picture swings along interestingly, though at a slow but even tempo. Play does not lend itself to fast-paced picture technique, and Cukor wisely steered away from trying to make such a radical change. The controversial 'can-can' dance, which was vetoed by the Hays office during production, is naturally out, although a few brief shots have been allowed.

'Zaza' is geared for good boxoffice returns, and should easily outstrip popularity of its film predecessors.

TITLE CHANGES

'The Lone Wolf' wound up as 'The Lone Wolf Spy Hunt' at Columbia. 'Boy Trouble' is release title for Paramount's 'Two Weeks with Pay.' 'Susannah' succeeds 'Susannah of the Mounties' as tag for Shirley Temple starrer at 20th-Fox.

Topper Takes a Trip

United Artists release of Hal Roach-Milton H. Bren production. Stars Constance Bennett and Roland Young; features Billie Burke, Alan Mowbray, Franklin Pangborn, Verree Teasdale, Alexander D'Arcy. Directed by Norman Z. McLeod. From novel of same name by Thorne Smith; adaptation, Eddie Moran, Jack Jevne, Corey Ford; editor, William Terhune; photography, Norbert Brodine and Roy Seawright. At R. C. Music Hall, N. Y., week Dec. 29, '38. Running time, 80 mins.

Marion Kerby.....Constance Bennett
Cosmo Topper.....Roland Young
Mrs. Topper.....Billie Burke
Wilkins.....Alan Mowbray
Mrs. Parkhurst.....Verree Teasdale
Louis.....Franklin Pangborn
Baron de Rossi.....Alexander D'Arcy
'Mr. Atlas'.....Paul Hurst
Bartender.....Eddy Conrad
Judge.....Spencer Charters
Prosecutor.....Irving Pichel

A delightful, very entertaining comedy built around several of the characters who appeared in 'Topper,' of which this is a sequel, and so well produced by the Hal Roach plant as to suggest that a cycle based on Topper's experiences should be in order. One a year about Topper and the invisible characters around him, with attendant trick photography and film technique would no doubt be welcomed by the exhibitors.

'Topper,' also produced by Roach and also directed by Norman Z. McLeod, turned out to be a bigger boxoffice hit than had been anticipated. It gathered good momentum on word-of-mouth and ended up a fine money-maker. The sequel, labeled with some sense of suggestion, 'Topper Takes a Trip,' will do better. The picture will do equally well in the small towns as in the big, and is a natural for world consumption. Foreign territories will go for it as quickly as the domestic field in view of its universal appeal and the simple but high effective story.

Constance Bennett, Roland Young, Billie Burke and Alan Mowbray were in the cast of 'Topper,' turned out by Roach for Metro in 1937. In that picture Cary Grant appeared opposite Miss Bennett. They played husband and wife who, after a drinking spree, were killed in an auto accident and then returned to life with a determination to do a good deed. Their experiences carried them towards a henpecked bank president (Young) whose troubles mounted as they appeared in the flesh or disappeared into ether at will.

As 'Topper Takes a Trip' opens the scene of Cary Grant and Miss Bennett's auto accident and their resurrection is reproduced to form a fitting start for the sequel. Acknowledgment is made by Roach to Grant for the reproduction of this opening sequence as the groundwork, and he is disposed of so that Miss Bennett may carry on. However, a dog with an astral body (Skippy), in numerous pictures in the last couple years, is substituted as a companion and his barking, tearing at trouser legs, etc., when not seen, adds to the comic results obtained.

Young, as Topper, is in court trying to offer a dubious defense in a divorce case Billie Burke has brought against him because he had a woman in his room (Miss Bennett's astral body of 'Topper') as the sequel gets under way. Thereafter, with the action shifting to Europe, where Miss Burke has gone to get her divorce, the living spirit of Miss Bennett and Skippy remain to keep him company although he doesn't want them to help him. The good deed Miss Bennett is still trying to do is reconcile Young and Miss Burke. After much hilarity and many very amusing sequences, she succeeds.

Norman McLeod's adroit direction throughout keeps the film at a nice pace.

The dialog is as much a credit to Eddie Morna, Jack Jevne and Corey Ford as the photography is a feather in the cap for Norbert Brodine and Roy Seawright, latter handling special effects. Lines handed Young are brilliant and never overdone. Those given Miss Burke are of a wacky, dumb-Dora flavor, but exceedingly clever. One of the beauties of the production is that pantomime takes care of much of the footage, with just the proper but pungent amount of dialog to suit for story-telling and comedy purposes.

Mowbray again plays Topper's butler, and a little scene he has with Verree Teasdale is a pip. Franklin Pangborn plays a hotel manager, while Alexander D'Arcy is the money-mad baron.

LIFE RETURNS

Selenart Pictures production and release. Features Dr. Robert E. Cornish, Onslow Stevens, George Breakston, Lois Wilson, Valerie Hobson. Directed by Eugen Frenke. Screenplay and adaptation, Arthur Horman. John F. Goodrich; story, Eugen Frenke. James Hogan; camera, Robert Planck; editor, Harry Marker. At Colonial, Lincoln, dual. Running time, 62 mins.

Cast: Dr. Robert E. Cornish, Onslow Stevens, Lois Wilson, George Breakston, Valerie Hobson, Stanley Fields, Frank Reicher, Richard Carle, Dean Benton, Lois January, and Richard Quine.

'Life Returns' shapes up as a tedious attempt to lay groundwork to bring in actual shots of the now famous experiment by Dr. Robert Cornish (May 22, 1934, in Berkeley, Calif.) when a dead dog was brought back to life. Ideated and directed by Eugen Frenke, its biggest handicap is extreme dullness.

When Cornish performed the ex-

Miniature Reviews

'Zaza' (Par). Fine production with hefty women-appeal. Good boxoffice indicated.

'Topper Takes a Trip' (UA). Dandy comedy sequel to 'Topper,' made by Roach for Metro release in 1937. Can't miss at the b.o.

periment, films were taken of the event to preserve a record of the amazing achievement and working with him at that time were Mario Margutti, William Black, Ralph Celmar and Roderick Krida, who appear in the film.

Leading up to the event is a story having Cornish, Lois Wilson and Onslow Stevens hopped up in the hope that they will some day perform this experiment while in college. Stevens breaks the threesome, goes to a big research lab, and then is broken both by opposition of the lab and the death of his wife, Valerie Hobson. Small kid, George Breakston, is about to be sent to juvenile hall, when he escapes with his dog. Pooch winds up in the hands of the dog-catcher, Stanley Fields, is gassed, and then comes the experiment which includes Stevens' rehabilitation as well.

Every performance is plodding, colorless, and it's a pic much longer to the audience than its accredited running time would indicate. Represents small biz possibility. Barn.

COME ON, RANGERS

(WITH SONGS)

Republic release of Charles E. Ford production. Stars Roy Rogers, Mary Hart; features Raymond Hatton, J. Farrell MacDonal. Directed by Joe Kane. Original screenplay, Gerald Geraghty and Jack Nutterford; camera, Al Wilson; musical director, Cy Feuer; film editor, Edward Mann. At Mayfair, N. Y., Dec. 29, '38, dual. Running time, 57 mins.

Roy.....Roy Rogers
Janice.....Mary Hart
Jeff.....Raymond Hatton
Col. Forbes.....J. Farrell MacDonal
Harvey.....Purnell Pratt
Burke.....Harry Woods
Nelson.....Bruce MacFarlane
Ken.....Lane Chandler
Smith.....Chester Gunnels
Earl.....Lee Powell

Fairly ambitious effort for a western. Script has a few concessions to adults in the audience, production is adequate and the playing is acceptable. 'Come On, Rangers' is no occasion for a celebration, but it's above average for the breed. Excellent for juve matinees and even passable for lower-billing in the duals.

Story sticks to the fundamentals of action, basic emotions and clear-cut characterization. Deals with the wholesale knavery that is supposed to have broken out in Texas after the Rangers were disbanded upon the state's admission to the union. Detail of U. S. cavalry, being unfamiliar with the locale, is stymied by guerilla tactics and political intrigue. But when an ex-Ranger's brother was bumped off, retribution was in motion and there was gunfire and thwarted villainy all over Texas.

As the demon hero, Roy Rogers looks the part, handles a pony satisfactorily and slings a mean sagebrush baritone, but he scarcely even goes through the motions of acting. Mary Hart has the looks for the colonel's daughter and she fills the modest acting requirements. Raymond Hatton is a colorful scout, while J. Farrell MacDonal and Purnell Pratt are plausible in character parts and Bruce MacFarlane fills out the part of the admirably restrained suitor who doesn't get the girl. Joe Kane's direction stresses the action and maintains authenticity. Hobe.

La Signora di Montecarlo

(The Lady of Monte Carlo)
(ITALIAN-MADE)

Rome, Dec. 20. E.N.I.C. release of Continental production. Stars Dita Parlo, Fosco Giachetti, Jules Berry and Claudio Lehmann. Directed by Mario Soldati. At Barberini, Rome.

The Crook.....Jules Berry
His Accomplice.....Dita Parlo
Their Victim.....Claudio Lehmann
Victim's Brother.....Fosco Giachetti

'Lady of Monte Carlo,' who functions as a crook's accomplice, is really an adventuresome with a heart of gold and a suppressed desire to go straight. Her desire is finally realized when she meets an old admirer and realizes he still loves her and she cares for him. Fact that the old admirer's brother was the victim of her latest scheme in Monte Carlo affords some difficulty, but in the end both the victim and his brother forgive her erring ways, and her evil accomplice conveniently finishes under the wheels of a train.

While acting and directing—in spite of difficulties of combining French and Italian actors with a German leading lady—are good, plot is too hackneyed to allow this picture to be of any importance. French and Italian versions of the film were made simultaneously. Heln.

NEIGHBORS

(POLISH-MADE)
(WITH SONGS)

Best Films release. Stars Helen Gross. Directed by Leon Trystan. Original, J. Feibke and N. Sondek; dialog, Joseph Tunkel; art direction, Jaek Rotmil and Stephan Norris; songs, Henry Wars. At Squire, N. Y., Dec. 8, '38. Running time, 80 mins.

Sonia.....Helen Gross
Hershel.....Joseph Orwid
Henry.....E. Bodo
Radel Radelson.....L. Sempolinsky

(In Yiddish; with English Titles)

Pretty nearly all of this production is out of synchronization, which strongly indicates the picture is a re-dubbed version in Yiddish of a Polish production previously shown in this country, titled 'Apartment Above.' Barring annoyance caused by poor dubbing, it still remains pretty fair entertainment, fashioned along American production lines, with new and up-to-the-minute jazz and gags that should give Yiddish folk a light-hearted pleasant hour and a half. It is an advance in style of entertainment heretofore turned out by Polish or Yiddish producers, but hardly up to Hollywood standard in story, direction, camera make-up and other deft touches.

Fans may like departure from usual style of serious classical themes.

Every attempt is made to bring the story up to date, plot being laid in New York, although made in Europe, and leading man a radio announcer and orchestra leader who succeeds in wedding the classic musical art to present-day jazz type of radio program. Love works wonders even to uniting both lyric muses into a joint musical program, an idea that is cleverly worked out in best musical taste.

Tale is one of comical mixup between a pair of lovers, swain getting identity of his lady love mixed up with girl friend she is visiting. Henry, the radio commentator and musician, has an impoverished boy friend, determined to marry a dowry, no matter which girl goes with it, and also adds considerable to the mixup. He spends most of his time fighting with his landlord, uncle of his sweetheart, both being musicians, but of different schools. Complications threaten to keep the young pair apart forever, but love, 'Humoresque,' and a masked costume ball, with Henry impersonating Mae West at her worst, keeps things moving to a happy finale.

Though starred, Helen Gross plays second fiddle to E. Bodo, as Henry, latter getting more than half the action and lines. She fills the romantic counterpart required by script, but needs additional histrionic training and a reduced figure. Other characters are passable, but two bucolic gentlemen in comedy roles would never be missed, though it's chiefly the script writer and director's fault.

Interior settings are fairly well dressed and in good taste, the ballroom background especially aping Hollywood standards. Direction is seldom static, but cutting 15 minutes from the production would make it an even better production.

Little Flower of Jesus

(Saint Therese of Lisieux)
(FRENCH-MADE)

Sunray Films, Sunray production and release; features Simone Bourday. Directed by Georges Chapierot. Based on autobiography, 'Story of a Soul.' Produced and photographed in the village of Lisieux and in Carmelite convent, France. Music by P. L. Streep. At Belmont, N. Y., week Dec. 12, '38. Running time, 67 mins.

Cast: Simone Bourday, Suzanne Christy, Andre Maray, Jane Dolys, Nicolas Malikov, Colette Dubois, Lionel Salem.

(French production; with dubbed English Dialog)

Kindest thing to be said about 'The Little Flower' is that it is a non-professional effort, and consequently can't be judged from usual trade standards. Possibly it might attract Catholic church group, but it is so far behind 'Glory of Faith,' another French production in which this great saint figures, that this is highly dubious. Difficult to believe that even church members will appreciate the superficial acting, absurd treatment, bad dubbing, sound and all-round mediocrity of 'Flower.'

This French-made film was turned out, undoubtedly, with sincerity of purpose, but the result is a test of audience patience. It shows a conglomerate group of amateur-appearing and acting French thespians mouthing American words, sometimes even with their mouths closed. Aside from the crude sets, reminiscent of early American film vintage, the whole story is tossed together in a haphazard manner, with shots of cathedral interiors, burning candles and storm clouds alternated with prosaic interior happenings.

Chorus at the opening, which might have been a highlight, is flatteringly recorded. Photography is foggy, dim or blurred excepting for a few outdoor distance shots. Even the English dubbing and editing has not made the picture strong enough to fulfill its mission in telling the story of 'the little flower.' Wear.

LE MIOCHE

(40 Little Mothers)
(FRENCH-MADE)

National Pictures release of d'Aguiar production. Stars Lucien Baroux, Madeleine Robinson, Little Philippe. Directed by Leonide Moguy. Scenario, Jean Guittion; music, Michel Levine; camera, Michel Kelter. At 55th St. Cinema, N. Y., week Dec. 23, '38. Running time, 95 mins.

Prosper Martin.....Lucien Baroux
Baby Pierrot.....Little Philippe
The Mother.....Madeleine Robinson
The Principal.....Gabriele Dorziat
Mlle. Clotilde.....Pauline Carton
The Chaplain.....Jean Perier

(In French; with English Titles)

The French seem to have an uncanny but sure knack of touching the heartstrings with their emotional or romantic delineation of fundamental humanity and this one, while not of tremendous importance, is a good example of what will please feminine fans. 'Le Mioche' is faintly reminiscent of 'Maedchen in Uniform,' but without the sex-psychosis angle.

Picture is handicapped by a slow beginning and needs judicious pruning and tightening. Jagged cutting has been resorted to unfortunately in those spots in order to shorten lengthy colloquy which proved difficult to translate.

On the whole, it is a tasteful well-directed comedy, without a single naughty sequence, despite its Gallic origin. It is a setup for women and men who remember what it is to be a parent. Simple, sentimental, tender and charming, it is a laugh-getter all the way through, and ends on a romantic note indicative of an unspoken but happy ending.

Direction by Leonide Boguy is sensitively handled and discloses a sure knowledge of adolescent behavior. Acting honors are divided between Lucien Baroux, who plays the bewildered professor, with an unexpected foundling on his hands, and an 18-month-old infant, 'Little Philippe,' of much promise.

Madeleine Robinson also does a fine job, applying proper restraint in the role of the deserted mother, forced to abandon her child on its father's doorstep.

Story deals with a lovable, honest professor, a commercial failure, but still full of faith and homey philosophy about getting all out of life, no matter how miserable. A foundling is dumped on his doorstep. Instead of turning it over to an orphanage, he starts complications when he is forced to take the child with him to a new job as teacher in a swank finishing school for 'jeune filles,' with strict regulations as to moral behavior and guidance by its teachers. Prosper Martin's problem is how to hold his job and at the same time secretly take care of the moppet. His rebellious pupils finally discover the secret and intend to expose him. Prosper makes an emotional appeal on what it means to be a foundling in a cruel world and the girls, their maternal instincts aroused, take over the job of mothering the child.

Balance of the picture is one round of hilarious sequences with the girls staging a sitdown-strike if Prosper and child are expelled. The fight is finally won, Prosper is begged to stay on at the school and the infant's mother shows up just in time to be restored to her offspring.

English titles are intelligently done, making the picture easy to follow, without any extensive knowledge of French. Picture's appeal is not necessarily limited to art and neighborhood houses, but should prove entertaining for all types of fans. Remake possibilities are also good. Camera work swings from fair to excellent, particularly in exterior composition.

FUOCHI D'ARTIFICIO

(Fireworks)
(ITALIAN-MADE)

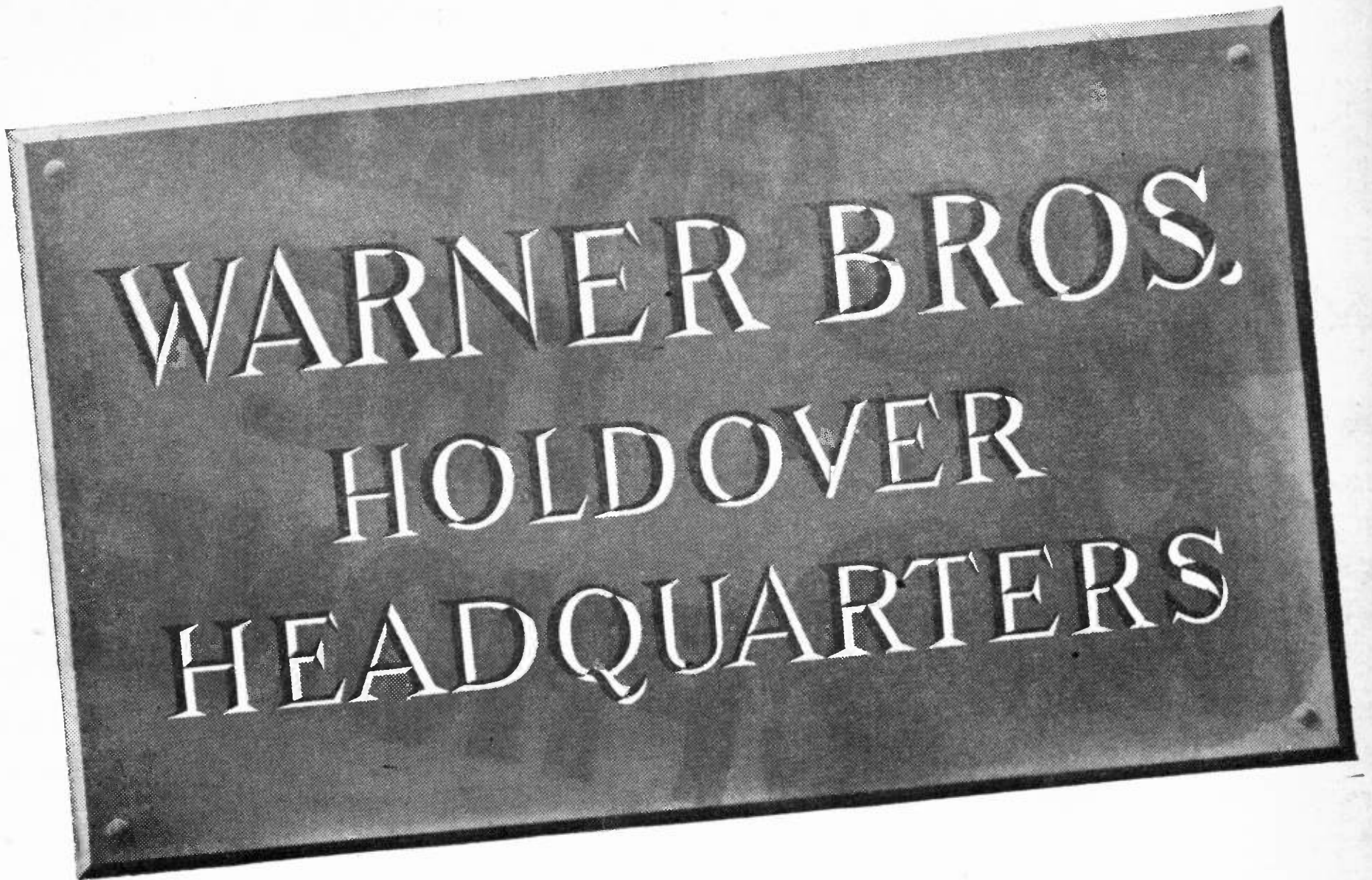
Rome, Dec. 20. ENIC release of Juventus production. Stars Amedeo Nazzari, Vanna Vanni. Directed by Gennaro Righelli. From original play of Luigi Chiarelli; camera, L. Alberelli. At Barberini, Rome. Running time, 92 mins.

Count.....Amedeo Nazzari
Prince's daughter.....Vanna Vanni
Prince's girl friend.....Jerry Land
Count's secretary.....Mario Porelli

Film distinguishes itself for the ugliness of its women. At least two of the actresses, Vanna Vanni and Jerry Land, are lookers, but the trouble lies in faulty makeup. Although the original play was quite successful in Italian legit some years ago, the film version is prolix and boring. Characters are weakly portrayed, though the plot is good.

It is based on the experiences of a young count who returns to Italy from New York with less money than when he left his country to start life anew. Everybody, however, believes him to be wealthy, despite his vigorous denials. A friend who shared with him the dark days of his American adventure takes advantage of the credit the count enjoys as a reputed millionaire, and by skillful gambling in the stock market, wins a fortune for the penniless aristocrat. The latter then marries the prince's daughter, who has plenty of money herself.

Amedeo Nazzari stands out. Luigi Chiarelli, one of Italy's best legit players, is sacrificed in a small part that gives him little opportunity. Mario Porella almost steals the picture from Nazzari, as the resourceful secretary, supplying the picture's only laughs.



BROTHER RAT

Held Over in 86 Percent of All Key Engagements!

ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES

4 weeks in Frisco, 4 weeks in Louisville, 4 weeks in New York, 4 weeks in Seattle, 3 weeks in Cleveland, 3 weeks in Washington, 3 weeks in Philly, 3 weeks in Chicago, doubled time in practically all other engagements!

DAWN PATROL

Every engagement to date a holdover!

And They Just Keep Rolling Along! . . .



It happened with 'Angels'. It happened again with 'Dawn Patrol'. Now it's happened for a third time—a *screening-room audience brought to its feet as one man, applauding!* Booker, reach for your date book! Grab that phone and make way for

THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL

First picture since his electrifying role in 'Four Daughters' for **JOHN GARFIELD.**

Plus those six Angels with Dirty Faces,
THE 'DEAD END' KIDS.

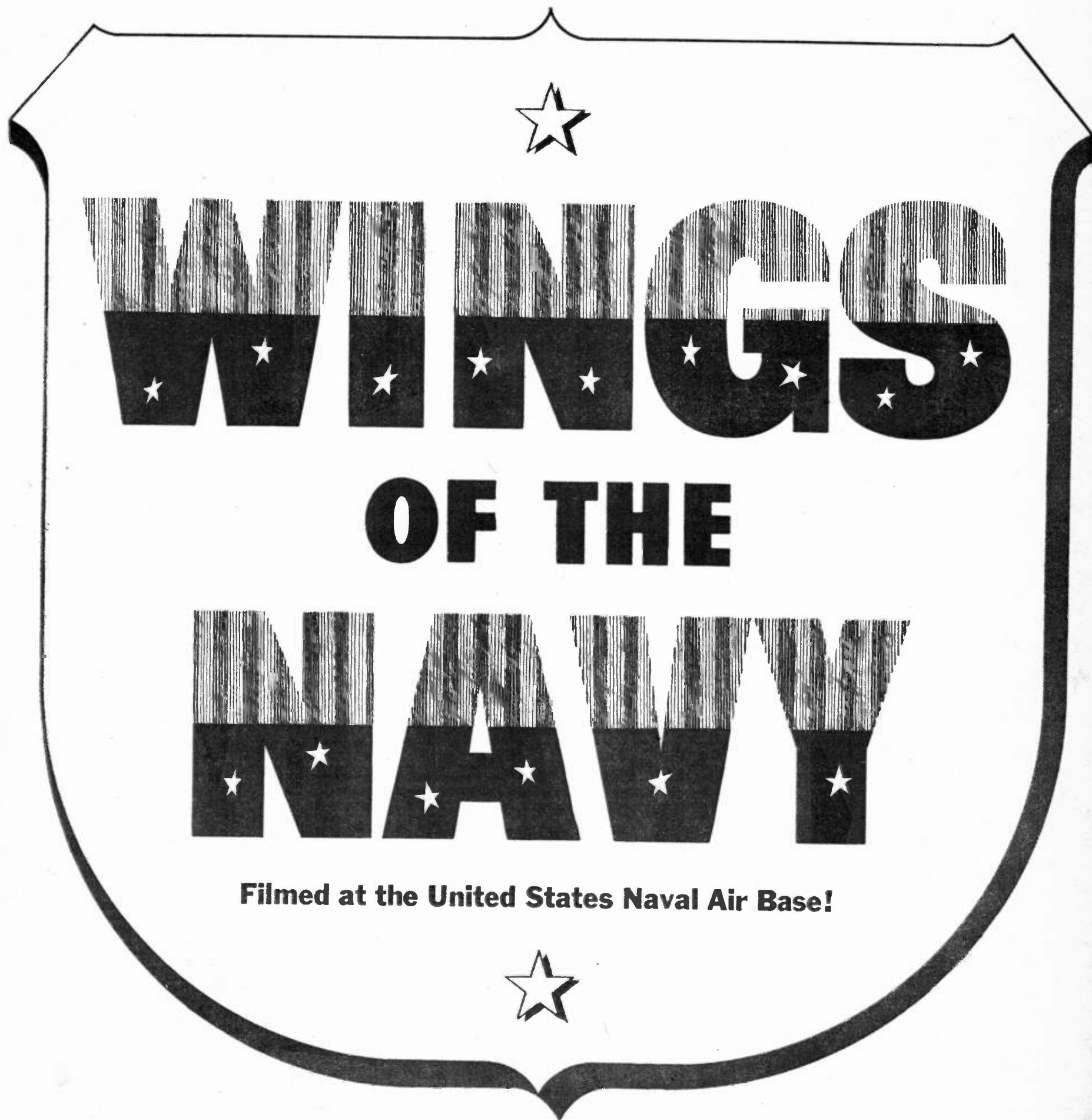
Also Claude Rains, Ann Sheridan, May Robson, Gloria Dickson

Directed by Busby Berkeley • Screen play by Sig Herzig • From a Novel by Bertram Millhauser and Beulah Marie Dix • Music by Max Steiner

WARNER BROS. *Holdover Headquarters*

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The 'Devil Dogs' of 1939!



Filmed at the United States Naval Air Base!

"WINGS OF THE NAVY"

with GEORGE BRENT
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JOHN PAYNE

Frank McHugh • John Litel • Victor Jory
Henry O'Neill • Directed by LLOYD BACON
Original Screen Play by Michael Fessier
A Cosmopolitan Production

EXPECT WONDERS . . .
IT'S PACKED WITH 'FM!

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CAGNEY



AS THE

OKLAHOMA KID



JAMES CAGNEY
in
"THE OKLAHOMA KID"
with HUMPHREY BOGART
ROSEMARY LANE • Donald Crisp
Directed by LLOYD BACON • Screen Play by
Warren Duff, Robert Buckner and Edward E.
Paramore • From an Original Story by Edward E.
Paramore and Wally Klein

IS CAGNEY AT HIS BOX-OFFICE BEST!



STUDY THIS FACE!

You'll never forget it. For here are forever written the ecstasy and pain of woman loved and loving. Here is the face of Bette Davis in her supreme dramatic triumph, "Dark Victory." Here is the screen's most gifted actress in a role which is destined to win for her another Academy Award. Here, with "Dark Victory", is established a blazing new pinnacle of screen perfection.

WARNER BROS. *Holdover Headquarters*

...They keep right on rolling with 'Brother Rat's' comedy

twin, **YES, MY DARLING DAUGHTER**

from the stage smash, with Priscilla Lane, Jeffrey Lynn, May Robson—all of 'Four Daughters' fame—plus topnotch troupers like Roland Young, Fay Bainter, Genevieve Tobin.

We follow it with the spectacular Technicolor epic of

DODGE CITY starring **ERROL FLYNN** and

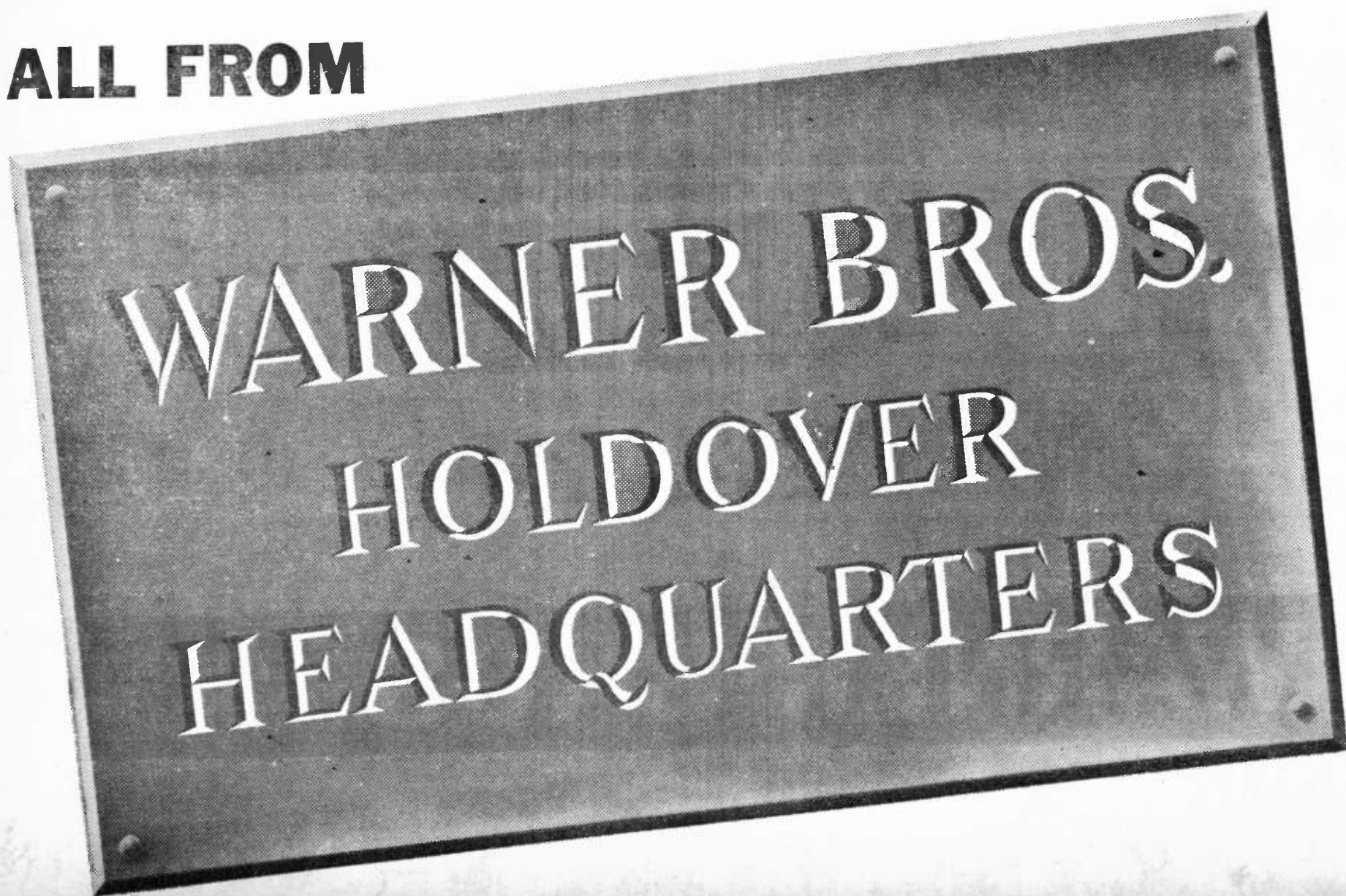
Olivia DeHavilland and crowds of others. Already they're calling it the 'Robin Hood' of the West!

And for Easter-Time the attraction awaited since 'Zola'—

PAUL MUNI and **BETTE DAVIS** in **JUAREZ**

with, as supporting stars, John Garfield and Brian Aherne, and more than 75 speaking parts. This, man, is *product*!

ALL FROM



EX-VARIETY MUGG

By Claude Binyon

My seven-year stretch on **VARIETY** ended in 1931, but somewhere upon me remains the mark of the mugg. I have worked diligently in Hollywood as a scenario writer with a tweed coat and a pipe and two swimming pools, specializing in sophisticated comedy, but the whole setup creates as much illusion as a torn backdrop. Jack Benny says 'he two swimming pools are ruining an otherwise classy routine.'

There is something about **VARIETY**. In San Francisco, for instance, I was present for a sneak preview, staying at a sweet hotel and giving out interviews with a tired look. An afternoon at the races had been arranged and finally I found myself being whisked to the track in a black limousine between Wesley Ruggles and a lady in furs.

'Originally you're from the east, I presume,' said the lady.

'Oh, yes.'

'I, too,' said the lady.

'Obviously.'

'The west is crude, but it has a certain charm,' she said.

'A certain charm,' I admitted.

There was a lull. 'What,' she asked, 'did you do in New York?'

'A theatrical paper,' I said, '**VARIETY**.'

'You old poop,' said the lady.

'Don't you remember me?'

I thought of her name. 'Oh, yeah,' I said, 'you bumped off your angel.'

'That's me,' she said.

'You're still pretty,' I said, 'but you were a lousy ingenue.'

'I wasn't lousy,' she said, 'I plain stank.'

Other disheartening little things crop up. There was the recent night at Grace Hayes' night club near Hollywood. I was attending with an actor who mentioned that we might be introduced and wondered if I objected. I didn't. In time I met Miss Hayes. She smiled.

'I remember that name from **VARIETY**,' she said.

'I'm not there any more,' I said.

'That's too bad,' said Miss Hayes. The actor was introduced and I wasn't.

And the time our production unit missed the whistle and gave birth to a lemon. The notices were as a sour as the picture and our little group was holding its vindictive post-mortem.

'What do those critics know?', snapped the director. 'Thirty bucks a week and trying to tell us about the picture business.'

'Those guys!' I said. 'A nickel a dozen.'

'They're sore because we didn't advertise,' said the producer. 'I could tell you a case—' He broke off, looking at me. 'Say,' he said, 'weren't you on **VARIETY**?'

'A long time ago,' I said.

The director stared at me. 'Would you wait outside?', asked the producer.

'But I wrote the picture!', I protested. 'I'm with you fellows.'

'Would you wait outside?', said the producer firmly. And I did.

At studios I have posed for publicity stills, by appointment with the photographer, and again there is that something. There was the time I was to be photographed at work in my office. I spent an extra half hour at home preparing, achieving that look of careless quality that goes with the writer born. My hair was rumpled not too much, my suit was expensive and my pipe was large. The photographer was impressed when he entered my office.

'This is an unusual assignment for me, sir,' he said. 'I haven't made any pictures of writers.'

'I'm teamed with Wesley Ruggles, the director,' I said. 'We've made five hit pictures in a row.'

'Then that's it, sir,' said the photographer. 'That's why.'

'We have done surprisingly well,' I said, puffing at my pipe.

'Uh—now, if you'll just sit at that typewriter, Mr.—Mr.—'

'Binyon,' I supplied.

The photographer wrinkled his forehead. 'Binyon,' he said to himself.

'What's the matter?'

'Are you the Binyon that worked on **VARIETY**, sir?'

'Well, yes.'

The photographer heaved a sigh. 'Take off that trick coat,' he said, 'and we'll do some gag stills—' he looked me over—'Fat,' he added.

Just Declasse

I have other setbacks. Not long ago the little wench and I entertained an actor and his wife at dinner. Afterward we were mellowing

over our brandies and I had decided that this was a friend to be a pal. In short order he was looking through my scrap book. Suddenly he straightened.

'I didn't know you were on **VARIETY**,' he said slowly.

'That's the wrong book,' I said in a hurry. 'The other book doesn't have what I wrote—it's just about me.'

'Here's something you wrote about me,' said the actor. 'Reviewing me in a picture. I remember it—because it set me back three years.'

'How about another brandy?', I asked.

'I don't want brandy,' said the actor. 'I want my hat.'

'I'm not on **VARIETY** now,' I pleaded. 'I'm in the picture business, the same as you.'

'I want my hat.'

Later that night the little wench turned to stare at me as she put her hair in pins. 'They're never coming back,' she said.

'I can't help it.'

'His wife was sweet.'

'He was a swell guy.'

'Then why can't we have friends,' she asked, 'like other people?'

'Kid,' I said, 'do you remember New York, with that smelly little apartment over the chop-suey joint on Broadway, and me catching shows while you cried over a stuffed crab at midnight?'

'I cried because I was alone.'

'That's it,' I said. 'We're still alone.'

'The trouble with you,' said the little wench, 'is that you've held both ends of the stick.'

'What do you mean by that?', I asked.

'Simply,' said the little wench,

'that you'll be a mugg for the rest of your life—because you got some on you.'

'From which end?'

'From the end,' said the little wench, 'that you weren't holding at the time.'

And the little wench is smart.

DETROIT FINALLY WILL GET A FILM BUILDUP

Detroit, Jan. 1.

This motor burg, which has been rather piqued these many years because it has been slighted by films both as to plugs and as plot locale, apparently will get some appeasement during 1939.

According to studio schedules, at least four features with Detroit as centerpiece will come out of Hollywood cutting rooms next year. Already announced is Metro's forthcoming Judge Hardy opus, 'The Hardy's Ride High,' which'll cover a Detroit auto plant, Belle Isle, etc. Paramount has bought rights to Wessel Smither's 'F. O. B. Detroit,' and both Warners and 20th-Fox are understood to be poring over plans for auto industry plotters.

Another possibility is Chris Sinsabugh's 'Saga of 100 Years on Rubber,' which the veteran automotive editor is now penning serially and which J. P. McEvoy, Satevepost writer, is understood to be considering for film adaptation.

Wilbur's 'Hero'

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Crane Wilbur's first chore as a director of features on the Warner lot is 'Hero for a Day,' rolling Jan. 5. Charley Grapewin has the featured spot.

Hollywood Agents' Hectic Year; Cutting Down Prod. No Help Either**Cohan's Payoff**

St. Louis, Jan. 1.

Local CBS station KMOX cornered George M. Cohan, whose 'I'd Rather Be Right' is grabbing off a sensational gross here, for a backstage interview. Cohan was asked to tell of his outstanding contribution to the theatre.

His reply was, 'Telling the Shuberts what I thought of them.'

SINCLAIR'S TIME-OUT FROM M-G FOR GUILD

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Robert Sinclair is taking time out at Metro to direct 'The Philadelphia Story' for the Theatre Guild.

He returns to a studio directing assignment after the show gets under way. He left for New York Dec. 30 to start rehearsals Jan. 10.

Mrs. Johnson Loses Suit

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Osa Johnson lost her suit against two airplane companies for injuries to herself and for the death of her husband, Martin Johnson, the explorer, when a plane cracked up near Los Angeles last January.

Superior Court Jury held accident an 'Act of God'. She sued for \$706,530.

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Year for the agents in Hollywood was marked with many trials and tribulations; the most outstanding being Screen Actors' Guild's licensing move and the cutting down of casts by the studios.

SAG's licensing drive, if for nothing else, can be thanked for being the first thing to awaken a need for fellowship in the percenters. Apparently ignoring pointed announcements a year ago by the Guild that such a move was in the offing, agents went blithely on their way with no thought of unity, except for a few farsighted boys who were laughed at for 'taking it too seriously.' Working quietly for several months, outlining provisions to be included in its franchising contracts, the Guild caught agencies unprepared and slammed home its demands.

Fluttering to cover, the 10%ers started a drive for a united front, to work out some compromise with the actors' plans, and managed, for the first time in history, to rally the agents. Appointment of committees, representing both the Artists' Managers Guild and smaller unaffiliated offices, quickly followed. After turning over their unanimous protests to Guild move and assuring committees that full force of all agents stood behind their decisions, individuals soon lost interest in outcome, leaving settlement entirely in the hands of the appointed.

At the present time agent committee, represented by M. C. Levee, Bert Allenberg, Abe Lastfogel, Leland Hayward and Bill Woolfenden, are meeting with Ralph Morgan, Kenneth Thomson and Laurence W. Beilenson of the SAG for final drafting of the licensing plan. Complete code is expected momentarily for signaturing by both groups.

While negotiations, so far, have progressed more or less in a peaceful manner, clouds still are hovering, in the shape of threat that writers and directors will be drawn into protection of the plan. That such a move has been considered by the Inter-Talent Council of SAG, Screen Writers and Screen Directors Guilds is known, but so far no definite steps have been taken other than serious discussion of the matter.

Another factor not to be ignored in the licensing drive is the California State Labor Commission, under which agencies are licensed and regulated by state laws. Labor body has come out with definite stand in the matter, indicating that agents and actors may go as far as they like in working out a contract, but final approval must remain with the state bureau. Currently, labor bureau is okaying all new pacts between agents and clients with the provision that final contract form adopted by SAG must meet with its approval. Commission has stated flatly that it will stand for no infringement on its power over agents.

Freelancers Hit

Curtailment of casts by the studios has been the most serious barrier for agents to hurdle, particularly those dealing almost exclusively in freelance players. While eliminations of roles from stories have been more noticeable during the past six months, the move has been growing since adoption of new working pacts with unions, which have upped production costs. In turn, agencies with large lists of freelance clients have been eliminating all except those who work steadily and have campaigned for other choice artists to come under their banner.

Recourse to the California courts by agencies and artists kept up the usual yearly average, marked by slight flurry in filings when state supreme court decided that arguments over cancelled contracts could be taken direct to superior court instead of first going to the State Labor Commission for arbitration.

Most significant among the legal proceedings was the award to agents of the right to collect commissions on an ex-client's future—speculative earnings—when the artist walks out on a managerial pact without just cause. In several instances courts have confirmed such awards made by the Labor Bureau and in other damage cases tried in the civil judiciary.

EXTERNAL THREATS TO THEATRE MAP

By Roy Chartier

Although the American theatre map may be carved up, Munich style, in the near or not so distant future, depending on what changes are wrought by Government pressure, during the past year its contours were not altered materially. Everything devolves upon the question of chain divorcement, either by Federal or state decree.

Producer-distributors controlling theatres of their own occupy important territory. So-called 'Independent' circuits, many of which enjoy buying power tantamount to monopoly, are also in possession of valuable zones. Individually and together, in wide localities and in single situations, they are in a position to dominate the little fellow. That will always be, though perhaps not to the extent to which the smaller retailer is subjected in other fields of merchandising where chain operation has been found to be profitable, economically sound and evolutionary natural.

Aside from the probability that some of these indie chains of wealth, buying power and manpower might become even more dictatorial, they can be accused simply because they are now so organized and so set up as to enable practice of the same oppression of which other chains stands accused because they are owned by a manufacturer-seller of film. If the little indie is to be protected all the way, then it would appear a logical conclusion that all theatre companies of strength, operating a group of from 20 to more than 150 houses would have to be broken up. There is a representative number of simon-pure indie circuits operating from 20 to more than 150 theatres. If nothing else they enjoy buying power in ratio to the extent of their operations. This buying power, as well, asserts itself not only in obtaining film, but everything else the theatre owner requires.

What Follows

Granted again that the producer-distributors will give up their theatres, numbering close to 2,500, who will acquire them? Who will be in a position to bid sufficiently high to get them? And will those affiliated circuits which are now owned in part by producer-distributors obtain first call on the producer interest in their properties?

In other words, would such a circuit as Saenger become 100% controlled by E. V. Richards and associates by buying Paramount's 50% interest and then be considered any less monopolistic in character, re-

gardless of whether any monopolistic advantages are taken, than it is now? With Saenger cited as an example, among many, would there be anything to stop the biggest competitor in his territory from picking up that 50% of Paramount's and thus, combining with Saenger, make the territory even tighter than it is now?

During the past year the producer-distributors have gone forward to complete theatres on which plans, leases and deals were made prior to the filing of the government anti-trust suit, but under an agreement reached meantime no further expansion is to be undertaken. Acquisition of a 50% interest in B. S. Moss' Criterion, N. Y., recently by Loew's was noted by the Department of Justice and Loew's was asked to explain this apparent failure to maintain the status quo. Loew's declared it had started negotiations on this deal in advance of the U. S. Suit.

Indies Can Expand

There is nothing to stop indies expanding, however, whether they now operate one theatre or 100. The indications are that with the majors restricting themselves from the field until they may re-enter competition, if ever, the independents will spread themselves during the coming year. Plans for considerable late building and negotiations here and there for acquisitions, are being reported. One of the latest deals is the passing of control of the old Sol Brill circuit of eight houses which blanket Staten Island, N. Y., to the Si Fabian interests.

There has been considerable building, rebuilding and remodeling during 1938 in spite of economic conditions that have been less favorable than for most of 1937 when elaborate plans to erect new theatres or reconstruct old ones were developed. As recession set in toward the end of '37, some plans for expansion were cancelled, while others were carried forward. During 1938 a total of around 500 new film houses have dotted the map.

Less than 50 of these are producer-distributor controlled or affiliated theatres, built by majors or for them by others, under deals that antedated the government suit. Among the five major chains, Paramount has increased its list the most with new theatres until now it numbers over 1,500. RKO, Loew's, WB and Fox-West Coast are all represented by less than a half dozen each. Warner expansion included the building of the new Warner in London, on the

site of the old Daly's historic playhouse.

Pool Declared Off

A few theatres here and there have been given up by the majors and some pools have been declared off such as the Paramount-RKO Kansas City pool. Others have been renewed. It was in Kansas City that RKO dropped one of its houses, the Mainstreet. The circuit continues to control the old Orpheum there. RKO also dropped the Bijou, Boston.

In Chicago the local map has also changed somewhat. The Oriental which Balaban & Katz built has recently gone over to Jones, Linick & Schaefer. In turn the latter gives up the State-Lake which B. & K. in the future will operate. Another change in that territory was the acquisition in August by Essaness of the Woods. The map above the border was changed with the taking over of Loew's Montreal by Arthur Hirsch.

Harry Koplar's interest in St. Louis Amusement in St. Louis was acquired by Fanchon & Marco earlier in the year concurrent with the purchase of an interest in F. & M. by Sam Dembow, Jr., and his active participation in the company as a vice president. F. & M. may be among independent circuits that will expand during the coming year.

4 Newsreel Houses

In addition to indie expansion and the grouping of various smaller indie interests here and there, there has been considerable pooling of unaffiliated houses in various situations, including Philadelphia, the stronghold of WB. In New York building has been at a low ebb, but during the year four newsreel houses have been opened, last of which was the one in Radio City which went into action less than two months ago.

Number of theatres in the U. S. in the last report rendered, was 18,410, while for the world the number was over 89,000. Nearly 63,000 of these are wired for sound.

Sooner the large number of 'cans' represented in the more than 18,000 theatres of this country are knocked out of business, burnt down (most of them are firetraps anyway) or become garages—to be replaced by houses that are a credit to the industry and the community, whether major chains build them or not—the better for all concerned.

Among charges that cannot be levelled at the major chains is that they haven't tried to improve the quality of the places where film is shown for safety as well as comfort of their patronage.

Top Films and Stars

(Continued from page 11)

though having no outstanders to lean on, proved okay, as did Richard Dix, with his action stuff. Studio has added Lucille Ball to the star contingent but, currently, nothing important has developed. Bobby Breen, who is a Principal Pictures (Sol Lesser) star, releasing through RKO, was rather a weak element in providing revenue or draw value for product at the theatres.

Studio had contracts with seven other stars who have not been used for 1938 release, though two of them are now in pix just finishing production. They are Douglas ('Wrong Way') Corrigan and Victor MacLaglen. Those who will see service during 1939 in the unused group are Eddie Cantor, Claudette Colbert, Bob Burns, Burgess Meredith and John Boles.

Studio featured group here comprises players who have done many chores at other plants during the year. Studio actually has no terrifically important player of b.o. value for its 1938 rating. Topping the contingent is Ann Shirley; then comes Sally Eilers, who also managed to keep busy at Universal and Republic. Preston Foster is another busy craftsman elsewhere, as is Chester Morris, who is used aplenty by Columbia. Ruby Keeler, who rates next, had just one on the season, while Victor Moore, Ann Southern and Milton Berle are currently out of the fold.

Others listed here have their value, but from the manner in which development took place at the studio during the year nothing happened to prove them of use to help sell pictures with top marquee billing.

Grant-Dunne, Jean Arthur Rank 1-2 on the Col. Lot

Columbia, whose top stars are all in on single pic deals, had as its outstander the Cary Grant-Irene Dunne combination, with Jean Arthur running them a close second. Others who came over on pic deals to rank as draw value include Edward Arnold, Lionel Barrymore, James Stewart, Edward G. Robinson and Katharine Hepburn.

Joe E. Brown, under the Dave Loew wing, made two that were released by the company. Jack Holt, who is under the Larry Darmour wing with Columbia release, is very

COLUMBIA

Stars

CARY GRANT — IRENE DUNNE
JEAN ARTHUR
EDWARD ARNOLD
LIONEL BARRYMORE
JAMES STEWART
JOE E. BROWN
EDWARD G. ROBINSON
JACK HOLT
KATHARINE HEPBURN
BUCK JONES
CHARLES STARRETT
EDITH FELLOWS
GLORIA STUART — LANNY ROSS

Featured

Melvyn Douglas
Ralph Bellamy
Walter Connolly
Leo Carrillo
Joan Blondell
Richard Arlen
Jimmy Durante
Mary Astor
Francis Lederer
Raymond Walburn
Jacqueline Wells
Frances Drake
Three Stooges
Gene Morgan
Rita Hayworth
Iris Meredith
Jack Luden
Robert Paige
Marc Lawrence
Richard Curtis
Don Terry
Eleanor Stewart
Ann Doran
Joan Perry
Charles Farrell
Penny Singleton
Arthur Lake
Donald Grayson

potent with his action stuff, as was Buck Jones, who made a few distributed by this company for Howard Lang. Charles Starrett, company's own western star, is proving a money-maker, too. Edith Fellows

starred here also, but not importantly, as did the Gloria Stuart-Lanny Ross combo, which made one.

Heading feature group here was Melvyn Douglas, who splits his acting time between here and at Metro, with Ralph Bellamy, who also gets around other places, and Walter Connolly coming next.

Columbia used plenty of important and top coin featured players from round the colony for individual assignments, such as Leo Carrillo, Joan Blondell, Richard Arlen, Jimmy Durante, Mary Astor, Francis Lederer, Three Stooges, Raymond Walburn and Frances Drake.

Possibly an important co-starring team will be developed with Arthur Lake, a silent day juve star, and Penny Singleton, who will be used in a series of 'Blondie' pictures. Other featured players in main were just cast fillers, but not of selling value to the exhibs.

UA's 17 Included 10

Made-in-America Films

United Artists, with 17 pictures released, of which 10 were domestic, and with four producers turning out this product, is listed individually by producers who turned out the American product. Sam Goldwyn had three that he deliv-

UNITED ARTISTS (Samuel Goldwyn)

Stars

GARY COOPER
MERLE OBERON
SIGRID GURIE
ZORINA

Featured

EDGAR BERGEN
WALTER BRENNAN
ADOLPHE MENJOU
RITZ BROS.
BASIL RATHBONE
ANN SHIRLEY
JOEL MCCREA
JOHN BOLES
JON HALL
PHIL BAKER
HUMPHREY BOGART
MARY ASTOR
IDA LUPINO
C. AUBREY SMITH
JACKIE MORAN
ELLA LOGAN

Walter Wanger

Stars

FREDRIC MARCH
CHARLES BOYER
JOAN BENNETT
HENRY FONDA
MADELEINE CARROLL
HEDY LAMARR
SIGRID GURIE

Featured

Leo Carrillo
Joseph Calleia
Gene Lockhart
John Halliday
Maria Shelton
Alan Marshall

Selznick-International

Stars

JANET GAYNOR
DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, JR.

Featured

Roland Young
Paulette Goddard
Tommy Kelly
Ann Gillis
Walter Brennan
May Robson

Hal Roach

Stars

FREDRIC MARCH
VIRGINIA BRUCE

Featured

Patsy Kelly
Alan Mowbray

ered, Walter Wanger turned out four, David O. Selznick two, and Hal Roach one. Edward Small, newly added to the fold, had 'Duke of West Point' released on Dec. 30, so it is not included in this group rating.

Cooper Tops Goldwyners

Goldwyn, of course, as his ace had Gary Cooper, who was way more powerful in draw than the other stars, such as Merle Oberon, Sigrid Gurie and Zorina. In his

featured group for value were Edgar Bergen ('Charlie McCarthy'), Walter Brennan, Adolphe Menjou, Basil Rathbone, John Boles, Phil Baker, Joel McCrea and Jon Hall.

Walter Wanger, making a quartet of pictures, had as his big coin asset Fredric March, with Charles Boyer next and Joan Bennett first of the femmes. Henry Fonda was just a step in front of Madeleine Carroll and Hedy LaMarr, whom Wanger had borrowed from Metro, and Sigrid Gurie, drafted from Goldwyn.

Featured players under his banner who were important included Leo Carrillo, Joseph Calleia, John Halliday, Gene Lockhart, Maria Shelton and Alan Marshall.

Hal Roach had on his starring side just two, Fredric March and Virginia Bruce, latter on loan from Metro. In featured division importance were Patsy Kelly and Alan Mowbray. For 1939 Roach will have Oliver Hardy and Harry Langdon as a new team, and Constance Bennett to add to the star group, with Roland Young and Brian Aherne in the featured layout.

David O. Selznick had as his star tops on the year Janet Gaynor and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. In the featured division were Roland Young, Paulette Goddard, Tommy Kelly, Ann Gillis, May Robson and Walter Brennan.

Deanna Durbin by Far Ranks Tops at Universal

Universal had as its main b. o. backbone for the year Deanna Durbin, who is plenty of value to this company. Edgar Bergen helped much also as marquee value in 'Letter of Introduction,' with Danielle Darrieux, the recent acquisition to the roster, though not a domestic money-getter on this one, helping out plenty on the foreign market to establish prestige for herself and the company. U. as Columbia, depends a good deal on potent outside talent, and for marquee embellishment had

UNIVERSAL

Stars

DEANNA DURBIN
EDGAR BERGEN
DANIELLE DARRIEUX
DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, JR.
VICTOR MACLAGLEN
SALLY EILERS
PRESTON FOSTER
ANDREA LEEDS
RANDOLPH SCOTT
WARREN WILLIAM
CONSTANCE BENNETT
BARTON MACLANE
GAIL PATRICK
HOPE HAMPTON

Featured

Mischa Auer
Jackie Cooper
Herbert Marshall
Adolphe Menjou
Joel McCrea
Nan Grey
Melvyn Douglas
Glenda Farrell
Charles Ruggles
Edward E. Horton
Kent Taylor
Edmund Lowe
Alice Brady
Dorothea Kent
Andy Devine
William Gargan
Robert Wilcox
Noah Beery, Jr.
Frank Jenks
Wendy Barrie
Paul Kelly
Mary Boland
Vincent Price
Sam S. Hinds
Irene Rich
Tom Brown
Jean Rogers
Barbara Read
Joy Hodges
Louis Hayward
Ken Murray
Frances Robinson
Johnny Downs
William Lundigan
Constance Moore

such names as Fairbanks, Jr., MacLaglen, Randolph Scott, Sally Eilers, Constance Bennett and Hope Hampton.

Featured players of unusual value also brought in from outside were Mischa Auer, Nan Grey, Kent Taylor, Alice Brady, Andy Devine, Frank Jenks and Dorothea Kent. Of course, most of these were not as significant in name value as large number of featured players brought in on single and multiple pic deals. Universal, however, is working on a buildup plan which may bear fruit during the 1939-40 season.

Two Mustangs Lead Republic to B.O. Gravy

Having as its two best revenue getters western stars, Republic is forging quickly ahead in mounting its pictures with potent star and featured names. The two toppers of its own are Gene Autry, tops in getting coin for the concern, and Roy Rogers, just breaking into the same line of work under this company banner.

In checking over the roster of stars it utilizes there is to be found a variety of talent which was dynamite at the b. o. for many years. Names of these people are still of value, especially in the territories which absorb Rep's product, and they help considerably in merchandising this product. In many instances one will see that exhibs capitalize on star names of these pictures over the so-so product of the major companies. In the featured group Robert Armstrong is a potent factor with Smiley Burnette, an Autry aide, next. Balance of those used are found on rosters of other indie as well as major production organizations.

REPUBLIC

Stars

GENE AUTRY
RICHARD ARLEN
CHARLES BICKFORD
ROY ROGERS
PRESTON FOSTER
LEW AYERS
GLEASON FAMILY
MADGE EVANS
H. B. WARNER
BEUCE CABOT
ALISON SKIPWORTH
POLLY MORAN
RAYMOND NOVARRIO
BOB LIVINGSTON
RAY CORRIGAN
MAX TERHUNE
JOHN WAYNE
OTTO KRUGER
WALLACE FORD
MARY BOLAND
BOB STEELE
PHIL REGAN
HENRY WILCOXON
MARIAN MARSH

Featured

Robert Armstrong
Smiley Burnette
Mary Ellis
Victor Jory
Joseph Schildkraut
Ernest Truex
Penny Singleton
Rochelle Hudson
J. Farrell MacDonald
Raymond Hatton
Dustin Farnum
Evelyn Venable
Richard Cromwell
Ann Dvorak
Wynn Gibson
Pinky Tomlin
Eric Blore
Jackie Moran
Lyle Talbot
Donald Woods
Patricia Ellis
Grace Bradley
Beverly Roberts
Edward Brophy
Bert Gordon
Helen Mack
Rosalind Keith
Ralph Byrd
Doris Weston
Tala Birell
Joe Frisco
Ben Welden
Alan Marshall
Leon Ames
Mady Correll
Mary Hart
Weaver Bros. & Elvir
Patric Knowles
Alan Baxter
Lynn Roberts
Robert Cummings

GN First Had Ritter; Fine Arts Contributes 26

Grand National first had Ritter as its principal coin getter, with Ken Maynard next and George Huston also quite potent in star group as were James Dunn and Ralph Morgan. Rod La Roque also made a comeback with the company as did Stuart Erwin, Hobart Bosworth, Paul Lukas, Ben Lyon and Lupe Velez.

Cecelia Parker and Eric Linden, who were featured in major product, are also used in star group here.

With Fine Arts doing 26 of the company pictures for the current season and most still to be made, likely that some personalities will be turned out who no doubt will reach the major company ranks in short time.

The featured group of players used

by this company also are top mounters of yesterday with Lois Wilson and Onslow Stevens of great significance in line with such box-office names of several years back as Grant Withers, Neil Hamilton and Lionel Atwill.

There are a great many individual producers in the indie ranks whose product and players are not listed as most of them are just of the in-and-out class with the pictures reaching the 'must have filler' programs.

GRAND NATIONAL

Stars

TEX RITTER
KEN MAYNARD
GEORGE HOUSTON
JAMES DUNN-RALPH MORGAN
ROD LA ROCQUE
STUART ERWIN
CECELIA PARKER - ERIC LINDEN
HOBART BOSWORTH
PAUL LUKAS
BEN LYON-LUPE VELEZ

Featured

Lois Wilson-Onslow Stevens
Grant Withers-Blanche Mehaffey
Neil Hamilton
Lionel Atwill
Brigitte Horney
Harriet Spencer
Lucy Manneheim
James Newell-Terry Walker
Marsha Hunt

Cooper, Karloff, Ritter Topline Monogram List

Monogram is another indie making fast headway with a number of its own groomed stars. Topper is Jackie Cooper, after whom come Boris Karloff, Tex Ritter, Frankie Darro, Tim McCoy, John Carroll, Movita and Jack Randall. These are all showing signs of progress, with Ritter moving fast and possibly heading the group next year. No outsiders of big coin proportions are used by this company in its starring group as other indies do. In the feature class it has tops in Ann Nagle, Grant Richards and Marjorie Main. Other players on this grouping are mostly those from the freelance field, many of them reliable assets to the company products.

MONOGRAM

Stars

JACKIE COOPER
BORIS KARLOFF
TEX RITTER
FRANKIE DARRO
TIM MCCOY
JOHN CARROLL
MOVITA
JACK RANDALL

Featured

Ann Nagle
Grant Richards
Marjorie Main
Jack La Rue
Eric Linden
Ralph Morgan
Jean Parker
Judith Allen
Evalyn Knapp
Weldon Heyburn
Alice White
Grant Withers
Evelyn Venable
June Travis
Sally Blane
Lloyd Hughes
J. Farrell MacDonald
Jackie Moran
Claire Windsor
Craig Reynolds
Marcia Mae Jones
Milburn Stone
Matty Fain
Robert Kent
Kay Linaker
Martin Spellman

Knopf's Story Safari

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

On hunt for story material, Edwin Knopf, Metro scenario head, shoved off for New York.

He'll pass a week consulting with publishers and viewing the new legit offerings.

The Youngs Have It

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Loretta Young has three sisters playing in 'Alexander Graham Bell,' which rolls this week at 20th-Fox. Youngsters are Polly Ann and Georgiana Young and Sally Blane.

Stars Around the Globe

(Continued on page 23)

other under a new producer, 'Cowboy and Lady,' is receiving its first dates outside the domestic field. 'The Plainsman' continues to bring in some returns, but the star did not have the big pictures he had in 1937 when in the top spot.

Ascendancy of Paul Muni from No. 9 to No. 4 position is based on extensive distribution throughout the world of 'Good Earth' and 'Zola.' Money taken in on these productions surprised. Reissue of 'Louis Pasteur' showed additional returns to make his foreign b.o. rise remarkable.

Temple Still Strong

Shirley Temple dropped to fifth position. The child wonder of the 20th-Fox lot continues a favorite outside the U. S., going against the tradition that a juvenile of her age seldom maintains such consistent popularity in the world mart. Some foreign countries reported that she meant little in big houses, excepting with children, but she maintained her grasp sufficiently in other territories to stay fifth.

Jeanette MacDonald climbed from No. 10 to sixth spot, such vehicles as 'Girl of the Golden West' and 'Firefly' appealing to foreign tastes. Patrons outside the U. S. are credited with appreciating the singing star whether able to understand her or not. Although teamed with Nelson Eddy in 'Sweethearts,' just released, and others, her features did big whither, not he was her leading man. Distributors believe that Eddy did not figure in the draw of her films.

Charles Boyer, who narrowly missed the first 10 list for 1937, gained seventh position slightly ahead of Deanna Durbin. His work in 'Conquest' first cinched him with foreign patrons during the past season. Then the strength in foreign lands of 'Tovarich,' 'Mayerling' (latter a sock French film in the foreign market) and others in the past year aided materially. Boyer, besides having a following in France, is a strong boxoffice favorite in Latin-American and Scandinavian countries.

Deanna Durbin, whose consistent strong pictures continued through 1938, is talked of even by rival companies as the miracle girl in numerous foreign lands. Her record of thus far never having had a mediocre film won her the eighth place in the list.

Errol Flynn, who was rated as having promise in the previous year, pushed up into ninth position. Tremendous business already done on foreign engagements with 'Robin Hood' highlighted his b.o. strength, although 'The Sisters' and 'Perfect Specimen' contributed. His 'Dawn Patrol' promises even more for 1939.

Claudette Colbert, a newcomer to the 10 Best, had been developing b.o. pull in the two previous years. 'Bluebeard's Eighth Wife' and 'Tovarich' alone enabled her to make the grade during 1938.

Strong Contenders

Among those who just missed the first 10 brackets were Spencer Tracy, Robert Taylor, Myrna Loy-Bill Powell (Miss Loy was chiefly with Gable this year), Tyrone Power, the Astaire-Rogers team, Bette Davis, Mickey Rooney, Sonja Henie, Ronald Colman, Fredric March and Luise Rainer. Although Tracy was with Gable in 'Test Pilot' and 'San Francisco,' distributors say that the fans came for Gable and went out talking about Tracy.

Robert Taylor slipped out of the first 10 classification through no fault of his own, but because his best draw, 'Yank at Oxford,' was only starting to clean up nicely in world marts. His part in 'Camille' and others helped him stay up as far as he did.

Tyrone Power built at the b.o. with his work in 'In Old Chicago' and 'Alexander's Ragtime Band.' Possibly more complete returns on the latter would have placed him in the list of boxoffice favorites. Then, too, distributors felt that at least with 'Chicago,' it was a case of a spectacle drawing rather than the cast. His 'Suez' probably will cinch him for a top classification in 1939.

Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers team, which won high rating in the past, fell back only because their latest feature is just starting foreign rounds.

Growth in popular appeal of the 'Judge Hardy Family' series and his

U. S. TOPS IN AUSSIE

By Eric Gorrick

Sydney, Dec. 20.

Despite all patriotic blather, a Commonwealth-wide check, extending to New England, still indicates that the U. S. product and stars mean the most to the b.o.s. This was true—in 1938, as in previous years, and probably in many years to come. Year, however, has not been overbright—not because of pix, but because of many b.o. obstacles, including an infantile paralysis outbreak, 150th anniversary celebrations and cricket broadcasts from England.

'Snow White' (RKO) astounded everybody by remaining in one house in Sydney for 21 weeks. Same pic is now in its eighth week in Melbourne, and will be the Yuletide attraction in New Zealand and Tasmania. In every nabe and stix center it's broken all records.

'Alexander's Ragtime Band' (20th) proved another click and has hit to eight weeks in Sydney, with okay biz in Melbourne. Other majors finding high favor with Aussie fans included 'Robin Hood' (WB), 'The Awful Truth' (Col), 'Yank at Oxford' (MG), 'Happy Landing' (20th), 'Bluebeard's Eighth Wife' (Par), 'Night Must Fall' (MG), 'Heidi' (20th), '100 Men and Girl' (U), 'Emile Zola' (WB), 'The Hurricane' (UA), 'Joy of Living' (RKO), 'Mad About Music' (U), 'Nothing Sacred' (UA), 'Rage of Paris' (U), 'Tom Sawyer' (UA), 'Firefly' (MG), 'Wee Willie Winkie' (20th), 'Test Pilot' (MG), 'Marie Antoinette' (MG), 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm' (20th), 'Three Comrades' (MG), 'Cloistered' (AD), 'Girl of the Golden West' (MG), 'Judge Hardy's Children' (MG), 'Boy from Barnardos' (MG).

Formby Big

British biz, excepting the quickies, went along nicely with 'Divorce of Lady X' (UA), 'Drums' (UA), and 'I See Ice' (AD). Today George Formby means plenty throughout Australia.

Two locals, 'Let George Do It' and 'Dad and Dave Come to Town,' turned out by Cinesound, smashed records everywhere. Two others by same unit, 'Lovers and Lubbers' and 'Broken Melody,' did better in the nabes and stix, although the latter was a class production.

Musicals, such as 'Goldwyn Follies' (UA) and 'Gold Diggers' (WB), flivved. Pix like 'Test Pilot' (MG), with strong action and love interest, okay for the mob, and adventure yarns similar to 'Robin Hood' (WB).

There's been a definite swing away from weak duals. Public preferred a strong top pic with a good vaude act or shorts rather than a weak B.

Stars

Deanna Durbin has retained peak popularity throughout year. Shirley Temple is still tops with the kiddies, but has no pull whatsoever in the city spots nights. Clark Gable is big, but Robert Taylor is less hot. Bobby Breen, who seemed to be going places, has dropped away down and doesn't mean a thing; this also goes for Jane Withers. Tyrone Power and Don Ameche okay as faves, and Sonja Henie is up with the b. o. leaders. William Powell appears to have lost some popularity, whilst Annabella, after an early promise, is now out in the cold through bad pix. Best team for the b. o. is Jeanette MacDonald-Nelson Eddy. Irene Dunne is still important and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., is gaining. Danielle Darrieux made a good impact. Eddie Cantor, once a topper, has slipped away down, and Gary Cooper is not quite so strong as previously. Paul Muni holds his spot, but Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford are nixy here. One of the most loved actors is Spencer Tracy.

work in 'Boys Town' has focused the foreign spotlight on Mickey Rooney, as, of course, it has in the domestic market. Sonja Henie is again beginning to build with foreign audiences, but needs more pictures before she will be accepted as a heavy draw.

The Marx Bros., the Ritz Bros., and Laurel and Hardy teams continued to develop their drawing power in England, where they like wacky comics. Of the youngsters, Bobby Breen, Jane Withers, Virginia Weidler, Bonita Granville and the Mauch Twins show promise. Breen's singing ability aided him plenty as an individual star.

Flynn Beached

Hollywood, Jan. 1

Errol Flynn was forbidden to sail his yacht, Sirocco, one of the largest in the film colony, on the grounds that he is not an American, although he has made formal application for citizenship.

Under Uncle Sam's regulations, a foreigner may not operate a boat of more than 16 tons in American waters. Flynn's yacht is 60 feet long and is listed at 31 tons.

XMAS WEEK'S U.S.

B.O. ABOUT 5% BEHIND '37

Pending more complete reports on Christmas week receipts throughout the country, figures available in New York, based mostly on first run theatres, indicate that this year's holiday business is a little behind that recorded for Xmas week in 1937. While the percentage cannot be figured exactly as yet, it would appear that perhaps the business is about 5% behind.

The downtown New York first runs and those of some other keys are away ahead of Christmas week in '37 but in many keys and territories, hard hit during the past year and this Christmas affected by cold, rain or other inclement weather, suffered in comparison with last year. Releases available in some situations, as against pictures on playdates last Xmas, also may have caused the deflection in numerous cases, while in New York numerous pre-releases were placed on engagements. Christmas business in N. Y. for 12 leading downtown houses showed an increase of about 14%.

When the whole country and leading keys as well as smaller situations are considered, reported gross receipts are causing some disappointment due to the fact that this year Christmas was a three-day weekend at tilted scales while last year the holiday fell on Saturday, making it just a two-day weekend.

THEATRE ENGINEERS FORCE N. Y. WAGE TILT

Threatened with a strike of engineers in New York theatres over New Year's circuits and managers hurriedly negotiated a new deal with Local 30 of the Engineers Union, effective Jan. 1. It will run for 15 months through April, 1940, and calls for an increase in the scale from \$46.67 weekly to \$52.50.

Following inability to get together on a renewal of the 1938 contract, expiring Dec. 31, the Engineers went to the international union and Joe Fay, v.p. of that union, together with the executive board of Local 30, forced a meeting of the managers Thursday (29).

While the engineers originally sought a one-year deal for '39 at \$55 a week, with two weeks vacation and double time for overtime, the final agreement reached, on the 15 months' basis was for \$52.50, with time and a half for overtime but no provision for vacation.

All chains operating in Greater New York, together with individual houses, including all the big first runs downtown, are embraced in the new contract.

Boo, Jr.

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

'Son of Frankenstein,' completed Saturday (31) at Universal, goes into national release Jan. 13, with heavier advance bookings than any other U feature.

Cutters kept pace with the shooting schedule to speed up the distribution.

DOC'S AND DAISIES

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Republic breaks into the socialized medical controversy this month with 'Doctors Don't Tell,' scripted by Aben Kandel from a magazine yarn by Dr. George Raymond.

Picture is the first Anniversary Special on the studio's 1938-39 schedule.

The French Wanted Laughs

By Hugo Speck

Paris, Dec. 20.

Of all of the stars in the world portraying the gamut of human emotions the French public scorned the lot and picked a person whose face is never seen on a screen as its favorite for the year just ending. It was Walt Disney & Co.

To Disney, or more correctly 'Blanc Neige,' as 'Snow White' is in French, the Seven Dwarfs, Mickey and Donald Duck go the honors not only of being first, but of being the only American representative in the first 10 of the French national choice as reflected by b. o. returns.

The others in the order of their pulling power were Fernandel, Jean Gabin, Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, Louis Jouvet, Vivienne Romance, Raimu, and with the rest a tossup between Sacha Guitry, Tino Rossi and Gary Cooper.

Scrutinizing this list and recalling the films in which they appeared during the last 12 months, show a tendency on the part of the French fan to avow his nationalistic spirit to a greater degree by a swing to native stars and a desire for amusement on the laugh side along with a little thicker mixture of stark realities.

The switch to a preference for native idols—there were four Americans in last year's first 10, topped by Charles Chaplin—is no doubt due to the great improvement shown during the year in the general standard of French films which brought three new names well up in the list. They are Danielle Darrieux, now recognized since her 'finishing' in Hollywood as the No. 1 French femme lead; Louis Jouvet, whose great pulling power through many appearances in excellent supporting or co-starring roles; and Vivienne Romance, who has established herself as tops here in portraying risqué roles of the 'bad woman' as a counter-part of Jean Gabin's 'bad man' males leads.

The four ousted Americans really dwindle down to three if Gary Cooper is to be counted. Chaplin is not there because he made no pictures and the disappearance of Dietrich and Garbo might also be accounted for by the scarcity of their output appearing here.

Another angle which must be pointed out at this point, to do justice to the Americans, is the fact that this list is compiled from all of France, that is, a list completed after consulting distributors or operators who have houses throughout the country, like the Sirtzky circuit with 32 houses in key points.

As publicity for American stars is concentrated in Paris, provincial audiences are not as acquainted with them as are Parisians. Also, among the inhabitants of the capital are thousands who understand and enjoy hearing the English language spoken and, for that reason, they would have a greater desire to see American films than provincials who don't understand a word and their entire outlook is French throughout. A list for Paris alone would probably include, besides Gary Cooper, who would lead; Gable, Irene Dunne, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, Deanna Durbin and William Powell-Myrna Loy in somewhat the order named.

Although 'Snow White' has just disappeared from the boulevards and its run in France is by no means completed, it will probably be the biggest grosser this country has seen in years. In Paris during its long first stand in the Champs-Elysees it took more in proportion than any film offered to the public since the time of 'Ben-Hur' and it will probably be a long time before another will equal it. Its enormous child draw helped.

Hungry for Comedy

That the French went more for comedy to relieve them of worries during the most troubled year the country has experienced in the international field since the war, is proven by the fact that Fernandel, No. 1 French comic of the most French order, climbed from third place last year to second this trip. His art is of the slapstick variety with plenty of French flavoring. He knows his audiences and plays to them to catch the pay dirt.

Jean Gabin's climb from sixth to No. 3 place might be attributed to his showing life as it is swept out from under the bed or from behind a bar, with plenty of honest-to-goodness raw, hard facts for the public

to chew on. His 'Quai de Brumes' is an example of the underneath realities which the French like to see presented to them, and though sad and unsavory some parts of it might be, they enjoy it.

Boyer's one film produced in France this year, 'Orange,' undoubtedly kept his average up, although it did drop from second to fourth in comparison with last year, while Danielle Darrieux sudden coming from no rating in the first 10 of last year to fifth of this, is undoubtedly due to a great degree to her Hollywood trip.

Louis Jouvet has always been a favorite here in supporting roles and has an outstanding theatrical name. His many appearances put him up in the list while Vivienne Romance's climb might be attributed to somewhat the same reason which saw Gabin go up the ladder of public choice. Raimu is another favorite and his 'La Femme du Boulanger,' made by Marcel Pagnol, assured his inclusion because he represents to perfection a certain slice of France itself.

Guitry's satirical ongoings with his light wit and excellent dialog—though always too long—capture a certain vein of French appreciativeness that allows the inclusion of his name. Rossi, candied singer with the femme following, took the slide from fourth to tenth principally because most of his pictures have been modeled one on the other. He depends almost entirely on his voice, as his acting capabilities are not extended. And as it is of the chocolate-coated type, as well as his appearance to a degree, only the femmes can continually take it.

Annabella would probably have been in the first 10 this year had she made more films in France, the outstanding one, 'Hotel du Nord,' only being released at the end of the year. Simone Simon's Hollywood visit did her little good from a b.o. return angle as the French were not particularly taken by the roles in which she was cast. Her one French production, 'The Human Beast,' with Jean Gabin, like that of Annabella's, only appeared late in December.

COSMO-WARNER TALK RENEWAL

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Future of Cosmopolitan Productions depends on the outcome of a conference between William Randolph Hearst and the Warners in two weeks. Negotiations for a renewal of their exploitation-distribution deal collapsed two months ago. Current contract expires with the release of 'Wings of the Navy.'

New deal, if signed, will not include any more Marion Davies starrers.

Name Samuelson Head Of New Philly Allied

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Sidney E. Samuelson, former prez of National Allied States Association, was named biz manager of the new Philly Allied unit by the board of managers on Thursday (29). Salary he is to receive not divulged, although he earlier told the board he wouldn't handle the job at less than \$7,500 a year. Samuelson said he'd give the post 'as much time as necessary to handle it, but it isn't a full-time task.'

Other paid officers of the new organization will be David Yaffe, young attorney, who, through his father's interest in various theatres, has long been active among exhibs, and Walter Woodward, recently sales manager for equipment concerns. Yaffe will be assistant biz manager and office director and Woodward will serve as traveling field representative. Ben Fertel, vet exhib, is temporarily serving as treasurer.

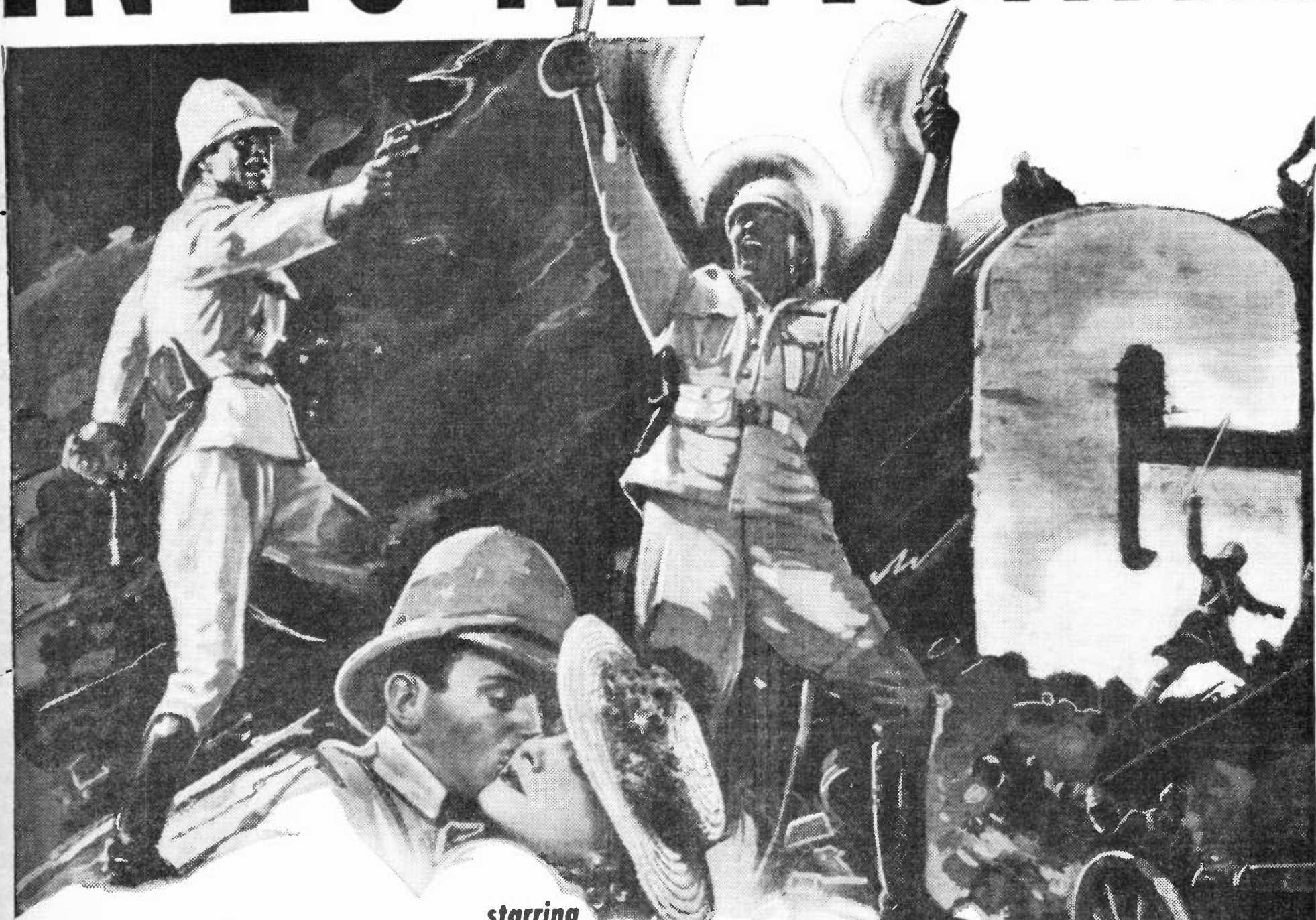
Busch Scripts 'Atlantis'

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Trem Carr has signed Niven Busch to write a story for his picture, 'The Lost Atlantis,' to be released by Columbia.

Prehistoric feature rolls late in February for six months of shooting.

NATIONALLY A 5,000 BILLBOARDS IN 20 NATIONAL



starring

CARY GRANT • VICTOR McLAGLEN
and
DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, JR.

with

SAM JAFFE • EDUARDO CIANNELLI • JOAN FONTAINE
PANDRO S. BERMAN IN CHARGE OF PRODUCTION
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Here's the picture that will do it!...A marvelously fine production that some of the critics will probably nominate for the Academy Award...A picture that is ALL ENTERTAINMENT...warmth and tears and laughter and heart tugs!...John Barrymore in a role great enough to crown his great career!...Little Peter Holden, boy star of the stage's "On Borrowed Time," in his screen debut...Scene-stealing Virginia Weidler more winning than ever...in the story of a lovable down-and-outer who became the city's most pampered son!

THE GREAT MAN VOTES

with

John Barrymore
Peter Holden • Virginia Weidler
Donald MacBride • Katharine Alexander

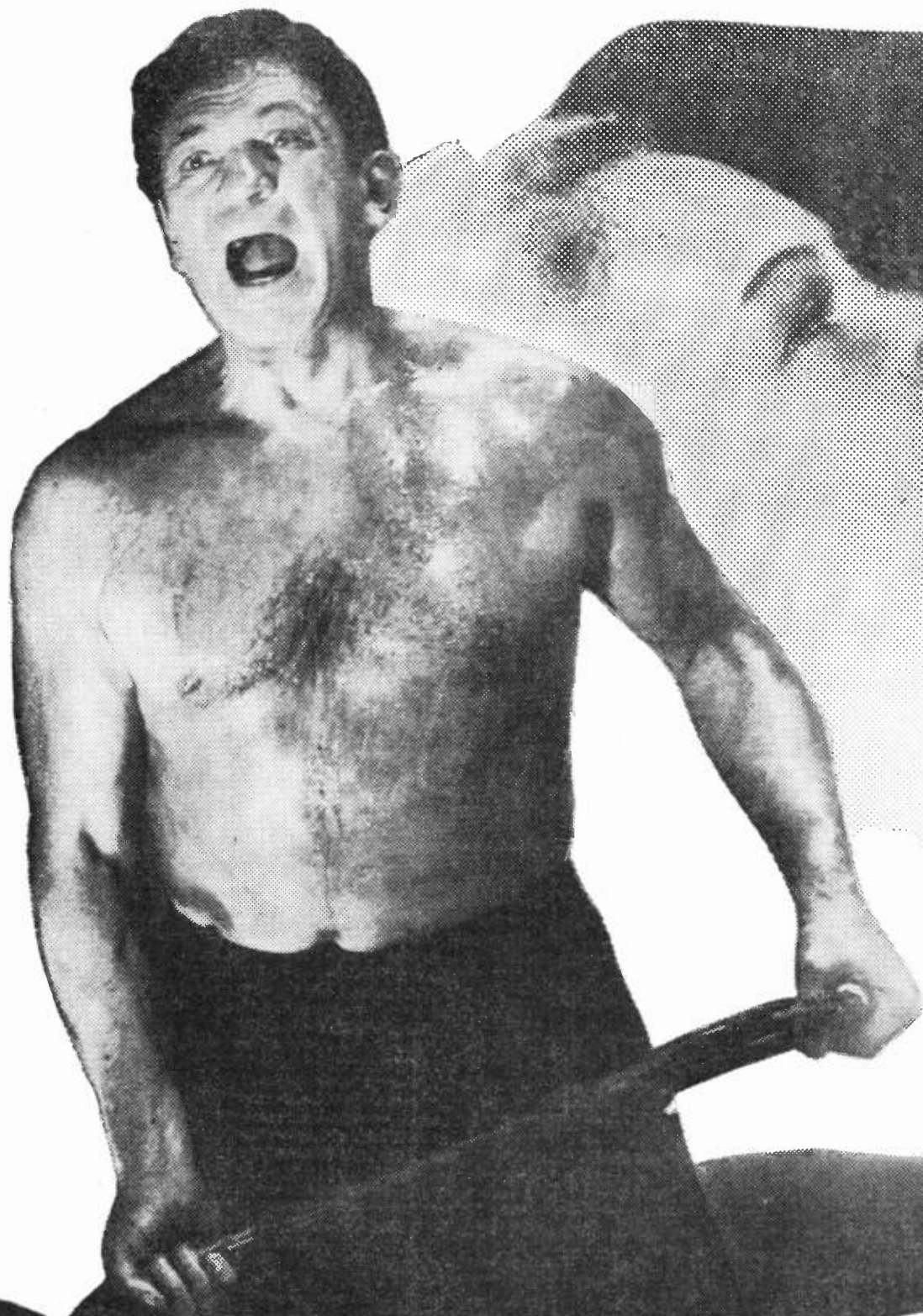
Pandro S. Berman in Charge of Production

Directed by Garson Kanin • Produced by Cliff Reid • Screen Play by John Twist

**OPENING
RADIO CITY
MUSIC HALL
SOON!**



**"CRUSHER" MCKAY... BLISTERING
BOSS OF THE STOKEHOLD CREW... WITH PIS-
TONS FOR FISTS... A FURNACE FOR A HEART
...AND AN EXPERT'S EYE FOR A PRETTY FACE!**



Flaming drama staged on the raging breast of an angry sea! . . . Typhoon ahead, mutiny below—and three people prisoned under decks, battling the creeping terror of white doom—a lone ship's nurse, a globe-roving doctor, and the "Crusher" who needed him even more than he hated him . . . RAW CONFLICT ON YOUR SCREEN, IN A PICTURE POWERFUL IN PUNCH AND BOX-OFFICE PULL!

**VICTOR
MCLAGLEN • CHESTER
"PACIFIC LINER" MORRIS**



with
WENDY BARRIE
ALAN HALE • BARRY FITZGERALD
DIRECTED BY LEW LANDERS • PRODUCED BY ROBERT SISK
SCREEN PLAY BY JOHN TWIST

WALT DISNEY'S

sensational holiday special!

MOTHER GOOSE

goes
HOLLYWOOD



--and, soon...
**DONALD'S
LUCKY DAY**
Released January 13

**SOCIETY DOG
SHOW**
Released February 3

**THE THREE LITTLE PIGS in
THE PRACTICAL
PIG**
Released February 24

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Wait till your crowds see **THESE** nursery rhymes—when they find out who's playing Mother Goose, Little Bo Peep, Jack Horner and all the others!...**THE BIGGEST SURPRISE PACKAGE** of the season, wrapped in true Disney style, and backed up by the kind of national publicity and tieups that mean tickets presold to millions!

WALT DISNEY
PRODUCTIONS *in Technicolor*

DISTRIBUTED BY RKO RADIO PICTURES

H'WOOD'S 3D OF A CENTURY

THE GROSSES

By Roy Chartier

Going into 1938 a year ago with grosses nationally off about 10% and the outlook very dubious, the film theatres of the country were imbued with anything but optimism concerning what lay ahead. At the height of the season last winter pictures were bringing in less coin than product of comparative value had during hot weather, and the uncertainties were disturbing.

Recession had come in October, 1937, knocking business galley-west. The final quarter that year had eaten substantially into the profits shown the prior nine months, and, as 1938 approached, it was difficult to figure what the future would hold. Through the balance of the winter and over the spring, there had been little letup in the recession and, unfortunately for the theatres, the product was slipping.

The result was that for the first seven months of '38, grosses were away down. Over May, June and July they were running from 12-15% behind the same months of the prior year, this representing a serious decline. January, February and March of '38 had averaged a decline of about 10%, as compared with the same months of the year prior. As April arrived, grosses started falling off a little more, while in May and June the low for the year was reached. In July business was a little better than was expected, based on what had happened in May and June, although picture product being supplied for that month did not stack up strongly.

A lot of rainy and cold weekends during July reacted favorably at the boxoffice, lessening the decline that otherwise may have been felt. This unseasonal condition was rather general throughout the country, and, while a stroke of good luck for the theatres, it was brutal for outdoor enterprises.

August the First Ray

July having been better than June in spite of no appreciable change in product, operators were considerably gladdened as August brought what appeared to be a substantial upturn in business. New season's product began to roll that month, led by 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' and 'Algiers,' the first two important 1938-39 releases to be made available. The result was that August's business averaged less than 10% behind the same month the year before. With further improvement shown on the gross graph for September, October and November, the picture theatres were quickly catching up with the pace which had been shown in the fall of 1937. Although at the end of November grosses were still averaging about 5% behind, the fact that the difference had been narrowed to this point was encouraging even though the recession of the fall of 1937 had brought the level down sharply.

Further encouragement was lent by the fact that while some stricken territories were running from 5-10% behind, in others the third quarter's '38 business was neck-and-neck with a year ago. On a few specific fall days, the national average has topped business for the selfsame day in 1937, another welcome sign, although difference in weather, product and the like may have figured importantly in such cases.

With fall business snapping back as well as it did in view of conditions and product that did not assay quite as high as it had for the final quarter of '37, operators looked to 1939 for substantially greater improvement and a possible return to the levels that had been maintained prior to recession. While in New York and some other keys, Christmas business ran substantially ahead of the same holiday week last year and early capitulations would indicate that the average gross level was a little behind for the whole country. This is a bit disappointing in view of a three-day Christmas weekend this year as against two days last Xmas.

General business indices show that the upward swing in industry started in July and has steadily climbed, except for September, with result that a recovery of about 50% of its highest position in the summer of 1937 has been made. Such indices would indicate that business is within about 75% of normal at the moment.

Product Just Wasn't There

The 1938 gross graph for pictures, which started pointing upward slightly in July, has been affected importantly when the whole year is taken in account by a basic lack of product quality. Operators declare that the first nine months of the year were extremely bad from a b.o. point of view due largely, in their opinion, to inferior pictures. Arrival of better

(Continued on page 52)

SELIG FIRST TO SHOOT IN L. A.

The Place to Pick Holly So They Called It H'wood—Edison Cameraman in Frisco Started Trek West—Griffith's Early Maneuvers

DOWN THE YEARS

By Arthur Ungar

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Is December, 1905, the folks of Los Angeles would come out some eight miles to a section of the town, westward of course, to pick holly for their Christmas decorations. That section of the town was heavily forested with holly and is now known as Laurel Canyon. Most of this territory at the time was owned by a family named Taft, who decided, due to the quest for holly, to call the section Hollywood.

At that time it was just a quiet little sector of Los Angeles where one went picknicking on the trolley or with the aid of the horse and buggy. No one heard of pictures outside of those that were being taken by the portrait galleries on Spring and Main streets. Motion pictures were unheard of.

As a matter of fact the first time that cameramen ever hit the gold coast of America was in 1906 when Edison sent a cameraman named Redfield to San Francisco from New York to get some scenes of the earthquake and fire damage. Locally the cameraman was more of an attraction to the sightseers and cleanup folks than the ruins. He was some pumpkins and every time he set up his tripod he was beset with questions as to what he was doing and what he would accomplish. Today it is different. Folks out here appear to know more about what the cinematographer is doing than he knows himself.

In 1907 the first film production unit hit Los Angeles. It was sent out from Chicago by Col. Bill Selig. Francis Boggs and Tom Persons headed the unit which came out in the winter season to make exteriors for a one-reeler, 'Count of Monte Cristo.'

Behold, a Pic Actor

That was the first time this town saw a film actor. The unit did not establish any base. It just did its chore and faded back to the Windy City. The following year Boggs and Persons managed to sell Selig the idea that a winter plant would be a good idea in Los Angeles, where they could wildcat from a studio base and get enough exterior stuff to last the year around. The idea was okayed so they came out and commandeered the roof of a building at Sixth and Main streets where the first studio in Los Angeles was established.

G. M. Anderson, who had been a stage actor, formed Essanay with George K. Spoor of Chicago, creating the character of 'Broncho Billy' and doing his chores around the 'Windy City' until the audiences began seeing telegraph poles for western backgrounds. So he decided in the fall of 1908 to take his troupe to Golden, Colo., for a brief spell. Things did not work out well there so he headed for Niles, Cal., close to Oakland, and established a studio there.

In Nov., 1909, Fred Balshofer was sent to Los Angeles by Kessel and Bauman of the New York Motion Picture Co. Hearing a Bison unit of 17 players they established a studio in a store and backyard in the outskirts of the Los Angeles business district. This company worked out in the suburbs, with exterior shots providing most of the entertainment. Those pictures were released by Universal.

That same year Selig, who had

(Continued on page 55)

'Variety's' Mail Clerk Sizes 'Em Up, Or 'Have You Anything for Me?'

By Helaine Samuels

'Have you anything for me?' and there, against the railing, stand the Mary Collinses, Harry Joneses, Delores de Loves, Ben Cohens, Carmen Riccis, et al. Many, in addition to the use of VARIETY as their mailing address, expect advice for the lonesome, the lovelorn, the career-seeker and last, but not least, perhaps a loan temporarily to tide them over.

John Orman—this name is fictitious, of course, as are all the others—has never failed to come in with the postman, who, excepting Saturdays, makes an appearance four times daily. The guy's air of nervous expectancy is supposedly due to his recent divorce, subsequent remarriage and the straightening out of the welfare of his numerous offspring, by proxy or otherwise. A middle-aged man with startling white sideburns, he sort of lives his part.

Diane Hunt's affected Bostonian accent somehow just doesn't seem to match her general demeanor or attire. An attractive girl who bravely declares she has danced her way practically all over the world, in theatres, cafes and night clubs of any strata, she presents a picture of calcimined elegance. Peculiarly enough, her mail solely comprises notices to attend meetings for any and all kinds of political and social movements. She says she attends in order to keep in touch with world events.

Cherie Le May was once a cute little blonde chorus girl until her appetite got the best of her. But as her 'dearest' friend reports: 'It don't matter to her. She had a lucky break. She got herself married to a sailor and now she's protected for life.' Incidentally, and of some trifling annoyance, Miss Le May's mail mostly consists of request samples and data from every conceivable kind of manufacturer and contest holder who put such ads in publications.

However, look at Dorothy Smithson and her many, many aliases. Since the lady has never been sober, opportunity to pass critical judgment on her idiosyncrasies is a little difficult to accomplish. Except to say that she remarkably and successfully manages to stand upon her own two feet at all times, rattle off

in a harsh and raucous manner her various cognomens, and then carefully walk out. The gal, under the circumstances, really does conduct herself as a lady.

Sherman Lansing is a well-tailored, personable young man with a listing in the Social Register. Nevertheless, upon information and uncertain belief, that does not prevent him from also being a great trumpet player and a prospective orchestra leader par excellence. Extremely polite, he times his presence with the erratic arrival of his one foreign letter, which comes periodically.

Lansing's serene existence offers a direct contrast to Harry Daniels, whose trials and tribulations with his dancing partner, her family and their marital prospectus result in a constant avalanche of billet-doux from both sides. After every little upheaval on their horizon, which seems to be quite often, the dejected young man comes in for advice on procedure. By now he should be well versed—well—until the next time.

Mary Brown and Ann Mason are schoolteacher and nurse respectively. While they probably do not know each other, they are an excellent study of similarity. Their air of quiet efficiency certainly has a pleasant and quieting effect after some of the whirlwind visits from our usually extreme personalities.

The Shakespearean Actors

Violet Barlow's parents toured every hamlet and lane of dear old England in Shakespearean repertory. The lady herself was practically born in the so-called theatrical trunk. Hence it is well understandable that she is an extremely versatile exponent of the famous Bard. However, as Miss Barlow comments resignedly, 'That's all long ago and no one knows or cares now.' So another legit performer manages to live on earnings from an occasional walk-on part or a surprisingly unexpected, but nevertheless extremely pleasant, radio job.

Some of our mail callers never come in personally at all, but send letters and picture postcards from all parts of the world with forwarding addresses. While these are in a definite minority, they lend that con-

(Continued on page 52)



CLAIRE TREVOR

Whose outstanding pictures for the past year are "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" and "Valley of the Giants," just completed the starring role in the forthcoming Walter Wanger production, "Stage Coach."

Miss Trevor is now in New York doing her weekly broadcast in support of Edward G. Robinson in the role of Lorelei in the Rinso "Big Town" CBS program.

Her representative, Harry Wurtzel, is due in New York after New Year to discuss a London pic offer with Miss Trevor.



GENE AUTRY

Republic's singing western star for the second straight year has been voted the box office champion among cowboy stars, by the nation's exhibitors.

Autry is currently working on a series of new musical westerns for 1939. Aside from his film activities during the past year he set many box office records during several personal appearance tours, and appeared with Eddie Cantor, Rudy Vallee and Charlie McCarthy among others on guest radio shots.

Ready Docket for NLRB Hearings On Squawks Affecting 15,000 in Pix

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Hearing dates for complaints involving approximately 15,000 film workers will be assigned this week by National Labor Relations Board.

Dr. Towne Nylander, NLRB regional director, will confer with William Walsh, board's senior counsel, and local field examiners to determine the status of various investigations and the possibility of arranging settlements without a formal hearing. Labor tops and attorneys for the major companies will be asked to submit recommendations for adjusting disputes involving International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

Most important of these cases is dispute between International Photographers Local 659 and IATSE and American Society of Cinematographers over control of head cameramen. The ASC has petitioned to be certified as bargaining representative for first cameramen, while the IA is asking to be designated as collective representative for all employees in photographic end of industry, including first cameramen. IA is now negotiating working agreement for photographers at Walt Disney Studio.

Another petition involves dispute between the IA Studio Utility Employees Local 724 over jurisdiction of studio laborers. All complaints except that of ASC have been consolidated and hearing postponed until Feb. 14 in hopes amicable settlement can be arranged. The IA also is petitioning to be certified as bargaining representative for members of its four big studio locals. Negotiations are being handled by Harold V. Smith, head of IA Coast offices.

Early Hearing for SWG

One of first cases to be set down for hearing will be complaint of Screen Writers Guild charging producers with unfair labor practice. Hearing will be conducted before an NLRB trial examiner by Bernard L. Alpert, special attorney assigned here from Washington. SWG charges major companies with coercion and intimidation and refusal to recognize certification of Guild by NLRB as exclusive bargaining agent for all scribes.

Other film cases to be assigned for hearing include Cinema Players, Inc., which is asking to be designated as collective representative for extras; Screen Writers Guild, petition of Motion Picture Technicians Committee for an investigation of the IATSE; Society of Motion Picture Draftsmen, and Set Designers Guild.

Survey just completed by studio unions indicates that employment boom which started in film industry in November will be carried over into this year. There was a slight letdown at Christmas, but labor calls for men began to increase again this week.

Smith, of the IATSE, said the employment situation is improving steadily, with additional men being put to work each day. He said if production schedules of studio executives materialize a new employment peak may be reached by the middle of this month.

L. C. Helm, business representative of Studio Utility Employees Local 724, announced unemployment at a minimum. Labor boss said that several times within recent weeks organization has not been able to supply all the demands for men and had to call on downtown locals to furnish men.

Keep Makeups Busy

Motion Picture Makeup Artists report entire list of makeups was exhausted shortly before Christmas and that names of only 20 hair stylists were on call sheets. Calls have already been placed for scores of makeups to report for work next week.

Herbert Sorrell, business representative of Motion Picture Painters Local 644, said employment outlook was favorable, with more painters working now than at any time since retrenchment policy was adopted.

Charles H. Woodie, business representative of Studio & Theatrical Janitors union, has been elected president of California State Council of Building Service Employees. Los Angeles will be host to 1939 convention.

Screen Actors Guild has cancelled all meetings of board of directors and Class B Council until after holidays. Proposed pact for licensing of agents is expected to be ready for submission to directors at their next session on Monday (9).

British Films

(Continued from page 5)

at a lunch given in honor of Murray Silverstone expressed the opinion that it would be a definite loss to the film industry as a whole if British film production perished. Some of the most successful American pictures of recent years have been based on British subjects and these indicate that audience interest is stimulated by the importation of ideas and stories from other countries. What is more logical than that these should come from Britain, a country that is closer to America in language, thought and ideals than any other in the world.

Further, the new Films Act of 1928 has a reciprocity clause by which American companies, acquiring British films for distribution in America, are relieved of renter's quota obligations in England.

Given that the film acquired is of a standard to merit distribution, the added advantage of not having to produce one, two or more films in England with its consequent displacement of money and executive man-power, should make Britain figure more largely than ever before in the policies of American producers.

Summing-up is just this. Britain today is making good pictures after years of hard experience, those pictures need an American outlet before they can improve further and in view of the consummation of the trade treaty which will tie England and America closer than ever before, America would not lose by taking more interest in the material produced on this side and making the path through the U. S. A. somewhat smoother.

PHILLY KAYOES 3% SALES TAX ON FILMS

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Strenuous lobbying by exhibitor organizations and Warner Bros. resulted last Thursday (29) in the last minute removal by City Council of a clause in a general sales tax measure which would have burdened exhibs with a 3% tap on film rentals.

Similar sentence was in last year's 2% sales tax bill and was likewise pulled out by friendly councilmen at last minute. Getting its baptism of fire in the current campaign was the new Allied unit. Dave Yaffe, assistant biz manager, rallied the forces, which worked under the field generalship tactics of Abe Einstein, vet Warner Bros. legislative contact man. Lewen Pizor and George Aarons, of United Motion Picture Theatre Owners, rival group, also played a part in killing the disastrous measure. Their work was so effective that the vote by Council was unanimous for striking out the film tax clause.

Film interests were prepared to fight the levy in the courts on the basis that film is leased, not sold, although there wasn't much optimism on that angle due to the precedent in New York which upheld the tax.

Parking Meters Irk Salt Lake's Theatres

Salt Lake City, Jan. 1.

Salt Lake City flicker patrons are nursing a torrid beef presented them during the holidays by the city commission. In three weeks, automatic parking meters will be installed in the downtown biz district where 85% of the burg's cinemas are located.

Under the new city ordinance, designed to relieve overburdened parking conditions, motorists will have to fork over before parking the family bus, as follows: 12-minute parking, 1c; one hour parking, 5c; two hours, 10c.

Curb devices aren't new here. They were jerked about two years ago, following a three month trial period.

Search for Wahooers

Metro is Booneing for a new Tarzan and his femme mate. Eastern talent executives have been told to scout the Atlantic seaboard for tall attractive young men of unusual physical getup and beautiful girls with a streamlined figure.

Talent lads have been told that appearance is the major consideration, but if they can act so much the better. Company apparently is willing to help train suitable types for the forest-long-jump production if showing photographic possibilities. New Tarzan series is now being set by M-G.

NW INDIES DO OK DESPITE PAR'S 87

Minneapolis, Jan. 1.

Survey shows that producer-owned Paramount Northwest circuit has anything but a stranglehold on exhibiting end of the business in this territory and that independent chains are continuing to expand and gain strength. All the more independent circuits have been prospering and apparently do not find the supposed advantages enjoyed by the producer-owned competitor a serious handicap to progress.

Paramount operates 87 houses in Minnesota, North and South Dakota and western Wisconsin. Biggest of the independent chains is the McCarthy with 20 houses. Probably even more important because of its de luxe theatres is Franklin Amuse. Co. 13 houses, most of them built or acquired the past few years and a considerable number in the Twin Cities. The Eddie Ruben and the Bennie Berger circuits each consist of eight theatres. Baehr chain, in northern Minnesota, comprises 11 houses. There are any number of smaller circuits numbering from two to five theatres.

In the Twin Cities, Par has 22 theatres against 58 independents. The independents have 13 in the downtown sections of Minneapolis as compared with 11 Paramount houses. Independent nabe spots number 45 against 11 Paramount's. Paramount operates six Minneapolis, five St. Paul downtown houses; and seven Minneapolis and four St. Paul nabes. Independents have 10 Minneapolis and three St. Paul loop theatres, and 31 Minneapolis and 14 St. Paul nabe situations.

Throughout the territory the Paramount's 87 theatres are only a comparative drop in the total bucket of more than 300 showhouses. Where Paramount has the edge, however, is in total seats and size of aggregate investment.

Koff Battling R'c'vrs To Retain His Theatre

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Hearing set for last Wednesday was postponed because of the holidays until Wednesday (4) by the U.S. District Court on charges brought by Mel Koff, operator of the Darby, that unfair tactics are being used to wrest his theatre from under him. Koff claims that receivers for the mortgage holders have violated the court's instructions by selling the house to outside interests without first giving him a crack at buying it. District Court, he maintains, when receivers took the mortgage instructed them to let Koff have initial opportunity to purchase the theatre if a sale contemplated. Their failure to do so, he feels, probably means he will be forced out when his current lease expires.

Koff is particularly unwilling to lose the Darby at this time, as he just came to a very favorable settlement with Warner Bros. on runs, following threat of a court suit.

Cisco's Girl Friend

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Lynn Bari is slated for the femme lead opposite Warner Baxter in 'Return of the Cisco Kid,' rolling late this month at 20th-Fox.

Cesar Romero gets one of the supporting roles.

RETAKES OF 1938

By George E. Phair

*Over the hill the Old Year blows
Along Time's endless track,
But do not cheer him as he goes—
He might come back.*

Revivals are the order of the day in Hollywood, with 'Frankenstein,' 'Dracula' and a lot of other cadavers showing more signs of life than some of the new productions. So let us exhume a few quips of 1938, which was a fair-to-middlin' sort of year, even though it did bog down on the backstretch. Time Stumbles On!

Claudette Colbert's two dogs, a dachshund and a French poodle, get along without international complications in 'Midnight.' Showing that dogs have more horse sense than people.

'Life Is a Parade' becomes 'The Parade Is Over,' even before it starts. Life is like that in Hollywood.

*The picture star is highly paid
When life is bright and sunny,
But when the final score is made,
The lawyer has the money.*

Freddie Bartholomew, a moppet, has paid \$83,000 in attorney fees. If he works hard and counts his pennies, he may save up enough to study law.

Paramount is brushing up 'Angels in Furs,' indicating a cold winter in Heaven.

*He looked upon the surge of youth
With envy in his eyes.
It pained him like an aching tooth
To see those fresh young guys;
Those kids who looked with smiling face
Upon a new career,
When he had run his youthful race
And faced a future drear.
It brought him back to days of yore
When he was in his prime.
A proud and pampered star before
He felt the blight of time.
The leaves had fallen from the vine
To mingle with the mold,
For he had reached the age of nine,
And he was growing old.*

Add Hollywood miracles—the 'Dead End' Kids as reformers in 'The Battle of the City Hall.'

Bullish trend in films—Walt Disney throws 'Ferdinand the Bull' and John M. Stahl takes 'Bull By the Horns.'

Football scenes in 'Hell's Kitchen' indicate that the old neighborhood has changed. In bygone days the boys tossed forwards and laterals with bricks.

Gals in the good old U. S. A. are registering a protest against Tyrone Power's South American romance. They claim a foul—hitting below the Panama Canal.

Nelson Eddy, highwayman, will make the heart rejoice,
Sticking up a stagecoach with a million-dollar voice.

*Horror films grow more horrendous,
More colossal, more stupendous.
Who d'ya think is coming back?
Jack the Ripper—good old Jack.*

Back in the simple days of childhood, Jack the Ripper was a name to frighten children. When a kid became a rugged individualist along about bedtime the mere mention of Jack the Ripper would send him scurrying under the quilts. Now he is coming to Hollywood to show 'Dracula,' 'Frankenstein' and those other bushers how to raise big-league goosepimples. Motion Pictures Are Your Best Baby Frighteners.

Speaking of double bills, Rita Hayward was robbed of two automobiles in one night. Next thing we know, the press agent will pull a double jewel robbery.

Newer homes in the picture colony are being constructed without open-air dunking ponds. It is no longer a social necessity to bathe colossally.

Studios are doing away with 'B' pictures by handing them another name, but Shakespeare is still right about a rose by any monicker.

*They socked the lady on the eye
With many a hearty biff,
They dragged her up a mountain high
And tossed her off a cliff.*

*They dunked her in a mossy well
And doused her in a lake.
They flung her in a dungeon cell
And chained her to a stake.*

*Through hurricanes and floods she went,
And quakes and sinking ships,
Nor ever mussed her permanent
Nor soiled her fingertips.*

*In jungle fens and Arctic snows,
In bloodshed and despair,
She bloomed as dainty as a rose
In yonder garden fair.*

You can always tell a yokel in Hollywood. He carries a little camera on a strap.

*Nuances of the picture art
Are baffling to the common throng
When Gladys Swarthout plays a part
Without a song.*

Measuring masterpieces of sculpture or painting by the dollar sign is an old newspaper custom. Often you read: 'So and So Sells \$1,500,000 Art.' Now comes Hollywood with its own artistic yardstick: 'Goldwyn Shoots 2,500 Feet of Heifetz.' Howja like a couple furlongs of symphony?

Film critic in Budapest fought a sabre duel with a producer. Over here they use poison gas.

*There was a man in Hollywood and he was wondrous dumb.
He answered 'No' instead of 'Yes,' and now he is a bum.*

PARAMOUNT
gives you
VARIETY
for
1939

**A complete assortment of
Diversified Entertainment**



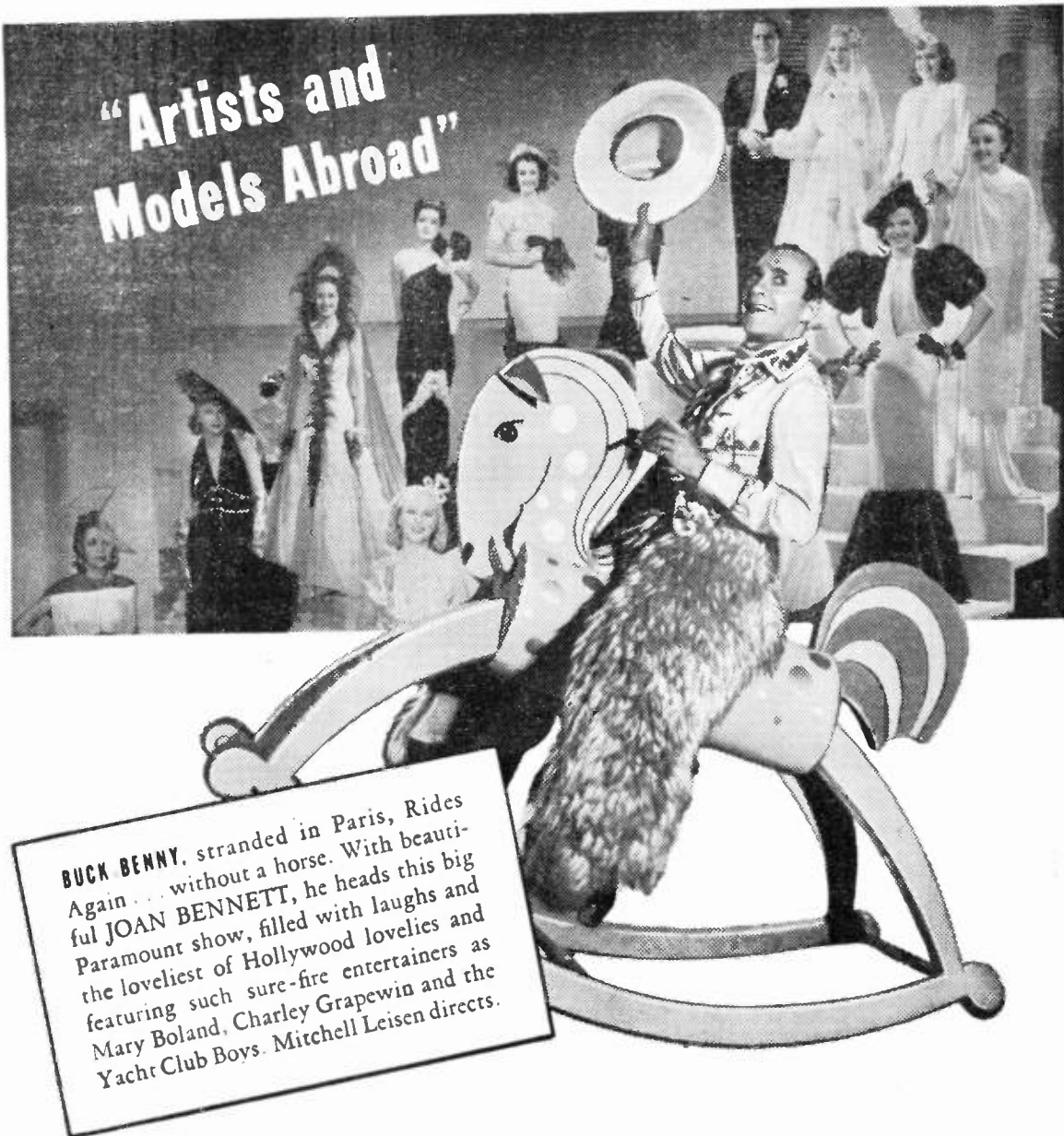
Ready for Release

All set and ready to pack 'em in, in the grand old Paramount box office tradition, are these brand new audience builders. Everyone of 'em proof positive that the big Paramount studio knows how to deliver 'em: **"Artists and Models Abroad"** starring Jack Benny and Joan Bennett; **"Disbarred"** with Gail Patrick, Robert Preston, Otto Kruger; **"Zaza"** starring Claudette Colbert with Herbert Marshall; **"Ambush"** with Gladys Swarthout and Lloyd Nolan; **"Boy Trouble"** with Charlie Ruggles, Mary Boland, Donald O'Connor; **"Paris Honeymoon"** with Bing Crosby, Franciska Gaal, Akim Tamiroff, Shirley Ross; **"St. Louis Blues"** with Dorothy Lamour, Lloyd Nolan; **"...one third of a nation"** starring Sylvia Sydney with Leif Erikson; **"King of Chinatown"** with Anna May Wong, Akim Tamiroff; J. Edgar Hoover's **"Persons in Hiding"** with Lynne Overman, Patricia Morison, J. Carrol Naish; **"Sunset Trail"** featuring Hopalong (Bill Boyd) Cassidy. **"Bulldog Drummond's Secret Police"** with John Howard and Heather Angel; **"The Beachcomber"** starring Charles Laughton with Elsa Lanchester.

In Production

In the Cutting Room . . . getting whipped into shape for late winter and early spring release are these grand additions to the big Paramount program (boy, these rushes look terrific): **"Cafe Society"** starring Madeleine Carroll, Fred MacMurray, Shirley Ross; **"Hotel Imperial"** with Isa Miranda, Ray Milland; **"Never Say Die"** starring Martha Raye and Bob Hope and Andy Devine; **"Back Door to Heaven"** with Wallace Ford, Patricia Ellis.

Before the Camera . . . Hollywood's top notch directors are now sending America's favorite stars through their paces in these smash Paramount spring successes: **"Sudden Money"**, with Charlie Ruggles, Marjorie Rambeau; **"I'm From Missouri"** starring Bob Burns with Gladys George; **"Me and My Gal"** starring Buck Jones with Helen Twelvetrees; **"The Lady's From Kentucky"** starring George Raft, Ellen Drew with Hugh Herbert and Zasu Pitts; Cecil B. De Mille's long-awaited **"Union Pacific"** starring Barbara Stanwyck, Joel McCrea with Akim Tamiroff, Lynne Overman and a tremendous cast of thousands; **"Midnight"** starring Claudette Colbert, Don Ameche with Francis Lederer, Mary Astor; John Barrymore; **"Man About Town"** starring Jack Benny and Dorothy Lamour.



BUCK BENNY, stranded in Paris, Rides Again . . . without a horse. With beautiful JOAN BENNETT, he heads this big Paramount show, filled with laughs and the loveliest of Hollywood lovelies and featuring such sure-fire entertainers as Mary Boland, Charley Grapewin and the Yacht Club Boys. Mitchell Leisen directs.



"DISBARRED"

CROOKED MOUTHPIECES...The men who shield the men behind gangland's guns — the men who cheat the electric chair thru trickery provide Paramount with another sensational thrill-drama. Backed by a strong cast including Gail Patrick, Robert Preston, Otto Kruger, Sidney Toler. Robert Florey directed.



"NEVER SAY DIE"

RAYE AND HOPE . . . MARTHA RAYE and BOB HOPE team up again to distribute belly laughs in their funniest comedy. Andy Devine, comedy star of "Men With Wings," and Alan Mowbray are in there helping them make this one the sock laugh hit of the winter season. Elliot Nugent directs.



"HOTEL IMPERIAL"

Romance...ISA MIRANDA and RAY MILLAND find love between battles as war surrounds "Hotel Imperial." Ray shares acting honors with Paramount's thrilling new star in this adventure drama of love and war. Reginald Owen, Gene Lockhart, J. Carrol Naish and a large cast of feature players. Robert Florey directs.



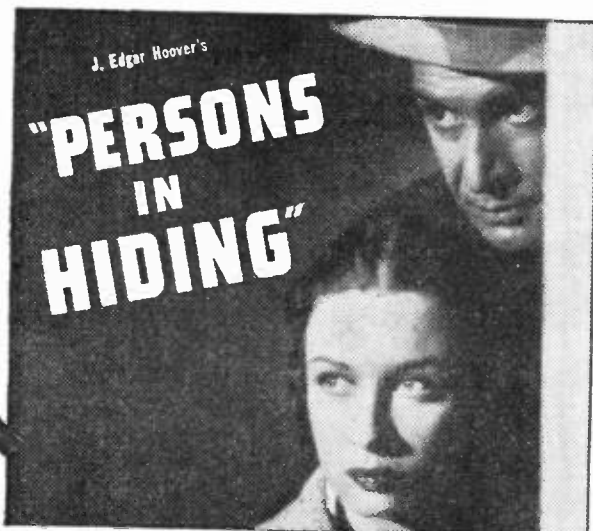
Starring CLAUDETTE COLBERT with HERBERT MARSHALL in one of the greatest emotional dramas of all time, "Zaza." Features an all-star line-up including Bert Lahr, Helen Westley, Constance Collier, Genevieve Tobin, Walter Catlett, George Cukor directs. Albert Lewin is the producer. A certain Academy Award Winner... a sure-fire box-office hit!



Wedding Rings and Bing... When BING CROSBY gets tangled up in the romantic yearnings of FRANCISKA GAAL and SHIRLEY ROSS it's a "Paris Honeymoon" all right. With Akim Tamiroff, lots of laughs and the usual bevy of bigtime hit tunes. Frank Tuttle directs.



Mississippi Showboat Romance... Paramount's exciting musical drama based on that first and grandest of all American jazz or swing numbers, "The St. Louis Blues," with DOROTHY LAMOUR and LLOYD NOLAN. Raoul Walsh directs.



First of Paramount's dramas based on the exploits of the F. B. I., from the book by J. Edgar Hoover. With Lynne Overman, Patrisia Morison, J. Carrol Naish. *Watch this girl!



Thrills! Thrills! Thrills!... the best of Paramount's much-praised underworld dramas with Anna May Wong, Akim Tamiroff. Has everything a punch-packed action picture needs.



Something New in Thrillers... First called "I Robbed a Bank"—a daring drama of two young people trapped in a ruthless manhunt. Gladys Swarthout plays her first big dramatic role, with Lloyd Nolan, Ernest Truex.



New York Drama... The hell which bred the "Dead End" kids is the stark background for a love story of a kind never before seen upon the screen. Starring Sylvia Sydney with Leif Erikson. Dudley Murphy produced.



Glitterbugs of the "400"... Paramount's laughing romance of those darlings of the tabloids, cafe society, starring MADELINE CARROLL, FRED MACMURRAY, SHIRLEY ROSS. Edward H. Griffith directs.

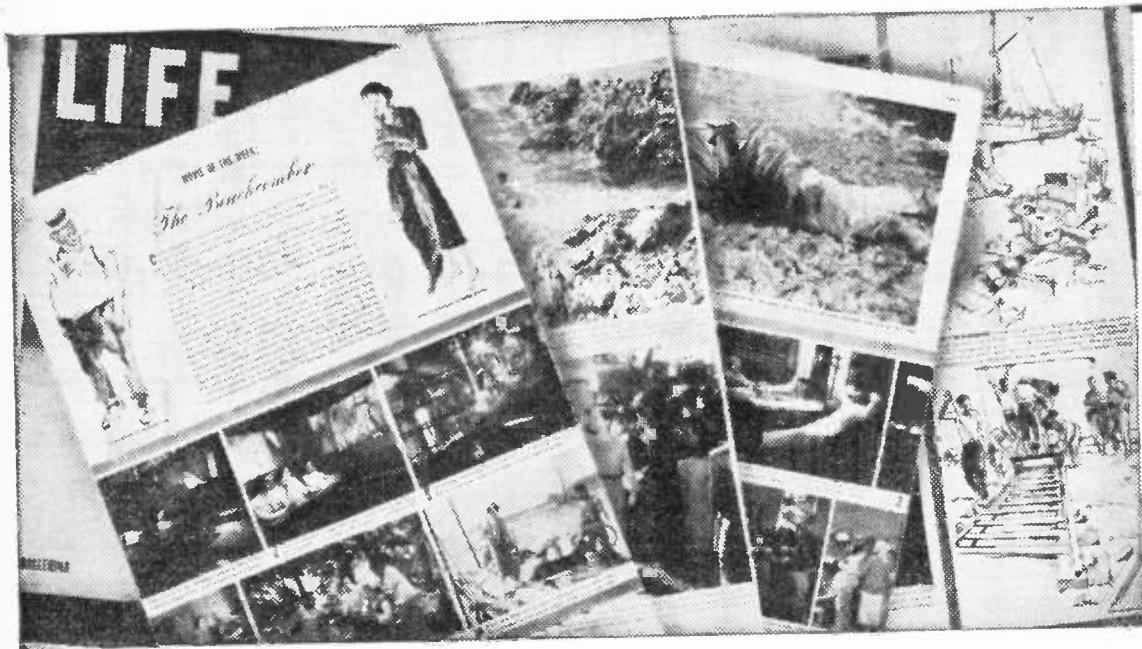
CHARLES LAUGHTON

returns to the screen as
"THE BEACHCOMBER"
 with Elsa Lanchester

The critics cheer—the magazines rave! New York crowds jam Broadway's Rivoli Theatre to see Charles Laughton, the screen's first actor, in the new season's first big film event, "The Beachcomber" . . . acclaimed as the grandest role of Laughton's film career—and a sure-fire money-maker for theatres everywhere.



"Another of the year's superior productions. An experience emphatically not to be missed."
 —N. Y. Times



- 1 17,300,000 readers of Life read this 5-page rave review!
- 2 800 big daily newspapers carried this United Press rave: "One of the best pictures of this or any other year, We urge that you see it!"
- 3 News Week gives front page publicity break plus rave review!
- 4 "Third best English speaking picture of the year," says National Board of Review!



A glimpse of the crowds now storming the Rivoli Theatre on Broadway.

A few of the raves from New York Critics:
 "Delightful comedy. A fascinating character study."—*Journal-American*.
 "Sheer magic. Well worth your time and attention."—*World-Telegram*. "One of the season's outstanding films."—*Sun*.
 "Sums up to delightful entertainment."—*Daily News*. "As gaily impudent and captivating a production as has come to town. Utterly delightful."—*Herald Tribune*.

Tricks in Show Biz Contracts

By I. Robert Broder

(Formerly of Counsel, Radio-Keith-Orpheum)

Recently, an artist submitted a film contract which had been offered to him and which had been approved by his manager. It contained the usual option, to be picked up following the making of a screen test. There was no obligation on the part of the film company actually to make the test, and the artist had no recourse against the film company in the event that it did not make the test.

The artist, however, obligated himself to refrain from signing any contracts with any employer in show business, whether such employer was another film company, or engaged in any other field of theatrical endeavor. In other words, the artist agreed not to work, or commit himself for any further employment, for a period of several months, during which the film company was to make up its mind whether or not it wanted to make a film test of him, or whether it wanted to, following the making of the film test, employ his services. Attached to the option agreement, was the actual contract which the film company would enter into with the artist, if it exercised its option. The contract contained every possible restrictive clause upon the future services of the artist and several expertly prepared "sleeper" clauses which were buried in the midst of much legal verbiage.

One such form of contract, used by one of the major film companies, includes a provision to the effect that if the film company failed to take advantage of a lay-off period in one term of the contract, it could add the lay-off period to any subsequent term of the contract. This contract provides for the usual guarantee of 20 weeks employment in each 26-week period. Each subsequent 26-week period provided for an increase in salary. If the employer (the film company) utilized the artist's services for the full 26 weeks for the first period, at \$500 a week and the artist's salary was to be increased to \$1,000 per week during the next 26-week period, the film company could lay off the artist for 12 weeks during the \$1,000 a week period. In other words, the artist was losing exactly \$3,000 in this particular instance and, of course, the artist would continue to lose much more money as his contract went on.

Going to another field, we find similar abuses in contracts. Recently, a prominent dancer was offered an engagement at an important New York hotel. The engagement was procured through a standard booking office. The agreement submitted to the artist contained a sentence to the effect that if the artist ever worked at the same hotel at any time during the succeeding five-year period, the artist was to pay commission to the booker for any such subsequent engagement, regardless of whether or not any such subsequent engagements were procured by the same booker.

It is thought that the necessity for legal counsel has been obviated due to standard forms of contract being required by such organizations as Actors' Equity Association, Screen Artists' Guild, Scenic Designers' Union, etc. Although these standard forms may be sufficient for the rank and file performer, quite frequently riders are added to these contracts by managers which poorly express the real intention of the parties, or are so clumsily drawn as to give rise to two or more interpretations.

Standard Forms Gone

In the vaudeville field, the days of the standard printed form of contract, which never varied, are gone. Independent bookers have sprung up, whose contracts are decidedly inadequate (and in many cases, not enforceable) and require close scrutiny. In a recent instance, a new booker issued contracts which were so poorly drawn that they even failed to protect the booker himself. This booker's contract failed to state the place at which the performances were to be rendered, and likewise failed to include, among other things, a provision for the act to supply the usual photographs and necessary stage equipment for its performances. In other words, if the act required the use of special stage props, scenery and costumes, it could walk into the theatre without such props, costumes and scenery, do the act in street clothes and the management would have no recourse.

In the artists' management field, contract abuses are becoming more and more frequent.

Recently, a topflight orchestra leader, who had just opened at a prominent New York hotel, submitted a contract to a girl singer. The contract was between 'Joe Blotz' and His Orchestra, Inc., and the singer. In examining this contract closely, it was impossible to ascertain whether the corporation was the girl's employer or whether it was her manager. It contained provisions whereby the girl agreed to work exclusively for the corporation and other provisions whereby, if the girl worked for anyone else, the corporation could collect 25% of her income as a management fee (and in addition, the girl had to pay agents' commissions for procuring outside jobs).

'Unique' at \$30 a Week

The contract further recited that the girl's guaranteed salary during each of the five years of her employment was to be the sum of \$1,500 per year and that her services were so unique, extraordinary and irreplaceable that, in the event that she breached the contract and attempted to work for anyone else, the corporation could enjoin such other employment. The conclusion to be drawn from both of these provisions is laughable on its face. Surely, an artist so 'unique, extraordinary and irreplaceable' must be worth more than \$30 per week. This young singer was also to provide her own wardrobe for theatre and hotel appearances.

Having the foresight to consult an attorney, that was sufficient to kill that deal and assist her in procuring a more equitable contract.

Not alone does the young and inexperienced performer, but experienced and higher-salaried people frequently get themselves into difficulties through signing long-term management contracts which should never have been signed.

Specifically, a contract was submitted recently by a name band leader, whose salary is upwards of \$5,000. He had entered into a management contract with one of the largest band booking organizations. The contract which he signed was printed except for the percentages which were to be paid as fees to the management. It was the old story of 'It's a printed form. Everybody signs it. We never make any changes. If you want us, this is the only contract which we will sign.'

When Trouble Arises

Eventually there was trouble. Bookings became very infrequent and the orchestra leader found it necessary to try to break the contract in order to get work and keep his band together. An examination of the contract disclosed such high-handed and unfair provisions as being for a period of 20 years. If, however, the management failed to procure any employment during a period of six consecutive weeks, the leader could terminate the contract on 10 days' written notice. The catch, however, was that the management corporation was given the right to sign all contracts for the leader at whatever salary it saw fit, at or above the union scale. In other words, if the management corporation failed to get employment for the leader for five weeks, it could sign a contract for the leader and his \$5,000 band, to appear for one night at the union scale and thereby commence another six-week layoff.

The contract contained no guarantee that any minimum number of weeks of employment would be procured. In fact, it did not even guarantee to get any employment for the orchestra.

If, however, the orchestra leader got a job either through his own efforts or through another agent, he was still required to pay the management corporation its percentage, even though he had also to pay a commission to another agent. The management corporation was authorized to collect all monies from all employers and if the orchestra leader and his orchestra could not perform because of illness, the management corporation was still to be entitled to its commission for the unplayed engagement. The management corporation disclaimed all responsibility for the failure of any employer to pay salaries to the leader and was not to be obligated in any way under any circumstances for anything arising out of the contract. To top all of this, all publicity used by the orchestra leader, whether or not created by him or the management corporation, could not be used by the orchestra

Now It's Free Bridge

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Latest move of Joe Conway, vet operator of the Egyptian theatre in suburban Philly, is to set bridge tables up on the promenade during matinees. If the women customers don't like the picture, they can play bridge. He claims it's a wow.

Present plan developed from an original idea of about five weeks ago which failed to click. It was for bridge matinees. Invited in for an hour of bridge, following which they were to quit to view the feature. Femmes didn't like it, however, because of the punk partners they claimed they always drew. Also resented the fact that Conway didn't serve 'em ice cream and cake. Present scheme seems to be meshing better because after the gals have gandered a hunk of the picture, they're usually willing to play bridge with anybody—and without tea and crumpets, either, Conway explains.

leader after the termination of the contract.

20-Year Pact

In other words, the management corporation agreed to do exactly nothing and the orchestra leader agreed to pay them a fixed percentage of his gross income for every one of his engagements during a period of 20 years. The sole obligation of the management corporation was, 'To use their best efforts to procure bookings.' And that might mean exactly nothing.

To the lay business man, such conditions are, at the least, incredible. No business man would attempt to enter into any agreement outside of his daily routine, without the advice and services of counsel experienced in his field. The practice of law has developed into specialized fields. Show business has so many individual problems of its own that the special field of theatrical law has, of necessity, come into being. A lawyer specializing in the theatrical field would no more think of undertaking the drawing of a technical agreement involving a mining enterprise, than a lawyer specializing in the mining field would attempt to draw an agreement for the management or employment of theatrical artists.

Attention has been called to a printed form of contract being issued by a new night club in Hollywood, whereby the artist agrees that if he 'doubles' in pictures, radio, television or in any other field of show business during the time appearing at this particular night club, the operator of the club is to receive 50% of the artist's additional income thus earned.

Attorneys have been accused by agents and managers of attempting to displace them. In some instances this may be true. In the majority of instances, however, ethical attorneys confine themselves to the practice of law, leaving the booking of artists to those particularly qualified to do so.

St. Louis Indies' Blues Over IATSE Demands for Extra Union Help

St. Louis, Jan. 1.

Negotiations are under way between theatre owners and the St. Louis Local No. 6, IATSE, for maintenance men in all theatres in St. Louis County, although many of the indie fear that their biz will be ruined if they are forced to accede to the union's demands. A six-month survey of theatres by IA reports that many janitors, managers and others were doing the work that comes under the jurisdiction of maintenance men. Newlin said that about 35 maintenance men, members of the union, have been out of employment.

Parleys are being held with St. Louis Amus. Co., which operates about 31 nabes in the city and county, and the St. Louis Theatre Owners' Assn., headed by Fred Wehrenberg. Most of the 50 indie nabes are members of Wehrenberg's organization.

Several indie theatre owners have voiced protests against the maintenance man move and pointed out the fate that befell Henry Holloway who opened a house in University City, a suburb, last year. Holloway, according to information current in local circles, was forced to employ

two operators at \$75 per week each and a maintenance man at the same scale after he was led to believe the operators would cost him only \$45 and there would be no maintenance man on his payroll. Holloway operated his house for nine months and shuttered it last March after dropping \$2,300. The house cost \$60,000 to build.

Finch's Union Beef

Reading, Pa., Jan. 1.

Claims that Walter S. Finch will have to close his Capitol if terms of a contract with stagehands and projectionists' unions are enforced, and that Finch has already lost \$4,000 through the wage clauses in the pact, were made in Berks county court here as a hearing of claims for back pay by union members in a labor dispute with Finch last summer. The two unions, which hold the contract with Finch, the employees themselves having no contract, filed counter-claims that the wage terms are not onerous and that at least two persons stand ready to take over the 2,200-seat theatre if Finch should throw up the lease or close the house.

Hope Gets It Hot

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Bob Hope goes jittery in his next Paramount picture, 'Some Like It Hot,' based on the current swing vogue.

Musical film features Gene Krupa and his band.

BITTER'S P.A.'s

Monogram's singing cowboy star, Tex Ritter, is going on a tour of personal appearances in the south and midwest shortly.

Dates start some time in January.

WANE OF FILMUSICALS

By Jack Jungmeyer

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

One screen musical this past year stood out so prominently and successfully above its competitors as not only to make boxoffice history for itself but also to emphasize the mediocrity of the general product in this category. That was the 20th-Fox Irving Berlin picture, 'Alexander's Ragtime Band.' [This excludes, of course, the cartoon film musical, 'Snow White.']

What 'Alex' had, and what most of the other musical endeavors of the season lacked, pointedly indicates some of the potent reasons why this film form is currently on the wane and why so many pictures, more or less based on music, were a bitter disappointment to producers and public alike.

'Alexander's Ragtime Band' had genuine emotional wallop. Its song content and arrangement blended well with a story of our times.

Most significant as to Hollywood's own verdict on the prospect of films with music for the immediate future is Warners' purge of all contract clerks from its music department. On top of that, WB didn't take up the option on Dick Powell, its chief songster during the past few years. Musical schedule for 1939 has been cut to lowest program in a long time.

At Paramount Boris Morros left as music department head. This severance is partly political, but also indicates a change in policy as to Paramount's future dealing with its musical program, in line with the public's recent verdict on this type of screen entertainment.

From the standpoint of production, Paramount as well as Warners, Metro, 20th-Fox and Universal placed considerable stress on musicals in 1938. Paramount had as its more important offerings Bing Crosby's 'Sing, You Sinners,' 'College Swing,' 'Doctor Rhythm' (Emanuel Cohen production), 'Paris Honeymoon,' 'Tropic Holiday,' 'Artists and Models Abroad,' 'Cocoanut Grove' and 'The Big Broadcast of 1938.' Warners made 'Garden of the Moon,' 'Gold Diggers in Paris,' 'Cowboy from Brooklyn.' Universal's contributions were B. G. DeSylva's 'You're a Sweetheart,' 'The Road to Reno,' hailed as Hope Hampton's comeback musical, and the two Deanna Durbin starrers, 'Mad About Music' and 'That Certain Age' (characterized by Miss Durbin's singing, although not in the specialized sense, musicals). Metro produced 'Rosalie' and 'Girl of the Golden West,' both William Anthony McGuire productions, and 'Great Waltz' and 'Sweethearts,' the Hunt Stromberg specials.

Exhibs Cooled on 'Em

A few of these were outstanding and grossed satisfactorily, some exceptionally. Many of them went in one ear and out the other without any memorable reaction upon either audiences or the coin tills. General consensus of producers and exhibitors at the end of the year was the conviction that film musicals were definitely on the ebb. Only where producers had a heavy contractual investment in songsters, as in the case of Paramount with Crosby and Metro with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, was there definite planning for pretentious musical pictures for this coming year.

Following the 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' precedent and approach, Metro essayed 'Great Waltz' as a musical biographical drama, woven around Johann Strauss' immortal melodies. But neither 'Waltz' nor 'Ragtime Band,' nor several of the pictures in the above listing which have a dominant musical character, are film musicals in the sense of cream-puff musical comedies that the public associates with the term. They are here lumped as a musical category to justify comment as to current trends which show a constantly widening rift between the more serious dramatic musicals and the frothy musical fripperies.

Of the latter, the 1938 public showed itself surfeited. For the more serious endeavors there was a demonstrable, growing demand.

Every indication from the preliminary caucuses of the producers and film sales chiefs in lining up the new year's picture programs is that the approach toward films with predominant music will be much more carefully mulled than heretofore.

NEVER IN THE HISTORY OF THIS INDUSTRY HAS A COMPANY WON SUCH RECOGNITION!

SHIRLEY TEMPLE

**NAMED "NUMBER ONE" MONEY-MAKING STAR
for the 4th consecutive year!**

It was an *all-time* record a year ago . . . when Shirley Temple was voted Number One for the *third* consecutive time. Only Shirley Temple could break a record like that!

**FIVE OUT OF THE "FIRST TEN" MONEY-MAKERS
are 20th Century-Fox stars!**

Shirley Temple! . . . Sonja Henie! . . . Jane Withers!
... Alice Faye! . . . Tyrone Power! — Five out of ten!

and of course

**20TH TOPS THE MONTHLY "BOX OFFICE CHAMPIONS"
with 18 top-grossing attractions!**

More monthly Box Office Champions than any other company! Proof again that 20th leads the industry for *consistent, week-by-week* delivery of hit pictures!

**A GREAT
1938
IS OVER!**

"HAPPY NEW YEAR" HAS A MEANING!

During the dark days of 1932-33, it was a hard problem just to keep this company alive.

It was important to us and it was equally important to thousands of our customers that the company continue as an important production source. By devotion to its task, a loyal organization pulled the company through to health and strength, but this could not have been done had we not also received the support and confidence of exhibitors throughout the world.

A little more than three years ago, Messrs. Joseph M. Schenck, Darryl F. Zanuck and William Goetz were invited to come with us, because of their outstanding production achievement.

Within those three years, without agitation or legislation, but by sticking strictly to the business of producing and selling pictures, Twentieth Century-Fox has steadily forged ahead until today the world's exhibitors vote it undisputed leadership.

But Darryl F. Zanuck and his production associates are not the kind of men to rest on past accomplishments. They recognize the responsibility of leadership. They appreciate their continuing obligation to our theatre customers.

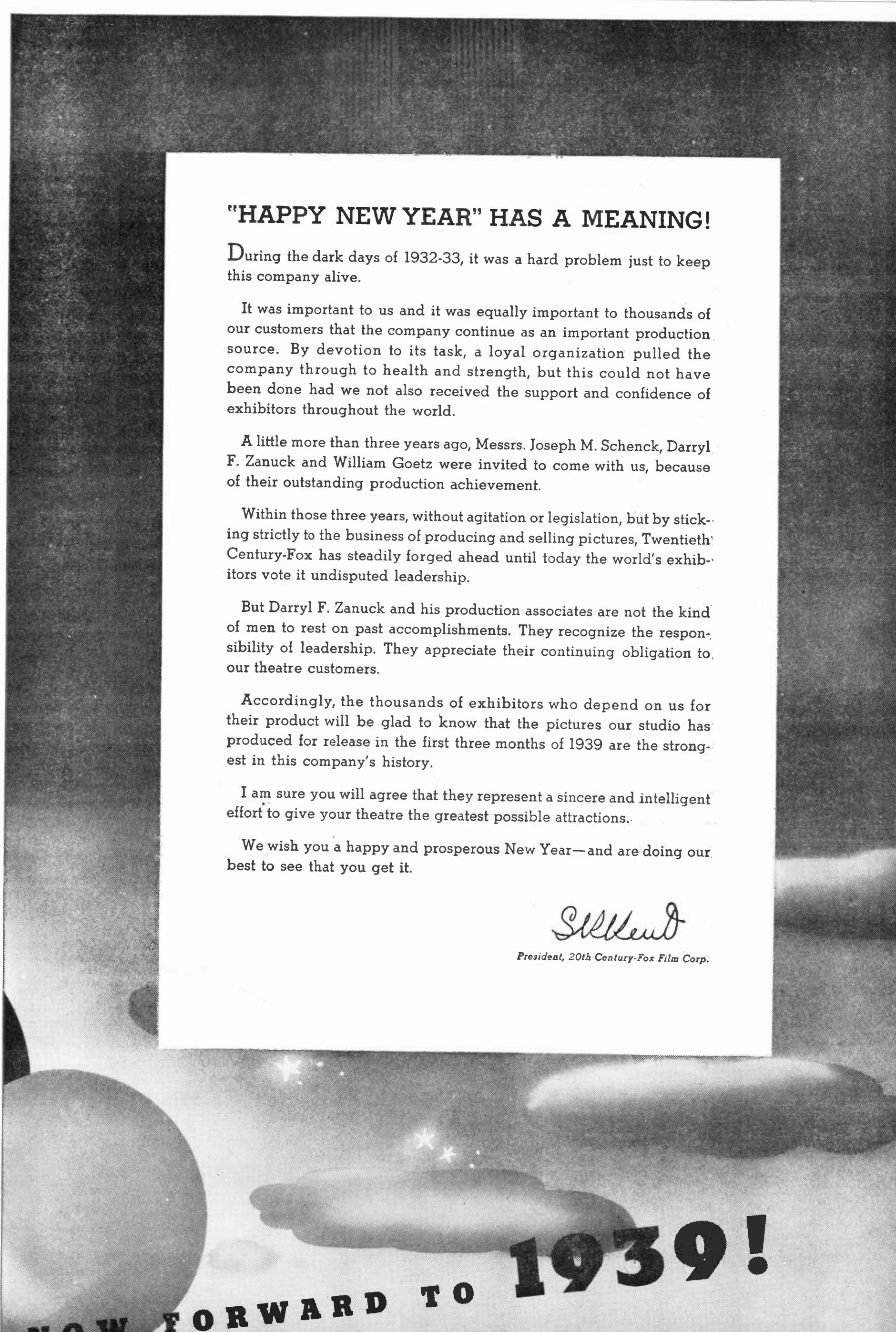
Accordingly, the thousands of exhibitors who depend on us for their product will be glad to know that the pictures our studio has produced for release in the first three months of 1939 are the strongest in this company's history.

I am sure you will agree that they represent a sincere and intelligent effort to give your theatre the greatest possible attractions.

We wish you a happy and prosperous New Year—and are doing our best to see that you get it.



President, 20th Century-Fox Film Corp.



NOW FORWARD TO 1939!

ALL THESE SMASH ATTRACTIONS

Marked for your mid-season high spot... already established, by early runs, a sensational top-money hit! A great picture that has captured a great tradition. Lavishly produced... with a brilliant cast... and enriched with all the beauty of Technicolor!

KENTUCKY

in TECHNICOLOR

with
LORETTA YOUNG • RICHARD GREENE
and **WALTER BRENNAN**

Douglas Dumbrille • Karen Morley • Moroni Olsen
Directed by David Butler

Associate Producer Gene Markey • Screen
Play by Lamar Trotti and John Taintor Foote • From
the story "The Look of Eagles" by John Taintor Foote

A stand-out attraction with no limit to its draw. Top-flight romantic drama mellowed with warmly human appeal! Starring Warner Baxter and Loretta Young (those grand stars of "Wife, Doctor and Nurse"). With Binnie Barnes, fastest-comer on the screen! Perfect!

LORETTA YOUNG • WARNER BAXTER

in

WIFE, HUSBAND AND FRIEND

with

BINNIE BARNES • CESAR ROMERO
GEORGE BARBIER • J. EDWARD BROMBERG
EUGENE PALLETTE • HELEN WESTLEY

Directed by Gregory Ratoff

Associate Producer and Screen Play by Nunnally Johnson

Alert-minded 20th showmanship brings you Alexandre Dumas' immortal story in a musical comedy version! Ameche is D'Artagnan... the Ritzes his three irrepressible comrades! A smash, smart, new entertainment angle... invested with lavish production values.

DON AMECHE

and **THE RITZ BROTHERS**
in a Musical Comedy Version of Alexandre Dumas'

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

with

BINNIE BARNES • GLORIA STUART • PAULINE MOORE
JOSEPH SCHILDKRAUT • John Carradine • Lionel Atwill
Miles Mander • Douglas Dumbrille • John King

Directed by Allan Dwan

Associate Producer Raymond Griffith • Screen Play by M. M. Musselman, William A. Drake
and Sam Hellman • Special material by Sid Kuller and Ray Golden
Music and Lyrics by Samuel Pokras, Walter Bullock

Word of this outstanding sensation has already spread like wind-whipped prairie fire! With its theme America's most lawless era, it depicts the thrilling, romantic adventures of the most colorful outlaw of them all! Epically produced by 20th in Technicolor.

DARRYL F. ZANUCK'S Production of,

JESSE JAMES

in TECHNICOLOR

starring

TYRONE POWER • HENRY FONDA
NANCY KELLY • RANDOLPH SCOTT

and

HENRY HULL • SLIM SUMMERVILLE
J. EDWARD BROMBERG • BRIAN DONLEVY
JOHN CARRADINE • DONALD MEEK
JOHN RUSSELL • JANE DARWELL

Directed by Henry King

Associate Producer and Original Screen
Play by Nunnally Johnson

IN THE FIRST QUARTER!

A showmanship inspiration! Revealing, through the magic of Technicolor, the world's four-time No. 1 star in *all* her charm. Woven from Frances Hodgson Burnett's immortal story. By far the most spectacular and ambitious of Shirley Temple pictures!

SHIRLEY TEMPLE in THE LITTLE PRINCESS

in TECHNICOLOR
with
RICHARD GREENE • ANITA LOUISE
IAN HUNTER • CESAR ROMERO • ARTHUR
TREACHER • MARY NASH • SYBIL JASON
MILES MANDER • MARCIA MAE JONES

Directed by Walter Lang
Associate Producer Gene Markey • Screen Play
by Ethel Hill and Walter Ferris • Based on the
novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett

No expense has been spared to make this one of 20th's most important productions. Smashing romantic melodrama of adventure. Three brave, young women of the sky who brush wings with death because it brings them closer to the men they love! Revealing the heart-throbs behind their spectacular lives!

ALICE FAYE • CONSTANCE BENNETT NANCY KELLY in TAIL SPIN

with
JOAN DAVIS • CHARLES FARRELL
JANE WYMAN • KANE RICHMOND
Wally Vernon • Joan Valerie • Edward Norris

Directed by Roy Del Ruth
Associate Producer Harry Joe Brown • Original Screen Play by Frank Wead

Horror!
Chills! Mystery! The elements which are so popular at today's boxoffices are all packed into Conan Doyle's greatest Sherlock Holmes story—the fascinating, spine-tingling tale of the giant, unearthly beast with blazing eyes that prowled in the gloom of the lonely English prison moor! . . .

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's THE HOUND of the BASKERVILLES

with
RICHARD GREENE • BASIL RATHBONE
(as Sherlock Holmes)
ANITA LOUISE • NIGEL BRUCE
(as Dr. Watson)

LIONEL ATWILL • JOHN CARRADINE
BERYL MERCER • BARLOWE BORLAND

Directed by Sidney Lanfield

Associate Producer Gene Markey

From the story by
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

HERE ARE 20th's FIRST-QUARTER RELEASES!

Release Date	PRODUCTION
Dec. 30	KENTUCKY (in Technicolor)
Jan. 6	WHILE NEW YORK SLEEPS
Jan. 13	CHARLIE CHAN IN HONOLULU
Jan. 20	SMILING ALONG (starring Gracie Fields)
Jan. 20	MR. MOTO'S LAST WARNING
Jan. 27	JESSE JAMES (in Technicolor)
Feb. 3	THE ARIZONA WILDCAT (starring Jane Withers)
Feb. 10	TAIL SPIN
Feb. 17	THE THREE MUSKETEERS
Feb. 24	PARDON OUR NERVE
Mar. 3	WIFE, HUSBAND AND FRIEND
Mar. 10	THE INSIDE STORY
Mar. 17	THE LITTLE PRINCESS (in Technicolor)
Mar. 24	THE JONES FAMILY IN EVERYBODY'S BABY
Mar. 31	THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES



Darryl F. Zanuck
in Charge of Production

THE UNIONS

By Roy Chartier

The year has been a turbulent one for the industry and the many new unions that have sprung up of recent date within it. Relations between the two caused considerable strain, although no preponderantly serious trouble. Strikes were threatened in various branches of industry and there was much organizing activity during 1938, with notable progress made, but labor impasses, lockouts, picketing and the like were held to a minimum.

The question of jurisdiction and the effort to obtain certification as bargaining agents from the National Labor Relations Board, plus splits in various ranks such as studio writers, focused the most attention on the labor perspective of the year.

Early in '38 the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, at Miami, announced it would extend its jurisdiction to all actors and others in pictures. That plan instantly met with concerted resistance by studio crafts which united to thwart such a move, and, although the ambition of the IA to control every branch, no doubt, still exists, the IA later sought to clarify its intention by indicating that what it favored was an 'inclusive organization' for strength and protection within the industry.

The IA, strongly entrenched in the studios under the five-year basic agreement, with its position fortified through negotiations in 1937, late last winter voted a \$1,000,000 fund to organize the industry completely. The big stagehands-operator union met with early opposition from the Screen Writers Guild and other unions in Hollywood which united to fight dominance by the IA, and the latter, at its convention in Cleveland in June, adopted a resolution asking the American Federation of Labor to revoke the charter of the Screen Actors Guild.

Bioff's \$100,000

William Bioff, a power in the IA, resigned before the year ended, stepping out Sept. 3, following reports of \$100,000 paid him. There were various denials that such a payment had been made by producers, suggesting intent of fortifying their position with the IA. Early in August, Bioff had revealed that \$100,000 was given him as a loan in 1937. This came out at a hearing before a Sacramento, Calif., grand jury.

Threat of the IA to embrace the whole Four A's (Associated Actors and Artistes of America) is no longer regarded with any apprehension. At the outset the IA was interested in taking jurisdiction over the Screen Actors Guild, notably the extras, as an opening wedge. This and other moves failing, with resistance met on all sides, the IA jurisdictional ambitions have gone out of the news, while meantime the AAAA is trying for a 'one big union' of its own, embracing all artists' groups, including Equity, SAG and others.

In addition to being accused of handing Bioff \$100,000, the producers have been blamed for many other things in labor relations during the past year, including that they were trying to destroy the Screen Directors Guild. This group, at the time, threatened an AFL tieup. In August the SDG filed charges of unfair labor practices against ten studios with the National Labor Relations Board.

Screen Writers

Friction between the SWG and the Screen Playwrights has also colored the labor map of the Coast, with the latest development a clash with producers over the new form of contract offered members of the SWG on renewals. These contracts required arbitration by SP of any disputes over screen credits. Members of the SWG signed such contracts only when attaching a rider noting that the agreement was being signed under protest. In June the SWG won a vote for writer bargaining representation, 267 to 57, against the SP, after the latter had announced it would not fight election of screen writers to determine a bargaining representative.

During 1938 the SWG won absolute autonomy from the Author's League of America, but a close relationship exists in that its members are also members of the Author's League.

The SDG, promising better pictures with less waste if given a free hand, earlier in the year petitioned the NLRB to act as bargaining representative for directors, assistant directors and unit managers, with first date set for hearing being Aug. 16. Postponement was taken and the hearing was held, but certification of the SDG as bargaining rep is still pending. The SAG was certified earlier in the year, and on Sept. 27

signed a nine-year pact with the producers, but the SWG, while certified, has not made much headway with the producers to date. Banning extras earlier in the year for failure to pay dues, with a threat of 3,000 of them to go over to the CIO and also turning thumbs down on a studio unemployment conference, the SAG, early in the fall, took under consideration a proposal to slash extra registrations to 2,500 and place players under contract to Central Casting Bureau. Another move which placed SAG in the limelight was its decision to combat any plan on the part of the producers to cut salaries. This occurred prior to the nine-year contract producers signed. One of the SAG decisions of the year was not to permit newspapermen or columnists to double as actors unless they became members of the union.

The Artists Managers Guild (agents) from the first wanted a closed shop instead of being licensed by the SAG, but finally agreed to the latter in November. Screen Publicists have not made very noticeable headway during the past year, nor have various other guilds or unions in studio activity of one kind or another. All are hopeful of NLRB decisions that they may act as bargaining representative for their various crafts.

The union situation in the east and other parts of the country has not been unduly disturbing. Negotiations which are held every April 1 or thereabouts in New York between Pat Casey and unions signatory to the five-year basic agreement were stalled until late summer due to uncertainty of conditions, with renewal for another year at the same scale as before.

The IA, which is included in the basic agreement, has gone forward rather slowly in its organization of workers of numerous classes in the theatres, including cashiers, porters, ushers, doormen, managers, etc., while minor moves of the CIO to get into the theatre field have been only negligibly successful. CIO has jurisdiction over the candy butchers.

The Building Service Employees union, of the AFL, has been organizing porters, cleaners, charwomen

and the like for more than a year now and has obtained a contract covering these employees in the New York theatres. The IA, more recently, inaugurated a drive to completely organize theatres (from top to bottom) in the east generally, including New England. Its drive for total unionization of theatre help is expected to eventually become nationwide. Meantime, the Theatrical Managers Agents & Treasurers, making notable progress in the legit field, is also working on unionization of its craft in the picture business, including the studios and theatres.

A move to unionize the night clubs in New York was also instituted during the past year. The Motion Picture Laboratory Technicians in N.Y., similarly put on a campaign to increase its representation in the lab field, with successful results following strike threats and picketing. The New York operators, Local 306, which has failed to effect a merger with Empire State operators, a rump union, is campaigning against theatres which still employ Emp men.

Musicians started a drive during the summer in Greater New York for a six-day work week at seven days' pay under present scale existing. The Music Hall, N.Y., first to sign, would have to pay about \$45,000 annually over and above the old nut as a result of this move, it was estimated.

Another union move in New York, where most of them begin, with rest of the country to be considered later, is the drive of the American Federation of Actors to organize theatres using stage shows, with a contract in negotiation under which the AFA demands a closed shop and a minimum of \$60 weekly for any artist appearing in the theatres.

The stagehands, operators and musicians, except for the six-day work week in the stage-show houses, have not been much of a source of trouble during 1938. Contrariwise, these unions have shown more of a disposition to play ball with the theatres than in former lush years. In the absence of better excuses, however, these unions are still blamed for ailing business, and numerous operators refuse to try vaudeville or stage shows because of labor demands.

—and on the Talent End

By Hobe Morrison

Performer unions have made substantial progress during 1938, not only in their relations with outside forces but also in their internal affairs. However, as the year drew to a close, nearly all the various unions were involved in critical struggles on different fronts. Indications are that the coming year will be a vital one to performer unions and hence to the position of the performer in the amusement industry.

In the ranks of professional show business, nearly all performers come under the American Federation of Labor banner. Associated Actors and Artistes of America, the AFL-chartered international union, has jurisdiction over the entire performer field. Its member groups, each with its separate charter covering a different field of entertainment, include Actors Equity, Screen Actors Guild, American Federation of Radio Artists, American Federation of Actors, American Guild of Musical Artists and a number of minor unions.

Strengthening of the Four A's, the parent union, continued during 1938 the developments which began the previous year. Confidence and co-operation among the member bodies was also extended and bulwarked, although only after the most violent inter-factional fight in Four A's history had threatened for a time to disrupt and perhaps destroy the organization. Strife extended virtually throughout the Four A's ranks, but when settlement was finally reached, relations became more friendly than they had ever been before. In particular, relations between Equity and SAG, which were principals in the quarrel, have continued to improve.

Main objective at the present time appears to be to strengthen still more the dominant position of the Four A's. Officials of the various member-unions have at last arrived at a fair degree of unanimity on the principles involved and a tentative, broad outline has been reached for the desired changes in the constitution. Idea is to house all offices of the various groups under one roof, to amalgamate administrations, set up a unified bookkeeping

system, a central treasury, a single membership card and one set of dues. Figured the various changes would eliminate duplication of effort and red tape, increase efficiency, save expenses and decrease dues. But even though the various officials agree on the desirability of the changes, the actual method to bring it about is vastly complicated and remains to be worked out. Efforts to solve that problem will undoubtedly consume a great part of the coming year.

Jurisdictional Disputes

Number of sharp jurisdictional disputes within the Four A's ranks have occurred during the year. Formation of AFRA settled the question as regards radio, in which Equity, SAG and AGMA had previously had a stake. But that was only one of the fields in dispute. AFA and the Burlesque Artists Assn. spent a part of the year at odds over various phases of the vaudeville-burlesque situation. AFA contested with Chorus Equity (subsidiary of Actors Equity) for jurisdiction over chorus members in niteries and vaudeville houses, finally winning on both counts. Decision was in line with the Four A's general policy of giving to each member union jurisdiction over chorus as well as principals in its field.

That policy came up again in the battle between AGMA and the Grand Opera Choral Alliance, which had previously held the AFL charter governing jurisdiction of opera chorus singers. When the two groups were unable to agree on terms for a merger, the Four A's revoked the GOCA charter and awarded the jurisdiction to AGMA. As the year ended, the various and inter-related jurisdictional questions seemed to be settled, at least for some time to come.

Of the various member groups in the Four A's, Equity probably had the least hectic year. That is natural, since the legit actors' group is older and much more firmly established than any of the others. Affairs within the Equity organization itself reached a climax of tension late in the spring, with the annual election. But the so-called insurgent faction, which had been steadily rising in power and action over the last few

years, was decisively defeated (largely through the vote and influence of the Hollywood contingent) and has been much less in evidence since then. With the election of Arthur Bryon his president, the association embarked on a policy similar to that of the other member groups. That is, of the president being a non-paid honorary officer, with most of the practical affairs of the association in the hands of the executive-secretary—in this case, Paul Dullzell.

Equity

After many years of agitation about the alleged abuses and evils of theatre ticket speculation, Equity finally joined forces with the League of New York Theatres to put into effect a 'code of fair practices.' In return for the League's cooperation, Equity agreed to a formal, permanent basic contract covering Broadway production. New ticket code was subjected to an enormous amount of criticism, mostly from the brokers. Charges, counter-charges, threats and recriminations have continued, but at present it is still too early to tell whether or not the code is enforceable or workable.

SAG's affairs during 1938 were not all smooth sailing, but nothing of a genuinely drastic nature occurred. One development of possible significance was the formation, with representatives of the Screen Writers Guild and Screen Directors Guild, of the Inter-Talent Council. Acting in a purely advisory or unofficial capacity, this group has met regularly to discuss mutual problems, and when possible, map cooperative plans. However, it is still in the nature of an experiment, and its practical worth cannot yet be estimated or predicted. Other SAG developments during the year concerned the IATSE, licensing of agents and modification of production contracts.

AFRA's Top Activity

Most important activity of the American Federation of Radio Artists has been its efforts to obtain contracts covering wages and working conditions of its members on sustaining and commercial programs. It began negotiations with the networks and a committee representing the American Ass'n of Advertising Agencies early in January, 1938. Contract covering sustaining programs was signed with NBC and CBS late in the summer, but little progress has been made with the admen. Union last month finally submitted its demands for a wage scale and is now preparing to try to pressure the agencies into accepting it.

Other AFRA activities during the year were its first annual national convention (incidentally, the first convention ever held by a Four A's group) in St. Louis, its settlement with CBS of the case of an employee discharged from a Cincinnati station allegedly for union activity, victory in a similar case against KSD, St. Louis, and the pending NLRB dispute with all the St. Louis stations.

AGMA

American Guild of Musical Artists, newest Four A's member, has had a strenuous year and its battles seem likely to continue well into 1939. Besides its victorious jurisdictional fight with the Grand Opera Choral Alliance, it obtained contracts with the Metropolitan Opera and the various other operatic outfits in the country and is now engaged in a crucial struggle with the two major concert bureaus, Columbia Concerts Corp. and NBC Artists Service. It has carried the latter scrap to the Federal Communications Commission, having been granted the right to intervene in that body's hearing of monopoly charges against the two concert managements. AGMA also ran into a tussle with Yehudi Menuhin over the latter's refusal to become a member. Fiddler emerged the winner in the first test of strength, but the Guild is understood readying a crush-move against him.

AFA

Besides winning its battle with Chorus Equity for jurisdiction over choruses in niteries and vaude houses, and losing another jurisdictional fight with the Burlesque Artists Assn, the American Federation of Actors has been busy throughout the year with its campaign to organize the niteries and vaudeville field. On another front it won a technical but terribly expensive victory from the Ringling-Barnum & Bailey circus management. In the latter case, although the union forced the show to close rather than back down on various wage and working condition demands, it received a brutal lambasting in the press all over the country and there was extensive criticism of the union's leadership even from within the membership.

Looming on the Four A's horizon is television and the jurisdictional problems it will involve. With no

PHILLY EXHIBS' SHOWMANSHIP SQUAWK

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Complete lack of showmanship by exhibs here is a major complaint of Philly exchanges. Distributors declare there is a downbeat in enthusiasm among house operators that carries right out to the potential patronage and is one of the principal causes of bad biz in these parts. Exchangemen point to sales—or lack of sales—of exploitation materials like posters, heralds and paper, as the basis of their reckoning.

Although grosses are down considerably under last year, distributors say, there is no attempt being made in Philly to combat generally bad conditions with advertising and exploitation, except in a few cases where lack of product causes exhibs to exert themselves on the stuff they get.

In addition to block booking, which was pointed out as a principal cause of lack of showmanship, the fact that every first-run situation, both downtown and in the nabes, is controlled, hurts. There is no strong competition to attract potential customers from one house to another, as the circuit rightly feels that it gets the coin in any case. In cities where there is a variety of first-run ownership there is a buildup to milk films of all possible. Result is that the pic becomes better known, attracts people who might not ever see it all, and it does better in the subsequent runs, too.

Fact that midtown houses are so typed, it is felt, also eliminates exploitation. Typing has gone so far that when it was attempted to show a Shirley Temple film in the Stanley instead of the Fox, where the moppet always plays, it died.

Volume of accessories and exploitation material, exchange managers say, has remained about stationary for the past few years, instead of increasing as grosses fell off. Type of material has changed, however. There has been an increase in the use of billboards and the sale of 24-sheet paper has gone up. Window cards and heralds have slid badly. Union requirements that billposters distribute window cards makes use of the practically prohibitive, running the cost up to about 10c a card.

Deny Idzal Ouster On Fox, Detroit

Detroit, Jan. 1.

Federal Judge Ernest A. O'Brien last week denied without prejudice a bondholders' petition asking removal of Dave Idzal and the Union Guardian Trust Co. as trustees of the Colwood Corp., owners of the Fox here.

Judge O'Brien declared he wanted to give trustees more time to carry out the proposed reorganization plan, which was okayed in June, 1937, and calling for leasing of Fox theatre to Fox Michigan Corp., controlled by Skouras Bros., at fixed rental of \$125,000 annually plus percentage above certain gross. Judge O'Brien told Harris W. Wiener, attorney for the bondholders, that the petition could be renewed later.

Grown Up and Wed

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

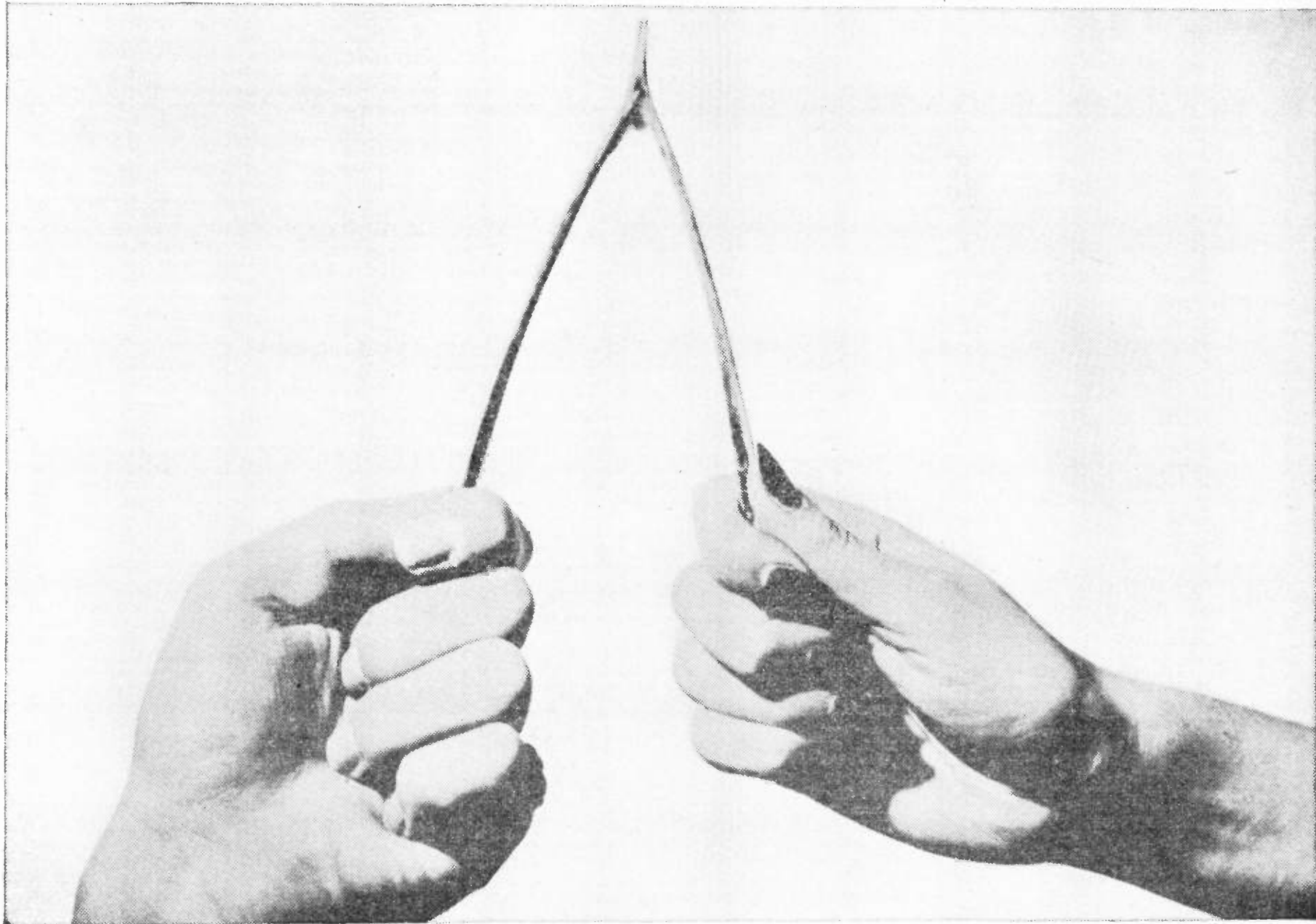
'Four Wives' sequel to 'Four Daughters,' goes into work at Warners early next month, with three Lane Sisters and Gale Page as the femme quartet.

Harbord Marries

Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, chairman of board of Radio Corp. of America, was married at Rapidan, Va., Dec. 31 to Mrs. Anne Lee Brown, widow of an army officer.

Couple plans a wedding trip before turning to Maj. Harbord's home at Rye, N. Y. They were married in the Rapidan Episcopal Church in a simple ceremony with only few friends present.

one able to predict how soon practical television will arrive or what form it will take, all the various member-unions are eying the situation jealously. But until the new medium becomes an actuality, no action by the parent unions appears likely.



BEST WISHES FROM THE FRIENDLY COMPANY IN 1939!

(The New Year starts brightly as M-G-M's hit parade goes merrily on! And the entire family of Loew's, Inc., Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures and Radio Station WHN take this opportunity to send heartfelt seasonal greetings to friends the world over!)

NEXT PAGE, PLEASE

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"SWEETHEARTS"

NEW YEAR'S BOOKINGS

start the flow of Glorious New M-G-M "Attractions! Here's a brief hint of happy days ahead!



ROBERT TAYLOR, WALLACE
BEERY, FLORENCE RICE
AND CHARLES BICKFORD IN
"STAND UP AND FIGHT!"



They Built A New America With Glory
And Guns... They Were Men Women
Could Love! Greatest Adventure Drama
Since "Mutiny On The Bounty"!

NORMA SHEARER
CLARK GABLE
in Clarence Brown's
"IDIOT'S DELIGHT"



Not since "A Free Soul"
and "Strange Interlude"
such a drama for the
screen's top favorites!
Their exciting lips meet
again! Norma... as a "lady
in tights"! Clark... as a
"ham" song and dance
man of the honkytonks!



"HONOLULU"

THE LULU OF MUSICAL HITS!
ELEANOR POWELL, ROBERT
YOUNG, BURNS & ALLEN,
Una Merkel, Milt Britton's
Musical Madmen and Hun-
dreds of Honolulu Hula Honies.

MICKEY ROONEY
in Mark Twain's
"HUCKLEBERRY FINN"



His Happiest Role!

Huck! Mrs. Watson!
"Pap"! Jim! Capt. Brandy!
They all live again in this
beloved romance of the
Mississippi—and the boy
who is "all boys in one!"



"ICE FOLLIES"

with
JOAN CRAWFORD, JAMES
STEWART, LEW AYRES
And the Stars and Ballet of the
"Ice Follies Of 1939." An eyeful of
Girls! Girls! A heartful of drama!

Walter Winchell Was
Right! She's Really
"Hedy Lamarrvelous!"



"I TAKE THIS WOMAN"

Spencer Tracy, great star of
"Boys Town"...and electrifying
Hedy Lamarr in her first pic-
ture since "Algiers"! This is
THE love match of the
century!

Dennis O'Keefe! Cecilia
Parker! In "BURN 'EM UP
O'CONNOR"! Thrills of the
romantic, roaring speedway!



"FOUR GIRLS IN WHITE" with
Alan Marshal, Florence Rice! Love
secrets from a nurse's diary!



ROBERT DONAT, famed star of "The Citadel", in James Hilton's tender best seller—"GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS!"



"FAST AND LOOSE"—with Robert Montgomery, Rosalind Russell! Hilarious sequel to "Fast Company"!



JEANETTE MacDonald LEW AYRES • FRANK MORGAN in "BROADWAY SERENADE"



From the romance of a man who wouldn't be known as "Mr. Mary Hale"—comes this lavish modern musical for the alluring song star of "Sweethearts" and "Young Dr. Kildare"!

NELSON EDDY, VIRGINIA BRUCE, LIONEL BARRYMORE, VICTOR MacLAGLEN, EDWARD ARNOLD in "DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT."



1939's Prize Cast in the adventures of "The Hornet" as Robin Hood of the Romantic West! MUSICAL!

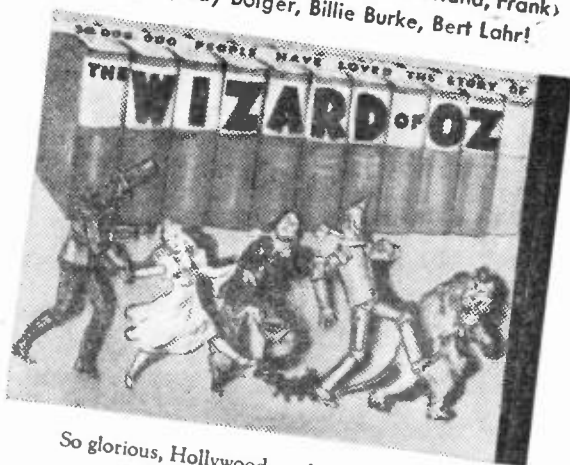


LEW AYRES LIONEL BARRYMORE in

"DR. KILDARE ON HIS OWN" Young Dr. Kildare's second thrill-hit. Staged in New York's dead-end streets!

"THE WIZARD OF OZ"

Filmed in Technicolor! With Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Billie Burke, Bert Lahr!



So glorious, Hollywood predicts it will be as sensational as "Snow White"!

WALLACE BEERY in

"SERGEANT MADDEN"

The father, a cop! The son, a killer! Tumultuous drama for "Stablemates" start!



THE MARX BROTHERS in "A DAY AT THE CIRCUS!"



Here Come The Clowns! Their best since "A Night At The Opera."

At Long Last! Their NEW hit! WILLIAM POWELL • MYRNA LOY in "RETURN OF THE THIN MAN"



JOHNNY WEISSMULLER in "TARZAN IN EXILE"

"THE HARDYS RIDE HIGH" Each one is better than the last and here's the newest and best of America's most beloved family! MICKEY ROONEY • LEWIS STONE CECILIA PARKER



M-G-M CAMERAS WILL SOON FILM THESE ROUSING HITS!

Norma Shearer in "The Women"!

Robert Taylor, Hedy Lamarr in "Lady Of The Tropics"!

Greta Garbo in "Ninotchka"!



Go to theatres playing M-G-M SHORTS. They are the bright spots of any program. These little pictures often steal the show! ROBT. BENCHLEY • PETE SMITH • CAREY WILSON JOHN NESBITT • FITZPATRICK Traveltalks • OUR GANG CRIME DOES NOT PAY Series



AND WATCH FOR LEO THE LION'S PERSONAL COLUMN OF M-G-M NEWS

(Another big M-G-M Promotion)

Appearing regularly in the following magazines: McCall's Pictorial Review • Redbook • Look • Liberty • Screen Romances Modern Screen • Modern Romances • Personal Romances • Picture Play • Motion Picture • Photoplay • Movie Story • Screenland Silver Screen • Screen Book • Screen Guide • Hollywood • Movie Mirror • Modern Movies • Movie Life and others to be announced!

Films' Technical Advances

By Walter Greene

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Most important contribution to the studios during the past year by suppliers and manufacturers was the group of faster and finer-grain panchromatic negatives introduced by Agfa-Ansco and Eastman Kodak. Results included finer grain, better photography, use of less light for interior, and requirement of less light for exteriors to allow companies to shoot under adverse lighting conditions.

The Agfa-Ansco negatives were first introduced on general production in the studios at the start of the year. The Supreme brand rated twice the speed of panchromatic films up to that time, allowing for better quality of photography and at the same time resulting in reduction of light necessary. Agfa's Ultra Speed proved to be nearly four times faster than the previous regulation negative, and was quickly accepted by the newsreel companies to shoot interiors of sporting events and night shots of important happenings that previously required special lighting. The Ultra Speed type was restricted for production purposes due to its tendency toward greater grain content in the emulsion than on regulation production negative, but studios found it valuable for special use on certain background and process shots where specific effects could be obtained.

Eastman Steps In

Eastman Kodak research laboratories went to work immediately upon the introduction of the Agfa-Ansco product, and came forth with its competitive negatives in October. Eastman matched the Agfa-Ansco Supreme type with Eastman Plus X Panchromatic Negative, which doubled the speed of the former Eastman negative in general production use. Eastman also introduced its Super XX, with an emulsion of high speed comparable to Agfa-Ansco's Ultra Speed, and with grain characteristics similar to the latter. Super XX will be used generally for newsreels and exteriors where adverse lighting conditions are present.

In between, Eastman also introduced a special background negative especially offered for process plates and general exterior work under normal lighting conditions.

As result of the faster and finer-grain negatives made available to photographers and process departments, a better quality of photography will prevail, while studios will be able to save considerable money annually in decreased cost of lighting on interiors.

Dupont's special sound-track negative for variable density track was widely used, as it removed all periodic fluctuations and densities in recording.

Otherwise, Little Else

Aside from the raw film manufacturers, suppliers of new equipment brought little of importance out of the research laboratories during the year. The two electric, Erpi and RCA, were content to work closely with studio sound departments in further adapting their systems for better sound quality without introducing new gadgets to experiment with.

Of importance to exhibitors was the recent trend of studio sound departments, with Erpi and RCA cooperating, to work out a suitable standardization of sound on release prints. After several years of competition in which studios tried to outdo each other in turning out masterpieces of sound recording that were fine in projection rooms and a few key houses containing highly-tuned equipment, but duds when shown on average theatre apparatus, the sound engineers have now adopted policy of providing best quality of soundtrack for the theatres to reproduce with present equipment under normal conditions. In other words, instead of trying to achieve the best sound job possible on pictures, studios are now putting on the track a recording that will be reproduced at a uniform quality in the theatres and eliminate distorted sound where formerly more was put on the track than the average theatre reproducers could accommodate.

Within the walls of the major studios, greatest advance has been in the wider use of process backgrounds in pictures. Utilized originally when sound was first introduced to secure exterior shots of moving autos or street scenes where sound could not be recorded due to interfering noises,

the process method has developed to a point where huge savings in costs are being made.

Today process, miniature and special effects departments in the major plants are considered among the most important of the technical services. During the past year, these departments have at least doubled their personnel, and technicians are continually discovering new methods of utilizing their systems to materially reduce production costs.

Skyrocketed costs for location work due to labor and talent conditions, imposed during the past two years, has focused attention of front office execs on their process departments as a possible source of reducing production budgets. What was formerly a convenience for a few scenes a month has become an important factor in film making.

One Film's Saving at \$200,000

One recent picture utilized production backgrounds that saved the studio around \$200,000 which would have otherwise been expended for the elaborate sets required. Cost of the background plates was under 10% of that figure, and studio had the further advantage of using fewer extra players than would have been ordinarily required if the set had been constructed—thus saving considerable time.

Most important from standpoint of setting precedent for general use in the future was Paramount's pioneering effort for 'Say It in French.' Victor Milner and a camera crew shot large amount of footage in the Waldorf-Astoria. The Rainbow Room in Rockefeller Center and other large interiors. General lighting as applied to production on a studio stage was used, except that ceilings prevent use of overheads. These shots, made under conditions never dreamed of before by studio technicians, were utilized in the studio for process background plates when production started later.

Paramount is so well satisfied with the results obtained in the first trial, that cameraman Leo Tover was sent east recently to obtain interior shots of prominent buildings and hotels for two other pictures lined up for early shooting.

Other major studios closely watched the Paramount experiment, but results achieved seem satisfactory all around, as process departments are now closely watching for chance of their own to duplicate the Paramount idea.

Miniatures

One of the top jobs which combined process, special effects and miniatures on wide scope was achieved in Paramount's 'Spawn of the North.' Miniature icebergs, with walls breaking off and plunging into the sea, were photographed for background plates. These were used most realistically and dramatically on process work that stands out as some of the finest of the year. To project the backgrounds of sufficient size to accommodate scope of action required, Paramount used a background screen 36 feet wide, utilizing a triple-headed projector to secure sufficient amount of light brilliancy on the screen. Paramount and Warners both have the specially-designed, triple-headed projectors for process work, which double the latitude allowed for action in front of the screen. Other studios will likely install similar equipment during the coming year.

20th-Fox's 'Suez' provided large amount of process and special effect assignments, with Fred Serson going through complicated steps calling for multiplicity of negatives to achieve realistic results that could not have been secured under any normal shooting conditions.

Double exposure work of cameraman Norbert Brodine and special ef-

fects expert Roy Seawright enhanced the entertainment factors of Roach's 'Topper.' It was the first picture of its type made in number of years, and technical achievement was of top calibre. Same application was used in the sequel, 'Topper Takes a Trip.'

Scripts ready for shooting are now broken down for process and special effect shots before pictures go into work. Process department advises which scenes are to be made before the background screen, and directors follow that advice. One production exec declares that process and special effects departments in his particular plant have cut down location and exterior work at least 50% and predicts that within the next two years improvements in processing will reach a point where it will be the exception rather than the rule for a picture company to go off the lot for shooting; naturally excepting westerns and features that are predominantly exterior in content.

Although there are about 15 companies scattered around Hollywood claiming color processes in various stages of development, Technicolor remained during the year as the only one in which its process was utilized for feature releases. There is no doubt that one or two practical color processes will finally emerge from the systems now being developed, and they will undoubtedly be used for feature production to some extent.

Color

But Technicolor is not standing still, and is raising its own three color process to high state of perfection. Rapid strides have been made to increase quality and uniformity of prints of Technicolor features and shorts in the laboratory. In fact, major advance of the tint firm in the past two years has been within the laboratory buildings, where secret of the Technicolor process in its entirety is limited to less than a dozen executives and heads of the plant. Despite the many protective patents on color machines and processing methods piled up by the company during the past 20 years, greater portion of the Technicolor lab work is development by engineers that is not easily patentable for protection.

While improving quality of prints of its present tri-color process, Technicolor is conducting extensive research in endeavor to develop single negative color process, utilizing the Kodachrome method which has been available in the 16 mm. field for several years, although little has been allowed to get out on progress being made, Dr. Herbert T. Kalms, Technicolor's president, recently predicted that the single negative color system would probably be ready for production purposes within a year.

Most prominent in the camera field was the development of the multiplane camera for use in cartoon work by Walt Disney studios. Machine was devised and constructed by the Disney technical staff headed by William Garritty, and was used extensively in 'Snow White.' Its main purpose is to create third dimensional illusion in certain shots and sequences and characters and backgrounds on corresponding planes from the camera. For each frame of film shot, maximum of 67 adjustments might be necessary, and the multiplane turns out two feet of cartoon negative per hour.

Improvement of color photography and prints, and wider utilization of process backgrounds and special effects, are indicated as major technical improvements of the coming year, as has been the case during 1938. From this point, nothing of outstanding importance in the line of new devices or apparatus to upset production seems to be ready to emerge from the research laboratories of the various equipment manufacturers.

PREVIEWS

By Bob Moak

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Birth of new year finds Hollywood studios' boss flacks split into two camps on the subject of previews, press and otherwise. There's the cake-with-frosting crowd, which argues that ermine and white ties, backed by arc lights and broadcast mikes, draws worldwide publicity for the feature to be unveiled, thus impressing John Public with importance of the offering. And there's the no-frosting school, which believes product gets a better break through straight press and air reviews when critics are seated in the midst of run-of-the-mine audiences and their minds not detracted by fanfare.

Leading the way in glamorizing press screenings is Harry Brand, 20th-Fox's praiser, who has set a new pace for swank in pre-release screenings of the Westwood outfit's epics. Brand takes over a theatre for a night, and gives the preview all the trappings of a world premiere, banging the drums to get out the mob to gaze as the studio bunch pass through police lines. Timed to stir interest in general release of the film, innovation gives the picture nationwide ballyhoo through ether prattle and coverage by wire news and photo associations.

Aligned with Brand as pros on the frosting question are Terry DeLapp, Paramount, and Robert Taplinger, Warners. Cons, whose slogan is 'Keep the reviewer's mind on his work,' include Howard Strickling, Metro; Howard Benedict, RKO; John Joseph, Universal; George Browne, Columbia; Walter Compton, Republic, and the lads passing out bally for the separate production units comprising United Artists. They put the picture in a theatre as an extra added attraction, rope off a section for the press, and let nature take its course.

Bill Pierce, Monogram's No. 1 flack, waves off outsiders, using studio projection room for screenings, and tossing a buffet supper afterward. Harry Sherman, who produces the Hopalong Cassidy and other outdoor dramas for Paramount release, and who personally supervises his previews, also uses projection room, following unreeled with what he likes to call a 'family party,' the press bending elbows with cast and technical crew.

450 Miles for a Screening

Warners' Taplinger broke precedent when early last spring he loaded the village's army of critics into planes and busses and conveyed them 450 miles to the ghost-mining town of Weaverville, Calif., which has no theatre, and projected 'Gold Is Where You Find It' on portable screen in ancient, weather-beaten town hall. Populace totaling 100, many of whom had never patronized the cinema, participated in affair which was described over a nationwide radio hookup.

Brand of 20th went Taplinger one better when he dragged out 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' and rented the Carthay Circle, Los Angeles, where he led reviewers, industry toppers, stars and visiting dignitaries past gaping throngs lining the thoroughfares. Mutual Broadcasting System aired the event on a half-hour slate, while news outfits serviced clients with reams of wordage and tons of photos. Brand had the entire house, issued reserved-seat tickets to guests and showed the feature only in conjunction with a short subject. In the past most press previews had been conducted without advance exploitation and as part of a regular theatre program, attracting few stars and meaning little outside of Hollywood in the way of news stories and art. Idea clicked so well that Brand repeated Dec. 14 at same house with 'Kentucky.' Heralded by a two-weeks' blurb campaign, affair was attended by press stars and other guests in formal attire. NBC carried the word-by-word across the land. Since picture glorifies the Blue Grass state, Gov. A. B. (Happy) Chandler and 23 other leading Kentuckians were persuaded to attend. They were brought west in a special car, and feted for two days before the preview and two days afterward. Four Star theatre in Los Angeles was leased by Brand for the inaugural screening on 'Suez,' which

was given a buildup similar to that accorded 'Alexander.' For 'Submarine Patrol,' however, he plotted on different lines, taking it along with reviewers to the Fox theatre in San Diego, Coast submarine base, where press and ranking naval officers and their families made up audience. Picture was also run in Grauman's Chinese on Navy Day for those critics unable to make the trip.

Par's DeLapp copped off big space in newspapers and fan magazines by chartering special train and hauling 500 members of press to Bing Crosby's Del Mar track, where he screened crooner's starrer, 'Sing You Sinners,' which had racetrack theme. Gang pulled in for lunch played mutuels and slot machines during afternoon race card, lingered for dinner, then sat in grandstand while 'Sing' hit the screen erected in infield.

DeLapp also did the unusual in previewing 'Cocoanut Grove,' screening it in the Ambassador Hotel's theatre, then moving the reviewers to the hotel's Cocoanut Grove for a dinner-dance.

In a Theatre

Since taking 'Marie Antoinette' into the Carthay for a flash preview-premiere, Metro's Strickling, long sponsor of that method in handling reviewers, has fixed a policy of taking new films into theatres as part of latter's fixed program. After years of using the Carthay and Grauman's Chinese, he has picked three houses for Metro's previews. They are the Westwood Village, the Alexander in Glendale and the Uptown, L. A. Which gets the break on each feature depends upon type and cost of production. Class dramas go to Village. Alexander gets comedies. Low budgeters go into the Uptown.

Universal's Joseph and RKO's Benedict believe exhibs buying their respective product should be given an opportunity to cash in on their pre-release showings in return for surrounding the reviewers with average fans. Both praisers use Hollywood Pantages and RKO-Hillstreet, and when these are not available, because of sellouts on regular attractions, move into the United Artists, Inglewood, or the Alexander, Glendale. Joseph and Benedict also hold down on number of free seats requested by theatre operators, running two previews simultaneously if necessary to handle the pass list. This is done to help the exhib fatten his own take. Columbia's Browne shows preference for the Pantages, Hollywood.

Because of radio and newspaper possibilities offered by taking new pictures into cities where arc lights and invitational mobs are more of a novelty than they are in Film-town, several of publicity directors are making a practice of spreading non-reviewer pre-release showings about the countryside. Par sent 'Spawn of the North' into Blowing Rock, in the North Carolina hills, where natives made good air-press copy. Same company's 'Arkansas Traveler' was given a one-man preview for William Allen White, to whom it was dedicated, in his hometown of Emporia, Kas. Warners took 'White Banners' into Columbia City, Ind., birthplace of Lloyd C. Douglas, its author, screening it while the townsfolk cheered the local boy who made good. Burbank heads also sent 'Gold Diggers in Paris' to Minneapolis, home port of the Schnickelfritz band, which had featured part in film.

Meanwhile, arguments for and against 'frosted' previews go on. Opposing views are best summed up by Brand and Strickling.

Says Brand: 'The flash preview takes up the publicity slack that always comes between the time a picture is finished and its release.'

Says Strickling: 'We prefer to have critics get the reaction of an average theatre audience instead of the smart Hollywood crowd. Then, too, it's next to impossible to pick up the publicity campaign at release time after a film has been given a too heavy play through a swank preview.'

Top Specialists

(Process and Miniature Work)

Farciot Edouart,
Byron Haskins,
Gordon Jennings,
Vern Walker.

First 10 Cameramen

(Listed Alphabetically)

William Daniels
Rudolph Mate
Joe Ruttenberg
Joseph Valentine

Tony Gaudio
Victor Milner
Leon Shamroy

James Wong Howe
Ernest Palmer
Gregg Toland

SECOND TEN

Joe August
Ray June
Oliver Marsh
John Seitz

George Folsey
Charles Lang, Jr.
Arthur Miller

Ernest Haller
Peverell Marley
Sol Polito

THIRD TEN

George Barnes
Bert Glennon
Ted Tetzlaff
Joseph Walker

Karl Freund
Theodor Sparkuhl
Leo Tovar

Merrit Gerstad
Karl Struss
Sid Wagner

Chi--Birthplace of Ideas

By Hal Halperin

Chicago, Jan. 1.

For years now the Chicago Tribune has carried on its flag this slogan, 'Make Chicago the First City of the World.' How long it will take for Chicago to become the first city is problematical, but there are instances and evidence that point out that Chicago has contributed more 'firsts' to show business than any other city in this best of all possible worlds.

This record of firsts goes back many years, even before there was a VARIETY. It is interesting to note that the leads that Chicago has taken have all been in the direction of popular entertainment. It has admittedly lagged behind New York and other cities in the promotion of entertainment for the masses. But give Chicago a general entertainment scheme and the town will bring out special angles in that field to give it greater popularity among the wide mass of the population. Chicago, it would seem, has its finger on the true pulse of the American people and knows, better than any other city, the tastes and preferences of the nation.

Chicago took motion pictures, made them a general medium of entertainment and brought the operation of theatres to their present high standards. Chicago took two-a-day vaudeville, which was then limited to a special audience, and made it great popular entertainment by combining it with pictures. Chicago took fan-dancing, which had been a mild attraction in \$4.40 musical shows, and made it the biggest box-office wallop of 1933-38. Chicago took the intellectual radio quiz program, jazzed it up with some popular musical ideas and made it the outstanding bright idea of commercial radio of 1938. Chicago took an icebox and made it sell theatre tickets.

B & K's Pioneering

Everyone knows the story of Balaban & Katz and the truly great job they did in taking the nickelodeon and transforming it into the modern picture theatre. There is basically little difference between the Chicago which was built in 1922 and, say, Radio City Music Hall. That comparison tells the story of the great advance that B. & K. did manage when it broke ground for its loop flagship. After 16 years that house, the forerunner of all deluxe theatres, is still a beauty to see and a joy to sit in. It is unquestionably still the finest theatre in this territory.

This one house, in itself, tells the entire story of deluxe operation. It's the story of a beautiful house, courteous attendants, free checking of parcels, the considerate handling of wet umbrellas, etc. Of course, it has all been ribbed and caricatured by the comics, but these comedians themselves would be the first to yelp their heads off now if they failed to receive such service in a motion picture theatre today.

Outstanding, of course, is the air conditioning and air-cooling which has completely revolutionized show business. For years, the legitimate theatre refused to recognize that there was such a thing as air-conditioning, but today, even the theatre which has steadfastly insisted that its customers want art rather than comfort has called in the air-conditioning engineers to see if they can't make art easier to take during June, July and August.

Chicago operators first thought of the modern type of marquee which combines advertising flash and announcements with its other decorative and protective purposes.

Good-Will as B. O. Asset

Chicago first brought institutional advertising and good-will into circuit operation, with Balaban & Katz selling the theatres strictly as theatres in themselves, with no mention of specific shows or attractions. It was a general appeal for patronage for B. & K. houses as a guarantee of good entertainment rather than the current week's show. This institutional copy, as much as any other item, served to establish the circuit not only in Chicago, but throughout the nation, where B. & K. operation stands for truly de luxe exhibition.

During 1938 there was a theatre opened in Chicago. It is called the Esquire and is operated by Harry and Elmer Balaban, according to the formal declarations. But the guiding spirit in setting up its policies and operation plans was A. J. Balaban, one of the founders of B. & K., and now returned to Europe. The Esquire is the newest theatre in the world; new, not by reason of its date of birth, but rather because of its

brand-new ideas of operation. This is remarkable in itself, in view of the oft-repeated statements by top exhibitors that the theatre operation has reached its furthestmost point and that beyond its present development can go no further. A. J. Balaban explodes these statements by demonstrating that there are still new ideas in show business if one will exercise ingenuity to devise them.

Here is a theatre without any sheets advertising the flicker out front. In the place of the standard announcement sheets are little cut-outs, of scenes of the picture, and simply the title at the base of the cut-out. Inside the theatre there is a new type of seat, which slides back rather than lifts up. Customers already seated need not stand to permit someone to pass by.

New-Style Hour of Shorts

All theatres run newsreels, but nothing like the 'Esquire Hour.' This is a 'newsreel' that evidences much care, patience and thought. The shots are all carefully selected from all services. In addition, there is a cartoon, an old one maybe, but it will be good. A travelog that ties in, usually, with the feature picture. There is an outstanding excerpt from a hit picture of the past. Maybe Grace Moore singing the 'Some Fine Day' aria, or Deanna Durbin singing with the Leopold Stokowski orchestra, or the Chaplin wordless song from 'Modern Times.' It is a complete hour's entertainment of genuine film variety. This is new and vital in show business. And Chicago started it.

Chicago has the State-Lake theatre, and the 'State-Lake policy' several years ago meant the combination of vaudeville and pictures on a four-a-day schedule. It was an immediate smash and soon all theatres throughout the country were using the State-Lake policy. Later, there was to come Paul Ash, whom B. & K. made a master-of-ceremonies, so that the stage shows became the most important idea of show business from 1926 to 1933. To house the stage show and m. c.s. big de luxe theatres sprang up throughout the nation. Chicago began both ideas.

In 1933, the firm of Jones, Linick & Schaefer was to take the State-Lake theatre and spring on the pub-

(Continued on page 48)

Photography Marches On

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Motion picture cameras and camera accessories have undergone sweeping changes in the last 12 months, each revision in design, each added gadget tending toward ease of operation, greater efficiency and, most important of all, vastly improved photography. Credit for much of the forward march in lensing equipment belongs to the studio photographic crews, who nowadays work in close co-operation with the manufacturers, suggesting innovations and passing on the results of their own experiments.

In cameras proper, the new Mitchell brings forward the most drastic changes, silencing hood and camera being combined into a single box, the whole lightened so extensively that its movement about the sets requires the services of only one man. Other hooded cameras in use since the coming of sound have been a burden for three men. Sound-proof qualities also have been increased, with the result that all trace of motor noise is eliminated. Rangefinder is built in in such a way that it is no longer necessary to lift a hood to make use of it, with better focusing resulting.

Camera cranes, which came into general usage in the film plants about the time sound swooped down, also have joined the progress procession. While these auxiliaries came into existence as makeshift affairs, each year has brought about changes to meet additional needs. Most advanced now in use is the newest addition to Universal's supply. Suggestions for its design and construction were contributed to by members of the camera and engineering departments of all major lots. Its chassis is propelled by an electric motor, giving it a controlled speed range of from one-tenth of a mile to five miles per hour. Boom, end of which carries a camera platform as well as bucket seats for the camera crew, also is electrically operated.

Indie Production's Upbeat

By Bill Brogdon

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Independent production lifted itself from doldrums of past two years and staged a strong move for revival of the state-rights feature during last 12 months. Reorganization of the Independent Motion Picture Producers' Association and forming of new producing companies with their own distribution outlets were strongest indications of shot-in-the-arm given to indies in general.

In past years Hollywood would be counted on for around 250 of the small-budget features for nabe houses but increase in production costs and reduced returns dropped number turned out to bare fraction of former times. Loosening of the purse-strings and a slightly modified production code resulted in new life, indies again seeing a chance to get negative costs back from exhibition.

Standard Pictures, headed by Barry W. Richards, finally got under way after trying for two years to find the proper financing for series of 12 pictures. Now amply bankrolled, company has located production activities at Grand National studio and is under way with its program. Richards has organized Standard Pictures Distributing Co. to take care of releasing end.

Another company starting with ambitious plans is Equity Pictures, backed by Malcolm Browne, Inc., with Bennie F. Zeidman in charge of production. Presently being worked out is complete distribution setup with network of exchanges around the country. With program of 20 features, consisting of eight action melodramas, eight westerns and four specials, Equity has completed one each of oaters and actioners, and is preparing to start second of melodramas as soon as distribution setup is completed so production pace can be geared to releasing needs.

Top-budgeted, independently produced pictures will be made by Commodore Pictures with announced cost of \$150,000 for each of its four features. Pictures will be aimed at the foreign market as well as the U. S. In charge of production for Commodore, headquartered at General Service studio, is Alfred A. W. Boule. Company is capitalized at \$1,000,000 and both foreign and domestic distribution is now being set up by S. Bronstien, president. Concern will not play for usual state-right market.

Clifford Sanforth, long dabbling in indie production, recently formed Clifford Sanforth Productions with slate of 14 features—six Oriental mysteries and eight westerns. Production is scheduled to start this month. C. C. Burr, another well-known indie producer, has again entered active production under the Atlas banner after two-year layoff to turn out series of Fred Scott musical westerns. Sam Katzman's Victory Pictures is doing eight westerns with Tim McCoy, and recently announced intention of producing six dramas for the state-rights market.

Progressive Pictures, starting off with a bang, turned out four features against a schedule of 12, but in the past few months has been conspicuous by its inactivity. According to old hands at bucking the indie market, Progressive's features carried too high a budget to hope for profitable playdates and unless costs sheets can be readjusted on balance of the program, little chance is seen for continued shooting. Ben N. Judell, head of company, is still trying to decide whether Progressive continues or folds, according to reports.

Road Show Pictures is doing four musical outdoor dramas, Gene Austin headlining. Company is currently road-showing its first in conjunction with personals by Austin, picture later going into theatres on regular runs. Upon return of troupe to Hollywood, second of the series will get into work and Austin will again tour country as additional stimulus at the box office.

Bright star of independent horizon is what is thought to be first color adaptable to the smaller-budgeted film, Telco. Company recently completed its first film after four years of experiments and process is said to cost only approximately 10% more than black and white. Production of pictures in the color is being handled by Al Lane.

With outlook for re-birth of production, rental lots catering to indies are looking forward to chance to start operations again in the black after too many years of red ink. International studio, run by Ralph Like, who also turns out an occasional picture for the small market, currently is headquartering Willis Kent Productions, Harry Webb, C. C. Burr, Like's own Argosy outfit and Laughing Gas Productions Co. Progressive studio, formerly the Maurice Conn studio, is housing Road Show Pictures, Hollywood Famous Pictures, Spanish language company, and serving for interiors for Sam Katzman's Victory westerns.

Talisman studios, operated by John F. Meehan for L. A. Young of Detroit, has been more successful than other rentals, having yearly lease with Monogram Pictures which assures it of operating overhead and some profit. Also on lot are Crescent, E. B. Derr company doing series for Monogram; Bennie Zeidman's Equity Pictures; Million Dollar Productions. Negro concern scheduling 12 features; Clifford Sanforth Productions; Majestic, which handles actual production of the Equity pictures. Also shooting on the lot at various times is Tri-Art Film Productions, independent two-reeler outfit.

Studios run on rental basis such as General Service, etc., are usually occupied by companies with assured releases, either with the majors or with well-established independent companies, and do not take the chance with vagaries of the state-rights field.

Among top three of the well-established independent companies are Republic, Monogram and Grand National, all with less worries on their hands as to the selling end. GN still has its mark to make in the field but internal troubles are expected to be ironed out soon to allow production of remaining features on its schedule of 68 pictures. Both Monogram and Republic have had no trouble in functioning efficiently, servicing its exchanges with full quota of product.

If spurt started in past few months among indies can be maintained, actors and technicians who have mostly been between jobs, will have an opportunity to again pocket a regular paycheck. Of particular significance in this line is work under way to set up nation-wide independent exchange system for all indie producers. At this writing plans have not yet jelled but efforts are continuing both in New York and on the Coast. Such a system would assure steady employment to that large number of players, technicians and other workers who find no market for their services among the majors.

STUDIO INVESTMENTS

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

While this has been a year of curtailed expenditures on the part of the motion picture industry, investment in Coast production plants has jumped to the amazing total of \$112,000,000. Figure marks an increase of approximately \$4,000,000 for permanent improvements in the last 12 months.

Should distributor income during next quarter continue at level attained during November, it is estimated production companies during 1939 will lay out around \$4,000,000 for additional land and new buildings and equipment. Any marked upping of theatre grosses in initial three months would boost figure to between \$7,000,000 and \$8,000,000.

Unsettled conditions, which have marked fading semester, have caused production biggies to ponder long and carefully before loosening purse-strings for new construction and apparatus. Only expansion undertaken has been that forced by necessity.

Heaviest spender for 1938 is Metro, which completed its gray stone administration building, known as the Irving Thalberg Memorial, at a reputed cost of some \$2,000,000. Culver City outfit also unveiled several new sound stages and other structures within confines of its main lot, as well as adding almost 100 acres to its outdoor set holdings to the south of the studio proper.

Despite continued broadening of lot borders during the last decade, every company except 20th-Fox finds itself hampered by overcrowding during periods when peak production loads are being carried. Zanuck's organization solves difficulty by throwing its Westwood overflow into the old Western avenue plant, which, though expensive, is the only way out at present.

20th's \$3,000,000 Plan

Program calling for an outlay of more than \$3,000,000 for new sound stages and other buildings at the

Westwood site, which was to have gotten under way last spring, was shelved because of box office decline. Prospects momentarily are that plans will be dusted off this year, and, should that happen, the Western avenue lot, first Hollywood home of the old Fox Film, will be dismantled and its realty placed on the market. Property is in heart of a business zone, with high land values and excessive taxes.

Paramount, intent in 1937 upon acquiring a new site in the Westwood or valley sectors, continues to hold off, but will be forced to make move within the next five years. Working under adverse conditions, due to overcrowding of its present plant, company is forced to erect all outdoor sets on its ranch in the Malibu hills, which means transporting people and equipment 40 miles from Hollywood.

Hemmed in to north by a cemetery, to the west by RKO, to the east by a thickly built residence and apartment area, and to the south by expensive business property, it is impossible for Par to build another structure within present confines. It is estimated that acquisition of necessary land, construction of another plant and purchase of equipment to completely move production from Marathon street lot would run to between \$15,000,000 and \$20,000,000.

Columbia, which finds itself facing a problem similar to that confronting Par, has partially overcome its difficulties by erecting all outdoor sets on its valley ranch, seven miles away, and throwing overflow stage work into the former B. P. Schulberg studio on Bronson avenue, which it recently acquired under lease.

U's Face-Lift

While Universal has plenty of room for growth, its Universal City holdings including 365 acres, it is in great need of more sound stages, two of which are now under construction. Work also will start shortly on a six-story administration building to cost around \$700,000.

U's plant, which had been allowed to run down at the heel during latter part of Laemmle ownership, has been in process of getting face-lift for last three months. First move of Cliff Work upon assuming general management was to order fresh paint, inside and out, for entire plant. Next was to modernize and soundproof three of lot's oldest stages, including the Phantom, so-named because it was used in making 'Phantom of the Opera' back in 1925. It is estimated that U will contribute better than \$1,500,000 toward permanent construction in 1939.

RKO Waiting for Reorg OK

While RKO also finds the going hard when more than six features are simultaneously in work, company execs prefer to wait until organization is free of court strings via the 77b receivership.

Republic, too, plans to cut loose in near future with heavy outgo for property and buildings, having crowded conditions until negotiations for purchase or longtime renewal of lease on present valley site is completed. Herbert Yates has for months been dickering with Guaranty Liquidating Corp., owners of plant, for its purchase. Company a few weeks ago unveiled new \$100,000 sound recording stage constructed across the line on Yates' own land.

Hal Roach is another who is feeling effects of limited stage space, and is mulling idea of razing present administration building on his Culver City property, and replacing it with steel and concrete structure running full length of his Washington boulevard frontage. Idea is to include three big stages and executive offices under single roof.

Heavy increases in number of features and shorts produced since 1932 has been a boon to owners of rental studios. Monogram now uses practically all the space at Talisman studios. International is never without activity nowadays. Paramount is using both General Service and Grand National for its overflow.

Ready Now THE PICTURES

JAN.
1

GREAT ENTERTAINMENT...

WALTER WANGER
presents

FREDRIC MARCH
JOAN BENNETT



TRADE WINDS



with
RALPH BELLAMY • ANN SOTHERN
SIDNEY BLACKMER • THOMAS MITCHELL
ROBERT ELLIOTT
a TAY GARNETT production

First four engagements all hold-overs . . .
Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver and Montreal!

JAN.
1

It's doing
GOLDWYN BUSINESS

like "The Hurricane"
and "Stella Dallas"

SAMUEL GOLDWYN presents

GARY COOPER
MERLE OBERON

The Cowboy and the Lady

with
PATSY KELLY • WALTER BRENNAN
FUZZY KNIGHT • MABEL TODD
HENRY KOLKER
Directed by H. C. POTTER



Played to 122,000 admissions in five
days at Radio City Music Hall. Held
over there and in 88 out-of town spots!

JAN.
1

"THE GREATEST WEST POINT PICTURE EVER MADE"

EDWARD SMALL
presents

THE DUKE OF WEST POINT



with
LOUIS HAYWARD
TOM BROWN
RICHARD CARLSON
JOAN FONTAINE
ALAN CURTIS
DIRECTED BY ALFRED E. GREEN
ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY BY GEORGE BRUCE



Garnered the big-
gest pre-holiday
business in four
years at Radio
City Music Hall!

All
Released Thru
UNITED ARTISTS

YOU NEED—WHEN YOU NEED THEM!

JAN. 12



TOPPER'S BACK AGAIN!

HAL ROACH presents

Topper Takes a Trip

starring
Constance BENNETT • Roland YOUNG
BILLIE BURKE • ALAN MOWBRAY
VERREE TEASDALE • FRANKLIN PANGBORN • ALEXANDER D'ARCY
Directed by NORMAN Z. McLEOD
Screenplay by Jack Jevne, Eddie Moran and Corey Ford • Produced by Milton H. Bren

Radio City Music Hall's New Year records vanish in a cloud of ectoplasm!

JAN. 26

HEARTBREAK!



SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL presents

Carole
LOMBARD • STEWART
James
"Made for Each Other"

with
CHARLES COBURN
LUCILE WATSON
Produced by
DAVID O. SELZNICK
Directed by
JOHN CROMWELL
Screenplay by Joe Swerling

Publisher Wilkerson of Hollywood Reporter sees rushes and says "Lombard's dramatics brilliant showmanship!"

FEB. 4

A "GRAND HOTEL" ON WHEELS!

WALTER WANGER presents

STAGECOACH



Picture now in final stages of cutting. Preview reports soon. Watch for them!

with
CLAIRE TREVOR • JOHN WAYNE
THOMAS MITCHELL • LOUISE PLATT
GEORGE BANCROFT • ANDY DEVINE
JOHN CARRADINE • TIM HOLT
A JOHN FORD Production

The Year In Pictures

(Continued from page 9)

defeat the North Dakota divorce statute, which has been appealed to the U. S. Supreme court. Earlier in the year, the Neely bill was passed to end blockbooking and blind selling, causing great consternation.

The U. S. Supreme court, which serves as the last hope in all agitation against distributors or theatre organizations, during the year rendered an opinion which caused a setback in the Dallas Interstate case and dealt another blow by refusing to review an order of the lower court against distributors in connection with the Philadelphia double-feature ban.

More trouble concerns two actions directed against Balaban & Katz, one of which was brought by the Government on charges of violation of a 1932 consent decree. This suit names all distributors excepting Columbia. The other B&K action, of a civil character, was brought by Chicago exhibitors against B&K. Loew's and all distributors under the anti-trust laws. Numerous other scattered moves that produce shaking in the boots, over and above the actions that are carryovers from 1937, include a new A. B. Momand suit against all companies; a zoning-clearance suit in Indiana against distributors; a \$1,000,000 anti-trust suit in LaCrosse, Wis. against Paramount, 20th and United Artists, Ramish-Gore's \$300,000 conspiracy charge versus Fox-West Coast; an anti-trust suit against Lucas & Jenkins for \$645,000; two suits in Philadelphia leveled at the Warner Bros. and an action of Newark independents against local chain operators and most distributors.

If nothing else, the trend of the times is providing a field day for the attorneys. In the U. S. suit alone it is estimated the legal bill will run over \$1,500,000.

In addition to the Federal suits, State legislation, civil anti-trust and other actions, during 1938 there has been a large number of cases charging plagiarism, breach of contract and violation of stockholder rights. Among the more important of these was the case in which an award of \$532,153 was made to plaintiffs in the 'Letty Lynton' (Metro) story-lifting matter, largest award of its kind ever made in the picture business, and the more recent stockholders' action, also against Loew's, on which much interesting indie testimony resulted. Decision in the latter is expected shortly.

The legal bill that's being run up might be lessened by steps that are being taken in an effort to avoid lengthy procedure in the courtrooms, notably in the Government anti-trust suit and others with similar grounding, but there is no certainty that these efforts will be successful.

When it became evident serious trouble lay imminently ahead early last summer, the New Deal was promised the industry would be good and steps were initiated by distributors to set up self-regulating machinery to govern distributor-exhibitor relations. The Government filed its anti-trust suit anyway, interrupting those plans somewhat.

Couldn't Dodge Mr. Whiskers

However, the distributors carried forth on the implied assumption that if they could settle grievances with exhibitors that were widespread, and set up a code of trade practices that would be agreed to by both sides, a trial of the Government suit might be avoided. To this end, after numerous negotiations between distributors and the committees of 10 leading exhibitor organizations, a draft of trade practice reforms has been drawn up and forwarded to the exhib bodies for their approval. It remains to be seen whether this or a satisfactorily revised trade practices program will be placed into effect.

It also remains for the future to decide what will be the reaction of the Department of Justice to the adoption, if and when it occurs, of such a program and to what extent, if any, it may affect the ponderous anti-trust suit on file. Distributors recently appealed for a bill of particulars in connection with the action, seeking minute clarification of charges alleged.

Meantime, the routine business of the distributor makes inroads on his time and his sense of calm. As in the tradition of the theatre, however, his show must go on, regardless of abnormal difficulties, unforeseen problems and unwelcome troubles.

During 1938, even if he hadn't had to worry about self-regulation, suits and the like, his sleep has been greatly disturbed. Early in the spring the exhibitors were complaining bitterly about the product being released, one plaint being there were too many D's and not enough B's, with result that a flock of reissues were scheduled. While a record number were added to the release sheets, so few of them got anywhere that many, which were to have been made available ultimately, were forgotten about.

Brutal Spring and Summer

Passing through the dull spring and early summer months, with growing fear over what the future offered, judged by the way business was going, the producer-distributors started discussing a back to the boxoffice ballyhoo. Born of the

panic was what later became known as the 'Motion Pictures Greatest Year' campaign.

During the spring and summer, selling had proceeded at a dangerously slow pace. This also created panic among distributors. Planning of the 1938-39 programs had been no cinch and some companies reduced the size of their season's catalogs. The combined majors had failed to deliver fewer pictures on the prior (1937-38) than the year before, and sales conventions had been starting in March, earliest ever, but all the way through the summer and deep into the fall, the contracts came through slowly.

Late 1937-38 product had been away below normal, exhibitors were beefing about features that were getting too short in running time (no less than 109 in '37-38 running under 67 minutes), reissues had not helped much, and very definite resistance to rentals for the new season was being felt. The alarm created among the distributors no doubt justified the 'Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment' idea, even if the average theatre operator thinks it has been worth much less to him than its proponents had imagined.

Pictures of genuine boxoffice quality, led by 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' began coming through around the middle of August and activity in contract-taking pepped up somewhat, but, due to the general uncertainty of the times and other factors, many key deals were still stalled a long ways. And there is still much for the salesmen to do before the '38-39 books are closed. What a life they lead!

Exhibition's Kinks

In exhibition, where the buying public is the deciding factor, the problems have also been legion during the past year. Aside from such matters as trade practice reforms and legislation which grows out of complaints made by the exhibiting branch of the industry, the theatres are concerned over a multitude of things which affect them directly or indirectly, locally or nationally.

These problems make the theatre operator's or manager's life as trying in his particular sphere as those which beset the distributor in his selling of pictures and the producer in making them. Some of them are the concern of all three branches of industry activity, such as giveaways, double bills, overseating, censorship, public apathy and outer-industry competition in the form of sports or other oppositional activity.

From the high-salaried operator in luxurious home office suites to the little independent in the tank town who operates part time, the quality of the product he is able to obtain is the important desideratum. That his public will shop with him if he has the right goods to offer is taken for granted, but an exhibitor's worries do not end with such simple business philosophy. Pictures that are deserving of better grosses than obtained may be dying because a fickle public has gotten fed up on certain types of productions.

An opposition theatre may be holding out such alluring bait as giveaways or bank night; or the fickle film fan may avoid picture shows in favor of periodic amusement that acts as competition, including outdoor activities during the summer months, football in the fall, the circus when it comes to town, local events of various descriptions, etc. Not to mention Lent, the two weeks prior to Christmas and such acts of God as hurricanes or floods against which the best quality of film suffers.

Sundry Angles

Even though the product obtained by a given theatre may be considered good, there is always the added setback represented by overseating, unfair price cutting competition, zoning and clearance, location of operation, etc. Then, in the face of the true business possibilities of the theatre, the operator must gamble for a profit on film, the value of which is to be proved but for which rental terms have been agreed upon in advance of production in most cases.

General business conditions and the danger of new and unforeseen opposition, not the least of which may be further theatre building in the community, also forces the exhibitor to gamble more than he may consider is fair for him.

There has been much building and face-lifting in the theatre field during 1938. If a new theatre is opened in a tough situation, that theatre may get hurt but it also works the other way very often. If the pictures on display are comparative in audience value, a fickle public may desert an older house and flock to the one, newly built, which has the glitter of gold about it and nicer rest rooms.

So it isn't just quality pictures that the exhibitor can rely upon. The operator not getting product that is as good as that of his competitor is in a more difficult position, however. Since he cannot rely to any great extent on the film he is buying, he may be forced into duals, if not already existing; into bank nights or other artificial stimuli; or into admission prices that are so low he is selling a scale rather than pictures.

ment, many exhibitors in foreign countries preferring to do business with one established firm.

In the past ERPI foreign organizations have confined their activity to handling of Western Electric sound equipment although expediency has prompted them to distribute other kinds of booth equipment when necessary.

Walt Disney Productions is the latest tag for Walt Disney Enterprises, the second corporate name for the company in two months. Title changing began Nov. 1 when three Disney companies went out of existence through a statutory agreement. Firms disbanded at that time were Walt Disney Productions, Ltd., Walt Disney Enterprises and Liled Realty & Investment Co. New title was adopted as more fitting, as the company is primarily in the picture production business.

Charles P. Skouras handed out bonus checks amounting to \$54,000 to 2,000 employees of the Fox West Coast Theatres in California, Arizona and Montana. Disbursements covered bonuses for district and house managers in the recent F-WC business drive, prizes for special drive weeks, insurance premium refunds, employees' Christmas bonuses and awards for best decorations of theatres during the Motion Pictures Are Your Best Entertainment campaign.

Movement is afoot by Lewen Pizor, prez of United Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Philadelphia to have every film house play 'The Star Spangled Banner' at the finish of each performance, but is meeting with no great success. Wherever tried in the Philly zone its pretty unsatisfactory. Large number of patrons not even recognizing the strains or merely continuing to walk out anyway.

Walt Disney's cartoonists may have taken a good long look at the big Wrigley sign atop the International Casino, N. Y. Some of the round fish, the little bubbles and iridescent color movement in 'Merbabies' suggest this.

In addition to the 'Best Entertainment' campaign, during the past year games of various descriptions have glutted the exhibition market and new boxoffice gags have been tried, including quizzes, spelling bees, coupon stunts and the like. On the other hand, the year 1938 has seen much agitation designed to do away with bank night and double bills. At present, steps are under way to eliminate giveaways in the Greater New York area and elsewhere altogether. The movement to purge the country of banko, bingo and other b.o. bait, whether legal or not, started early in the year with test cases inaugurated in some sections on the games. Meantime, there are many operators who are afraid, as they will admit, to guess just how much banko and other stunts for b.o. stimulus have really meant in gross receipts.

Dualing

There has been no decrease in dualing throughout the country but territories which have been more or less free from the policy in the past, notably the south, southwest and portions of the west, are still holding their own with single bills. The result, in the absence of any authentic poll inside the industry or with the public, is that some theatre operators want the duals and others don't. In Philadelphia the legality of duals has been upheld following efforts of distributors to eliminate them, while in Chicago last spring there was talk of a city ordinance to ban double-features. In that situation, as well as in some territories of lesser importance, smaller indies have moved to triple bills as a means of competing with larger houses playing duals.

While the time may come when all double-features will be wiped out and banko, bingo, giveaways, etc. are relegated to the scrap heap, it does not appear to be around the corner. No less near, in all probability, is a satisfactory settlement of clearance and zoning, over which there has been considerable trouble during '38, notably in the Chicago territory, Indiana and Philadelphia.

Trade Practice Code

A trade practices program, first draft of which has been sent out for exhibitor approval, affords some hope in connection with reforms in connection with zoning and clearance, but that all squawks on this mooted point could be settled by any pact having a chance of adoption is unreasonable to expect. However, there may be relief on protection and clearance through plans for a system of arbitration to govern this as well as other items of dispute between exhibitors and distributors.

There is much that a system of arbitration may have to bear, but also some things over which it may have no jurisdiction. Time will tell.

Exhibs continue to complain, in one way or another, against radio, but notably because of participation in it by producers, stars and others. One of the complaints is against early airing of song numbers from pictures, although there is another school of thought which believes the establishing of a hit song through broadcasting redounds to the benefit of the film from which it comes.

In Minneapolis Sunday night scales were cut early in the year as a means of combating competition on the air that night, while in Birmingham, the R. B. Wilby interests raised a howl because admission was being charged to local broadcasting.

Other Exhib Highlights

The exhibition field also gave the industry historian the following during 1938:

Threats of strikes by closing theatres; efforts to cut operating cost by darkening some signs, thus saving electric current; complaints of subsequents against milking of films up ahead; successful use of medium names as b.o. fodder for stage-equipped theatres; failure to get Federal tax relief in the 1938 tax bill; Sunday film tests here and there; closing of more than the average number of houses during the summer; threat of as many as 88 indie theatres in one key to cut to a half-week against distributor demands, never carried out; advances by the drive-in type of theatre, mostly in the east but threatening to spread as summer opposition; disapproval by larger buyers of long-term film contracts due to gamble taken; a tendency to favor neighborhood houses as first runs due to parking problems in downtown areas; a hurricane in the east that caused heavy damage to theatre properties, with Paramount the hardest hit; squawks which led to extension of the Greater Movie drive beyond Dec. 31 for subsequent runs; admission for 12 months held to 24c, bettering the mean average for the past eight years; probable testing of the Wages and Hours bill so far as theatres are concerned; killing of horse and dog racing in western Massachusetts, largely through efforts of exhibitors; inclination toward theatre building as taxpayers because of the low cost and stimulation of construction generally under new plan of the Federal Housing Administration to provide funds; and, lest it be forgotten, an RKO reorganization that has been just around the corner for a long, long time now.

Inside Stuff—Pictures

Herbert Bayard Swope's boy, John Swope, who is also known to the film colony as an agent, of a sort, will be better known as a camera artist when his 'Camera Over Hollywood' (Random House; \$3.50) comes out this week. Swope's 10% boss, Leland Hayward, wrote the introduction, which is a different sort of an intro is that his boss not only strongly suspects but as much as states that seemingly all the photographic subjects were taken in Hollywood while Swope was supposed to be snapping producers into buying Leland Hayward's actors, writers and directors. To the credit of Swope (and Hayward) there aren't too many shots of Margaret Sullivan (Mrs. Hayward) although James Stewart, a particular pal of the lenser-agent, does seem to be generously represented.

This is the volume for which Claude Binyon was to have done the intros but seemingly it's the type of book where pictures speak everything for themselves.

Prominent actor had a huge grouch for the holidays, the result of outsmarting himself. He had a deal with an agency to make three pictures during 1939 for a major studio at \$65,000 a picture. Contract had been signed by the studio and awaited the actor's signature. Meanwhile another agency told the thesp they could get him \$100,000 per film, so he spurned the first offer. Instead of lamenting the loss of his services the studio gave three cheers. They were tickled pink to get out of the contract. Now the second agency has the actor on its hands. Best offer reported so far is \$25,000 a picture.

Deal is under way whereby Electrical Research Products, Inc., will distribute complete booth equipment of American manufacturers in about 50 foreign territories. ERPI foreign distributing companies will handle equip-

Chi's Ideas

(Continued from page 45)

lie a combination of stage show, vaudeville and pictures, so successful that it has become a standard policy in most vaudeville theatres.

Fanners and Filmmakers

Also in 1933, Sally Rand quit the legit stage in Chi to wave a couple of fans at the World's Fair on the lakefront, and for at least four years following the fan dancers, bubble dancers, ostrich dancers, muff, scarf, bird and other dancers were evidently the only attractions which guaranteed a strong boxoffice. No doubt there had been fan dancers before Sally Rand, but Chicago's great ability to take a static item and dress it up for popular consumption didn't fail in this instance, either.

Quizzes were going along nicely in radio for a couple of years, but for a rather select audience; until, in early 1938, one Kay Kyser dressed it up with popular music that the whole nation could understand and made it the most walloping idea of the year in radio.

THE START OF A SMART SHOWMAN'S CALENDAR *for* 1939!

JANUARY

BASIL RATHBONE
BORIS KARLOFF
BELA LUGOSI
LIONEL ATWILL *in*
**"SON OF
FRANKENSTEIN"**
with **JOSEPHINE HUTCHINSON**
Emma Dunn, Donnie Dunagan, Edgar Norton

Original screenplay by Willis Cooper

Produced and directed by
Rowland V. Lee

A Rowland V. Lee Production

FEBRUARY

W. C. FIELDS *in*
**"YOU CAN'T CHEAT AN
HONEST MAN"** *with*
Edgar **BERGEN** and "Charlie **McCARTHY**"
and **FRANK JENKS, PRINCESS BABA**

Screenplay by GEORGE MARION, JR. • Original Story by Charles Bogle

Directed by **GEORGE MARSHALL**
Associate Producer: **LESTER COWAN**

MARCH

DEANNA DURBIN *in*
"3 SMART GIRLS GROW UP"
with **NAN GREY • HELEN PARRISH**
CHARLES WINNINGER **ROBERT CUMMINGS**
WILLIAM LUNDIGAN
ERNEST COSSART
NELLA WALKER
A HENRY KOSTER PRODUCTION
PRODUCED BY JOE PASTERNAK

APRIL

**"EAST SIDE
OF HEAVEN"**
with
BING CROSBY

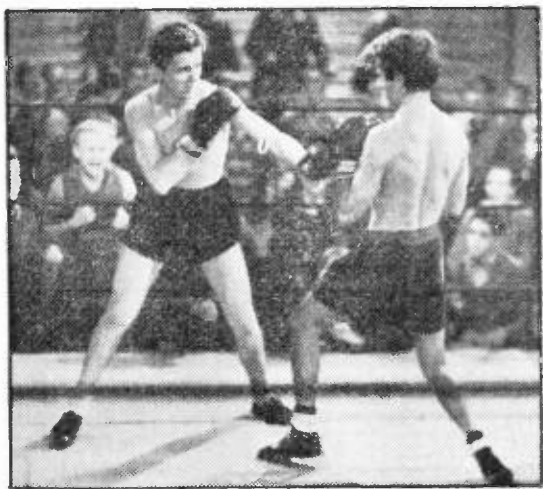
Directed by **David Butler**
Music and Lyrics by **John Burke and James Monaco**



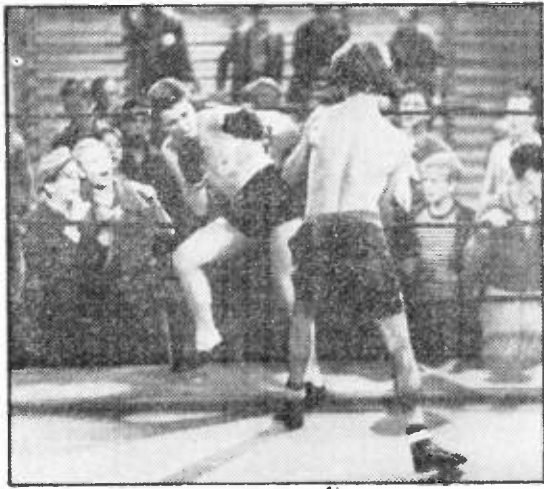
COMPLIMENTS OF NEW UNIVERSAL

FIGHT PICTURES!

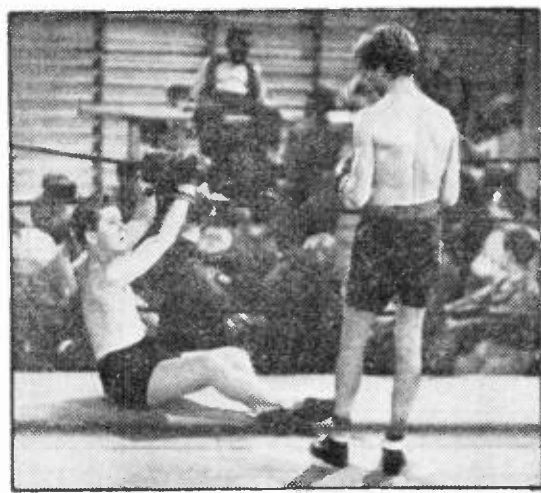
—From the season's drama smash of youth!



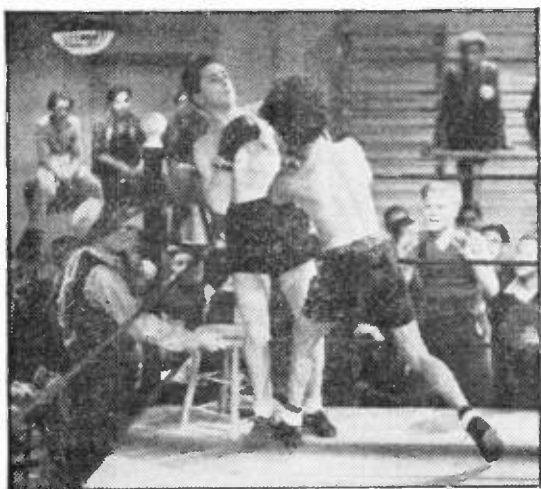
1. They square off. Cooper is new to this gang of kids. Somebody kidded him... he was tired, hungry, so he snapped back. Now he's got a fight on his hands.



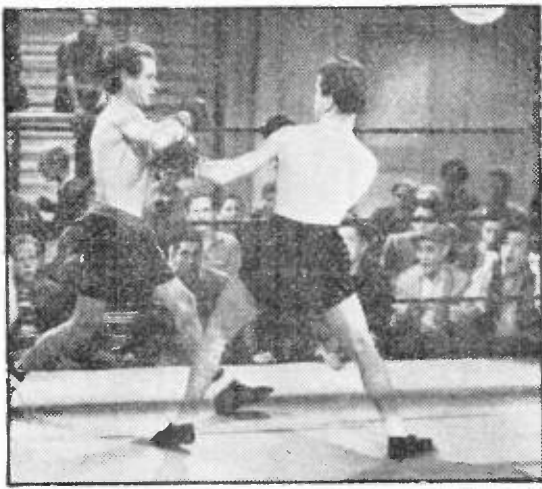
2. A left cross gets Cooper before he knows what happened. His opponent drives in hard figuring on an easy take. The kid in front of him seems daffy, no fight to him at all!



3. He's down! That left and then a hard right did the job. Cooper seems dazed, unaware that he's in a fight with a boy out to do damage—not to win a decision!



4. The round's over but the bell means nothing to Cooper's opponent. He drives hard and the yell of the mob covers up the sound of the gong, the weak protests of the few that want fair play!



5. But the fight isn't over yet, Cooper comes back and there is determination to win. The other fellow realizes that his set-up has become a problem. He steps up his own pace... the fight's just begun!



He walked out on her ideas... but not on her!

THE TUMULT OF A
MOB GONE WILD...
ROARING SCENES
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET!

JACKIE COOPER
in A UNIVERSAL PICTURE
NEWSBOYS' HOME
with
EDMUND LOWE
Wendy BARRIE • Edward MORRIS
Samuel S. HINDS • Elisha COOK, Jr.
THE LITTLE TOUGH GUYS
Directed by HAROLD YOUNG
Screenplay by GORDON KAHN
Original story by Gordon Kahn and Charles Grayson
Associate Producer KEN GOLDSMITH



**PRINTS NOW
AVAILABLE!**

THE GUILDS MARCH ON

By Rod Roddy

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

With the Screen Actors Guild setting the pace, labor tightened its grip on the film industry during 1938. Supported by the National Labor Relations Board and encouraged by enactment of the Wage-Hour Law, many new guilds and unions sprang up. Screen directors and writers renewed their fight for producer recognition. Major studios are now 100% organized, although the white collar workers are rather loosely banded together in company guilds.

The SAG moved into first place as the largest and most influential craft in the motion picture business. The actors laughed off a threatened invasion by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, headed off a brewing extra revolt by granting them modified autonomy, and then branched out to assume control over the agents. The players took time out between these activities to negotiate a new modified agreement with all major companies and most of the independents.

While the actors have always steered clear of entangling alliances with other crafts, they agreed to sit in on establishment of an Inter-Talent Council as a safeguard against any expansion by the IATSE. Council meets once or twice a month, with representatives from the SAG, Screen Directors Guild and Screen Writers Guild attending. Pledges of cooperation also were received from the film editors, studio flacks and many technical organizations.

Bioff's Resignation

Resignation of William Bioff as Coast head of the IA, return of local autonomy to Studio Locals and internal attacks by minority groups resulted in ditching of any plans to take over all workers in the industry. With various crafts directing attacks against the IATSE, the organization soon found itself on the defensive.

A deal was negotiated to relinquish control of the studio laborers to Studio Utility Employees Local 724, contingent upon Jeff Kibbe withdrawing his NLRB petition demanding an investigation of IA supervision by international officers. Kibbe refused, and the NLRB hearing went over until Feb. 14 to determine if an amicable adjustment could be arranged.

With the IA definitely removed as a threat to its reign, the SAG quickly negotiated a new pact with the producers and announced plans to franchise all agents. The agents balked, but later agreed to drop all opposition if the actors would modify certain requirements in their licensing program. Attorneys for the two groups are now drafting a code of ethics for the agents, subject to approval by the SAG and the Artists Managers Guild.

When it became evident the licensing plan could not be blocked, all of the independent agents joined the AMG as associate members. M. C. Levee, AMG prexy, promised they would receive the same consideration as the original 13 members. Principal objections of agents were limiting of contracts to one year and demand that all existing contracts be made to conform with pact finally adopted by the SAG. Some modification will be made in these.

Big decrease in number of extras used by studios was seized upon by certain leaders in old Junior Screen Actors Guild to foment a revolt of extras. Several petitions were filed with NLRB demanding various groups be certified as bargaining representative for atmosphere players. Several of these are still pending. Offensive was blasted, however, when the SAG adopted new by-laws granting modified autonomy to the extras. The name of Junior Screen Actors Guild was abolished, and the SAG membership divided into Class A and Class B groups.

Class B membership, composed largely of extras, was given authority to initiate resolutions, rules and regulations, and to sit with the SAG board of directors when such proposed legislation is under discussion. By-Laws call for appointment of three members of Class B Council to represent the junior membership before the board.

In addition the By-Laws provide that the Class B membership may withdraw from the SAG upon an affirmative vote of 51% of the membership. Demand for such an election may be initiated by a 30% vote of Class B members. A new provision also provides that the Class A members cannot vote the Class B

members on strike unless the latter themselves vote in favor of a walk-out.

Extras' Org.

A hearing on petition of Cinema Players, Inc., to be designated as bargaining representative for the extras will be ordered by the NLRB shortly after the first of the year. If it is shown that Cinema Players has support of a representative group of extras, tops in the SAG may agree to a consent election to determine whether the SAG will continue to negotiate for the extras, or whether the latter will set up a separate organization. The producers, however, have already indicated they will not bargain with any group claiming to represent the extras, since their contract with the SAG covers these players.

The Screen Writers Guild was designated by the NLRB as exclusive bargaining agent for all screen writers and held two preliminary meetings with the producers. The scribblers walked out of the last parley when the film executives refused to cancel their contract with Screen Playwrights, Inc., and declined to recognize the SWG as exclusive bargaining representative for all writers.

Charles Brackett, prexy of the SWG, immediately signed complaints filed with the NLRB by attorney Leonard S. Janofsky charging the major companies with unfair labor practice. Dr. Towne Nylander, regional director of the NLRB, conferred with both groups and suggested further efforts be made to negotiate.

No action has been taken on issuance of formal complaints, the examiner stating that he desired to investigate all phases of the situation. The NLRB finally assigned Bernard Alpert as special attorney to handle the situation. Dr. Nylander explaining that William Walsh, senior NLRB counsel, was needed for other work. If complaints are issued, a hearing will have to be conducted before a special NLRB trial examiner, with several months intervening before a decision can be handed down in Washington.

Writers

In the meantime, the Screen Playwrights continue to arbitrate disputes over screen credits and otherwise function for the members. The SWG had notified the producers that any further negotiations with the SP will be illegal in view of certification of the SWG by the NLRB, and SWG members are signing under present contracts carrying clause providing for arbitration of credit disputes by the SP.

A double-barreled attack was laid down by the Screen Directors Guild, which petitioned for certification as bargaining representative for directors, unit managers and assistant directors, and at the same time charged the major companies with unfair labor practice for refusing to negotiate. Hearing on the charges required several weeks, during which it was shown that many of the directors had never paid any dues in the organization and that others were delinquent more than one year.

Producers offered to negotiate separate agreements with the directors and unit managers and assistant directors, but claimed three groups did not constitute a proper bargaining unit under the Wagner Act. Companies insisted directors were highly paid creative artists, while unit managers and assistant directors were representatives of business office. Tops in SDG refused to divide membership and all negotiations were called off.

Frank Capra is president of the SDG. Charles Brackett prexy of the SWG, and Ralph Morgan head of the SAG. Morgan scored a 4 to 1 victory over Melvyn Douglass and carried his entire slate into office. Brackett and Capra were selected without opposition.

Kenneth Thomson was retained as executive secretary of the SAG, and with the Guild counsel, Lawrence W. Eclenson, handled most of the negotiations with producers as well as with the AMG over the licensing plan. The SAG also retained Aubrey Blair as studio contact for Class B members. J. C. McGowan, veteran director, was employed as executive secretary of the SDG to succeed Herrick Herrick, resigned.

Society of Motion Picture Film Editors negotiated pact with producers calling for minimum of \$100 weekly for editors of features and \$75 for shorts. One-year agreement recently expired, and editors are now asking for reclassification of apprentices, film librarians and assist-

ant cutters. Walter Sharp is executive manager of organization.

Casey Holds Off

Pat Casey, producer labor contact, refused to negotiate with studio publicity writers, art directors, and other smaller groups until their status was clarified by the NLRB. Hearings have been held on a majority of the petitions and recommendations for certification are now pending before the board in Washington.

Agreement with studio Painters expired in May and workers are now seeking wage tilt for men employed on night shifts. Petition for time and half for Painters on graveyard shift was filed by Herbert Sorrell, business representative of Motion Picture Painters Local 644.

Enactment of Wage-Hour law resulted in hurried visits to Washington by Pat Casey, Victor H. Clarke, Keith Glenan and other film executives. Several conferences were held with Elmer F. Andrews, Wage-Hour administrator, but no definite ruling was secured for application of the act to the film industry. Following huddles between various attorneys and company executives, studios placed all white collar workers on 40-hour week. Paramount also put assistant cameramen on 44-hour week and other moves were made to comply with law when attorneys warned against probable prosecutions. Various changes are being recommended daily at conferences between Casey and major studio managers and attorneys.

Tops generally agree that biggest developments in studio labor this year was agreement on 8-hour day for actors. SAG licensing plan for agents, and resignation of William Bioff as Coast head of IATSE and personal representative of George E. Browne, IA international president. Investigation by Federal agents of charges of racketeering by certain labor tops also drew considerable attention. Investigators are still tracing incomes of certain leaders who are alleged to have received huge sums shortly after settlement of 1937 studio strike.

Membership of Inter-Talent Council is composed of following:

Screen Directors Guild: Frank Capra, Herbert Biberman, Lewis Milestone; alternates, Elliott Nugent, W. S. Van Dyke, Frank Tuttle. Screen Actors Guild: Ralph Morgan, Elizabeth Risdon, Robert Montgomery. Screen Writers Guild: Charles Brackett, Jane Murfin, Philip Dunne, Boris Ingster.

New officers of the Screen Actors Guild are Ralph Morgan, president; Joan Crawford, James Cagney, Edward Arnold, vice presidents; Paul Harvey, recording secretary; Porter Hall, treasurer. Board of directors: Edward Arnold, Beulah Bondi, Ralph Byrd, Melvyn Douglass, Porter Hall, Paul Harvey, Hugh Herbert, Howard Hickman, Peter Lorre, Edwin Stanley, Gloria Stuart.

Screen Directors Guild is governed by the following officers: Frank Capra, president; W. S. Van Dyke, Howard Hawks, vice presidents; Frank Tuttle, secretary; Rowland V. Lee, treasurer. Board of directors: Herbert Biberman, Frank Capra, John Cromwell, John Ford, Gregory LaCava, Rouben Mamoulian, Lewis Milestone, Phil Rosen, A. Edward Sutherland, Frank Tuttle, Howard Hawks, Williams Wellman, William K. Howard, Leo McCarey, W. S. Van Dyke.

Junior Screen Directors Guild: Harry Scott, president; Robert Ross, vice president; Sid Fogel, treasurer; Clem Jones, secretary. Junior Board of directors: Horace Hough, Joel McDonald, Walter Mayo, Harry Scott, Eric Stacey, Fred Fleck, Robert Ross, Joe Dill, Bob Farfan, Sid Fogel, Vaughn Paul, Clem Jones, Ralph Wilson, John Voshell, Paul Wing.

Screen Writers Guild officers and executive board follow: Charles Brackett, president; Philip Dunne, vice president; Maurice Rapf, secretary; Ring Lardner, Jr., treasurer. Board: Charles Brackett, Philip Dunne, Gilbert Gabriel, Sheridan Gibney, Dashiell Hammett, Lillian Hellman, Boris Ingster, Ring Lardner, Jr., Mary C. McCall, Jr., Dudley Nichols, Laura Perelman, Maurice Rapf, Eudd Schulberg, Donald Ogden Stuart, Anthony Veiller. Alternates: Julius Epstein, David Hertz, Henry Myers, Frank Partos, Gertrude Purcell, Wells Root.

John Lee Mahin was reelected president of Screen Playwrights, Inc. Other officers are William Conselman, Bess Meredyth, vps; Bert Kalmar, secretary; Walter De Leon, treasurer. Executive board: John Lee Mahin, Bert Kalmar, Walter DeLeon, Bess Meredyth, Patterson McNutt, Howard Emmett Rogers, Rupert Hughes, Grover Jones, William Conselman, Rian James, Casey Robinson.

Market Bullish In 1938

By Mike Wear

Reactionary trend of late 1937, which was prolonged and even accentuated during the first half of 1938, was abruptly halted in the stock market during the latter part of June and in July, with subsequent activity on the upside bringing new high prices for the past year. Even in the face of disturbing news in Europe, with its continued tangible threats of warfare, 1938's stock market wound up the 12 months with healthy gains as contrasted with drastic losses shown in the previous year. Past year will go down as the one in which the steady decline was abruptly halted and a new recovery movement got under way.

This changed sentiment was mirrored in the rise in the value of leading amusement issues. Twelve representative stocks appreciated \$100,000,000 in value from the closing quotation on Dec. 31, 1937, to the final prices Dec. 31, 1938. While higher prices were registered by picture shares earlier last fall than shown in final market sessions in December, the manner in which the film company issues weathered the selling of stocks for tax purposes and the sluggishness in final month boded well for the future of these shares.

Heavy declines early in 1938 recorded by picture stocks were wiped out later, even though the dip in income, in common with other business generally, showed up in reduced earnings for picture companies during the year. And companies turning in reports for fiscal years ending in August and October made poorer showings as a rule than those closing their 12-month period in December. This was to be expected because none of these companies was able to cash in on improved business for the last three or four months of the year.

Typical of this situation was the report of Warner Bros. for the 12 months ending Aug. 27, which showed net operating profit of \$1,929,721 as compared with \$5,876,182 in the previous fiscal year. Just how the slump cut into earnings of the final quarter (June, July and August) is revealed by the first 39 months' report showing net operating profit of \$3,282,765.

Col. and U's Down and Up

The year 1938 was marked by declining revenues for Columbia Pictures and vastly improved earnings by Universal. Universal's new executives who installed Cliff Work as studio boss in place of Charles R. Rogers, and other realignments were held responsible for the situation which will find the company operating steadily in the black during last few 1938 months. U showed a net loss of \$773,248 for the 39 weeks ended July 30, 1938, but a profit in the final quarter ending last October probably will reveal Universal completing a fiscal year with its small "e" loss in a long time.

Dip in Columbia Pictures earnings forced the company to pass up the payment of its usual cash dividend starting with the action in June, although retaining the semi-annual stock divvy of 2 1/2%.

While many companies for the first 26 weeks showed materially reduced net profits, some being cut almost in two, as compared with the previous year, both Loew's and 20th-Fox managed to buck the trend fairly successfully. Loew's wound up the first 40 weeks of its fiscal year (ending in August) with a net profit of \$8,352,675 against \$11,714,722 in a similar period of 1937.

Loew and 20th-Fox

The dividend record for Loew's fell back from its record high of \$7.50, paid in 1937, to only \$3 but permitting a nice cash reserve to pile up.

Although 20th-Fox revealed \$4-

622,091 for the first 39 weeks of 1938, comparing favorably with \$4,898,893 in similar period of 1937, final total is expected to be considerably under the \$8,617,114 recorded for full 12 months of 1937. Excellent returns from the film company are anticipated in the final three months.

High cost of production was held responsible to some degree for the slump of Paramount earnings. The total for the first three quarters, \$1,876,469, was roughly \$4,800,000 below the same period of 1937. While a net profit of \$2,500,000 is looked for for the full 12 months there may not be sufficient improvement in the last quarter to realize this amount.

Two weeks of rising stock values late last June began to convince traders that the bear cycle had been completed and that a new bull market was in the making. The bear traders could not laugh off gains of 1 to 5 and 10 points. Subsequent rises, halted temporarily by European disturbances, bore out the contention that a bullish cycle had arrived, and as usual, the market traders discounted upwards the improvement in business by several months.

WB's Conversion

Financial circles showed avid interest in Warner Bros. plan of exchanging old debentures, due in the fall of 1939, for new debentures of the same 6% interest-bearing value due in 1948. Deb holders were asked to deposit old bonds for certificates for the new obligations, but the final date for exchange had to be extended to Dec. 1 and then to March 15, 1939. By the end of the year about \$19,200,000 worth of the debentures had been deposited, or about 57% of the \$29,400,000 total issue.

Net profits of \$4,141,205 for the first nine months (\$6,599,111 in 1937) reported by Radio Corp. of America indicates that the full year savings will range between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000. Besides paying the dividends on the first preferred and the small issue of Radio B preferred still outstanding, RCA paid 20c. on common shares as it did in 1937. Columbia Broadcasting also suffered a slump in earnings as compared with 1937, reporting \$2,606,157 in the first nine months against \$3,053,416 for 1937. Company paid \$1.25 on both the A and B shares during the year.

Improved earning position of Technicolor, Inc., was indicated in the eight-month report when net was \$862,612 against \$451,258 in similar period of 1937. Corporation paid 85c. in dividends as of Nov. 1.

Pathe Film Corp. proposed plan of liquidation and establishment of new capital setup failed to pass at special stockholders' meeting, Dec. 13, when only about 60% of outstanding stock showed at session. Needed 80%. Officials blamed court actions of small common stockholder group and E. I. du Pont de Nemours, both of which failed. New plan is now being formulated.

Two stockholder suits against Loew's, Inc., one having been tried and a decision expected early in 1939, caused heavy selling and depression of Loew shares and bonds mid-December. Losses of four or five points subsequently were partially wiped out.

RKO Nearly Out of 77B

Radio-Keith-Orpheum came closer to emergence from 77B, after the usual court delays, stockholder complaints and other obstacles. Company showed a deficit of \$480,176 for the 26 weeks ended July 2 against a profit of \$1,442,710 in the same period a year ago. Earnings record was reflected in low quotations for the common stock but the bonds made substantial gains.

With net earnings of \$536,205 for the first nine months, Consolidated Film Industries, Inc., which has heavy interest in Republic Pictures, appeared headed for \$650,000-\$700,000 year. Company paid \$1 on its preferred stock for the year.

Amus. Stocks Climb in '38

STOCK	Closing Price Dec. 31, 1937	Closing Price Dec. 31, 1938	Points gained	Appreciation in value
Columbia Pic	12	15 1/4	3 1/4	\$936,000
Cons. Film pfd.	5 1/2	10 1/2	5	2,620,000
Eastman Kodak	160 1/2	184 3/4	24 1/4	54,584,810
Gen. Theatres Eq.	11 1/2	15 1/2	4	1,503,000
Loew	45	54 1/8	9 1/8	14,600,000
Paramount	9 3/4	13 3/4	4	9,819,200
Pathe	5	10 1/4	5 1/4	3,071,250
Radio 1st pfd.	46	66 7/8	20 7/8	19,124,626
RKO	4	2 3/4	1 3/4	\$2,571,950
20th-Fox	19 7/8	26 1/4	6 1/2	11,105,250
Universal pfd.	29	68	39	702,000
Warner Bros.	6	6 1/4	1/4	925,250
Total appreciation				\$116,424,436

* Loss. † Depreciation.

‡ Final quotation in 1938 (Dec. 30)

Variety's Mail Clerk

(Continued from page 29)

tinental touch to VARIETY's Mail Department.

Marcelline Loring was once glorified by Ziegfeld, which should be sufficient recommendation of her exterior qualities. However, the passing of time has not been too kind and Marcelline has not emerged into the full maturity of glorious womanhood with the fair, slender, delicate stateliness one would be led to expect. A faded figure, with an air of hopelessness, she occasionally drops in to pass the time, for she has never received any mail. The cost of serious illness of long duration has reduced her financially and pulchritudinally. However, she lives carefully, perhaps meagerly, and so ekes out her existence.

The No-Mail Caller

Which brings to mind Martha Bryson, who is a psychological study if ever there was one. A mature woman whose beruffled skirts sweep the floor, she unfailingly visits us every day. She has never received any sort of a communication, but always leaves specific and definite instructions to be sure and hold all her mail; not to return it to the post office no matter how long she may be delayed in making an appearance. Her costumes alone usually attract some attention, but her very persistence about her non-existent mail leave one with a feeling of pity rather than annoyance.

To get accustomed to Paul Maronev's funeral attire and approach takes some little time. Other than mentioning his surname, the man has never uttered one word, although he has been coming in for years. Perhaps he cannot speak English, as his name does indicate foreign extraction. His mail is always from the same person, somewhere in the middle west, and written on the same gray notepaper. Furthermore, the speed with which he comes in and goes out seems to just complete his general make-up.

It takes all sorts of people to constitute a world and so we come to Stephen Forrest, a very effete young man whose long blonde bob and sweepingly lashed blue eyes must be the envy of every female. Whatever his peculiarities, his graceful and charming manner has forced us

to regard him with indulgence rather than humor. Every few weeks he shows up for his check from home, which he dramatically clasps to his chest and confidentially whispers, "The Saviour has come once again." Oh well!

While we apparently cater only to members of the amusement world, those not directly of it, but by perpetual contact, really become part thereof.

Hoofers, On and Off

These are, therefore, included en masse in this general resume. The Gaines Brothers (nee Ginsberg), professional dance team, are no longer a team, or, in the accepted sense, professional dancers. Unless one considers that Johnny Gaines, the younger one, keeps in practice by constantly executing intricate and perhaps difficult routines in the mirrored reflection of VARIETY's window; and that Martin, the elder, feels it is time for him to retire, and so is trying to become another agent, with offices in front of the Palace Theatre building. Their short, lithe figures belie the years which close scrutiny shows they must have attained. Martin always manages to make his presence known by taking a flying leap from the front door to our railing, which he has to cling to very tightly in order to prevent himself from catapulting on the head of the receptionist (that's us) who sits beyond. The Gaines Bros. must be on every advertising mailing list in town, as evidenced by their mail.

Joe Dolan is a press agent for legit road shows. We see him rarely, but when he does come in, his fiery, incessant line of chatter imparts a stimulating effervescence. He has a friendly greeting for anyone and everyone he meets, and only his white hair testifies to his 30-odd years of heraldry all over the United States.

Jean Duke is our office boys' delight. Young, well-formed and extremely pretty, no matter the deliberate and perpetrated distractions offered, she always focuses her gaze on our letter-boxes throughout her daily, but, oh, too short, stay. To date, every effort on the part of our younger masculine contingent to disrupt her calm has met with no success.

Many, many more personalities could be elaborated on, but we now call a halt after enumerating the vagaries of those that are representatively outstanding.

L'VILLE SIGHTS SOCKO GROSSES

Louisville, Jan. 1.

After a running start over the holidays downtown houses are romping along to take some sweet profit. With another week-end holiday setup and first-class films, plus the usual mid-night shows New Year's eve, everybody is sitting hunky-dory and well pleased with returns.

B.o. leader looks to be 'Sweethearts' on a single at Loew's State. Combo of Eddy-McDonald spelling fine returns.

Ten-day showing of 'Cloistered' opened at Columbia Auditorium (31). Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates Brown (Loew's-Fourth Avenue)—'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G), after week at Loew's State. Last week 'Thanks for Everything' (20th) and 'Secrets of Nurse' (U) scraped bottom at \$1,200.

Kentucky (Switow) (900; 15-25)—'Can't Take It' (Col). Deemed strong enough to hold up as single. Last week, 'Arkansas Traveler' (Par) and 'Straight, Place' (20th), nice \$1,500.

Loew's State (Loew's) (3,100; 15-30-40)—'Sweethearts' (M-G) Last week, 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) nice \$7,500, and moveover.

Mary Anderson (Libson) (1,000; 15-30-40)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB). Last week, 'Hard to Get' (WB) fair \$3,300.

Ohio (Settos) (900; 15)—'Numbered Woman' (Mono) and 'Dr. Rhythm' (Par), split with 'Join Marines' (Rep) and 'Fools for Scandal' (WB). Last week, 'Penitentiary' (Col) and 'Tom Sawyer' (UA) split with 'Dangerous to Know' (Par) and 'Midsummer Night's Dream' (WB) slight \$900.

Rialto (Fourth Avenue) (3,000; 15-30-40)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Last Warning' (U). Last week 'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Down on Farm' (20th), proved terrific for nine-day stanza, and wound up with a near record-breaker \$13,000, way beyond expectations.

Strand (Fourth Avenue) (1,400; 15-30-40)—'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Down on Farm' (20th), moved over here after stupendous week at Rialto. Last week 'Up River' (20th) and 'Sharpshooters' (20th), so-so \$1,800.

Omaha Ogling First Flesh in Months, And 'French'; 5 Pix, 35c

Omaha, Jan. 1.

Aided by the double holiday, grosses skyrocketed here this week. Away out in front was Orpheum's stage and screen fare, first flesh here in three months. Dixie Dunbar and Armida headed the bill. Orpheum got \$1 straight for midnight eve show, while the Omaha and Brandeis got 55 cents. Suburbans went to quantity, giving five features for 35 cents.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates Avenue - Dundee - Military (Goldberg) (950-810-650; 10-25-30-35)—'Suez' (20th) and 'Brother Rat' (WB), dual, split with 'Keep Smiling' (20th), 'Tarnished Angel' (RKO) and 'Mr. Wong' (Mon.), tripler. 'Down Arkansas' (Rep) and 'Ghost Creeps' (WB), dual, added to tripler for New Year's show. Very good showing. Last week 'Stablemates' (M-G) and 'Certain Age' (U), dual, split with 'Miss Manton' (RKO), 'Garden Moon' (WB) and 'Racket Busters' (WB), tripler, \$3,000, socko.

Brandeis (Singer-RKO) (1,250; 10-25-35-40-55)—'Going Places' (WB) and 'Storm' (U). Looking excellent. Last week 'Woman Again' (Col) and 'Peck's Boy' (RKO), \$5,500, nice.

Omaha (Blank) (2,200; 10-25-40-55)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'King Alcatraz' (Par) with 'Sweethearts' (M-G) on midnight show, swell. Last week 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Touchdown Army' (Par), \$8,000, good.

Orpheum (Blank) (3,000; 15-35-55-1)—'Say French' (Par) and stage show headed by Dixie Dunbar and Armida. 'Kentucky' (20th) and stage show on New Year's eve, socko. Last week 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Service De Luxe' (U), \$10,000, dandy.

Town (Goldberg) (1,250; 10-20-25-35)—'Boo!oo' (Par), 'Rhythm in Saddle' (Rep) and 'Mr. Wong' (Mon.), first-run tripler, split with 'West of Santa Fe' (Col), first run, 'Suez' (20th) and 'Miss Manton' (RKO), tripler. New Year's eve show added 'Shadows Over Shanghai' (GN) and 'Mr. Wong' (Mon), dual, to tripler. Last week, 'Old Mexico' (Par), 'Prison Farm' (Par) and 'Night Hawk' (Rep), first-run tripler, split with 'Time Out Murder' (20th), first-run, 'Black Bandit' (U), first-run, and 'Certain Age' (U), tripler, \$2,100, very good.

KANSAS CITY

(Continued from page 12)

previous week's 55c. Going okay. Last week 'Hard to Get' (WB) and vaude headed by Ben Blue, \$8,000 at 55c scale, a bit off at this figure.

Orpheum (RKO) (1,500; 10-25-40)—'That Woman Again' (Col). Opened Saturday (31). Columbia film in this house adds to the picture scramble locally, as an innovation here. Last week 'Heart of North' (WB) okay at \$5,000.

Tower (Fox Midwest) (2,050; 10-25-40)—'Storm Over Bengal' (Rep), with Frankie Masters band and Joy Hodges on stage. Started good. Last week 'While New York Sleeps' (20th), with Gene Krupa and band on stage. Jitterbugs supported show strongly and week came in at \$12,000, only spot to hold expectations.

INDPLS. LOOKS FOR FAIR B. O.

Indianapolis, Jan. 1.

'Sweethearts' at Loew's is showing the way to all other first run houses as the new calendars go up on the wall. Looks out in front with a strong start, while 'Artists and Models Abroad' at the Indiana and a combination of Major Bowes Swing School plus 'While New York Sleeps' at the Lyric occupy runner-up positions in that order. The two other first-run houses, Circle and Apollo, are playing holdover sessions of 'Dawn Patrol' and 'Kentucky,' respectively.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates Apollo (Katz-Dolle) (1,100; 25-30-40)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Next Time Marry' (RKO). Moved over from the Circle for a second stanza. Last week, 'Slave Ship' (20th), revival, dismal \$1,200.

Circle (Katz-Dolle) (2,600; 25-30-40)—'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Down on Farm' (20th). Shifted over from the Indiana for a holdover sesh. Last week, 'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Next Time Marry' (RKO), okay \$6,300.

Indiana (Katz-Dolle) (3,100; 25-30-40)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Last Warning' (U). Last week, 'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Down on Farm' (20th), robust \$8,000.

Loew's (Loew's) (2,400; 25-30-40)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Last week, 'Dr. Kildare' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G), \$4,500, modest.

Lyric (Olson) (1,900; 25-30-40)—'While New York Sleeps' (20th) and Major Bowes Swing School unit on stage. Latter given all the billing. Last week, 'Heart of North' (WB) and Lola Lane on stage, \$8,000, lightweight.

Rose's Financing Deals

London, Jan. 1.

David Rose, new head of Paramount's operating company in Great Britain, is reported as being constantly in touch with city financiers, seeking a bankroll for Par production here.

Idea as outlined thus far would be for Paramount to undertake super-features here suitable for world distribution.

'Sweethearts,' 'Ky,' 'Patrol' Beaucoup Hefty in Seattle

Seattle, Jan. 1.

Bang-up shows at most spots, with timely Saturday openings for such big ones as 'Kentucky,' 'Dawn Patrol,' and 'Sweethearts.' Holiday biz bringing nice gravy this week.

Midnight shows at all first runs and many of the subsequents after generally disappointing Christmas week. Prices for the midnight shows upped. Sterling chain (John Danz) has vaude at Colonial, Palomar, Winter Garden, Florence and State, with slightly upped admish.

Current Pix; Last Week's Estimates Blue Mouse (Hamrick-Evergreen) (850; 32-37-42)—'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Man Remember' (RKO). Former film moved here from Fifth. Last week, 'Flirting with Fate' (M-G) and 'Up River' (20th) excellent \$3,000.

Coliseum (Hamrick-Evergreen) (1,900; 21-32)—'Men Wings' (Par) and 'Time Out for Murder' (20th). Last week, 'Hot to Handle' (M-G) and 'Mr. Moto' (20th), \$3,700, good, eight days.

Colonial (Sterling) (800; 10-21)—'Frontiersman' (Par) and 'I Am Criminal' (Mono), dual, split with 'Lost Express' (U) and final installment, 'Tracy Returns' (Rep), dual. Last week, 'Public Cowboy No. 1' (Rep) and 'Speed to Burn' (20th), dual, split with 'Born to West' (Par) and 'Tracy Returns' (Rep), dual, good \$2,000.

Fifth Avenue (Hamrick-Evergreen) (2,349; 32-37-42)—'Sweethearts' (M-G). Opened New Year's eve with plenty of bally. Last week, 'West with Hardys' (M-G) and 'Christmas Carol' (M-G) (2d week), \$5,000, slow.

Liberty (J-VH) (1,800; 21-32-42)—'Goes My Heart' (UA) and 'Crime Takes Holiday' (Col) (2d week). Last week, socko \$5,800.

Music Box (Hamrick-Evergreen) (850; 32-37-42)—'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Down on Farm' (20th). Moved over from Paramount. Last week, 'Cowboy and Lady' (UA) and 'Torchy Man' (WB) (3d week), \$2,000, mild.

Orpheum (Hamrick-Evergreen) (2,600; 32-37-42)—'Dawn Patrol' (WB) and 'Thanks for Memory' (Par). Getting a big advertising barrage. Last week, 'Heart of North' (WB) and 'Peck's Bad Boy' (RKO), \$4,900, fair, eight days.

Palomar (Sterling) (1,350; 16-27-37-42)—'Exposed' (U), renamed locally 'Candid Camera Girls,' and 'Tans of Deep' (GN) plus vaude. Last week, 'Sons of Legion' (Par) and vaude, five days, plus 'Toy Town Jamboree' headlined, split with 'Annabelle' (RKO), 'Jamboree' and extra acts, \$5,200, big.

Paramount Hamrick-Evergreen (3,139; 32-37-42)—'Kentucky' (20th) and 'Spring Madness' (M-G). Last week, 'Artists and Models' (Par) and 'Down on Farm' (20th), \$5,500, good.

Roosevelt (Sterling) (800; 21-32)—'Arkansas Traveler' (Par) and 'Miss Manton' (RKO). Last week, 'Room Service' (RKO), and 'Campus Confession' (Par), \$2,200, okay.

The Grosses

(Continued from page 29)

film in August and September, when boxoffices instantly responded, would seem to bear out this underlying reason for the drop to 12-15% in grosses during the late spring and early summer.

Optimism concerning 1939 contrasts with the pessimism which was general when 1938 was born, for various reasons. Among these is the belief that better product will be provided. Less uncertainty over conditions generally is also expected to prevail and may encourage more spending than has been noted during 1938. While it has not been dissipated, though less a discouraging factor at the moment, the intensity of the war scare and upset foreign conditions, are likewise blamed for business anemia during 1938.

The year just ended also included elections which always create adverse reaction at the boxoffice as well as business or public uncertainty. There were elections in 47 states to choose 35 senators and 32 governors. In some territories the heat of the campaigns tended to keep a lot of people away from the theatres, a large majority clinging to radios to follow developments.

The September hurricane, as well, affected business in many eastern and New England states. Losses sustained at the boxoffice and through suspended operation or damages inflicted were great. Paramount and the Prudential Playhouse circuit, latter an independent on Long Island, were the hardest hit. Many theatres were shut down for a week or more.

Because of the adverse conditions that have prevailed during the past year, most operators have brought costs down so that even if in 1939 the attendance does not come back to the high point at which it stood previously, the percentage of comparison in profits will be more favorable. Economy has become generally advisable but in some of the more hard-hit territories it has been intensely essential to cut operating overhead in view of bad conditions, notably in the Michigan, Chicago and northwestern zones.

While the year ahead may not be a banner one there is every reason to expect that it will surpass the showing made in 1938 by a marked margin if the quality of picture product does not fall far below normal and war does not develop.

New York Theatres

The United Artists RIVOLI THEATRE

Charles LAUGHTON in "The BEACHCOMBER"

A PARAMOUNT PICTURE with Elsa Lanchester

Story by SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Doors open 9:30 A.M. - BROADWAY at 49th Street

7th Av. & 50th St.

ROXY

ALL SEATS 25c TO \$1.00

HELD OVER

'Kentucky'

—On the Stage—
New Stage Show

RADIO CITY

MUSIC HALL

"TOPPER"

TAKES A TRIP

Spectacular Stage Productions

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Loew's STATE

TODAY ONLY

"OUT WEST"

with the

HARDYS

and

VAUDEVILLE

Starts Thursday

"THE YOUNG"

"HEART"

In Person

PAUL

WHITEMAN

and his

RHYTHM

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B'WAY'S BIGGEST HOLIDAY SHOW!

DAWN PATROL

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ABE LYMAN

25c To \$1.00

STRAND

B'way and 47th St.

in M-G-M's TECHNICOLOR MUSICAL

Jeanette MacDonald - Nelson Eddy

'SWEETHEARTS'

in Victor's

Astor

25c to 1 p. m. at all times; midnight show every night

Continuous Performances, Popular Prices

LESLIE HOWARD in Bernard Shaw's

PYGMALION

As M-G-M Hit

The only theatre in Belle, Mo., will be remodeled at an expenditure of \$5,000. Arnold Boschen, architect. Hannibal, Mo., will let bids on Jan. 5.



A word to the **EYES** is sufficient

● When you flash a Pre-vue trailer on your screen you are capturing the immediate attention of every eye in your theatre . . . telling your sales story to a hundred percent audience . . . and at the lowest cost per reader of any medium of advertising this business affords . . .

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ATLANTA 147-73 Walton St., N.W.	DENVER 2144 Champa St.	MINNEAPOLIS 1105 Currie Ave.
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CHICAGO 1307 So. Wabash Ave.	KANSAS CITY 1706 Wyandotte St.	PHILADELPHIA 1201-07 Vine St.
CINCINNATI 119 West Central Pkway.	LOS ANGELES 2018 So. Vermont Ave.	SAN FRANCISCO 168 Golden Gate Ave.
CLEVELAND 2336 Payne Ave.	MEMPHIS 500 So. 2nd St.	ST. LOUIS 3318 Olive St.
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**COLUMBIA'S LAUGH HIT
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MELVYN DOUGLAS ★ VIRGINIA BRUCE

**THERE'S
THAT WOMAN
AGAIN**

MARGARET LINDSAY ★ STANLEY RIDGES

Directed by Alexander Hall

A COLUMBIA PICTURE

**OPENING RADIO CITY
MUSIC HALL...JAN. 5th**

H'wood's 3d of a Century

(Continued from page 29)

experimented with Los Angeles, established a studio at Edendale, taking over an old frame house with a picket fence enclosing the property. Edendale is located above the present site of Angelus Temple (Aimee MacPherson's worship house) and an area where Mack Sennett, Marshall Neilan and Thomas H. Ince, and later Kalem, had studios.

Bosworth First Coaster

One of the first stars of the silent days to originate on the Coast was Hobart Bosworth. He had been doing stock work in San Francisco, came south for his health when he got the offer for a picture job from Joseph P. McGee of Selig Polyscope. Bosworth, like all legit actors, expressed horror and insult at first. McGee sold him when he offered \$125 for two days' work. The picture was 'In the Power of the Sultan,' with Bosworth playing the male lead. The picture was taken in back of a Chinese laundry where a sheet was borrowed for a robe and a bath towel for a turban. Bosworth liked the work and the next year was an actor, writer and director, buying stories from a young girl named Gladys Smith, who afterward became Mary Pickford, the actress. Statement of purchase of these stories from Gladys Smith was recently made by Bosworth over the radio show, 'I Was There.'

Other statistical figures show that Miss Pickford was brought west by D. W. Griffith in the fall of 1909 with a Biograph unit which included Owen Moore and Henry B. Walthall, Marion Leonard, Florence Barker, Dorothy West, Kate Bruce, George Nichols, Billy Quirk, Frank Grandon, Charles West, Mack Sennett, Dell Henderson, Arthur Johnson, Daddy Butler, Christie Miller, Tony O'Sullivan, Alfred Paget and Jack Pickford. At the cameras were Billy Bitzer and Arthur Marvin. Bobby Harron, later a Griffith star, was prop boy.

Griffith rented a three-acre lot at Georgia and 12th streets in downtown Los Angeles for outdoor stages, located next to a lumber yard and had high board fence to keep curiosity seekers out. A rough wooden stage was erected 50-foot square. There were two small dressing rooms for men and women to use in relays.

Griffith's First Bio

The first migration into Hollywood was made by Griffith to Paul DeLongpre's Garden off Hollywood and Cahuenga, where 'In Old California,' the first Bio picture on the Coast, was made. Griffith confined himself practically to exteriors, developing his own negatives, cutting the pictures and tiling them here and then shipped the complete picture east.

That winter the Griffith unit wandered all over southern California, using locations at Pasadena, San Gabriel Mission, San Juan Capistrano mission, Camulos and Santa Monica. Camulos was the background for the first version of 'Ramona,' which was made in one reel. In the 1909-1910 season Alice Joyce and Carlyle Blackwell were spending their winter around Los Angeles working for Kalem.

When Griffith returned to California in November, 1910, with his Biograph troupe he brought William Beaudine along as a prop boy. Latter now is a director. Blanche Sweet also came along. She got \$40 a week. Wilfred Lucas was another member of the caravan. Mary Pickford and Owen Moore were not along, they had joined IMP. Marion Leonard had gone to Reliance, S. E. V. Taylor, Walthall, James Kirkwood and Arthur Johnson were with the same company.

The new troupers that Griffith brought out were Claire McDowell, Stephanie Longfellow, Florence La Badie, Mabel Normand, Vivian Prescott, Frank Powell, Edwin August, Charles Craig, Joe Graybill, Donald Crisp, Eddie and Jack Dillon and Jeanie MacPherson.

Having had his production experiences the previous year, Griffith had another studio built before his arrival on a 2 1/4-acre tract next to the car barns at Georgia and Gerard streets. This had open stages only and a one-story building for offices, dressing rooms and projection room. First picture made that trip was 'Enoch Arden.' Production work was at Santa Monica, and it was the first two-reeler that Griffith had made.

Eatery Doubles As Prop

For dramatic subjects the Biograph crowd were using the roof of the old Hoffman restaurant on

Spring street as a studio. They would put up two six-foot flats as background, and to keep the sun glare off would cover the flat tops with sheets and tablecloths borrowed from the restaurant. Props were also purloined from the eatery, such as tables, chairs, etc. When a change of set was needed they were switched about or others obtained downstairs, the set was dressed and work resumed. It took about two days to shoot a pic here. There was no rent for studio or props. Actors just ate lunch at the place.

Finally in September, 1910, Hollywood came to life as a studio center. David Horsley, president of Nestor, with Al Christie as his director, came here from Staten Island, where Nestor had been turning out its product, and leased an old roadhouse running from El Centro to Gower on Sunset boulevard as their first studio. Harry Revier used part of the space as a film developing laboratory.

The roadhouse was used for office and dressing room space, with Revier utilizing the horse watering troughs for his developing work. The first stage erected was a wooden platform 20x40 feet. 'Her Indian Hero,' with Dorothy Davenport in the lead, was the first picture made here by Nestor. Also in the cast were Victoria Ford (later Mrs. Tom Mix) and Jack Conway, now ace Metro director.

Within three months after Nestor had planted itself in Hollywood, 15 different companies decided to settle in this area seven miles east of downtown Los Angeles and the Alexandria hotel where they domiciled and fraternized from their advent into the town.

Refugees From 'The Trust'

Most of these companies were independents, who were chased out of the east by the spies and strongarm men of the ill-fated Motion Picture Patents company. For some time these companies had armed guards both around studio and outdoor locations to prevent smashing of their cameras and equipment by the alert strongarmed huskies of the 'trust,' as the Patents company was called at that time.

Around this time Pat Power encountered similar trouble at Fort Lee, N. J., as did Anderson in Chicago. He was making westerns there and in one picture Indians were shown in sweaters and over the top of the set was visible trolley poles which caused audiences even in those days to beef. Powers emigrated to the land of real Indians and no trolley poles. In those days audiences would watch characters and tried to get lip reading of speeches players were making and generally overlooked detail and background.

American Film Manufacturing Co. was organized in 1910 by S. S. Hutchinson, who raided the talent and staff of the Essanay Coast studios in an effective manner. It was one of the first indie companies on the Coast and established its studio and headquarters at Santa Barbara under the Flying 'A' banner.

Tom Ince, in January, 1911, was taken away as a director from Laemmle's Imp company by Kessel & Bauman at \$125 to produce and direct for NYMPC. Ince came to Los Angeles with a troupe and set up a studio in Edendale. 'The New Cook,' a one-reeler, was his first picture.

Ince spotted the Miller Bros. 101 Ranch show in winter quarters on the Pacific Palisades above Santa Monica, and had Kessel & Bauman tie up the circus for picture use during the winter at the rate of \$2,500 per week. This established the 101 Ranch trademark in those days. First picture was a two-reeler, 'Across the Plains.' Then followed a long series of Kay Kee 101 westerns that made the series popular with theatre patrons and exhibitors of those days.

Wall St. Comes In

Formation of Mutual Film Co., as distributing agency for indies early in 1912 by H. E. Aitkins and John R. Freuler saw the first sizeable chunk of Wall Street and public money into the picture business.

In the winter of 1911, Mack Sennett, who had been acting and directing for Biograph, persuaded Kessel & Bauman to hire him as a director-producer of comedies, and Keystone was launched with a small studio having one stage in the Edendale sector. Mabel Normand and Alan Fralick were featured in 500-foot subjects at the start, but Sennett soon had his cops hopping all over

Funereal Bally

Los Angeles, Jan. 1. Ghost walked in this town in spite of the holiday letdown. Fox-West Coast ushers, wrapped in white sheets, carried empty coffins about the streets to plug midnight spook shows. Circuit plans to continue the spooky stuff.

the landscape, and two years later the Keystone Cops were favorites with the public.

In November of 1911, Vitagraph's western company was established temporarily at Santa Monica, but a few months later the company bought a 29-acre plot in east Hollywood at Prospect and Talmadge, to build a studio which is still standing and used occasionally by Warners' who acquired the plant in purchase of Vitagraph about 10 years ago.

Early in 1912 Carl Laemmle bought the Imp Co., which had been producing for several months at Boyle Heights location, and acquired the Nestor site at Sunset and Gower. He also bought that corner property for the Universal coast studios.

In the same year, Jimmy Youngdeer had a profitable production unit at Edendale turning out one and two-reel westerns for Pathe. Youngdeer would shoot necessary amount of film, put the developed negative in a box with a couple of stills, and ship east for Pathe representatives to cut into releasing shape.

Start of Colossals

In fall of 1912, D. W. Griffith arrived in Los Angeles for what proved a permanent stay. He headed a Biograph troupe, and immediately started production of 'Judith of Bethulia,' multiple-reeler which was finally completed for the astounding figure in those days of \$35,000. Picture was in five reels and grossed nearly \$200,000 in the United States alone, still getting revenue for Bio as late as 1916. Lionel Barrymore joined Biograph as a featured player in 1912.

In the same year, Laemmle established a second studio at Edendale to take care of expanding production activities of Universal. Lubin, which had confined production to Philadelphia area up to this time, finally sent a company west in 1913. Headquarters were established on Pasadena avenue, on present site of Sycamore Grove. Unit made three split reels weekly, featuring Dolly Larkin and Freddie Fralick. Production consumed three days, or less a week, with cast and crew off for balance of the week.

General procedure in those days was for director, cameraman and two principal actors starting out to seek locations. When right spot was obtained studio was advised to send out prop man. After location was set, call would be put in for extras or supporting players, and many nearby barbers and tailors would close up shop to secure a \$5 check for few hours' work.

Whoop Up 'Squaw Man'

First feature unit to invade Hollywood was the Lasky-DeMille-Goldfish troupe, which came west with a short bankroll, even for those days, to ambitiously make 'The Squaw Man' with Dustin Farnum starred. Trio had originally figured to produce in Flagstaff, Ariz., but on arrival in that town found bad weather and came on to Hollywood. Robert Brunton interested the newcomers in leasing a barn on Vine street, which became the center of Lasky production for many years.

D. W. Griffith jumped from Biograph to Mutual late in 1913, and after working in Union Square studios of Reliance, came back to the Coast and established headquarters in the plant which later became famous as Fine Arts.

Immediately on his arrival in Hollywood, Griffith started preparations for the most ambitious picture planned up to that time, 'Birth of a Nation.' Turning out one and two reels to supply the Mutual program, 'Birth' got under way and provided introduction to pictures of many players and directors who later became big names in the business. Cast of 'Birth' included Henry B. Walthall, Mae Marsh, Elmer Clifton, Robert Harron, Lillian Gish, Joseph Henabery, Sam De Grasse, Donald Crisp and Jennie Lee.

Adam Kessel, of KB, backer of Keystone, hired Charlie Chaplin Jan. 2, 1914, at \$150 a week. Chaplin's first picture was a one-reeler with Mabel Normand, 'Mabel's Predicament.' His first two-reeler was 'Dough and Dynamite.' Carl Laemmle was sold the idea of

a huge picture plant, and in 1914 bought 230 acres in San Fernando valley for \$165,000, site of present Universal City. Studio was opened March 15, 1915, with special trainload of U officials and celebs coming from New York. Main stage, 450 feet long, accommodated two dozen companies at one time, and to cash in on publicity value of tourists, overhead runway was constructed so sightseers could look over the picture-making below.

First Six-Reel Comedy

In 1914, growing success of five-reel features in the theatres indicated the demise of one and two-reel dramas. In April of that year, Mack Sennett made 'Tillie's Punctured Romance,' first six-reel comedy, with Marie Dressler, Mabel Normand and Chaplin. Picture took 14 weeks to make.

Phenomenal success of Chaplin under the Keystone banner resulted in G. M. Anderson signing the comedian for the year of 1915 for astounding figure of \$1,250 a week. Year later, Chaplin was back under the Mutual banner for a \$570,000 fee for 12 months, and after that contract he signed with First National to deliver 12 two-reelers for \$1,000,000. Before he finished switching to five-reelers during this contract, deal cost First National several million dollars, but agreement was particularly profitable to the distributing company.

First serial made was 'Adventures of Kathlyn,' which Selig turned out for release starting in January, 1914. Universal quickly followed with 'Lucille Love,' starring Grace Cunard and Francis Ford. Then Pathe got into the serial market with the very profitable 'Perils of Pauline,' following with 'Exploits of Elaine.'

Late 1914 saw influx of new organizations to produce five-reel features exclusively, and by the end of the following year one and two-reel dramas were passe and shunned by theatres and audiences.

Among the five-reel companies launched about this time were Bosworth, Moresco, Pallas, William Fox, American, Balboa and World Film. Famous Players and Lasky were gathering momentum, while many of the old companies, which had been turning out the short reels, jumped to feature-length product.

First feature carrying the Fox trademark, released through Fox Office Attractions Co., was a five-reeler made by the Horkheimer Bros., 'Will of the Wisp,' featuring Jackie Saunders. Horkheimers operated Balboa studios in Long Beach for number of years, releasing most of their later product through Pathe.

Aitken Launches Triangle

Organization of Triangle by Harry Aitken in 1915 was of major importance to progress of the industry at that time. He coined the name from three producers tied up to deliver product to the organization, D. W. Griffith, Thomas H. Ince and Mack Sennett. Program called for Griffith and Ince each to deliver one feature weekly, with Sennett turning out two Keystone Comedies a week for the program. Triangle booked one feature and a comedy in a block as a complete program to theatres, and backed up by heavy advertising campaign in national publications. Triangle got off to a bang-up start. Dissension finally hit the ranks of the company within a few years, and when Griffith, Ince and Sennett withdrew with their stars and personalities, Paramount stepped in to get the bulk of the best boxoffice talent.

Decline of Triangle, with resultant reorganization which installed strict economy supervision over production, provided opportunity for Paramount and First National to make phenomenal progress.

In 1916 Griffith made 'Intolerance' for a reported cost of \$1,500,000, but the picture failed to duplicate success of 'Birth' and Griffith put much of his profit of the previous spectacle back to make up losses on 'Intolerance.' Ince was ambitious at that time and turned out 'Civilization,' a costly spectacle, which also failed to click but turned in a slight profit to the producer.

From 1916 to 1921 were the golden days. Producers and companies sprung up overnight in Hollywood and the east, and financing was plentiful. Pictures generally were making money and in many instances were turning back huge profits on nominal production costs of the day.

Metro, which had been mainly a releasing organization, opened its own studios in Hollywood around 1919, and Warners trekked west about 1922 to acquire acreage on site of what later became that company's Sunset Boulevard studio.

Increase of theatre circuits in the 20s resulted in tightening up of pro-

duction and elimination of several distributing organizations that had been handling product of independent producers. Swing was to centralization of both production and exhibition, and numerous companies were caught in the shuffle.

Several independent producers foresaw what was coming and tied up with major studios in extensive capacities. Louis B. Mayer, who had been producing three groups of features for Metro and First National release, was injected into the Metro-Goldwyn merger as head of production, with Irving Thalberg going along as his associate in the deal.

Schulberg Heads Paramount

Paramount studio organization was re-shuffled for infusion of new blood and Ben Schulberg moved in to take charge. Top directors with boxoffice names of those days caught lucrative contracts with the majors and passed up overtures to start their own individual producing units to release through a combined outlet like United Artists. Associate producers' failure to get over washed most of them up from cooperative companies.

Period might be termed leveling process and stabilization period of the industry. Studios, which heretofore had been ramshackle affairs thrown up with no idea of permanency, were being enlarged with well-constructed stages and buildings of steel and concrete which indicated that leaders of the industry finally realized picture making was here to stay.

Guilds Start Stirring

In 1926 and 1927, indications pointed to lessening of audience interest in pictures, and the heavily capitalized companies inaugurated retrenchment in production. Attempt to make horizontal cut of 10% in all studio salaries at this time, instead of gaining its objective, upset Hollywood and resulted in losses of considerable amounts through arguments, meetings, etc. This idea on the part of heads of companies backfired to cause trouble during the past decade, as talent groups were launched for protection against other campaigns of like nature, and preliminary groundwork for the Guilds was laid in these years.

Sound was launched by Warners without fanfare in 1927, and new innovation caught heads of other companies asleep. Studio execs were not interested when 'Don Juan' was shown in the summer of 1926 with a musical score sound track accomplishment. Even the Vitaphone shorts on the same bill were tossed off as novelties that would not get any further than the Edison film-disc apparatus of 20 years before.

But when 'Jazz Singer' hit the theatres in 1927, with part dialog and singing, attitude of competing companies changed. Rush was on for tieups with the electricians to immediately install sound recording equipment in the studios, but it took nearly a year before all major studios were sufficiently equipped to turn out majority of their pictures with full sound and dialog. In the meantime Warners introduced the first all-talker, 'Lights of New York,' in July 1928 to revolutionize film production and its technique.

The Promised Land

Sound in pictures gave new life and vitality to production. Any player, director or other person having had stage experience was signed to a juicy contract and bundled off to Hollywood. Songwriters came in droves to write tunes for musicals, and Hollywood was the promised land.

Hollywood was a financial paradise until 1933, when came the depression. But Hollywood refused to admit a depression was on. Salaries of talent and executives kept mounting while negative costs hit new highs. While companies were getting bankruptcy cleaning and re-blocking, salaries skyrocketed. And despite continual statements of company heads that costs must be trimmed, the Hollywood merry-go-round still spins.

And from being a camping ground over the winter for picture companies in 1909, Hollywood has become an industrial center employing around 40,000 people who drew \$91,000,000 from its cinema payroll where \$165,000,000 was spent on the 1937-38 product.

Clap Hands for Ellen

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Ellen Drew gets the femme lead opposite George Raft in 'The World's Applause,' due to roll Jan. 16 at Paramount.

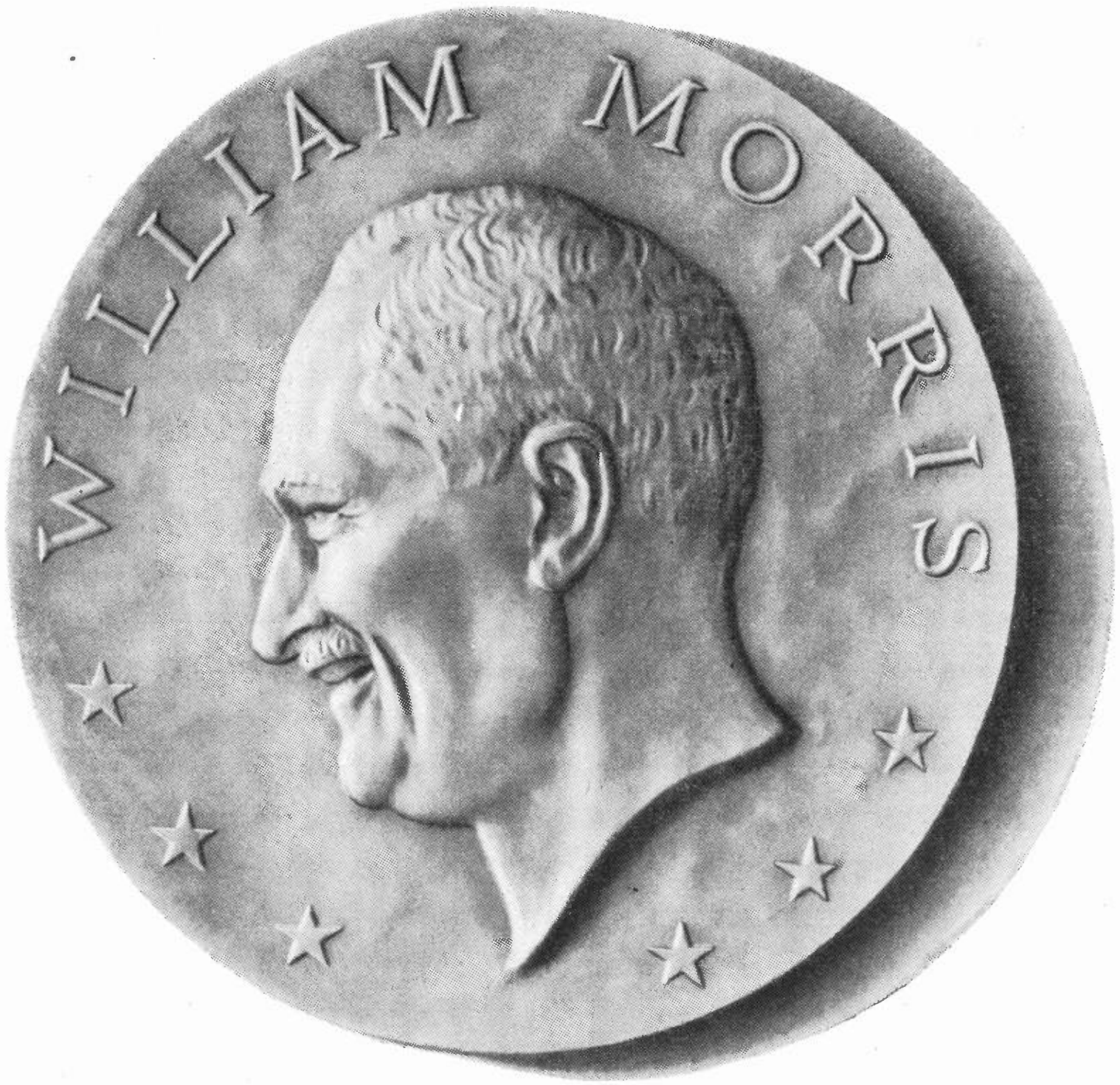
Harlan Thompson produces from script by Gilbert Gabriel and Walter Ferris.



“

F

orty years is a long time in show business. Its structures are traditionally transitory. Therefore it is extraordinary—probably unique—that this institution founded by William Morris should have so long endured, grown and expanded. The more so since it has been a creation founded on spirit, courage, imagination, enterprise and fidelity rather than steel, brick and mortar. William Morris had little love for tangible temples; the cathedrals of his building rested firmly on human elements and were cemented solidly with service, sincerity, independence and integrity. ¶ Despite aggressive assaults of powerful enemies, despite dazzling offers to buy him into submission, the W intertwined with the M, his trade-mark, has never come down. And today, in the second generation which he nurtured, imbued and trained, it still stands, firmly riveted to the steel and stone of other men—still his symbol of service, sincerity, independence, integrity. ¶ A far-flung organization has grown from that hole-in-the-wall of 1898 on Union Square. Not only through its bristling past but through its living present, the name of William Morris is eternally integrated in the history of amusements in America and the world. But, except for size, there has been little change; expansion and growth have only served to emphasize the original principles and policies of the founder. ¶ Innumerable careers have been the fruit. Stars have been born and raised to higher glories. Talent has been sought out, encouraged, developed, perfected. New names, new faces, new methods have been added to art and the joy of living. ¶ Such building was the life-work of William Morris; and such is the heritage of those younger disciples of his creed who took over and who now carry on. ¶ There are no more enemies. The fights have been won. The principles have been established and accepted. The soldier has gone to his rest. ¶ But the inspiration of his precepts lives on. ¶ Forty years. Forty years of work and accomplishment. Forty years of striving and attaining. Forty years of building on a foundation no more substantial than one man's big heart, with materials no more solid than one man's character—William Morris' monument!”



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December 3rd, 1938

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In these thirty-three years you have taken the initiative in all of this constantly moving, changing panorama of the theatre. In most cases you have anticipated and sensed in advance the various cycles of progress and you have been a dynamic force and constructive factor.

It is with extreme pleasure that we salute and congratulate your Third of a Century service to the amusement world.

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W. S. BUTTERFIELD THEATRES, INC.

E.C. Beatty
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Chicago, Illinois

An open letter
to

VARIETY

Dec. 28, 1938.

Dear VARIETY:

When anyone sticks it out in this business world for 33 years—they certainly deserve a pat on the back.

Congratulations, VARIETY . . . and here's hoping you will enjoy an even greater future.

This year, FILMACK, is celebrating its 20th anniversary. And since you asked, I'll tell you how FILMACK was born.

It was back in 1919. I was a Press Agent for Universal at that time. The most disgusting thing in show business was the special trailer situation.

Honestly, it took a Month of Sundays to get a little 50-foot trailer made. I became so disgusted with special trailer service, I decided to do something about it.

One day I just tossed a perfectly good Press Agent job out the window and opened a trailer company dedicated to the hustling showmen of America. I guaranteed 'em "Same-day Service" and immediately they began sending me some orders.

It has been a long, hard battle . . . but FILMACK is still tossing the trailers back the same day the order rolls in.

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VARIETY, as you go about the country, from coast-to-coast, visiting with America's finest showmen, right on their office desks, I would like for you to tell 'em FILMACK'S story . . . and urge them to send their next special announcement trailer order to

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Jerome Lubin

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MAINE AND NEW HAMPSHIRE THEATRES CO.

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ON YOUR 25th ANNIVERSARY WE SENT
YOU THE FOLLOWING LETTER:

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WE congratulate "VARIETY" on its past performance, and feel assured that because of its progressive management it will continue to become more and more depended upon by all who seek theatrical news.

AND THIS STILL HOLDS GOOD ON YOUR
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Sincerely,

JOHN J. FORD

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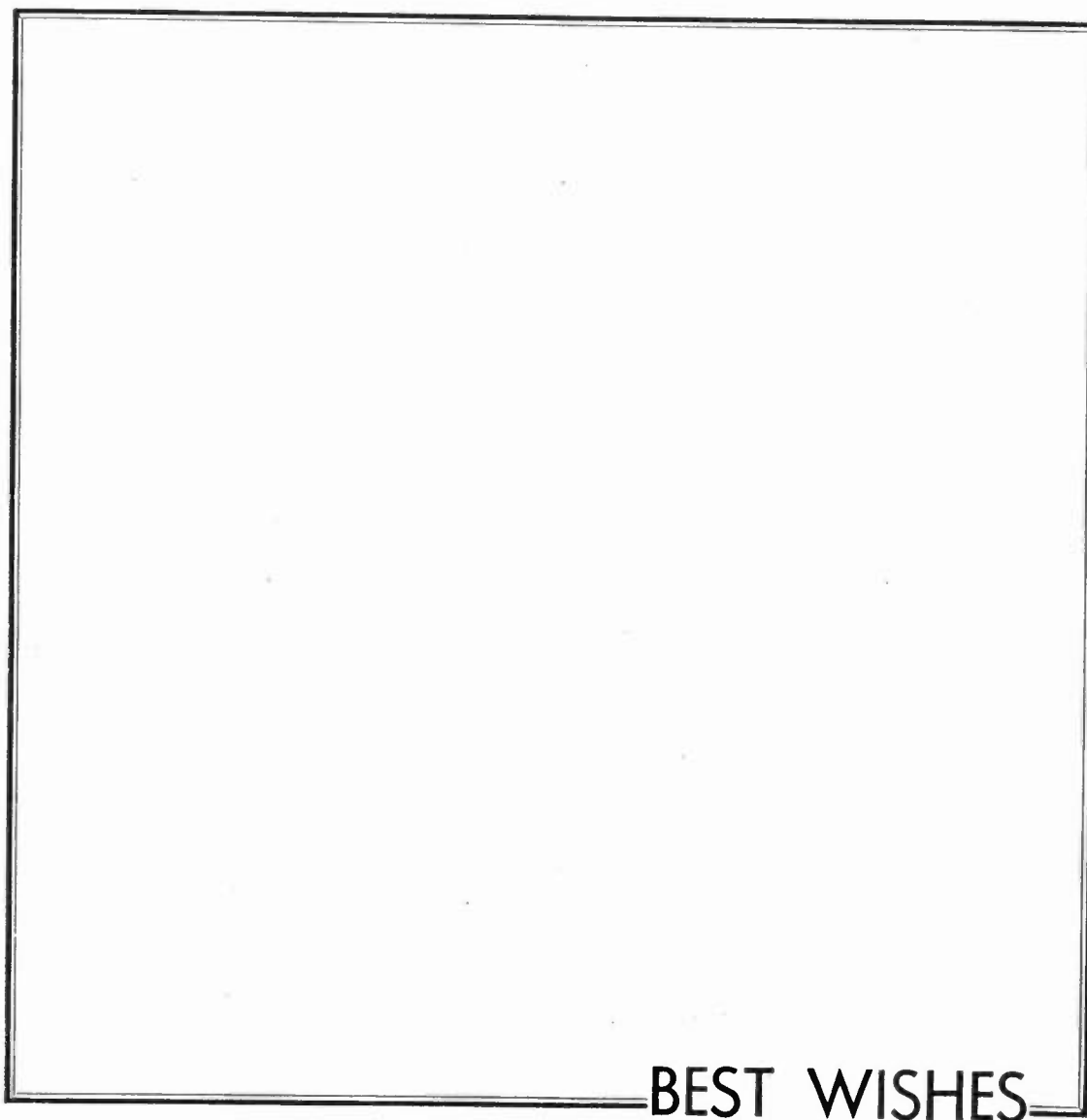
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I.A.R. Wylie's Saturday Evening Post
serial, "The Gay Banditti" Adaptation—
by Charles Bennett; screen play by
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"MADE FOR EACH OTHER"—
starring CAROLE LOMBARD
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Charles Coburn and Lucile
Watson. Miss Lombard returns
to serious drama after the mad-
cap comedy cycle. Story and
screen play by Jo Swerling.
Directed by John Cromwell.
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"GONE WITH THE WIND"—starring
CLARK GABLE as Rhett Butler and
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Howard. Directed by George Cukor.
Filmed in the true-life hues of Techni-
color. Production designed by William
Cameron Menzies, and faithfully adher-
ing to the history of the South under
the technical advice of Wilbur G. Kurtz,
as it appeared in Scarlett O'Hara's day.
Costumes by Walter Plunkett, who
spent six months touring the South for
authentic models and materials of the
Civil War era. Released thru Metro-
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"REBECCA"—Daphne du Maurier's
powerful novel, bought from galley-
proofs in advance of publication for
\$50,000, as was "Gone With The Wind,"
and already a runner-up to that novel's
tremendous popularity. In England, Miss
du Maurier's "Rebecca," far outstripped
the author's former best-seller, "Jamaica
Inn," by selling more than 50,000 copies
in the first month of publication as an
English Book Society selection. In the
United States it is a Literary Guild se-
lection destined for the largest printing
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"Rebecca" will be directed by the re-
nowned Alfred Hitchcock after he has
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tization of the greatest catas-
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Like I. A. R. Wylie's "The
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was published serially in the
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NEW YEAR GREETINGS

FROM

EDWARD EVERETT HORTON

SEASON'S GREETINGS

M. E. COMERFORD

PETER LORRE

DALE VAN EVERY

“‘Trade Winds’ Preems to Breezy \$14,500, Philly

Philadelphia, Dec. 20

“Mighty powerful is ‘Trade Winds,’ which world-preemed at Aldine, clicking off \$14,500 and assured of at least one more week.” . . .

VARIETY
Dec. 21, 1938

TAY GARNETT

FORTHCOMING TAY GARNETT PRODUCTION



“WORLD CRUISE”

CONGRATULATIONS

VARIETY

ON YOUR
THIRD OF A CENTURY—
OVER THIRTY-THREE YEARS
OF SERVICE TO SHOWPEOPLE
AND SHOWBUSINESS



SHEA THEATRES
OF BUFFALO

HELLO !

Bing and Dixie

MERVYN LEROY PRODUCTIONS

for

M. G. M.

"STAND UP AND FIGHT"

"WIZARD OF OZ"



SEASON'S GREETINGS

FREDERICK JACKSON
Screen Plays



Management
LAURA WILCK

SEASON'S GREETINGS

LEW AYRES

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

We Pay Our Respects to the Peck's Bad Boy of the Show World

For three decades and more, VARIETY has occupied an unique position in the literature of America and in the Show Business itself.

VARIETY has grown with the Show Business, marched with it, fought its battles. It has been both its staunchest champion and its most uncompromising critic; not always right, but always upright and forthright.

One cannot appraise VARIETY'S worth by its years, but by its zeal and loyalty, and by its deep understanding of, and its intelligent service to, the amusement industry and to those in it.

The spirit of VARIETY is the spirit of its late founder, Sime Silverman, whose memory remains its great inspiration, whose influence and judgment, though unseen, are felt and respected in VARIETY'S every word; for Sime was the very Spirit of Show Business.

Greetings to VARIETY and to everyone.

May this New Year be a Happy Year for all mankind—everywhere.

BALABAN & KATZ
and
GREAT STATES THEATERS

Best Wishes for the New Year

from

HARRY SHERMAN *Producer of*
Clarence E. Mulford's

HOPALONG CASSIDY STORIES

1937

Hopalong Rides Again
Texas Trail
Partners of the Plains
Cassidy of Bar 20
Heart of Arizona
Bar 20 Justice

1938

Pride of the West
In Old Mexico
The Sunset Trail
The Frontiersmen
Silver on the Sage
Arizona Bracelets
(Tentative Title)

for PARAMOUNT

In addition to two exciting Zane Grey Productions:

The Mysterious Rider
Heritage of the Desert

Next season Harry Sherman will produce six more Hopalong Cassidy pictures and two or more Zane Grey features.

Season's Greetings

FRANCES DEE

DALE VAN EVERY

33rd ANNIVERSARY

"Third of a Century"

VARIETY

**Many Happy
Returns! . . .**

**RKO
THEATRES**

GEO. W. TRENDLE
DETROIT

December 14, 1938

Variety Publishing Company,
154 West 56th St.,
New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

Variety's 33rd anniversary is truly an event, not alone for you but for everyone concerned with the amusement world.

In courage and rugged character throughout its third of a century as the mirror of events and trends in entertainment, Variety's record of service is its greatest tribute.

Closely paralleling the evolution of the motion picture, of vaudeville and radio, Variety's editorial content and news coverage has kept pace, step by step, never hesitating to fight for what you believed was for the best interests of the greatest number.

In saluting you on your "Third Of A Century" as a leader in the amusement world internationally, I add a full measure of appreciation for the constant value your efforts have had in reporting and interpreting entertainment news.

Sincerely yours,

Geo. W. Trendle
Geo. W. Trendle



—Greetings—

DIXIE DUNBAR

20th Century-Fox—"KING OF BURLESQUE"

20th Century-Fox—"PIGSKIN PARADE"

20th Century-Fox—"WALKING DOWN BROADWAY"

20th Century-Fox—"ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND"

Universal—"FRESHMAN YEAR"

MGM—"ONCE OVER LIGHTLY"

—Now Personal Appearances—

Management, WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY

Season's Greetings

M & P THEATRES



M. J. MULLIN
SAM PINANSKI

NEW YORK

LEO MORRISON

INCORPORATED

HOLLYWOOD



ROY
DEL
RUTH

DIRECTOR

1938-1939 RELEASES

"MY LUCKY STAR"

"TAILSPIN"

IN PRODUCTION

"ROSE OF
WASHINGTON
SQUARE"



UNDER CONTRACT TO 20TH CENTURY-FOX

CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN!!

RALPH RAINER and LEO ROBIN

Season's Greetings....

GEORGE BRUCE

HOLLYWOOD

Congratulations on a Third of a Century Anniversary

MICHAEL CURTIZ

Director

For 1938

"ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD" "FOUR'S A CROWD"

"FOUR DAUGHTERS"

"ANGELS" WITH DIRTY FACES"

For WARNER BROS.

INTERMOUNTAIN THEATRES INC.

CAPITOL THEATRE BUILDING
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

P. O. BOX 1018

WABATCH 7066

TO VARIETY :

You have long been known to us, out here in the West, as one of our closest links with the happenings throughout the industry. We compliment you not only on your speedy reporting of vital screen news, but on your complete coverage of the entire amusement world.

We heartily extend our best wishes for a long future as pleasant and fruitful as the past thirty-three years.

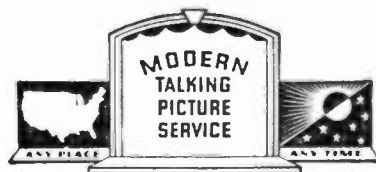
Sincerely,

INTERMOUNTAIN THEATRES INC.
Utah and Idaho

Harry David
HARRY DAVID
General Manager

SPONSORED SHORTS

Distributed By



In All Exchange Cities
Are Selected For:

1. AUDIENCE APPEAL
2. PROFITABLE TIE-UPS

*Smart Exhibitors build Box Office
with Modern's free sponsored shorts*

MODERN TALKING PICTURE SERVICE

9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.

Circle 6-0910

Or Your Exchange City

ANN SHIRLEY

"A MAN TO REMEMBER"

"BOY SLAVES"

In Preparation
"SORORITY HOUSE"
RKO

National Release
January, 1939

"TOPPER TAKES A TRIP"

starring
CONSTANCE BENNETT
ROLAND YOUNG

Billie Burke · Alan Mowbray · Verree Teasdale
Franklin Pangborn · Alexander D'Arcy
Atlas the Pup

Directed by
Norman
Z.
McLeod

Screenplay by Jack
Jevne, Eddie
Moran, Corey
Ford

Now
Showing

Fredric *Virginia*
MARCH · BRUCE

in "THERE GOES MY HEART"

with Patsy Kelly · Alan Mowbray · Nancy Carroll
Eugene Pallette · Etienne Girardot

Directed by
Norman
Z.
McLeod

Screenplay by
Eddie Moran
and Jack
Jevne

In Production

"It's Spring Again"

with
OLIVER HARDY · HARRY LANGDON
BILLIE BURKE · ALICE BRADY
James Ellison · Jean Parker · June Lang

Directed by Gordon Douglas

Screenplay
by
Corey
Ford

A. Edward
Sutherland
Associate
Producer

In Preparation

"CAPTAIN FURY"

starring

Brian *Victor*
AHERNE · McLAGLEN

with

JUNE LANG · PAUL LUKAS
JOSEPH CALLEIA

In Preparation

JEAN ARTHUR

in

"THE WATER GIPSIES"

In Preparation

Donald Henderson Clarke's
Sensational New
Novel

"THE HOUSEKEEPER'S DAUGHTER"

Hal Roach Studios

Greetings.

· 1 9 3 8 ·

Released through
UNITED ARTISTS

MILTON H. BREN
Executive Producer

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR THIRD OF A CENTURY ANNIVERSARY

JOHN M. STAHL

Producer - Director

UNIVERSAL

GREETINGS FROM

CHARLIE RUGGLES

AND HIS

SEE • ARE ▲ KENNELS

ALFRED L. WERKER

Under Contract to
20th Century-Fox

Season's Greetings

UNA MERKEL

TRI STATES THEATRE CORPORATION

A. H. BLANK, President

G. RALPH BRANTON, General Manager

EVERT CUMMINGS

JOE KINSKY

A. G. STOLTE

District Managers



Congratulates

VARIETY

On a Third of a Century's Service

Season's Greetings to All

HOWARD EMMETT ROGERS

Season's Greetings

W. P. LIPSCOMB

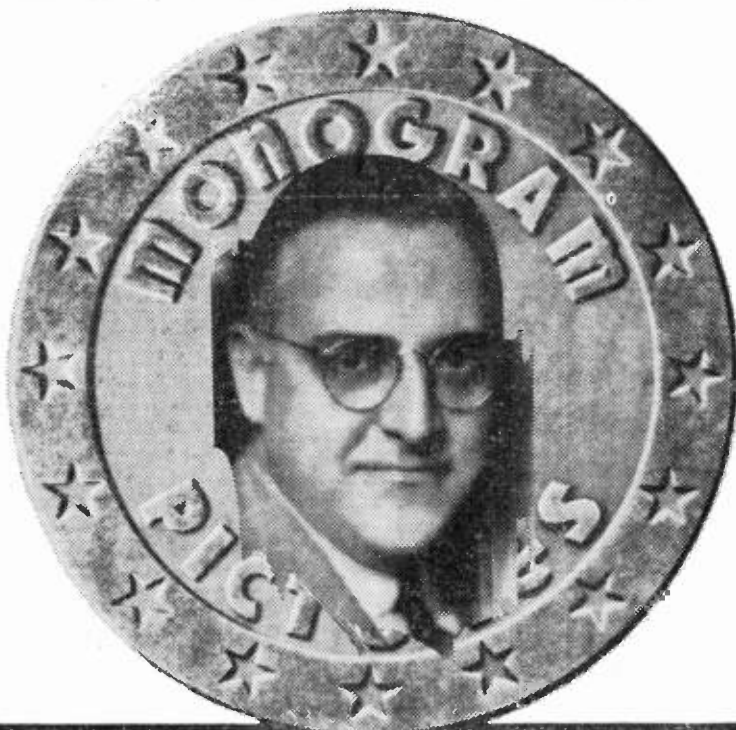
Screenplay

'Pygmalion'

W. RAY JOHNSTON SILVER JUBILEE YEAR

Celebrating 25 Years of Service to the Showmen of America

1914



1939

YEAR BY YEAR DISTRIBUTION ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS PRODUCER-DISTRIBUTOR

1914	MILLION DOLLAR MYSTERY JAMES CRUZE	1920	BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME ALL INDIAN CAST	1926	SCOTTY OF THE SCOUTS BEN ALEXANDER	1932	THE THIRTEENTH GUEST GINGER ROGERS
1915	BEATING BACK AL JENNINGS	1921	THE GOLDEN TRAIL JANE NOVAK	1927	SHANGHAI ROSE IRENE RICH	1933	SWEETHEART OF SIGMA CHI MARY CARLISLE
1916	SILAS MARNER JEANNE EAGELS	1922	TEN NIGHTS IN A BARROOM JOHN LOWELL	1928	CASEY JONES RALPH LEWIS	1934	JANE EYRE VIRGINIA BRUCE
1917	THE DEEMSTER DERWENT HALL CAINE	1923	MAN AND WIFE NORMA SHEARER	1929	PHANTOM IN THE HOUSE RICARDO CORTEZ	1935	THE HEALER RALPH BELLAMY
1918	THE MASKED RIDER HARRY MYERS	1924	EASY MONEY MARY CARR	1930	WORLDLY GOODS LILA LEE	1936	THE HARVESTER ANN RUTHERFORD
1919	LIGHTNING BRYCE JACK HOXIE	1925	FLAME FIGHTER HERBERT RAWLINSON	1931	MOTHER AND SON CLARA KIMBALL YOUNG	1937	HOOSIER SCHOOLBOY MICKEY ROONEY
		1938	GANGSTER'S BOY JACKIE COOPER				

Congratulations to *VARIETY*

WESLEY
★
RUGGLES

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

SHOW PLACE OF THE NATION

ROCKEFELLER CENTER

NEW YORK CITY

WALTER WANGER welcomes 1939
with
TWO
DISTINCTIVE
BOX OFFICE
ATTRACTIONS

Fredric
MARCH and *Joan*
BENNETT in
TRADE WINDS

with
Ralph Bellamy • Ann Sothern
Sidney Blackmer • Thomas Mitchell • Robert Elliott
A TAY GARNETT Production

"STAGECOACH"
with

Claire **TREVOR • John WAYNE**

Directed by
JOHN FORD
who made "The Informer"
"The Hurricane" and other
notable attractions

Andy Devine, John Carradine
Thomas Mitchell, Louise Platt
George Bancroft, Donald Meek
Berton Churchill, Tim Holt and
Tom Tyler

A JOHN FORD PRODUCTION

RELEASED THRU UNITED ARTISTS

WM. ANTHONY McGUIRE

AUTHOR OF

"THE GREAT ZIEGFELD"

PRODUCER

"ROSALIE"

"GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST"

IN PREPARATION

"ZIEGFELD GIRL"

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

*Congratulations
To VARIETY
On Its
Third of a Century*

WARNER BAXTER



John W.
Considine
Jr. METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

Famous Players
Canadian Corporation Limited.

ROYAL BANK BUILDING

Toronto,
CANADA

Mr. N. L. Nathanson, members of the Executive Committee, and our managers and staffs join with me in sending cordial greetings to *VARIETY* on the occasion of its THIRD of a CENTURY Anniversary.

I am voicing the sentiments of our entire organization in expressing our appreciation of the valuable contribution *VARIETY* has made to the world of entertainment in presenting latest news, views and ideas from all branches of Show Business.

Sincerely,
J. J. Fitzgibbons
Vice-President

FRANK TUTTLE

DIRECTOR



“PARIS HONEYMOON”

with BING CROSBY

OMAR KIAM

COSTUME DESIGNER

UNITED ARTISTS

Dear VARIETY:

For thirty-three years VARIETY has taken the initiative in the ever-changing panorama and climb of the amusement industry. Many times you have anticipated and warned us of the impending changes. You have played and continue to play an important part in the dramatic development of the amusement industry.

The pages of VARIETY are the history of show business for a third of a century. We of the Sparks Theatres in Florida look back with pride over our years and endeavors in the same business. VARIETY has served the inside people of show business; we of the Sparks organization have served that vast throng of theatre-goers. Surely there never was a time that called for greater co-operation, more sympathetic understanding and more constructive relationship between the trade and its customers.

The life of VARIETY has been the life of the show business. With your continued co-operation and constructive criticism we believe a new and greater period of show business will develop. We salute you and greet you on your thirty-three years—a third of a century of service to all of the amusement business.

E. J. SPARKS, Pres.

Sparks Theatres of Florida

LeRoy Prinz

Dance Director

SEVENTH YEAR AT
PARAMOUNT STUDIOS

Management:
ORSATTI & COMPANY



MOLLY PICON

Happy Holiday Greetings to all wide-awake exhibitors. My second full length Yiddish musical film, "MAMELE," now showing at the Continental Theatre, Broadway and 52nd Street, has been enthusiastically acclaimed by both the press and public, which accounts for the capacity business. Following its Broadway run, it will be released throughout the States. For bigger box-office receipts write or wire, SPHINX FILM CORP., 535 Fifth Avenue, New York.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

DON BAKER

FOURTH YEAR
PARAMOUNT THEATRE, NEW YORK

THANKS TO BOB WEITMAN

HAPPY NEW YEAR

DOUGLASS MONTGOMERY

"BALLERINA"

Now in Third Capacity Month at Little Carnegie, New York

DISTRIBUTED BY

MAYER & BURSTYN, Inc.

NOW LOCATED AT

RIALTO THEATRE BUILDING Broadway at 42d Street
New York

SEASON'S GREETINGS

HAROLD YOUNG

DIRECTOR

'THE STORM'

'CODE OF THE STREETS'

For NEW UNIVERSAL

RUSSELL BIRDWELL

Announces with pardonable pride the exclusive public relations representation of a limited number of Motion Picture personalities including

RONALD COLMAN

JANET GAYNOR

CAROL LOMBARD

DAVID O. SELZNICK

NORMA SHEARER

Industrial and foreign accounts to be announced on February 1st, with the opening of offices in Beverly Hills, New York City and Washington, D. C.

★

**NORMAN
TAUROG**

D I R E C T O R

BOYS TOWN
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

★ **MAD ABOUT MUSIC**
UNIVERSAL

**ADVENTURES OF
TOM SAWYER**
SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL

★

Congratulations

BOB BURNS

SEASON'S GREETINGS



**ROBERT Z.
LEONARD**

SEASON'S GREETINGS

DORE SCHARY

M. G. M.

INTERSTATE CIRCUIT, INC.

MAJESTIC THEATRE BUILDING

DALLAS, TEXAS

VARIETY:

As time rolls on so does VARIETY, keeping pace with our ever-changing industry. On this occasion—the thirty-third year of its being—we extend greetings and our best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,

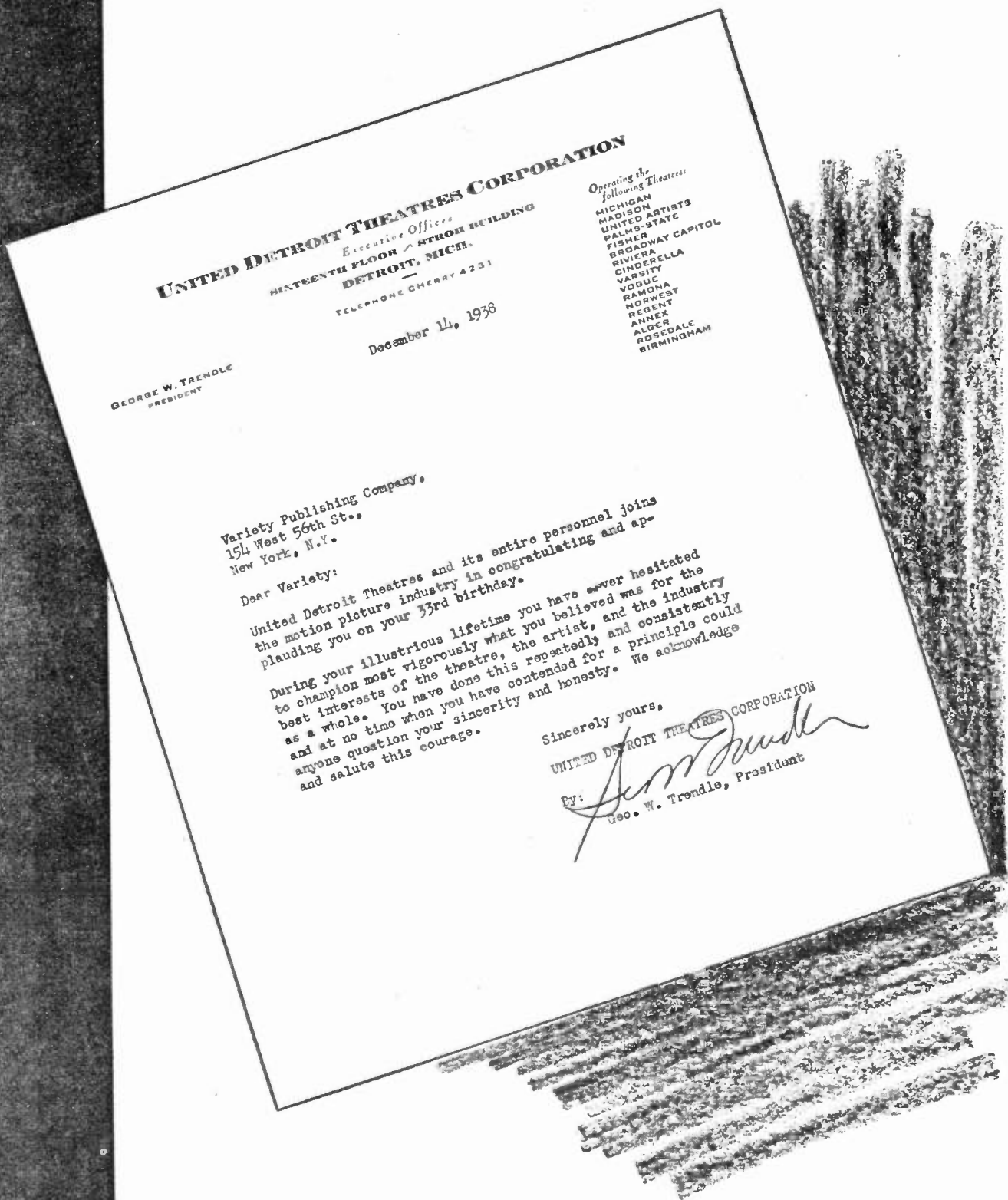
Karl Hoblitzelle

R. J. O'Donnell

Congratulations!

ARCHIE MAYO

Under Contract to
SAMUEL GOLDWYN, INC., Ltd.



All
 Artists
 Should
 Contribute
 To the
 Motion
 Picture
 Relief Fund

A
 Contributor

Congratulations to VARIETY

J. CARROL NAISH

MARTHA RAYE

SEASON'S GREETINGS

DARIO FARALLA

PRODUCING FOR PARAMOUNT

Congratulations to

VARIETY

On the occasion of its

Third of a Century

Anniversary

FOX WEST COAST AGENCY CORPORATION

CHARLES P. SKOURAS

FOX WEST COAST THEATRES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

ARCH M. BOWLES

FOX WISCONSIN AMUSEMENT CORPORATION

HAROLD J. FITZGERALD

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ELMER C. RHODEN

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FRANK H. RICKETSON

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FRANK L. NEWMAN

NATIONAL THEATRES AMUSEMENT CO., INC.

SPYROS P. SKOURAS

Soak-the-Yanks in Australia, Politicians' Patriotic Tactic

By Eric Gorrick

Sydney, Dec. 15.

Politically it has been a bad year for the American film distributors in Australia. From every part of this island continent yells have gone out to politicians concerning an alleged stranglehold gotten by U. S. interests over Australian and British holdings. Same thing has also happened in New Zealand. This patriotic angle is certain to generate trouble.

From the very first the American film biz has been against producing in Australia. Despite political threats it still openly refuses to produce films here. Premier Stevens of New South Wales, where most of the bother cropped up, admitted that the present quota has been a failure. Government, through its Film Commission, is now attempting to bring down a measure early in 1939 whereby the distributors will be brought into quota line. In the meantime the distributors are sitting pat. It's the waiting that causes the headaches.

Political plays have been in force throughout 1928. New South Wales would prefer the quota question to be taken in hand by the Federal authorities, but the Federals are not so keen, knowing just what has to be bucked. Premier Stevens, to save his face, must act.

Pressure Reason

Looking behind the scenes, it's easy to see just why pressure is being applied. Leading commercial men, with no production experience, sunk a lot of capital into home studios, only to find they were on wrong end of the cigar. With empty studios they are now yelling to the government to make the U. S. men sink coin into production under quota enforcement.

Take, for example, National Productions, a unit headed by powerful newspaper interests as well as political. National started off in grand style by importing Charles Farrell to star in 'Flying Doctor.' Technicians were brought over from Gaumont-British. Despite all this the pic left its sponsors holding an empty financial bag. Some time ago Columbia tried a flyer in the home production field. Imported Victor Jory to star in 'Rangle River,' with Clarence Badger directing. One production was quite enough. Today Cinesound is the only unit in regular production. Recently, however, execs stated that unless government provided some assistance the studio would be forced to shut. U. S. coin is needed to keep home studios open. Local producers want it, and the government intends to provide it—in a constitutional way.

Figures

Australia, with a population of 7,000,000, has, according to a report, 1,240 pic theatres. These are kept open mainly on U. S. product. Various managements tried an all-British policy, but failed in every instance to keep such a policy in operation. It's admitted that it would be impossible for locals and Britishers alone to sup-

ply sufficient product to keep all theatres open. It is admitted, however, that locals of quality, and Britishers in general, should be given an opportunity to compete with U. S. pix on an open market.

Major U. S. distributors took out of Australia about \$4,000,000 in 1937. Yet a major chain like Hoyts, screening mainly U. S. product, was able, despite outbreak of infantile paralysis, anniversary celebrations and cricket DX broadcasts from England, to turn in a profit of \$300,000.

U. S. distributors are by no means blameless for the creation of so much current political strife in this territory. They have bucked the government on many points and, in addition, have been deemed grasping with percentage demands. On the other hand, they are slugged by all provincial governments on high taxes, including a payment of 16c per foot on all negative prints brought in.

The current political fight for screen control, with airings in all newspapers, is not doing the b.o.'s any good. Public is being given an inside to the pic biz generally. It's a bad policy. Public buys the kind of entertainment it desires, and so far the lean has been towards the U. S. Sane showmen admit it would be foolish to have any government dictate to the public what type of entertainment it must buy.

Sir Ben Fuller once remarked if the government forced showmen to screen Australian films, and the showmen took a loss, then the government should reimburse them. There are many who agree with Sir Ben.

Erection Stoppage

In New South Wales no one can build a theatre without governmental permission. This ruling has been extended until June, 1939. In South Australia political pressure was attempted to stop Metro from erecting a new theatre. However, Metro, despite yells, is going ahead on erection plans.

In every centre of Australia political pressure is on to stop U. S. interests from advancing any further. Some of the headaches experienced in 1938 included erection stoppage. 25% right of rejection, proposed tax on each pic imported to assist local producers, stoppage of block-bookings, Empire quota on a reciprocal basis, control of theatre licensing, restriction of investment and control of theatres to British subjects, cheaper film hire, and prevention of foreign (U. S.) domination screens of New South Wales. 1939, according to those on the inside, will bring additional headaches.

Black's Adelphi, London, Deal Now Looks Cold

London, Jan. 1.

The deal between Gaumont-British and Associated Theatres Properties to lease the Adelphi as a vaudeville house, with George Black in control, is not likely to go through. The main reason for the failure of the deal to be completed is that ATP wants to form a private company with G-B to promote the venture instead of a flat rental proposition for the house. Black is opposed to the idea, and is insisting on the rental plan.

It is understood that Gaumont-British now is considering the London Hippodrome, a subsidiary of G-B, as a suitable vaudeville spot. Hippodrome played vaudeville the last time 14 years ago when operated by William Morris.

'The Fleet's Lit Up' is closing at the Hippodrome some time in January after having been there since mid-August. Vaudeville twice-nightly policy is supposed to go in during February.

HOME TO ROOST

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

'Prodigal Returns' is the next Spanish language picture starring Tito Guizar, to be made by Dario Productions at Grand National, starting late this month.

Mortimer Braus is doing the screen play from an original by Dana Wilma.



GEORGIE WOOD

Great Britain's greatest Radio Sketch Actor.

Pantomime 1938-39, Opera House, Belfast.

Greetings to "Water Rats" in America: Dave Apollon, Charles Chaplin, "Chuck" Riesner, Ted Shapiro, George Swifts, Chick York. From "Water Rats" in England, especially Sam Downing, Charlie Kunz, Bobby May—also "Hollywood Householder" Charles Austin and myself.

DISCREPANCIES OF 'SUEZ' HIT IN PARIS

Paris, Dec. 24.

Recent attacks in French periodicals on the way Hollywood portrays Frenchmen in its pictures has been followed by a second, a blast on 20th's 'Suez.' Taking up the cudgels of certain members of the de Lesseps family, the mag points out the historical discrepancies of the film, showing photos of the personages involved at the time the incidents actually transpired and also stills from the film.

Captions of one picture note the difference in the ages of the Empress Eugenie and de Lesseps at the time of the Suez's opening in 1869. The Empress was then actually 43 and the engineer 84. De Lesseps, played by Tyrone Power, and the Empress, portrayed by Loretta Young, are pictured as comparative youngsters.

Power is also shown talking to the Khedive Mehemet Ali and his son, Mohammed Said, the caption stating... 'but when Lesseps commenced to interest himself in the canal, Mehemet Ali was dead.' Other photos show Power fully dressed in the water with Annabella, and state: 'The little Francaise and M. Ferdinand de Lesseps have a fashion of flirting in the water which only the heat of Egypt might explain.' Annabella saving Power in a sand storm with the caption stating, 'such a personage as portrayed by Annabella never existed.'

But while the film came in or some chiding from that angle it received full justification from another. Octave Aubry, recognized authority on Bonaparte history, expressed the opinion that the divergencies shown were permissible.

'History is one thing and the cinema is another,' he said. 'I accord a certain indulgence to falsifications of detail if the goal followed is attained, if the grandeur of a man or the value of a work is attained.'

Although certain de Lesseps descendants are still protesting at parts of the picture, responsible members have approved the film.

Tropical Radio Rules

Washington, Jan. 1.

Finishing touches placed last week on allocation pact which assures Central American nations of frequencies necessary to overcome engineering difficulties common in the tropics. State Department announced final agreement with governments in the hot zone where operation on the standard 550-1600 kc band is impracticable.

Only reason for American participation was the military defense of the Panama Canal, since the channels are earmarked for special services in this country and no conflict is likely.

SUBDUED SPARKLE OF BUDAPEST

By E. P. Jacobi

Budapest, Dec. 20.

Budapest is indeed hard put to it to keep up its claim to gaiety these days. Bit by bit the glamour of the once famous, even notorious, night life is wearing off. Yet, perhaps compared to other poverty-stricken, war-shadowed mid-European capitals, Budapest niteries still blazingly hold their own.

Whatever effects politics, racial prejudices, Nazi threats and their counter-effects may have on things in general, wildest political antagonists peacefully sit side by side in the Arizona or the Anna Bar. But patronage is sparser, money trickles more thinly, but it all goes on just the same, ready to pick up on the first sign of relief.

There have been practically no big foreign attractions booked. Few of international repute, invariably are of Hungarian extraction; artists who return from engagements abroad to put in a few weeks or months at home, gladly accepting payment in Hungarian currency so that the transfer problem which makes the engagement of a foreign act almost impossible, does not enter into the question. Qualification for membership of Artists' Association, formerly a mere formality, is now taken more seriously and dependent on an exam, ensuring a certain standard.

Arizona, leading night club, is still the unique glamorous bedlam that experts still call the craziest place of entertainment in Europe. Formerly it only had a revolving floor that could be raised and sunk, but this year it has been reconstructed to allow the boxes to sink below floor level and soar up again, with lighting coming from big shells on the walls that shift to and fro, and a row of boxes that have no direct view of the floor but watch the show from its reflection in black mirrors. What with colored lights, an orchestra platform that moves up and down, backwards and forwards, girls swinging from the chandeliers and toted along on wires from the ceiling, and similar devices, it's anything but restful, but then, apparently, people don't go to niteries for a rest cure, and they seem pretty well pleased with Arizona's stunts.

Magyar Texas Guinan

Additional Barnum touches are the zoo attractions. Miss Arizona, proprietor's wife, the Texas Guinan of Budapest, started last year by appearing on the floor in Oriental splendor riding a real live camel. Ship of the desert proving a smash hit, she topped it with a Hindu number for which a baby elephant is borrowed night after night from the municipal Zoo. A pony and a snake are other guest performers on the polished revolving floor of the Arizona. Arizona has been an excellently paying proposition up till lately, deservedly so because it is a well-conducted establishment, with the proprietors knowing their job and doing it. Miss Arizona is head hostess; Rozsnyay, her husband, is manager, composer and pianist; girls are pretty and of a nice type. They had been planning to establish a summer branch at a roadhouse, but nothing came of that owing to crisis slump.

Only other important place at present is Moulin Rouge, which has much success with a really good floor show compiled of old-time musical comedy hits. Banking on 'good old days' nostalgia has proved so successful that they are now putting on the third show in this style, with 'Merry Widow' and contemporaries very nicely staged. Parisian Grill, the third big niterie, is in conjunction with Moulin Rouge and has not opened this winter so as to cut out competition which under present conditions might harm both. Grill's chief income being summer biz at Margaret Island, they've decided to lie low during the winter.

Of the ritzy restaurants, Reine Pedaque, Kakuk, Kis Royal and Tarjan's are in the front rank, both summer and winter. Kakuk and Kis Royal have gypsy music, and therefore much patronage from foreign visitors. Foreigners and provincials form the nucleus of clients at Cafe Ostende and other places where gypsy kid bands are performing. Despite legislative measures against juvenile performers in niteries, kid orchestras, comprising gypsy boy musicians under 14—the

smaller the better—somehow find a way out and are always popular. Their musical performance is truly amazing, even though it palls after a time.

Small Bars

Bars, small niteries with a pianist or a two or three-piece orchestra and an occasional diseuse or torch singer, still attract most of the better-class local patronage. The socialites at the piano bait, sensational two or three years ago, has lost zest; either they are no longer at the piano or they have ceased to be socialites. The diseuses who still hold their own are quality goods, more on the actress than on the hostess side, socialite or otherwise. Janka Solyom, Martha Ratkay, Terry Fellegi belong to the first legion.

Anna Bar, Capri, haunt of government party politicians; Bristol Bar, Hungaria Grill, Dubarry, Prince of Wales, Orszaghaz Bar which melts into the bridge club active at the same establishment, and half-a-dozen others, less pretentious, constitute the link between niteries and simple cafes. Of these there used to be one on every street corner in Budapest in bygone days, substituting for clubs and homes, but their days of glory are past. They have gone dark by the dozen during the last few years, stricken by the slump, by taxes and by radio entertainment in the home. The latter element was felt considerably by cafes, restaurants and shows during the crisis weeks when everybody was glued to the loud speaker at home.

Patrons are not so much reduced in numbers as in their powers of consumption. Of a Saturday when niteries are still packed—well, not exactly to capacity, but still comfortably crowded—the overwhelming majority will be Scotsmen with perhaps one or two emperors—the reckless spenders—thrown in. Hungarian champagne, at five or six dollars a bottle at swell night clubs, is the staple drink; anybody who calls for French already deserves the title of emperor. Fancy drinks are not very popular, foreign brands being heavily taxed; champagne comes cheaper in the long run. Next to it, 'barack,' the national apricot brandy, is chief item on list of drinks.

Compared to pre-war or inflation booms, Budapest nite life has, of course, grown drab; it has even dwindled considerably in comparison to what it was four or five years ago. But coming from Berlin or Vienna, Prague or Zurich, Rome or Brussels, Amsterdam or Belgrade, you will still find it miles above any of those places in the way of gaiety, temperament, brightness and originality on the part of the entertainers and appreciation, enjoyment and abandon on the part of the guests. There is less money and no doubt a good many people are missing from the ranks. But those that are left haven't lost their zest for fun, and they never will, not if Hungary goes ever so totalitarian.

MAY NIX TAX ON U. S. DISTRIBS IN N. S. W.

Sydney, Dec. 15.

Unofficially learned that the government of New South Wales may decide not to impose a tax on U. S. pix as a subsidy to assist home producers. Reported that the government regards such an imposition wholly unworkable from a law viewpoint, and such a tax, if imposed at all, would, it's said, have to come with the authority of federal officials, and not through any single state government.

Understood the committee probing the current picture situation on behalf of New South Wales government has had advice from Canberra, the seat of the federal government, to watch its step on additional tax impositions in connection with the picture industry.

Radio Normandy have received renewal from Hayward's Military Pickle via Muller Blatchly & Co.

PICK N. Z. BOARD TO EASE EXHIB, DISTRIB ROW

Auckland, N. Z., Dec. 15.

In an endeavor to bring peace within the picture industry here, it has been decided to appoint a special board of four representatives of the exhibs and a like number of distributors, with a chairman appointed by the government to sit in at all meetings. This move has been discussed for some time and according to many traders may offer the only solution in bringing about peace between exhibs and U. S. distributors operating in the dominion.

This territory has always been a sore point politically to the U. S. distributors. At one time, following certain political moves, the distributors withdrew for a spell.

Earlier this year it was anticipated the distributors would again withdraw but when the government told them that if they went out again the road back would not be an easy one, they decided to stick.

Influence of Rome-Berlin Axis on Italy's Show Biz

By H. M. Brown

Rome, Dec. 20.

Heavy hand of politics makes itself felt in Italian show business in four ways: (1) through censorship of all productions even remotely smacking of anti-fascist or anti-Italian influence; (2) through tinging almost all Italian productions with fascist propaganda; (3) through the application of Italian 'autarchy'—i.e. economic self-reliance—ambitions; (4) through certain preferences shown for and returned by the German colleagues.

Partiality toward the other member of the Rome-Berlin axis has not had very great economic importance so far. There have been the usual 'cultural' exchanges—German singing clubs touring Italian cities; Emma Gramatica, Italy's No. 1 actress, giving performances in Berlin. Beniamino Gigli has made a number of pictures especially for the German market; German producers give the Italian Riviera a break, over the French, in film scenes laid in southern resorts. And there is more collaboration on two-language productions with German studios than with those of any other nationality. Many a voice was raised in accusations of political favoritism when at the International Film Exhibition at Venice, the prized Mussolini Cup was awarded jointly to the members of the Rome-Berlin axis. While there was no disagreement on the great artistic merits of Leni Riefenstahl's 'Olympia,' it was considered that this pic should have competed with other reportorial films or else been put in a class entirely by itself as was Disney's 'Snow White.' Instead, it was classed in the competitish with regular feature films, which was by many considered unfair.

Censorship of foreign productions for political reasons has hit at American pictures a number of times. 'Blockade,' 'Farewell to Arms,' and 'Idiot's Delight' were not only nixed by Italian censors, but singled out for comment by Commendatore Luigi Freddi, director-general of the Italian film industry, as typifying an 'anti-fascist' trend in American production which Italy resented. Even more surprising to American producers representatives, who appeared to have thought these pics anti-war rather than anti-fascist, has been the branding of certain scenes in American pics descriptive of Italy or Italians as 'anti-Italian.' Fascism wants the modern Italian to think of himself as typically 20th century, and thinks it is condescension to portray him still as a picturesque, song-singing, spaghetti-eating individual. Accordingly, all scenes that show 'picturesque' Italian life are required to be cut or changed.

But Internal Propaganda's OK

While Italians object to political inferences in foreign productions, almost all outstanding Italian productions, both screen and stage, do their bit for fascist propaganda. On the stage, the San Remo drama prize was awarded to a play 'I figli' ('Sons') that was full of declamatory patriotic passages, but that turned out to be such bad drama that it was dropped from the theatrical repertoire immediately after the official performance at which the prize was awarded. On the screen, 'Life of Verdi' showed episodes of the struggle for the unification of Italy, glorified typically Italian music. 'Under the Southern Cross' glorified the Italian colonist in Africa. 'Luciano Serra, Pilot' glorified Italian military aviation. That these pics were considered outstanding in this year's crop cannot be questioned, as they were singled out for showing at Venice; that they contained propaganda passages can also hardly be questioned.

In addition to propaganda for internal consumption, Italian show business has arranged various good will tours abroad—notably to South America. Ermete Zacconi, Italy's distinguished 80-year-old actor, took his company on a tour of South American capitals, was decorated by the Minister for Press and Propaganda upon his return.

The move to limit 'un-Italian' influence in show business ties up with general ambition toward economic and cultural independence. 'Autarchy' has become the most popular word in Italian production, and of course film and legit production are bound to mirror this general trend.

Formerly large part of repertoire of legit companies were translations

of foreign plays; now it is very smart to be very Italian. Jewish playwrights are virtually excluded from the Italian theatre, though as yet there has been no law passed banning production of plays by Jewish authors. But, unofficially, and despite the fact that Jewish influence was never important in show business here as it was in Germany, Jewish activity on screen and stage is being nixed. The French playwright, Henry Bernstein, who was the foreign author most widely produced in Italy, returned a decoration received from the Italian government in protest against discrimination against Jews. Official regulations—such as those forbidding Italian artists to assume foreign pseudonyms, requiring the fascist salute on screen and stage, and prescribing the fascist form of address—give Italian productions more and more of a national stamp.

Most outstanding 'un-Italian' touch that has been allowed to remain is the peroxide blonde touch: most Italian actresses, and practically all chorus girls and variety artistes, have dyed hair.

LONDON LEGIT NOT SPIFFY

By Joshua Lowe

London, Dec. 20.

Constantly threatening war clouds put a damper on all kinds of show business in 1938. Chaos in stock market, luxury trades, etc., played havoc with amusements. Over 130 odd productions were boldly presented, with but a bare 25% that could be classed as coming anywhere near the hit mark. Definite successes in straight shows include 'Dodie Smith's latest, 'Dear Octopus'; Charles Morgan's 'The Flashing Stream' and Emyln Williams in his own play, 'The Corn Is Green.' 'Spring Meeting,' scheduled for New York production, is drawing profitable business at a small house, as is also J. B. Priestley's Yorkshire comedy, 'When We Are Married' among other quiet, unspectacular little plays that are just staying put.

American contributions consisted of 'Amphitryon 38' which did full time business during its allotted span; 'Golden Boy,' with good takings until they changed the cast and sent over an entirely new company; 'Idiot's Delight' was okay until the political situation became tense, necessitating its sudden withdrawal. It was later revived at cheap prices at His Majesty's, where it ran another six weeks 'Dodsworth' (Palace) probably flopped due to the fact that it had an English cast which did not conform to the atmosphere. 'On Borrowed Time,' only survived four days at the Haymarket.

Theatrically unique was the reopened 'George and Margaret' which is still going strong at the Piccadilly at half prices, after two years' run at Wyndham's. Another instance is 'Glorious Morning,' which moved from the Duchess in September and is playing to half price at the Whitehall.

'Lambeth Walk' Show

Musical hits are headed by the cheap-priced, twice-nightly production of 'Me and My Girl' at the Victoria Palace, which is booked weeks ahead, and has been running this way since its production at the close of last year. The popularization of 'The Lambeth Walk' song and dance from the show is probably doing a lot to keep the show in the limelight. The venture looked anything but promising until the show was broadcast, when it took a sensational spurt, and has never looked back.

Crazy Gang in its revue, 'These Foolish Things,' is doing splendid business at the Palladium, and the only other revue, 'Nine Sharp,' has been doing consistently good business at the tiny Little Theatre since January. 'Wild Oats,' 'The Fleet's Lit Up,' 'Running Riot' were in the money, while 'Bobby Get Your Gun' is carrying on at cut salaries. 'Under Your Hat,' the new Cicely Courtneidge-Jack Hulbert show, has had a

An Old Adage Fits Mid-Europe: 'Clash of Arms Silences the Muses'

Budapest, Dec. 20.

After the upheaval of Anschluss, in March, 1938, the Czechoslovak crisis in October and the war scare, entertainment trade in mid-Europe is gradually settling down again. For how long? Who knows? Of course this does not mean that it is back to 'normal.' Trends in various countries are divergent, common traits between them almost nil. The one thing that is common to all, nationalism, makes each different.

Vienna has ceased to be a key city in the world of the theatre. It is simply a branch of the German totalitarian entertainment system. Half of Vienna's theatres are closed for reconstruction. Of those that are open, state-subsidized Opera is the one that has undergone the slightest change, save for some important individuals, notably among the conductors.

Berlin actor, Lotha Muthel, is manager of Burgtheater, almost completely 'Aryanized' well before Anschluss. Repertory comprises a few German classics, the standard propaganda dramas of the Third Reich and currently an adaptation of Oscar Wilde's 'Bunbury.' Volks-theater, Raimundtheater and Volksoper, just reopened 'after reconstruction,' are KdF theatres. These magic letters mean that they are co-operatives, controlled by the 'Kraft durch Freude' organization, state institution which provides entertainment and propaganda for workers.

One Private House

Only one theatre, Reinhardt's one-time Josephstadter theatre, is a private undertaking and has remained in the management of Heinz Hilpert. There have been many important changes in the company: few Austrian actors are left, the new batch being almost exclusively of German extraction. Season has not brought a single new play by an Austrian or German author.

Vienna's two major film studios, Rosenhugel and Sascha, are also 'under reconstruction.' Very conveniently, the two most popular screen stars, Paula Wessely and Magda Schneider, have just had babies. How far Vienna will enter into the Reich film production in the future remains to be seen, but it certainly seems likely that special Austrian characteristics will not be tolerated.

Naturally, German films dominate the picture theatres. At the time of writing, eight out of Vienna's 13 de luxe first-run theatres presented German pictures, four simultaneously showed 'The White Squadron,' Italian propaganda picture, featuring the African campaigns, and only one presented an American feature. French films, so much in evidence

wonderful launching and looks set for many months.

Most spectacular flops in this field were the Drury Lane show, 'The Sun Never Sets,' which lost about \$150,000 in the month it lingered; and the second ice production at the Coliseum, which only survived three weeks, in strange contrast to its predecessor 'St. Moritz' which coined money. But the craze for this form of entertainment was definitely exhausted. C. B. Cochran's musical, 'Happy Returns,' with Beatrice Lillie, was a big disappointment; also Eric Maschwitz's 'Paprika,' which he hoped would be a prosperous successor to 'Balalaika' but which folded after 11 days. 'Maritza' at the Palace, 'No Sky So Blue' and 'Peller's Follies of 1938' were other wash-outs in the musical line.

Musicals Taper Off

There seems to be a departure with each ensuing year, of the musical type of show as an attraction. Not that so many fail in proportion, but that so few are staged. Public taste seems to demand the quiet, homely type of comedy, like 'George and Margaret,' 'Dodie Smith's family plays and that type, replacing the ghoulish era and the sex farce. The quiet sincerity of 'Goodbye, Mr. Chips' and the piece a man can take his young people to, seems now to be in most demand. But chiefly, musical productions are now so expensive, it takes months, even with a big hit, to get the investment repaid. Recently Jack Waller is reported to have said he would do no more musicals, and Cochran 'swore off' several times.

By F. P. Jacobi

during the last two years, have receded completely into the background.

No Jewish Patronage

Business aspect of the show trade is regulated to a great extent by the Kraft durch Freude. Majority of cheap theatre tickets are distributed through their organization. This gives a certain stability to the box office, but no chance of big profits. Lack of Jewish patronage is strongly felt, especially in the music world. Vienna's standard musical comedy stage, An der Wien, is dark; important concerts and recitals, mostly sold out in days of yore, are half empty. No one now dresses for a theatrical performance. A good many bars and night clubs are either 'under reconstruction' or frankly closed. Femina, the only revue theatre, and Ronacher, variety stage, are open.

What has become of the talent for which there is no longer any room on Germany's and the former Austria's stages? There is only one outlet for German-speaking actors and German-writing authors of the non-Hitlerite brand, and that is Switzerland. It is practically the only country where grand musical comedy in the Viennese style is still very popular. Of course, Switzerland is a very limited field and protects its own talent like all other countries, but a few of the really important figures of the pre-Hitler era find refuge there, such as Bassermann, now touring in Swiss author Faesi's comedy which has brought him exceptional success. Beyond Switzerland, Paris is still the Mecca of refugee authors. Austrian playbrokers have pitched their tents there, and authors and actors rally around them as far as immigration restrictions permit.

Czechoslovakia

Prague, only a few months ago a stronghold of German acting, is no more to be considered as such. Prague's two important German theatres are closed, their companies disbanded. German theatres in the Sudeten area are conducted to conform to other Reich stages. Sign of nationalistic spirit prevalent in Czechoslovakia is that five of Prague's seven legit theatres are performing original Czech plays, and only the opera and a musical comedy stage include plays of other extraction in their repertory.

Majority of cinemas are showing American pictures currently, but this may undergo a change in the future if Czechoslovakia's political orientation towards Germany finds expression in trade trends also. At present nationalistic tendencies turn against manifestations of foreign culture, German or otherwise.

Refugees from Germany not being admitted either to Czechoslovakia or to Hungary, exiled talent in no way changes the aspect of cinema production or other branches of show business in these countries. Neither have Austrian picture imports been important enough for their present lack to make any difference. After the Anschluss slump and another set-back in the war crisis days, entertainment trade in Hungary has picked up surprisingly. Production, at a complete standstill last spring, has made up for lost time. Some 22 full-length features have been completed this fall. Of these 11 have already been released. Hungarian production figures for the current season should not lag much, if any, behind the maximum production of 35 features made during the 1937-38 season.

Restitution of North Hungarian areas, up till now under Czech rule and closed to Hungarian imports, gives an added stimulus to national film production. Territorial readjustment has brought about a 10% increase of population, estimated to mean a 12% increase of picturegoers. This prospect gives a widened base for Hungarian pictures. Sale of these is restricted by language limits and costs must be kept within narrow bounds to ensure a reasonable profit margin. Locally-made features come to anything between \$24,000 and \$32,000. Only one or two have run to a higher figure.

Hungarian Cinderella

Hungarian pictures are gaining in popularity, improving in technical quality and in standard of acting. It's

the scripts that are sadly lacking. Majority are adaptations of popular fiction or stage plays, with current patriotic trend expressed by preference for folklore stories. Even among the original screenplays, there is not much trace of originality. The Cinderella element still prevails. On the whole, there is some improvement in the average quality, but no outstanding success. Hungarian pictures are steadily gaining importance in the local market but at present can hardly expect to do so abroad.

Durbin, Darrieux Tops

Figures for the first ten months of the year, Jan. 1 to Nov. 1, show that of 173 pictures shown, 90 were American. German imports have slipped considerably. Only 23 German features were exhibited, same number as Hungarian. There were 26 French imports. The remaining 11 features were of British, Italian, Czech and Austrian extraction. Outstanding favorites of 1938 were Deanna Durbin, Danielle Darrieux, Sacha Guitry, Clark Gable.

Legit theatres show astonishing vitality of Hungarian amusements. Of the 11 legit stages playing at the close of last season, one did not reopen; instead, there is a new venture to make up the number. Three of these have distinct successes now running: four current plays have already passed the 50-performance mark, a fact that means success in the case of a non-musical on the Budapest stage; subscriptions, particularly in the state-subsidized theatres, Opera and National, have gone over well. Constant source of complaint of managers is shortage of good plays. This is certainly not a local symptom, but a particularly depressing one in the case of Hungary. For years we used to pride ourselves on the fact that although poor in funds, we were rich in talents. The facile gifts of Hungarian playwrights started a world vogue. At present, although there is an insistent local demand for national product, there are not enough available plays to go round even at home. To eke out home product, there is an increasing demand for English and American plays, but few of these digest really well. In spite of Hungary's political approach to the Berlin-Rome axis, only one Italian and one German play, and that one on an American subject: Hanns Johst's 'Thomas Payne,' were produced in the government-controlled National theatre. Both were flops. Nationalistic trend is expressed by great number of historical and folk plays and fiction, but few of these have the hallmark of genuine conviction and strength that might carry a message beyond the obvious limitations of subjects. Hence, the export possibilities of Magyar plays have been considerably lessened of late.

This symptom of authors drying up is of course largely due to the political situation. There certainly is a good deal of truth in the old clash-of-arms-silence-of-Muses adage. Added to this are local difficulties resulting from new press laws and anti-Semitic measures. These do not exclude non-'Aryan' authors from publication or stage production, but have created an atmosphere of apprehension that is not conducive to creative conditions. This applies also to picture scripts and particularly to fiction publication.

Theatrical companies have not been influenced in any way by the anti-Semitic restrictions: so far, the only important changes due to these are evident in the press. Many periodicals have been refused circulation permits and considerable changes have been made on the staff of nearly all dailies, a matter of great importance in the world of Hungarian literati who largely depend on journalism for their bread-and-butter and write fiction and drama only as a part-time job. The current legislation to further shrink the 20% population ratio down to a 6% quota is further stifling that group of literati, cinematic and stage artisans.

However, even though things look slightly drab for the time being, Hungarian show business has given another proof of its vitality during the recent trying times. Producers, actors, authors, directors are skilful if not shatteringly important just at present, and Hungarian audiences insist on going to films and theatres on the slightest provocation. You can't kill the Hungarian entertainment trade unless you knock it on the head with a hammer—and apparently not even then.

Night Life in Berlin

Berlin, Dec. 20.

Former white light district of Berlin, the Friedrichstrasse, is just a ghost of its old self as the trend to the West Side continues. Kurfuerstendamm gets the play. Elite goes either to Ciro's or the Quartier Latin. These class joints are known for their jazzy bands and can afford best pay in town. International set generally meets after dinner for hoofing and champagne at small tables or hard liquor at the bar.

There are still lots of bars and petite boites. But they don't differ from the usual run in the other metropolises. Soft waltzes as well as the tango are tops. Most exclusive of these spots is the Koenigin. The Kakadu, longest rail in Germany, with a bevy of girls on both sides and a floor show now has a strong presence of Japanese. The Atlantic, Barberina, Rio Rita, Cascade, Freddy and Rocky are all intimate dance bars on or near the Kurfuerstendamm in easy reach of those on the nitery move.

Biggest dance place, allowing hundreds on the double floor, is Delphi in a building of its own now featuring Arne Huelphers, a Swedish band master. Another huge double floored dance cabaret—with a separate bar show up a flight—is Femina. Also does big afternoon biz.

Hohe Popular

Berlin native goes in for fun in crowds and flits down south into the New World. It is a gigantic barn with two floors, connected by shoot-the-shoots which whisk you off your feet and swing you to your place. It's great fun going there with a crowd in a holiday mood. There is shooting galleries, a merry-go-round and other indoor tentshows. Bavarian food, beer and music are served before a huge stage with modeling, shoe-plattler and all the hoke that goes with it.

It's the terp that also counts with the Resi, the frolic fave of the east-side. Mirrors everywhere and revolving mirrors from the ceiling reflect a colored sprinkle on the move. Over each table is an illuminated number to aid location for telephonic and postal communication. Through the tubes you can send any billet-doux to anybody hitting your eye. The only catch is the censorship department making ample use of the basket if your slip doesn't seem proper.

Haus Vaterland kept to it. The various rooms a la gypsy, turk and cowboy are standing attractions. An hourly thunderstorm over the Rhine is the main stunt of another room, and a generous floor show rounds up a lot of try-outs and feature names as well. St. Pauli, a class nitery styled on the remake of the dock-joints at St. Pauli, a district of Hamburg, never lacks a smart crowd and features the songs of the old salts with accordion accompaniment. A number of dancing gals keep hoofing on the run. A bar fills one nook of the room. It's a gay, peppy place and always packed. Another spot with a big draw is the Ziegeuner Keller in the center of West End night life, and situated in a cellar. A hot gypsy band in costumes and Hungarian decor jam it to capacity though no dancing is permitted. But food is good at the price and Hungarian wine for only a few cents a decanter helps key up the spirits.

Curfew

Although curfew rings on public places at 3 a.m., special club license gives life to some wee hour spots. Girls play quite a role in keeping whoopee-bent customers from turning in early. The Kuensler Eck is the oldest spot tucked away in a cellar. It has quite a tradition as hangout for artists who turn up after curfew and mix with the smart set on their last lap after lah-de-dah balls. Old folios and antique art adorn the walls. A keyboard is reserved for private tickling and musically minded guests amuse themselves till the crack of dawn.

Too Funny

A new spot way up the Kurfuerstendamm is the Kuensler Klause with boites and nooks but in the way of a restaurant. It's a rendezvous for artists after theatre and is crowded by visitors from the nearby Kabaret der Komiker, which reopened recently. Former management there was forced to close. Political satire and ribbing didn't jell with demands of official quarters.

The Tusculum is a wine-restaurant further down.

Lobbies of the international hotels look like those in Switzerland at the height of the season. Old German aristocracy and the new political world meets at the Kaiserhof. A separate restaurant with access from another side, the Kaiserstuben, is packed at dinnertime. If you are in search of the exclusive foreign element, you drop in at the Adlon bar or grillroom. Once a week the hotel sponsors a house-dance; it's a popular society affair. At the Eden are the aforesaid exclusives, with a dash of the artistic thrown in. A specialty is the five o'clock dance on the roof-garden with a good swingband. The Excelsior hotel is famed for its cellar restaurant with good food at low price. Eatery's a former Turkish bath all laid out in Dutch tile.

Those in the know as a rule don't stay in their swank hotels for dinner-time. Downtown they go to Hiller or Habel Unter den Linden or the Old Inn, tucked away in a courtyard. Uptown at Peltzer's Atelier, Horcher's next to the Scala or Schlichter's opposite, the gourmet can indulge his wildest fancies, fine wine included, and get out for around \$30, but if not bent on rarities, he can make a fiver do the trick.

For the Cosmopolitans

But all these places belong to the international side of things. It's not Berlin. The Berlin type of restaurant is the big beer place, such as the Berliner Kindl on the Kurfuerstendamm. In summertime tables are set out way into the street; at the back an open air garden is crowded, after sunset lit with electric bulbs strung from tree to tree. During bock-beer time when particularly hefty beer is on tap, special entertainments are arranged. Electric bulbs get colored lampion fittings, paper festoons dangle from the ceiling and a Bavarian band frolics up a hum. The crowd gets balloons and paper cups and the fun gets going. The place is packed to the rafters. Such beer restaurants with backyards as Alte Klause are scattered up and down Kurfuerstendamm. Italian and Russian spots lie in between. The cafe addicts meet at Cafe Wien where there is hoofing on the second floor. On Nollendorfplatz Cafe Hoffmann has an excellent Mexican band, while the Filmhof further on has a floor show and jazzband.

Aussie Revivals Didn't Revive Biz

By Eric Gorrick

Sydney, Dec. 15.

After remaining in the doldrums for the better part of 1938, legit is at the moment encouraging hopes for 1939. Old Williamson-Tait setup continued bringing old-time revivals out of the storehouse only to find public appetite blunted. Revivals included 'Desert Song,' 'Belle of New York,' 'Rose-Marie,' 'No. No. Nanette' and 'New Moon.' These revivals played both here and Melbourne.

Of the new shows offered by the W-T setup, 'Balalaika' went to a big hit, proving that public still willing to pay for class attractions with fresh artists. Margaret Adams and Robert Halliday from U. S. scored in this show. W-T also did remarkably well with Ruth Draper. British star, Fay Compton, did excellently in Melbourne with 'Victoria Regina,' but oddly did not fare so well in Sydney with this one and two others—'George and Margaret' and 'Tonight at 8:30.'

June, 1938, saw, after months of share dickerings, a new unit. Australian-New Zealand Theatres, take over the W-T holdings. This deal was brought about largely through the efforts of Ken Asprey. The old W-T directorate was cast overboard and a new one appointed, including Asprey, Frank Tail, Stanley Crick, George Dean, Ernest C. Rolls. Major stockholders include A. W. Allen, Sir Hugh Dension, Sir George Tallis, E. Gorman, H. S. Chambers, W. H. Edwards, J. H. Mason and K. C. Campbell.

Revivals were continued until Ernest Rolls was able to book new attractions abroad. Took a chance, however, and decided to spot Betty Balfour in 'Personal Appearance,' but the show flopped quickly in Melbourne, and here, ANZT, with nothing new to offer, closed down

HUNGARIAN GROUP MAY PLAY N. Y. EXPO

Tibor Koves of Budapest is in New York on a deal for the Gypsy Children's orchestra of 25 from the Hungarian capital for the N.Y. World's Fair.

This is the troupe Bob Ritchie, Metro talent scout, had all set to import but encountered labor permit difficulties in connection with doing a film on the Coast.

GOV'T RADIO FACES ACUTE COIN LACK

London, Dec. 23.

BBC is threatening it will reduce programs in quality and quantity, slow down visio, restrict cultural and foreign broadcasts and reduce personnel unless Government gives it an increased bankroll. Is currently incurring heavy expense in Broadcasting House expansion, additions at regional transmitters, boosting visio et al, and is likely to become insolvent unless more cash is forthcoming.

Aside from receipts from publications, Corp exists entirely on Gov't grants from the income it receives from radio licenses. These cost 10 shillings (\$2.50) per set per year, yielding annual sum of above \$20,000,000, but of this the Treasury takes a rake off of nearly 33% to cover expenses plus a contribution to the national exchequer.

MORLAY'S NEXT PIC

Gaby Morlay, French film and legit actress, will return to France in February after a brief Canadian tour in 'Victoria Regina,' to star in Marcel L'Herbier's film production of 'Entente Cordiale,' based on life of King Edward VII.

Sexton Blake, gumshoe hero of millions of English kids, due for BBC serial mat in 1939. Ernest Dudley is writing a script from a story by Berkeley Gray.

NOT SO GAY PAREE

By Hugo Speck

Paris, Dec. 20.

Harassed and hounded by internal political differences, distressed and disturbed by an almost continual war scare topped by being nearer to a great conflict than at any time since the treaty of Versailles, a big slice of the Gay was knifed off Gay Paree during the last 12 months with the end of the year seeing a continued letdown as compared to previous seasons.

While after dark amusements cannot be said to have diminished greatly in number, the end of the year seeing the usual flourish to snatch whatever holiday coin was on the spend, the trend of political events, and especially the new financial decrees of November upping the cost of living, exerted a great influence.

Wave of strikes which began in 1936 continued to make sporadic appearances and the franc was allowed to fall another 30% in relation to the dollar at the end of the year. This was decidedly against causing even the money spending Frenchman to trade mille notes for champagne corks. The lower franc did have the effect of attracting more visitors, especially English, but the touchy international setup did much to offset what would ordinarily be a big tourist draw.

In only one case did international events help the bright light world. That was the postponement of the visit of King George and Queen Elizabeth of England. Spots intending to stay open until late June until after the visit, extended shuttering until they had returned to England in late July.

Montmartre

Through it all Montmartre on the hill still held top honors for high, middle and low offerings to the pre-dawn browsers. Every type of night life Paris has to offer from the dance halls with taxi girls, smoky little boites where the atmosphere is not on the bill, niteries where nudity reigns, the bigger class spots to the little exclusive clubs where the atmosphere is very much on the bill, are to be found somewhere on the slant of the hill.

Bagatelle, where Ford Harrison's American orchestra and a local tango band are the only attractions, is the big class spot of the district and the only one in town where evening dress is de rigueur. It does not compete except in price with the upper strata restaurants like Maxim's and Cafe de Paris, both of which are in the Opera district and carry bands. The Bagatelle is a supper club exclusively, catering only to the after-dinner and after-theatre crowds, opening at 11 o'clock.

Leading in popularity with all classes is Pierre Sandrini's Bal Tabarin which also passes the dinner for a later opening but carries the best floor show to be seen. Popularly priced, Sandrini's specializes in glorifying the gal. Two Americans, Lyda Sue, acrobatic dancing ace, and Anita Lou, American can-can dancer, topped the Yanks in this year's revue bolstered by six dancers from the New York side of the water. Plans call for a new revue at the Bal early in 1939. Sandrini intended to open the Moulin Rouge as the class dinner-dance spot of Paris in the late fall or early winter but delayed reconstruction because of disturbed situation.

Subdued Lights

Of the little exclusive nooks where subdued lights, Russian and Hungarian music and signers offer recompense for stratospheric prices, four led the list at the end of the year. There was Sheherazade; Casanova, where the American singer Reva Reyes is still favorite; Monte Cristo, where American singers used to headline but their pay is too steep now; Don Juan, opened and operated for a time by Harry Pilcer, and perhaps also the Monseigneur, to add on a fifth.

Below this overpublicized exclusiveness and overpriced drinks comes a host like Caprice Viennois, Le Grand Jeu, Chez O'Dett, Chez Frisco, The Big Apple, with Brick Top doing the honors, Melody's Bar and a great many smaller spots. Noticeable by its absence is Chez Florence, for years the top spot on the hill, but closed after the summer season and shuttered ever since.

Three sizeable nudist adherents hold the notice—Chez les Nudistes, which offers the best show produced by Felix Rosan; Chez Eve and Pile on Face, the latter being reopened after nearly a year's darkness, Dance

halls in this section are plentiful enough with the Coliseum where Willie Lewis and his Yank colored orchestra is spotted and Tahiti-Dancing leading the lot.

Swing to the Etoile

Noticeable during the year was a swing of night life interest from the hill to the Champs-Elysees district with the larger cafes putting more interest in musicking houses so customers could come and listen, pay a cafe price for a drink and go home. Class place for the summer season was the Restaurant des Ambassadeurs, with shows set by Clifford Fischer and Henry Lartigue. These embodied some of the best offerings of the time, including Eddie Oliver's orch, with the 12 Paradise Girls and acts like Grace Poggi, Ketty Mara and the Anacaona Sisters. But indicative of the trend in this town of how much money is available, spot reopened in October without dinners, with Eddie Foy's French band to be replaced later by that of Serge Glykson, no line of girls, with acts and prices pared in comparison. Later, however, Georges Carpentier was installed as host and the talent budgets upped with comparable increase in biz.

Pavillon de l'Elysee, a little further up the Avenue, was a new spot for this year and was still surviving when the old one was ushered out. In the higher price range like those up nearer the Etoile, it caters mostly to a French crowd. Still going strong and making a bid for the dinner crowd by a recently inaugurated policy is the Bocuf-sur-le-Toit—translated Steer on the Roof for us—just around the corner from the Hotel Georges V. Class of entertainment there is usually consistently held to a pretty high standard, with Billie Sparrow, Bob Harley and Garland Wilson getting breaks and George Johnson's American Negro band holding down the pit for swing. Over on the other side of the Avenue is Villa d'Este where Harwood Chase maestros another American Negro band and entertainment hits a good interest scale. In the same district are Chapeau Rouge, Le Berry and Cabaret des Champs-Elysees where Bernard Hilda and his band splits its time between there and the downstairs cabaret at the Cafe Florian. One dance hall came into existence in the district during the year in the reopening of the old Chez Ray Ventura as Mimi Pinson's. The Bagdad specializing in tea dances, reopened late in the season to make a bid for the holiday business.

Left bank's Montparnasse held its own with the same old haunts. It still housed the Poisson d'Or, the Boule Blanche, the Joker, the Jockey, and la Villa in the ordinary run of cabarets and the Cabaret des Fleurs as its nudist contribution. Still going is the Monocle, hole-in-wall for the gals who wear tuxedos. Sphinx across the street is another tourist eye-popper.

PANEL OF 4,000 TO CHART BBC SHOWS

London, Dec. 23.

Listener research at BBC, starting new probe, covering a bigger field and digging deeper. Research unit is eager to get some index of opinion on programs generally, and is inviting 4,000 random radio owners to keep tabs on Corp's weekly output so as to show which features are most listened to.

Special logging sheet is being issued to the 4,000, who are asked to indicate what programs they heard, together with comment, and sheets are posted back to BBC each week. System is entirely voluntary, and cooperators are selected from tally of nearly 100,000 who responded to a recent request to kick in with Corp on the research slant. Probe will cover period of four months.

BBC claims these tests have proved most satisfactory when applied to individual types of programs, and states John Watt was largely guided by a 2,000-listener probe of variety in building current schedules. Inquiries have also been similarly carried out on talk and discussion features.

More, Better French Films During 1938; New Rules Impeding Yanks Expected

By Hugo Speck

Paris, Dec. 20.

Year 1938 has been perhaps the greatest in the history of French film production. Marked step-up in the number of productions, but more important this increased number of films has shown improvement in quality which American distributors can no longer ignore, or at least, must recognize as a growing competitive factor.

Technical progress generally has kept pace with photography. Little technical mistakes which can make a film look amateurish to the educated cinema audiences of today have been ironed out to a considerable extent. There is still room for improvement but progress has been made.

Big stuff in the French industry was fact that a Hollywood star, Marlene Dietrich, was signed by Jack Forrester, of Forrester-Parant, to make a film in France during the coming spring. This is exceptional, for France has mostly small producers (nearly 90 companies produced 111 films in 1937). French can at the moment exert themselves on name talent due to low production costs viewed broadly. Staggering outlay for executives, directors and high overhead in general forked up by the Yank companies is not on ledgers here. Too, studio costs are much lower in comparison and taxes for stars differ between the two countries by as much as 45%. The French can use the tax difference for salary outlay.

When von Stroheim, Conrad Veidt and a few others started making pictures here, the French industry began boasting that it was turning the tables on Hollywood. The Dietrich deal followed on Grace Moore's film in France during the latter part of the year.

Only 20 films were produced during the first three months as compared with the 31 in the same period of the previous year. Labor laws calling for the 40-hour week had upped production by some 40% and a great many of the producers had been caught by the exchanges, having previously borrowed in England at 110 to the pound and being forced to pay them back at 160.

Industry soon shook that lethargy, however, and in the following three months turned on the pressure to make completed productions stand at 55 at the mid-year marker.

Between 15 and 20 productions rate mention. First real outstanding production to make its appearance during the year was 'Prison Sans Barreaux' ('Prison Without Bars'), which gave Corinne Luchaire her first big part and as a result of her performance saw her making an English version of the pic for Korda in London. This was followed by the only pic Charles Boyer made in France during the year.

An adaptation of a Bernstein play called 'Orage' (Storm), it revealed another newcomer in Michele Morgan who next co-starred with Jean Gabin in another of the year's best productions, 'Le Quai de Brumes' ('Foggy Quay'). Interspersed between these two came one of the year's greatest flops and one of its best offerings. The former was 'La Marseillaise' which Pierre Renoir produced and marked the one and only film in which the government had a hand. It was supposed to be the super-super production of the previous year for presentation at the expo but was not released until March of this year.

'Ballerina' Tops

Commendable piece of work in the study of child psychology was 'La Mort du Cygne,' released in America under the title of 'Ballerina.' For its type, this was the best production of the year.

Two other films high on the standard scale but of entirely different nature were 'Alerte en Mediterranee' and 'Adrienne Lecouvreur,' the former having an international flare on a naval background and the latter of the dated type showing the life of a music hall sweetheart of another age. Going back in history also was 'The Patriot' in which Jean Renoir held up a co-lead with Harry Baur in taking some leaves from the history of Russia. Also drawing on Russian history for a background was 'Tragedie Imperiale,' 'Tarakanova,' 'Katia,' and 'Jouer d'Echecs' ('Chess Player') with Conrad Veidt.

Meanwhile no overwhelming catastrophe engulfed American film in-

terests here but 1938 has seen a great sufficiency of unwanted and uncontrollable events take place. And worse, 1939 promises to bring legislative action of a sort that is bound to curtail American activities here and cut receipts.

Outstanding events over which the Americans had no control and which hurt all business interests in France alike were the screwball international situation and a further devaluation of the franc. From May the franc slid to 38 to the dollar by the end of the year in comparison to around 25 in January, 1938. That meant that 13 more francs had to be made for every dollar squeezed out of the business here if dollars were to be taken out of the country. That fall in the value of the franc in no way offset the corresponding decrease in operating costs for American firms doing business in this country.

First show on the legislative field indicating that the French had by no means forgotten their home industry and wanted to help it to the detriment of the outsiders came in March when the government appointed a committee charged with the duty of finding out why production output in this country stood at such a low figure and recommending measures to remedy the fault. Happily for American interests the committee never did much more than discover that of the 488 films shown in France during 1937 only 116 of them had been French. It recommended that the government take measures to correct this deficiency of French production, but none of its recommendations prompted any steps.

Thereafter the country was too occupied with government changes and war scares to pay much attention to any reforms those out gunning for foreign films might want to put into law. Nothing further happened that greatly affected the Yanks until early in October after the international uneasiness resulting in the Munich agreements had subsided. The Yanks were caught unaware when the gates were opened to let in the mob searching for visas for the 94 foreign dubbed films which could be shown in France between Jan. 1 and June 30, 1939.

New Visa Laws

A new clause had been included in the visa law making it necessary that all films be dubbed before they could be registered for visas. It was that clause that elbowed the Yanks out of their place in the waiting line. Previously, foreign films could be registered for visas before they were dubbed, but not so this trip. They had to be dubbed first. As a consequence several American concerns did not have their product ready, but finally managed to grab their share before the 94 visas to be allotted were filled. What did come to light though was that independent distributors who had bought old films in America for small prices had entered them as American product, bringing the sum total of visas granted Yank pictures higher than the usual. But in so doing they were doing an injustice to the American industry by importing secondary films in the first place that the companies themselves would never think of sending to France and secondly, by grabbing visas that should rightfully go to top American product. Figures on visas granted for foreign films during 1938 and the first six months of 1939 will be found below.

Coming at practically the same time, and looking much worse from the American angle, was the formation of another committee to draft laws for that forever searched for cure-all for the French industry. With members appointed from all ministries which have anything to do with the making, distribution, importing and exporting of films, the committee was placed under the Premier's office with a mandate to make its recommendations before the end of the year.

At the time it was formed informed circles were of the belief that the new inter-ministerial commission was the forerunner to the sort of action that in no way could be of any help to the Yanks and might possibly find some means of getting around the terms of the Franco-America trade treaty.

Fears thus engendered in American circles were practically confirmed in November when first smelters of what the committee's

The sweep of quota ideas and legislation, restrictions and nationalism in foreign countries represented more than just the threat presented in 1937, but a definite inroad into the revenue of American companies in the past year. An added handicap was the continuation of the Sino-Japanese conflict and the spread of Nazism in central Europe as the German rule extended to Austria and parts of Czechoslovakia.

While income prospects are on the downgrade in Europe and in other parts of the world, some hope is seen in bolstering returns from South America, where many foreign managers spent much time in the past year. Actually, income from the foreign market is off only 8% as a whole compared with a year ago, but ensuing months are expected to see a further dip, especially if Nazi influence is extended, war scares continue in Europe, and Italy goes through with its distribution monopoly act.

To add an additional headache, Great Britain, which might be expected to take up the slack or decline elsewhere, will not show any appreciable improvement over 1937. Reason: the new Quota law. Put into effect in the last 12 months, it forces U. S. picture companies to make or buy more expensive British features.

Although the larger American companies thus far have decided to live up to the spirit as well as the letter of the British quota law by spotting costly pictures on their quota requirement programs, if these more expensive productions (with an outlay of upwards of \$500,000 each) do not measure up in the world market, and especially the United States, American distributors may decide to trim sails and make more minimum credit films. But for the moment, U. S. companies are willing to test the idea that successful world-market pictures can be made in England even if representing a big outlay. Also the credits all along the line have been virtually doubled, meaning that twice as much money must be put into Great Britain's quota credit films. All of which cuts into net revenue received from distribution in England.

Italian Blow

While much talk is heard about the inroads of Nazism, American companies really feel that the biggest blow to their European market would be the establishment of Italy's nationalization plan, whereby a government body would handle the distribution of all foreign product (largely that from U. S.) in that country. Italian business, under existing political conditions, represents a neat percentage of that done now on the continent by U. S. film companies and, inversely, the tremendous popularity of American films may eventually win the Italian government around to a more reasonable attitude. But this will have to come after the first of the year.

The Italian film monopoly was scheduled to become effective Jan. 1, 1939, and major companies had made arrangements to quit the country if the law went into effect

recommendations would most likely contain came to nose. Decrees making law of its findings were expected to show with the batch of financial and economic reforms issued at the middle of the month, but for some unknown reason they were postponed. But as the commission's life is limited to the end of the year the new decrees are expected to appear before Dec. 31.

As far as could be learned in the best informed circles the decrees will be in six parts, nearly all of which will take a crack at the Americans without them having any legal grounds for regress. Those measures which it is expected will be included which would hit the Americans hardest are:

1. A paragraph making it obligatory for all houses to carry a documentary film on each program. Reason which will be given for this will be to encourage young directors, as most young meggers start with that type of film. But in reality these would make programs too long for double features to be carried. And that is where the Americans would be caught. In the nabes and provinces where most of the double feature programs are offered, it is an American film usually which furnishes the second part of the program. If documentaries were made obligatory the second film would have to be dropped, mean-

By Mike Wear

as outlined. American firms contend they can't operate profitably on any flat rental basis with the Italian government body controlling all distribution, claiming that they are being forced out of business in Italy. If Americans get out, it will be the final move away from the Hays office agreement made between Americans and Italians about two years ago.

Almost before the ink was dry on this pact, there were departures or threats of such from the terms laid down. First there was a project to abolish dubbing of foreign films which would have eliminated small-town business. This fell through but shortly afterwards there was a big increase in the dubbing tax, these added revenues being used by Italian picture firms to help them compete against the pictures they were taxing. Then there was talk of cutting the amount of exportable earnings from \$1,000,000 a year to \$500,000 and number of pictures they could import into Italy from 250 to 150 annually. This also failed but left American representatives convinced that they could not depend on the Italian film industry holding to the Hays agreement.

Italy already has a customs duty, an amusement tax and an added burden in that virtually all films must be dubbed into the Italian language. The number of films allowed into the country is limited and there is a quota on exhibitors as to the number of foreign pictures they may play.

Hitlerism

Absorption of Austria by Hitler meant that the same quota laws, restrictions and other regulations now apply to pictures distributed in the country which has become a German province. While not a highly profitable territory, it meant reduction of foreign income. Only a few cities thus far have been placed under Nazi rule in Czechoslovakia as result of the Sudetenland partition. Theatres in the area represent a negligible amount of business because largely German lower-class patronage. Big threat to foreign business is contained, however, in the possible spread of German control into other important nations.

And in the Far East

Returns from China get worse as Japanese troops press their warfare to larger cities. Besides the number of theatres destroyed in bombardments, experience has shown that those operated under military control seldom show as good boxoffice as under civil regime.

Promise of better revenue from the Orient is contained in the agreement made by American companies with Japan, whereby approximately 240 features were shipped into that country by the end of 1938 and \$800,000 in rental coin was withdrawn from Japan to the Yokohama bank at San Francisco. This money, derived from revenue on pictures distributed in Japan, will be split up among the American companies signing the pact at the end of three

years. Agreement was satisfying because it temporarily lifted the ban, in existence for about a year, against U. S. films being imported into Japan and paved the way for distributors to get their profits out of that country. Real hope in the Orient, however, lies in the early successful culmination of present Japanese campaign in China.

Upturn in France, even though a critical monetary situation cut into any increase in boxoffice, was a happy development. Several companies made extensive and profitable deals for showing their product, with the mild dubbing restrictions and taxes not greatly changed from a year ago. This friendly attitude on the part of the French government partially can be attributed to the greater success which has greeted the showing of French-made films in this country.

Down Under

Agitation for quota laws in numerous states of Australia, with anything likely to happen, is termed a real threat to business Down Under. Australians were given the cold shoulder in England's quota law, any hope of bolstering home production being crushed by the new British act. There still remains the urge, particularly in New South Wales where some of the biggest centers of population are situated, to push Australian production. The new quota law put into effect during 1938 in New South Wales has been ignored by American distributors on the grounds of unconstitutionality. As a consequence, new N. South Wales laws were passed late in the year and will cut deeply into U. S. revenue.

Distribution is looking up in several Scandinavian countries. Sweden, however, is agitating for a home industry which is expected to mean restrictions or higher taxes against foreign films. South Africa still enjoys free trade, although real revenue comes from only about seven or eight cities of importance.

South America

While the American industry is looking hopefully to South America as a means of further increasing business, leaders admit there is an undercurrent even now which hints of restrictions, higher taxes and possibly quotas to come. Argentina is the only actual country where this has come to the surface. Proposed American government campaign to use films as goodwill bearers is expected to combat the spread of Nazi and Fascist ideas in South American territory. At least they will counteract the propaganda of which American film officials have been cognizant for some time. Desire to obtain a firmer foothold in South America and supplant other foreign pictures with U. S. product is seen, too, in the programs of several Spanish features in work for several major companies at the present time. Possibilities of this territory are seen in these ambitious moves by American producers.

Mexico continues as a profitable market, despite labor government rules which have added to the cost, already high because of a high tariff and taxation.

London Calling

London, Dec. 20.

Willson Disher to broadcast Jerome Kern's life story in March.

Duke of Kent, King's brother and prospective Governor-General of Australia, will broadcast to Commonwealth Jan. 26 on Empire programs.

Clifford Odets' 'Waiting for Lefty' on BBC list for March presentation, despite fears of its leftist swing; other drammer plans include Burgess Meredith's 'Adventures of Mr. Bean,' Barrie's 'Twelve Pound Look,' 'Jamaica Inn,' 'Mr. Deeds Goes to

ing the cutting out of the American film.

2. State control of collection of receipts. This is an old proposal dating back for several years. Reason for its inclusion stated that it would protect the rights of authors, writers, etc., and assure them of getting their just cut. But if it contains the stipulations it carried when originally proposed it would allow the state to take a further cut of the receipts—presumably for the cost of the collection—with which the French industry would be subsidized in one manner or another.

Town,' repeat of G. B. Shaw's 'St. Joan' and a new play by James Bridie.

Alexander Woolcott to broadcast program on Stephen Foster from New York.

Reckitt & Colman Products have placed contract with Normandy through London Press Exchange and J. Walter Thompson Co.

Jack Waller's life story aired as fourth of BBC 'Showmen of England' series.

Val Gielgud's BBC drama plans for Jan.-March include 'No. 17,' 'Les Miserables,' three broadcasts from K. K. Chesterton's 'Club of Queer Trades,' 'Mr. Deeds Goes to Town,' 'Cyrano de Bergerac' (Humbert Wolfe's rhyme version—again), Bernard Shaw's 'St. Joan.'

B. A. EXHIBS GET 2 MORE

Buenos Aires, Dec. 25.

Lautaret & Covo, local exhibitors, who have been operating five cinemas, have purchased two other houses, the Broadway and the Mogador.

Latter theatre operated by Augusto Alvarez.

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PANTOMIME**"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"****SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE**

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ERNE LOTINGA as "BUTTONS" in "CINDERELLA" Pantomime

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IN
"OLD IRON"

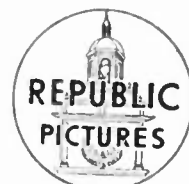
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UA's Spanish Trio; Wm. Rowland to Mex for RKO

Contracts have been signed between United Artists and Fortunio Bona Nova, Spanish actor and film producer, whereby latter will make three pictures for the Latin-American market. UA will release. One picture will be made in Hollywood and other two in Mexico. Nova will co-star with Andrea Palma. Producer is now in Mexico to cast the film.

Contracted to turn out six Spanish talkers for RKO this season, William Rowland has gone to Mexico City to make the second of the series following production of the first earlier this fall at the Eastern Service studio, Astoria.

Rowland's pictures are budgeted at \$40,000 each. Since the first ran to nearly \$50,000, he is trying Mexico City as a producing ground in the hopes of holding the negative cost down. All five yet to go under the RKO contract may be made there as a result.

Current London Plays

(With Dates When Opened)

'French Without Tears,' Criterion—Nov. 6, '36.
'Robert's Wife,' Globe—Nov. 23, '37.
'Me and My Girl,' Victoria Palace—Dec. 16, '37.
'Nine Sharp,' Little—Jan. 26, '38.
'Banana Ridge,' Strand—April 27, '38.
'Glorious Morning,' Whitehall—May 26, '38.
'Spring Meeting,' Ambassador—May 31, '38.
'Lot's Wife,' Savoy—June 10.
'The Fleet's Lit Up,' Hippodrome—Aug. 17.
'George and Margaret,' Piccadilly—Aug. 30.
'Running Riot,' Gaiety—Aug. 31.
'Flashing Stream,' Lyric—Sept. 1.
'Room for Two,' Comedy—Sept. 6.
'Dear Octopus,' Queens—Sept. 14.
'The Corn Is Green,' Duchess—Sept. 20.
'Goodbye, Mr. Chips,' Shaftesbury—Sept. 23.
'Elephant in Arcady,' Kingsway—Oct. 5.
'Bobby Get Your Gun,' Adelphi—Oct. 7.
'When We Are Married,' St. Martin's—Oct. 11.
'Quiet Wedding,' Wynham's—Oct. 14.
'Goodness, How Sad,' Vaudeville—Oct. 18.
'Idiot's Delight,' His Majesty's—Oct. 24.
'Elizabeth of Austria,' Garrick—Nov. 3.
'Traitor's Gate,' Duke of York—Nov. 17.
'Geneva,' Seville—Nov. 22.
'Under Your Hat,' Palace—Nov. 24.
'Story of African Farm,' New—Nov. 30.
'Windfall,' Apollo—Dec. 15.
'Under Suspicion,' Playhouse—Dec. 20.
'No. 6,' Aldwych—Dec. 21.

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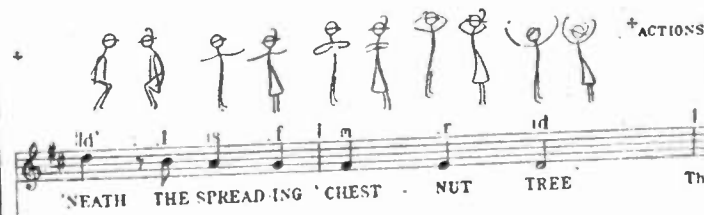
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Night Life in Tel Aviv Lively Despite Internat'l Troubles

Palestine, Dec. 20.

Despite its troubles, Tel Aviv, all-Jewish metropolis on the shores of the Mediterranean, has been keeping its niteries wide open. Three of them have gone in for floor shows and permanent bands, mostly drawn from the hot spots of Beirut, Damascus and Cairo. Other artists drift in here from Bucharest, Budapest and Prague.

Bands are so-so, entertainment fair. Most of it is copied from American films which are in vogue now, since German and Italian pix are taboo. A good band on a month's stay in Tel Aviv would clean up.

All niteries have no cover charge. Prices on drinks, food, etc., are modest. They make their profits on turnover, the places usually being filled from 7 at night until around 1 a.m., when municipal authorities clamp down on music.

British Pride in Donat Pic Soars 'Citadel' B.O.

London, Jan. 1.

Combination of 'local-town-boy-makes-good' and the fact that the picture already has clicked in America, brought unusually enthusiastic notices on 'The Citadel' at the Empire.

Rave criticisms, in which British prestige as typified by this picture was stressed, held responsible here for the way the business is holding up.

'King' Grinds in B. A.

Buenos Aires, Jan. 1.

New policy of continuous showing of a new feature has been inaugurated by Paramount with 'If I Were King' when it opened here at the Opera Cinema, Dec. 29.

Performances start late in the afternoon and run until after midnight instead of the usual three-a-day plan generally employed at houses here.

CAIRO EDITOR TO H'WOOD

Cairo, Dec. 14.

Zakaria Cherbini, 30-year old film editor of Al Ahram, Arabic newspaper, is planning to visit Hollywood in March.

His primary purpose for the visit will be to do some articles on films.

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The Costumers

By JOHN HURLEY

Costume business, which had been coming out at the elbows for some time, is wearing new duds. Better than a dozen new fields are being serviced. Along with two forthcoming Fairs in 1939 at New York and San Francisco, television looms a speck on the horizon as a future aid.

Loss of vaudeville's flash acts, units and costumed turns, together with decline of musicals, repertory, stock, the road, costume balls and masquerades, (pre-cafe society), all were socks in the nose. When the Federal Theatre Projects decided to dress themselves, it was the unkindest cut of all.

Bright outlook comes with new territories and development of what was considered gray side-lines. Schools, clubs, churches, little theatres, summer theatres, Junior League groups, charity shows, and shows aboard ships (transoceanic and cruises), plus the new wrinkle of pageants and large scale niteries have helped. Prospect of 50 different shows at New York Fair '39 and slight return of costume plays this and last season are also cheering.

No Specialties

It's true that some of the one-time users are still around, but amount is insufficient to keep any small outfits operating in the money. Smallies have been forced to the wall. Certain individuals 'make out' with a couple of accounts, i.e., smaller niteries and present day burlesque with its scant costuming. Burley was important once, but advent of the strip hurt. Specialists (makers alone) are virtually extinct. All are making, buying, renting, selling to get by under new order of things. All have had to reorganize and re-trench.

Coincident with the change in revenue sources, the seasonal aspect of the business has altered. There's a year-around flow now as compared to October to May high spot of yesteryear. Another new factor is the volume of business as compared to one time large individual orders of the Ziegfeld, Carroll, Dillingham and Erlanger period. Profit is made on quicker turnover now. Also there is less bad debt risk today. Once as much as \$25,000 had to be written off the costumer's books annually. Uncollectible figures rarely hit the hundreds now. Smaller number of shoestringers in Broadway producing is a contributing aid. Other new accounts are equally less speculative.

Cafes Bad Risks

Greatest risks are in the cabaret field. Those who put too much stock in bistros have been hit plenty, largely by the 77b route around New York. Biggies don't have much to do with New York niteries, excepting large scale ones. They confine nitery activity to out-of-town spots on rental c.o.d. basis.

Many of little theatre groups, drama workshops, etc., get up their own rigging, but the majority make outside buys. Scenery construction, direction and acting are prime concerns.

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Paul Robeson

*Season's Greetings
To My Friends Both
Sides of the Atlantic,
With a Particular "Hello"
To the Hyams Brothers*

Care of American Express Co.
Haymarket, London, England

Varieties' Paris Decline

By Hugo Speck

Paris, Dec. 20.

If night life floundered in Paris during 1938 then what is properly called vaudeville went completely under, torpedoed for a bull's-eye by very many of the same reasons which caused after dark amusement spots to become just after dark spots for the lack of persons wanting to be amused, even at any price.

This type of entertainment began taking it on the lam last year and continued so drastically that by the

end of the year the old vaudeville pond was just about dry.

At one time in 1936 there were ten houses open and offering a pretty fair brand of variety or vaudeville shows. Last year that number dropped to five and this year three, with only one offering anything like class bills, the other two content to fill programs with French circuit riders, all native in vintage and all ways in France because their product is not exportable. The two permanent circuses which have always been here kept their stands open for business but their offerings must be considered from a different angle. So in reality it all boils down to three, with Mitty Goldin's ABC shifting over to revues about half of the time, to pass up what few foreign acts he can afford to bid for, the situation looks about as lively as a scarecrow on a very still day.

Four Reasons

In addition to those already cited, the following reasons undoubtedly contributed to the shrinkage of this type of show business and curiously enough both radio and cinemas had a hand in it:

1. A further devaluation of the franc: it continually falling throughout the year for a tumble of over 30% during the 12 months to touch 38 to the dollar;
2. A decree early in the year making it obligatory that cinemas grossing over a certain amount weekly put in vaudeville acts or pay an extra 25% tax;
3. A movement on the part of independent radio broadcasting stations to give public broadcasts in different theatres and halls where the public was admitted on the cuff or for practically nothing in relation to variety house prices; and
4. A growing unwillingness on the part of the public to pay the prices asked to see the same acts over and over again in one house after another.

First, however, probably had more influence than any one of the following three. With 38 francs to the

dollar and over 178 to the pound it is evident that operators here could not pay foreign name acts to appear in France unless acts were willing to double while here, which in itself presents plenty of difficulties. That narrowed the field to local acts and there aren't anything like enough to go around, which resulted in discontent on the part of the public and a falling off of box returns caused by number four.

Although the decree mentioned in number two was never rigorously applied into the 50-odd houses it affected in the Paris region, many of the larger cinema cases did put in acts or pit orchestras to cover the most loose application possible of the law. But it did result in many of the acts and orchestras which were making the rounds popping up at first one cinema and then the next. So the oncomers were naturally more willing to pay the price of a film and see an act or two instead of paying almost the equivalent or more to see the same acts in a variety house.

Radio No Help

Free show offerings by the radio stations hit their stride in September and have to this date seemingly clinched the fact that vaudeville has been buried in a pretty deep grave. Variety, legit cinema and revue house operators headed by Mitty Goldin got together to fight the idea, claiming it was unfair competition as the broadcasting stations did not contribute to the public assistance taxes or have to stand heavy overheads. The big drum was beat for all it was worth with a lot of noise coming therefrom, but at the close of the year the broadcasters continued with their free or almost free shows. Poste Parisien was using the 2,800-seater Empire, Radio-Cite was using the Normandie and the Theatre Pigalle, and other stations were dividing their attention between smaller houses and halls. But there is no doubt this practice did its part in choking off vaudeville on a legitimate vaudeville stage.

With the ABC, the other two houses worthwhile mentioning at the end of the year were the European and the Bobino, the latter two smaller and in the nabes. True, there was the Petit-Casino, the Concert Mayol specializing in revues, and the larger theatres offering acts but none of them pull much weight. Mitty Goldin with his ABC offers the best shows, snagging foreign acts wherever possible, but nothing like those which have been seen in previous years. Clifford Fischer is reported to be dickering for the Empire as a vaude outlet here but nothing tangible had come of that at this writing.

Three revue houses, while offering nothing exceptional in the way of foreign name acts and some the same as far as native talent goes, kept perking at the usual rate with a climb upward towards the end of the year.

Chevalier Revue

Varna's Casino de Paris ran a revue headed first by Mistinguett and later by John Warner until late October, and then burst out with the best thing he has produced in years with a crackling show headed by Maurice Chevalier. The latter is a bell ringer and is set to run until March of next year. At his Alcazar, a nude review with no outstanding talent held the stage for the greater portion of the year, with a Marseillaise revue going in towards the end of the year.

Paul Derval's Folies-Bergere closed a revue headed by Josephine Baker early in the season, after a

Newsreels and World News

By Mike Wear

It was a year of swift happenings. Paramount, Fox-Movietone, Universal, Metro's News of the Day, and RKO's Pathe, followed newspaper headlines closely, but the newspaper headlines were following the radio news flashes and the reels were often downright stale. Dictatorships and propaganda control complicated their job further. Photographically the difficulty is making a comprehensive story, topically the difficulty is securing early shipment. Anschluss and Czechoslovakia were newsreel heartbreakers.

Past year had no graphic luck breaks such as Norman Alley's Panay boat Scooperoo, the Hindenburg disaster, the police killing of 12 in labor shooting at Chicago.

Munich was the highlight of 1938 and history. Jewish persecution scenes, ranked by most newsreel editors as next in importance in foreign affairs, were terrifically ticklish and hard to handle. Editors rank struggle between the Japanese and Chinese as third in news value. 'March of Time' cashed in on Europe's troubles with several timely topics.

While press association editors are inclined to name the terrific hurricane which swept New York, Long Island and New England as an outstanding story, newsreels attach equal importance to the Howard Hughes around-the-world flight and the Douglas Corrigan solo plane jaunt to Ireland. This is because they were able to cash in on both stories with more dramatic effect. Several of the reels, just as the daily newspapers, were slow in getting into action on the tropical hurricane catastrophe because it's the type of news whose scope spreads and is not easily predicted.

On the domestic front the newsreels designated the national election last fall as next of importance, as did newspaper editors, because of sweep in sentiment towards the Republican party.

Whereas a year ago there was considerable talk concerning an Associated Press or combined coverage by newsreels, the new year opens with newsreel executives giving attention to the possibility that newsreels might be sold on a strictly competitive basis if new block-booking regulations should preclude any chance of spotting newsreels along with feature product. Such change undoubtedly would see many drastic shifts in the present newsreel setup, with new combinations not altogether unlikely.

That the reels are alert to such change is seen in the establishment by several reels of newsreel contact men at police headquarters in New York City and the possibility that similar arrangements might be perfected in other metropolitan centers of news. System worked out unusually well in Manhattan because police headquarters also contacts some seven other states by teletype on big events.

Low Lehr continued to make 'em chuckle in Movietone. But the prize laugh clips were the straight comments by Sweepstake winners, caught by Paramount and Fox, and the English narrator's droll poetry about spring in London and Graham McNamee's comment on April snow scenes in New York City by Universal.

Newsreels continued giving bangup gridiron coverage with added expense, particularly for locally important games, again making the football season an added financial burden without additional compensation from exhibitors.

run of well over a year, to be followed by one that ran until early September. But the latter had no real name talent in the entire cast and degenerated to a mere scene shifting spectacle. New revue which went in there near end of year starred Jeanne Aubert and featured Irene Hilda, known from her New York appearances with Fischer.

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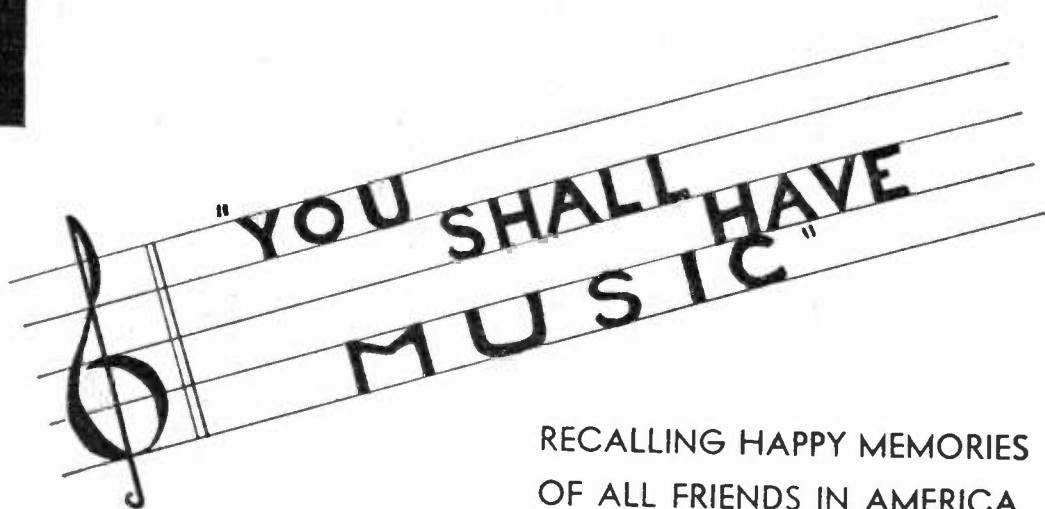
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Jack Hylton



RECALLING HAPPY MEMORIES
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HITCHCOCK

LONDON

IT'S FUN TO BE A SPONSOR

By J. L. Grimes

(General Advertising Manager
Wheeling Steel Corp.)

Wheeling, W. Va., Jan. 1.

To the seasoned advertising man who thinks the daily routine is getting him down I should like to prescribe a little fling at radio. If he is past 40, with a score of years in the business behind him, and if he operates in a locality at least overnight from the nearest network headquarters, he is a good prospect for learning that life will have begun the day he takes the fling.

Such a bold and venturesome ad manager may just as well forget the Wages and Hours bill because it doesn't apply to him. As a further suggestion he might take a pencil and make a correction in the Good Book, changing 'six' to 'seven' where it mentions the day of a man's toil. And with a little thrill (or shudder) he'll be in the show business!

Maybe this thing started too late in life for me but I am glad it started.

The local radio station offered our company a part in a series of 'industrial' radio programs. We were to get together some music, make a talk about something, all of which would be simple stuff. Our experience was significant. A telephone call to one of our plants brought to the studios of WWVA more aspiring and perspiring radio talent than we had ever seen in our life.

Out of such prospects emerged an orchestra of sorts, a soprano at least easy on the optic nerves and a whistler past middle years who had been with Al G. Fields, and someone to do the speaking part. This effort was no 'Hellzapoppin' but Mrs. Jones' plant started to grow and that was nearly eight years ago.

The Magic Sound-Box

Fascinates the Pee-pul

All those amateurs and ex-professionals from one of our factories who appeared on that program made it their business to call me repeatedly and ask when we would be putting them on the radio again. It's a marvel to me, the magnetism of a microphone. They called so often I couldn't forget them, not even during the ensuing years when business brought little profit to spend in advertising or otherwise.

Late in October, 1936, the idea still persisted. We had a meeting with the local radio operators. Next thing I knew we organized a band, a mixed quartette, got a master of ceremonies and sent out invitations to our employees to attend an audition for headliners. First show was piped from a large studio to a loud-speaker in an adjoining room packed with company officials, executives and their wives. Curtains were drawn over the windows between these two rooms so the performers would not see the audience, and vice versa. We didn't want either to become nervous; we were after a vote of confidence and more than that we wanted some favorable votes on an appropriation that would put a series of programs on the air via the local transmitter.

We got the vote of confidence that night, Nov. 5. What is more we got the appropriation the next morning and the Wheeling Steel Employee Family Broadcast, first of its kind, went on the air the following Sunday afternoon, Nov. 8, 1936. It has been going ever since, this year modestly spreading out on a limited coast-to-coast network of the Mutual Broadcasting System.

A Slight Problem

Half-hour radio shows with a cast of 28 to 80 people are some undertaking, I have discovered. Fine as the facilities are in a small station like WWVA, with a commendable personnel, a radio program such as we attempt each Sunday calls for all hands on deck and every man to a pump to prevent capsizing. The station willingly undertook the details but before we knew it the details overtook all of us. Program director of WWVA found it necessary to give all his time to the production of 'It's Wheeling Steel.' He moved downtown to my office. He's producing the show today, Walter Patterson, and at 27 we think he is pretty good and believe he is proving it. Down at my office we figured he could be closer and of more help. I surely needed help and plenty of it. He's still at my elbow and it is getting increasingly difficult to do a little of a lot of other work that's got to be done.

Walter's ambitious spirit is con-

tagious. His boss catches it. And while this may sound backwoods to VARIETY's readers who know a lot about radio, we're putting down facts. Walter wanted a musical arranger. Think of a small town radio program requiring a musical arranger! As I look back, figuratively, with my ears, I know he was right but I didn't know it then. The lad has a way about him. He got his arranger and it was the first time we couldn't find the needed talent for a job among our employees. Maury Longfellow, however, is now a full fledged member of the Wheeling Steel family and he works in an office that adjoins Pat's and mine.

Longfellow puts a 50-minute classic score into a two minute capsule for the Musical Steelmakers which he says they can butcher in a single afternoon's program. Although he may say it is slaughterhouse technique, Maury doesn't really believe that for he and a lot of others really consider that the Musical Steelmakers are doing fairly well. There are no big names among the members of this band but they hold their standards high and work hard, like it and come up for more.

Earl Summers, Sr., directs the Musical Steelmakers and has a way of bearing hard in the right direction on the down beat.

Wheeling Steel was begun for the express purpose of providing opportunity for the musical talent among the corporation's employees and the employees' families, and with the idea that such opportunity properly embraced might prove to be good advertising for the corporation's products. And good advertising it is if an enthusiastic sales organization unanimous in praise of its radio program as a sales help means anything. And good advertising it must be when industrial customers show by their letters voluntarily written to the home office at Wheeling Steel that they like this unpretentious radio program and continue to talk about it as they listen to it every Sunday. And there is no question but that it is good advertising when inquiries and orders are the aftermath of a 30-minute broadcast. We point to more publicity for Wheeling, the town, Wheeling Steel, the sponsor, and for members of the cast and employee headliners, which also are Wheeling Steel, than we have ever seen heretofore. And, intangible as it may be considered, anyone in business whether it is steel business or show business knows that pub-

licity, especially good publicity, is something to be desired.

President Warmed Up To Radio by Degrees

President W. W. Holloway, of the Wheeling Steel Corporation, was not so sure the writer knew what he was doing with this radio program. It was a long time before he attended one of the Sunday performances because he, like many high executives of other companies sponsoring radio programs, probably always caught the program on the day something went haywire with it. And plenty does. He knew what it cost so maybe that knowledge brought him out for the first time one Sunday afternoon. He makes the following statement expressly for VARIETY:

'I am a convert to our radio program because these boys and girls have done what I believe to be good work along entertainment lines. Although I know most of them have even less training for their initial appearances than members of the regular cast who are far less expert than professionals, I must agree with many of our friends that their production is surprisingly well presented.'

'I have been amazed at the amount and high calibre of talent that comes to light in our organization and am gratified by the interest and spirit shown by our people in this program. I am now a regular listener and when it is possible I am looking for a good seat in the visible audience.'

Wheeling Steel program is broadcast from the stage of the Capitol theatre in Wheeling every Sunday at 5 p.m. EST. The biggest radio program out of Wheeling, West Va., it seems natural that it be staged and aired from the largest theatre in Wheeling; in fact, the largest in West Virginia. Capacity audiences of 2,500 are the regular thing, not the exception.

Program pattern is, of course, variety. It opens with a recording of a Wheeling Steel mill whistle, usually followed by a rollicking number by the Singing Millmen. They are a male quartette and its members are two 'yardmen' from the Steubenville, Ohio, works of the corporation, an operator on steel plate shears from the Yorkville, Ohio, works, and a clerical worker from the tube mills of the Benwood, West Va., works of Wheeling Steel. Each contributes a solo now and then.

Musical Steelmakers are 17, in-



Season's Greetings

ROY SHIELD

Musical Director, Chicago Division,
N. B. C.

cluding their leader, and all but five are on the payroll of the corporation, the latter having won berths also as members of the staff orchestra of station WWVA. Recently the Steele Sisters, a trio of high school girls who are members of employee families, won a four weeks' engagement with Horace Heidt and his Ale-mite Brigadiers.

Old Timer on the program is John Winchcoll, a member of the payroll department. He gets as much fan mail as the company, I am told. His bits are written, strange as it may seem, to the character of John Winchcoll by Patterson and Patterson's boss, John, thereby, enacts the character of John and John is the Old Timer. His parts have been condensed on the assumption that if the employee family and friends like him they will like him more if they do not hear too much of him. This, we believe, is good showmanship and it applies to the 16-year-old soprano, Dorothy Anne Crow. Member of the employee family, this young lady is still in high school. One number on Sunday with perhaps a bit in the finale is considered plenty of hard work during the week and on the Sabbath for the young student whom Reinhold Warrenrath has frequently complimented.

And speaking of hard work these boys and girls who comprise the Musical Steelmakers or Wheeling Steel cast have a strenuous week. Radio programs presented by professionals may require plenty of rehearsal hours, but in our humble judgment

50 hours a week is a moderate demand for a 30-minute broadcast in which the material is wholly amateur. Rehearsals of 'It's Wheeling Steel' begin with the Singing Millmen on Monday evening. Tuesday evening is the only night off thereafter until the show signs off Sunday at 5:30. Most of these people work by day and despite the time required for rehearsals which must be confined to evening hours, except on Sunday, it is great fun and all seem to enjoy it, and especially the checks they get. Of course, all are paid for this radio work. It is a happy family.

What is the end? I hope there isn't any end except in the sense that there is an objective, that of bringing to the microphone worthy talent from the employee family of Wheeling Steel.

Expecting That Hen Fruit, But Nerves Now Steadier

To the layman this procedure might be difficult to understand; to the professional whose success is won by dint of patient labor it explains why no Wheeling Steel program has been marred by an amateur unprepared for his responsibilities. We are always expecting the proverbial egg to be laid between the hour of 5-5:45 o'clock on Sunday evenings. Doubtless it will happen some day and there may be no harm if it does happen. These boys and girls are presented for what they are, nothing more. Many times we like to think they surprise the audience who is asked not to expect too much.

And there is the meat of the nut. As long as we keep the purpose of the Employee Family Broadcast uppermost in the minds of all concerned with its production and do not let the show itself take on transcendent importance, it is our opinion we can continue to have the dials of our employee family from coast-to-coast turned our way and along with that big group another of genuine friends who like the idea, like us and stick along.

Sure, we have troubles. I personally escort members of our little family to our first aid station, near my own office, to have throats swabbed, noses sprayed. We have such obstacles, but they are those human ailments we have to look out for so Sunday's show is not too seriously affected and so no mother and father, brother and sister, or even relatives in Peoria, are disappointed because Johnny is too ill to sing with the Musical Steelmakers.

Other night we had one of our regular auditions for headliners from the employee family. First preference, by the way, is for actual workers right from a mill or a machine who can qualify for a part on the program; second preference is for sons and daughters of actual workers in the mills, mines, factories or offices of the corporation; third and last is for those whose uncles and aunts work for Wheeling Steel.

When we announce an audition we have to forewarn the management of WWVA because when applicants start coming up in two elevators it requires extra help to handle them and numbered cards have to be passed out to give everyone a proper chance. This is one of the trials of the game that greys a fellow's few remaining hairs. We ought to have additional accompanists and a few more members on the audition board.

And so it goes. Nine coal miners from one of our mines in Pike County, Ky., were auditioned right in their home town. Our producer and my assistant had to drive 350 miles to get there. On returning the report was favorable and was supported by more than one hundred photographs. Hillbillies? We prefer to call them mountaineers, and anyway many who pretend they do not like mountain music were honest enough to call us and tell us they were good when they appeared one Sunday.

We have signed up for continuation of our weekly programs until June 25, 1939. It's a lot of work—and a lot of fun—to be a 'sponsor.'

WOR's Odd-Shaped Mike

WOR, Newark, introduced a new style of mike on the bandstands of various New York hotels New Year's Eve. It's tagged the 'Perifone' and was modeled by Jack Poppel after the N. Y. World's Fair Trylon, Perisphere and Heiline.

Instrument is counted on to give a truer reproduction of sound than do the mikes now in use. Its convexity makes it possible to pick up sounds on a very broad arc.

'The Package' Becomes an Issue

By Ben Bodec

Has the talent package idea in radio reached its highest point of development, or are advertisers as a whole beginning to regard this device as too cumbersome and inflexible for successful solution of their merchandising problems? Ad agency men are divided in their opinions on the subject. As for the trend either way most deeply concerned are talent agents and indie program producers.

By the talent package is meant the type of show in which the star supplies everything from the band to the stooges and guest artists for a lump sum. Example programs are those presided over by Eddie Cantor, Kate Smith, Burns and Allen, Jack Benny and Fred Allen. Likewise, the MGM tieup with Maxwell House Coffee, the Texaco set-up and the musical melanges as represented by Fred Waring, Horace Heidt, etc.

Reversing the usual procedure of parliamentary debate, the negative side herein gets the first crack at the forum. As a rule, states the contrary element, the proposed show looks great on paper. With such an array of talent the program couldn't help but click. The agency executive checks off each name on the setup before him, nodding his head in assent until there looms up in his mind the one big question: Will it serve the advertising or merchandising purposes of the client? In nine times out of ten, the anti-packagers contend, it doesn't.

A star may know what will be entertaining and gather around him those components that will point up his particular talents, but the agency that isn't traveling along the line of least resistance will find, say the anti, that this method is tantamount to working in the dark. The average client has more to think of than

entertainment. He has to consider organizational enthusiasm and by organizational enthusiasm he means more than his employees. He must take into account the manifold likes and dislikes of his thousands of dealers.

Vast majority of his dealers may like the comic but for some constitutional or vague reason they're dead set against the tenor on the show. Since the dealers serve as the influential factor in practically every form of advertising, the smart manufacturer or distributor will bow to these dispositions in putting together a program. How important a part this factor plays in such organizations as General Motors and U. S. Rubber Co. is attested by the existence of their own Dealer Advisory Councils.

With the anti-packagers the show that counts in the long run is the one that has been whipped together with the assistance and guidance of the agency of record. It is aware of the organization's problem, and, it is assumed, it also knows the sort of entertainment that will curry favor with the class of consumer it wants to reach. It is a species of expediency—dictated alignments that do not function best with the packaged-all-ready-to-go-type of show.

Cited as substantial affirmation of the anti side of the question is the consistent policy that J. Walter Thompson has pursued in putting together the elements of all its shows. Another agency likewise mentioned is Ruthrauff & Ryan.

Success Throttles Quibblers

From the pro contingent comes the opening broadside that nothing succeeds like success. The package show has proved for the most part successful in capturing top audiences.

In many instances their perennial status clinches the argument, taking for example, the self-same Eddie Cantor, Kate Smith, Jack Benny, Burns and Allen, and Fred Allen. These personalities have become radio fixtures and successfully so because they have been left free to pick their own support and to mold this amalgam of talents and temperament so that it is sympathetic to the unique predilections of the star. Again, the package show is set to stay because Young & Rubicam, rated among the top three agencies in radio, not only has employed all but Cantor under such arrangement but is still of the opinion that the method makes for sound showmanship, all depending, of course, on the mike experience and previous success of the star.

Of pertinent interest to the question of the packaged show is the development that has taken place in one of the talent agencies, Lyons & Lyons. The personalities concerned are William Stuhler and Don Stauffer. Stuhler joined L. & L. about a year ago and Stauffer is slated to team up with him in two or three months, with the latter retiring as v.p. in charge of radio for Young & Rubicam. Though young in years each is a seasoned radio executive and producer, and the theory that seems to motivate their new alliance within the L. & L. organization is that because of their background and close association with the problems of the advertisers they should be able to construe the advertiser's needs and provide him with a packaged show that will do the job successfully.

The William Morris Agency has, of course, been the chief proponent and one of most successful salesmen of radio packages.

Today and Tomorrow In Radio

By Bob Landry

In 1938 radio stepped into the bright sun of international political importance. This was dramatized by Anschluss in March and by Munich in September. Coincidental with the plot and counter-plot of the world struggle between fascism and democracy, between open markets and closed markets, raw materials and spheres of influence, the attention of the American broadcasting trade digressed frequently from the routine news events of domestic broadcasting to considerations of far wider and infinitely deeper significance. Radio sensed, as never before, the role it plays in human life, a role that over the advertising function while at the same time re-emphasizing why radio is so notably a superb advertising medium.

Psychologically, after the imagination-soothing experiences of 1938, a 'big question' of 1937—would New York or Hollywood win out as chief origination point for sponsored programs?—now seems pretty minor. Radio is romancing with destiny these days. That Hollywood versus New York rivalry was just puppy love.

Forebodings

It is not yet possible to fully perceive the subtle ways in which post-Munich economics may affect American life and thinking; and, in turn, find expression in American radio, which is famously hyper-sensitive to every current and backwash. Already unmistakable are new tensions and new problems created by the convulsions and revulsions of Europe. In America where free speech has more or less been taken for granted (except during war-time and in scattered backward areas) the year 1938 has brought with it certain forebodings. What is free speech? And for whom and to what degree is it free? And does it actually exist on the radio, and who and what threatens it?

Obviously free speech is a facile ideal when nothing very menacing to life divides men. Today racial animosities are chafed and mob jitters (as revealed by 1938's famous 'Mars Panic' broadcast) is widespread. The 'freedom' of a demagogue to agitate not only strains the whole practicality of free speech, but introduces confusing thoughts that free speech isn't so simple as Americans have heretofore naively assumed.

Viewed in this light, the end of 1938 and the opening of 1939 may well be seen as peculiarly saturated with meaning to American radio as a dividing line between a past that was easy and prosperous, to the point of fantasy, and a future that is to be vexatious and complicated, beyond present reckoning.

Internationalism

How can events happening in Germany or middle Europe react upon American broadcasting? In many ways. For example, by rolling its eyes toward South America and causing our Government and business men to blanch with apprehension, Germany has given a powerful impetus to participation by the United States (tentatively, and in a small way at first) in the business of broadcasting. That possibility does not charm the guardians of status quo who visualize further inroads, supervision, limitations and other calamities as conceivably following a first breaking down of private enterprise's radio monopoly.

At the same time that this nebulous South American threat to Yankee trade advantage and prestige causes our Government to sympathetically ponder having its own radio stations for shortwave commercial and political propaganda. The country is dotted with German bunds and, in sections of the land, there is marked increase of anti-Semitism. The sit-down strike, most hated and in certain cases most-successful tactical measure ever adopted by American labor unions, is another import from Europe. America has, of course, always felt political vibrations from overseas due to the colonies of immigrants in all of our large centres. Today, as never before, the impact of what's said and done in Europe is felt in America. Radio by virtue of its intimacy with every and all phases of American life confronts European-germinated ideologies and must adjust itself and these pressures to the somewhat vague but real rule of 'public service, convenience and necessity.'

Trouble-Makers

As between old-style Democrats and Republicans, offside markers are simple enough to set up and enforce. But, today, the demagogues of all parties want to incite religion against religion, race against race, and class against class. Persons who are shrewd pulse-readers are alarmed at the evil possibilities that a provocative spark might set off in some sections. All of which comes right home to the front yard

of radio as a chief news agency of the people, and as the one forum which every demagogue wishes to exploit.

Some years ago the late Anning Peil, then chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, told the National Association of Broadcasters that the Government would not provide deadlines or ways as to specific kinds of programs over the air. It was up to the individual broadcasters to guess, and guess correctly, what should or should not be censored. And if the individual broadcaster did not possess the inbred common sense and judgment to know the right answers, he did not have the proper qualifications to be a broadcaster. This responsibility, when so defined, seemed sufficiently appalling at the time. Today the burden is infinitely greater.

Looking Both Ways

It seems appropriate in connection with this Anniversary edition of *VARIETY* to approach American broadcasting from a plateau point of view, first looking backward to the known happenings and attempting to evaluate or at least itemize them; and, second, looking ahead to the probabilities. Concerning the prophetic stories it may at least be hoped that they are not 'etched in the head.' In any event, censorship and international radio loom large in relation to the future and have accordingly received more than ordinary prominence.

It is too soon to appraise the 'rejuvenated' N.A.B. and the work it is trying to accomplish. But that effort is important in the trade story of 1938. Not necessarily from the exact point of view here expressed but substantially because of the trends already mentioned broadcasters have realized that their life was not just a bowl of cherry brandy.

In Washington, in February, 1938, the N.A.B. met. It was a convention to end conventionitis, a great sobering up, an honest Indian powwow. Spade work was done, the foundations laid, the new N.A.B. complete with blueprint was unveiled. That the convention found the rank and file delegates lethargic is historically important as proof that there had been other 'new year resolutions' before.

Pick Miller

After months of search, the N.A.B. board's appointment as the N.A.B.'s first paid president, to pay \$25,000 and \$5,000 extra for expenses, went to Neville Miller, former mayor of Louisville. Job of making radio's trade association stand for something more than an annual golf tournament and a three-day busteroo has begun. (See *VARIETY*'s Anniversary Edition, next year, for further details.)

Washington, as usual, occupied a lot of the broadcasters' time. In 1938 there was the super-power hearings revolving around WLW and there were (and still are) the 'monopoly' hearings which will continue into February or later. Politics remains the great preoccupation of all broadcasters. Many a radio station owner knows more about Washington politics than he knows about station operation.

Time Sales Fell Off

Developments of the year included the first tapering off of the upward curve in CBS' monthly gross time sales. So-called 'recession' got pretty well mired and it provided first sample of red ink in several years for many a broadcaster throughout the land. Detroit, prime source of advertising revenue, went dry when automobile sales dwindled to fractions. Of the various advertising media radio suffered most of all. Tires and other accessories followed suit. Adverse Federal ruling on motordom's dealer assessment for advertising purposes further bogged down the carriage trade.

NBC during 1938 made numerous changes in sales policy in an effort to warm up the cold feet of the blue network. A. E. Nelson, one-time indie broadcaster of Chicago, got the job as blue sales manager and moved to New York from KDKA, Pittsburgh. Various tactical changes, some of an auditing nature, were put through. Ultimate result is still uncertain.

Trammel Brought In

RCA-NBC's tendency to make year-end changes of important personnel introduced Niles Trammel, long Chicago v. p. of the network, as executive vice-president, a job left open since Richard C. Patterson (now with the Dept. of Commerce in Washington) stepped out. President Lenox R. Lohr had heretofore been known as opposed to an exec v. p. but the obvious need for a desk-free functionary, with the experience and authority to make decisions and to get out and mix, finally brought this appointment. Trammel had often been reported coming east and had as often spurned

the bid. He is possibly the most popular of all the NBC toppers.

Board meeting that confirmed Trammel also rewarded Dr. A. J. Morton, head of the NBC-owned and managed stations, with a vice presidency.

Toscanini

It was just as the clock struck 1938 that NBC proudly drew aside the drapes and revealed Arturo Toscanini as an employee (at \$4,000 per Saturday night) and culturally this is undoubtedly tops for a year when the imminence of investigation made all of radio excessively aware of the nobler things. NBC had two major brushes with the finger-pointers during the period overlapped by Toscanini prestige. These were respectively Mae West and the 'Beyond the Horizon' cases. NBC took full blame for the Westian skit, actually the work of J. Walter Thompson, but when Eugene O'Neill's near-classic was singled out for a witch-burn, the outcry of the cognoscenti was rude enough to make the would-be censors yell 'excuse, please' and run for cover.

From a program production standpoint the year was marked by flukes and crisis-created popularities. Champion fluke, of course, was the Orson Welles 'War of the Worlds' program over CBS which provoked an incredible display of nation-wide hysteria (somewhat if not largely exaggerated by newspaper stories), and has shown broadcasters the dangers of over-vividness. It was during the disaster-about-to-befall week or two before Munich that the people came to appreciate transoceanic broadcasting. In London Fred Bate for NBC, John Steele for Mutual, and Ed Murrow for CBS were suddenly in the spotlight. More, ever more, news of the demented continent was the order of the day from the American networks.

Briefly, if not permanently, new personalities emerged out of the Sudeten story. Hans von Kaltenborn doing an all-day and all-night shift, sleeping on a cot at CBS, became a household word for the first time. Max Jordon, Maurice Hindus, William Shirer and others broke through the murky anonymity of 3,000 miles of ocean to speak from 'the-scene-of-the-crime.'

Nothing Much New

But of new entertainment personalities 1938 produced few. Bob Hope came in strong for Pepsodent and seems headed for substantial ranking. Billy House, from vaudeville, sounded good in a summer getaway for the jinx-chased Wrigley account which meanwhile is committed to the Jesse Lasky amateur variation. Rudy Vallee program had a long lull of comparative mediocrity, and the Chase & Sanborn hour was virtually a one-man program (Edgar Bergen) with its floundering around accentuated by Bergen's sickness. In the early half of the year Lew Lehr became the first news-reel-created comedian to achieve major prominence. He has shown a tendency to grow in radio popularity.

Otherwise it was the same old time-tested favorites. Check 'em—Amos 'n' Andy, Jack Benny, Paul Whiteman, Eddie Cantor, Burns and Allen, Easy Aces, Fred Allen, Joe Penner, Major Bowes, Bing Crosby, Phil Spitalny, Ben Bernie, Guy Lombardo, Al Jolson.

Acknowledgement should be made, of course, to the activity in dance orchestras which were distinctly bullish in 1938 and found ready sounding boards in radio. This aspect of talent development and new careers is fully treated elsewhere in this special edition.

Hollywood

Hollywood's place in the radio sun is now seen to be permanent as concerns some accounts but its limitations are also more clearly apprehended and the belief that easy, short-cut solutions to the radio entertainment problem could be found on the sponsor side of Pasadena is not exploded. Texaco's tummy ache in the fall was due to an indiscriminate bunching together of film names, merely because they were film names. It proved vastly educational in more ways than one, and to more organizations than one. Ward Wheelock chose to demolish the Campbell soup 'Hollywood Hotel' and go east for a cheaper program (of similar formula) with Orson Welles. Film colony angles are treated in detail in the Hollywood story elsewhere.

Rash of quiz programs broke out during the summer and continued into the fall. Of these 'Information Please' is the standout. These shows, all twists on vox pop and amateur ideas, have provided low-cost entertainment but, like everything in radio, were speedily overdone and only a few of the best survive the final shaking down.

Ten Years Before the Mike

By Rudy Vallee

In 1928 the orthodox formula of sustainings was a typical print orchestration played by a regulation band of 12 or 15 men, played as written from introduction down through to the end, to be followed by a coy or stentorian announcement of the next number. A repetition of this was what most night listeners had come to know and expect.

Commercial programs were apparently much the same, and the word 'guest artist' had hardly come into popular conception, although the Dodge Victory Hour, with the unheard-of miracle of picking up Jolson in one city, Will Rogers in another, and Paul Whiteman in still another, had left radio audiences gasping. But as yet the typical commercial with guest artists, and the variety show, were only germs in the minds of a very few.

Big commercial hours with big money—at least big money for those days—were just beginning to increase in numbers in 1929. From the very start our particular program had at least one guest artist. Our original idea of having the broadcast supposedly emanate from the Villa Vallee, on East 53d street, New

York, or a party of some sort, failed to jell. The confusion of crowd noise, tittering hostesses and silly personalities being picked up at various tables, seemed to be confusing.

The obvious solution was a featured guest artist who could either sing, gag or do something really entertaining. Thus for a period of three or four years the formula was extremely simple—approximately 45 minutes of dance music, 8-10 minutes of a guest artist, 5 minutes for commercials, and 2-3 minutes for applause and humorous reaction commonly known as 'spread.' This, of course, varied with the guest artist; with some the music was cut as much as 10 minutes. Still, in contrast with our present three spots which never consume over 18 minutes, the program must have been unquestionably too long on the musical dance side. In our blissful ignorance, however, we continued happily playing musical spots sometimes as long as 8-10 minutes, and sometimes in a tempo hardly calculated to stimulate the listener to any great degree.

Early band efforts were simply

popular tunes played in measured, stately tempo. It was only a question of time before this type of program palled on the listener to the point where it was obvious that a new formula must be found.

Still Room for Improvement

And while broadcasting technique has progressed far since those days, in my opinion there is even now great room for improvement, both from the standpoint of receptivity of the microphone to cohesion between monitor, production men and direction. As I stated in *VARIETY* some time ago, I still believe that for the artist to perform in front of a microphone without an indicator to tell him, at that moment, what he or she is doing with strength of voice against strength of gain, is like an automobile without a speedometer. Today many minutes of vocalizing and instrumental music that cost sometimes hundreds of dollars a minute, are ruined or at least poorly balanced because it takes time for frenzied signals from the monitor or the control room to reach production man and director to remedy the defect.

Why broadcasting studios have not adopted the motion picture technique of moving the microphone to the sections of the band, instead of moving whole sections of the band laboriously (sometimes noisily, and always with great difficulty) down to a microphone, is incomprehensi-

ble to me. Many times the brass section, five or six strong, lumber down to a microphone with hardly time to set themselves for a solo, and then rush back to try to play another passage from their original place. Actually there is no excuse for broadcasting to have failed to adopt the Hollywood technique of handling a microphone.

In 10 years, too, radio has evolved from a comparatively unrestricted medium to one of the most carefully watched and guarded, blue-pencilled means of entertainment. In 1928, one of our most popular numbers was the Cole Porter lyric, 'Let's Do It,' which cleverly states that people, animals, insects and things 'do it,' with the simple explanation, 'let's do it, let's fall in love.' It was in the fall of 1928 that someone howled for my head as a result of this song, with the result that WOR took the initiative in asking me not to do it. Gradually the other stations likewise assumed the same attitude, and from practically that time on, all the stations have united in a ban on songs containing the word 'do—do it again, you do something to me, and all songs of that type which, because of the simple double-entendre on the word, have become restricted lyrics.

Today, because of unusual whims and caprices of an unpredictable public, it is impossible to even play 'Holy Night' in dance tempo. It is a wonder to me that there has not

been more of a furore aroused by the playing of such classics as 'Martha' in hot dance tempo.

Restriction

Between the restrictions laid down by the ASCAP, the writers, the sponsor, the advertising agency, children's societies, teachers' societies, women's organizations, temperance organizations, and others, it is almost impossible today to do a broadcast of the type possible five or six years ago. It is becoming increasingly difficult to clear songs, lyrics and material. If it continues to become more difficult, the time will come when all programs will be of such an innocuous and tame nature that the zest and pep will have gone out of broadcasting. Possibly by that time we will have television with an entire new set of censorship rulings and theories.

Gertrude Berg Guests

On Orson Welles Show

Gertrude Berg, director and enactor of the chief role in The Goldbergs' family serial, takes her first outside dramatic part since starting the Goldbergs nine years ago when she joins Orson Welles on his Campbell show Friday (5). She'll play the part of the mother in Welles' radio version of 'Courseless at Law.'

Payoff check for the stint will be made out to a charity.

The Chicago Agencies

By Dan Goldberg

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Of the 100 and more agencies in Chicago, about a dozen handled 95% of the radio business during 1938. All of the others talked about going into radio in a big way, voiced their opinion that radio was here to stay and had a \$1,000,000 account primed to buy an hour a day on 500 stations. And yet, despite this talk, only a handful did anything in or about radio.

There was basically little change in radio business in Chicago as far as programs and ideas were concerned; but 1938 saw a reshuffling and revaluation of agencies as to standing in the radio industry. Several of the biggest agencies crawled into a shell of latitude while others zoomed into large importance in the other business, establishing themselves as real factors in the present-day agency business. The line-up was about this way:

Blackett-Sample-Hummert continued as the pace-setter topping all others on general billing and importance in the radio field. Their billing on such accounts as Ovaltine, Cornmeal Mills, Procter & Gamble, Skelly Oil was enough to make the agency a honey jar for stations and representatives. There is little question of the job that B-S-H did for its accounts, although several attempts to gild the lily met with reverses. Agency attempted to obtain discounts or rebates for its clients from stations using B-S-H commercial platters; also tried to boost the amount of radio station publicity for its accounts. Both of these angles were branded as chiseling and received with a complete chill from the stations and it is unlikely that the agency will succeed in accomplishing much. It indicates the manner in which the agency is in there fighting for an edge. The agency continued its faith in script shows as the best commercial radio medium, though it did indicate a tendency of move away from the kid show to a more adult type of program.

Kastor made strides during 1938, zooming ahead in radio billing and activity though without any particularly strong new accounts. They are continually battling for new business, however, and have made, from time to time, several additions to the staff in the hope of corralling fresh clients. But the strongest point that Kastor made in 1938 was its ability to boost its current clients in radio billing. Agency turned in two outstanding jobs. First was its trick in taking 'Manhattan Mother,' a top five-times-weekly script show, and making it pay out successfully in a lone market. With only Chicago as an outlet for the American Family soap product, the agency took a script show that on cost of cast, writing and production compares with any Coast-to-Coast program, and made it a worthwhile investment for a single market. Now has the program on two stations, WBBM and WGN, daily. Agency also took a new Procter & Gamble product, the Teel liquid dentifrice, and helped boost it in a drug field. Used a few spot shots with Jerry Cooper discs and also some cut-in announcements on the Jimmy Fidler picture gossip program. Radio department now headed by Bob Jennings, ex of WLW.

Lord & Thomas (Chicago) declined in importance in radio during 1938. Had practically nothing on the air. Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge was an outstanding smash for Lucky Strikes (American tobacco) but that rates as a New York deal on the part of the agency. Agency lost two important accounts during the past year: Quaker Oats and Horlick's. It got the Lady Esther account, for which it switched from the Wayne King orchestra standby and replaced it with the Guy Lombardo band.

Walter Wade, chiefly identified with Alka-Seltzer, saw a decrease in billing for the stomach-soother account and is at present resting on oars. Agency went out and corralled one big local radio account, the Morris E. Sachs clothing store, for which it is at present continuing the weekly 60-minute amateur show which was originated and built to midwest smash proportions by the Schwimmer & Scott agency.

Russell M. Seeds agency, under the presidency and guidance of Freeman Keyes, shot into national prominence in radio during 1938, primarily with the selling job accomplished for several Brown & Williamson labels.

Took the weakest of the B-W tobacco accounts from Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn and made it a seller through smart radio handling. Agency credited with shrewd time buying and selling copy. While the shows themselves do not rate as particularly hot stuff for the discriminating they sell. In addition to the B-W accounts such as Avalon cigarettes, Big Ben and Bugler tobacco, Seeds handled radio billing for Schaeffer Pen and a piece of General Mills.

McCann-Erickson agency in Chicago did little during 1938. Primarily buying a few spots for Maytag.

Roche, Williams & Cunningham agency also was pretty stagnant in radio during the past year, but rates for its snatch of the Horlick's account for which it is now buying some spots and announcement.

Benton & Bowles-Chicago had a winner in 'Stepmother' for Colgate and did okay in the farm field with its feed portion of the Quaker Oats account. B.B.-Chicago has three career men, Ed Aleshire, Stu Sherman and Art Marquette.

Neisser-Meyerhof had a lot of Columbia network billing last year because of Wrigley. Little doubt that the real operations and thought on the Wrigley radio handling is in Chicago Columbia offices, which means chieftain H. Leslie Atlas, who is very close to 'D.K.' N-M, on their own, hit on a winner with its interviews with clubwomen in the clubrooms for the Kitchen Klenzer product.

Ruthrauff & Ryan agency in Chicago in 1938, grabbed off big bowl of Quaker Oats for which it now has two coast-to-coast programs, 'Girl Alone' in the daytime and the weekly Tommy Riggs variety period. Under the supervision of radio chief Ros Metzger department steadily expanded.

Needham, Louis & Brorby continued its coast-to-coast ride with the Fibber McGee show for Johnson as its one big item in the radio business.

Aubrey, Moore & Wallace continued with 'First Nighter' as its prime radio entry for its Campagna account.

J. Walter Thompson revamped its entire radio staff in Chicago and is now handling only a single local show in Chicago. However, has a number of spot shots.

Schwimmer & Scott is one of active smaller agencies, living up to its reputation for aggressiveness and new ideas. Came through with an outstanding job for Wurlitzer's nationally. Also handled a smart set of announcements nationally for Lea & Perrins.

Auspitz & Lee was another outstanding agency among the smaller outfits in Chicago during 1938. Again bought more local radio time than any other agency for a single account—Evans Fur. Agency had made this firm a big winner right through the depression years and continued to hold up volume of sales for fur firm during the past year. Looks for considerable expansion in other types of accounts during 1939, especially with an eye towards national radio business.

Henri, Hurst & McDonald several years ago found a good thing in Smiling Ed McConnell and since that time has endeavored to utilize this home-folks crooner for all clients and accounts.

Young & Rubicam (Chicago) toward the close of 1938 suddenly spurred. Has the Drackett business. Office now in the process of revision and expansion.

PINK SLIPS FOR 40 IN FED. RADIO DIV.

Along with the general cutting in the ranks of the Federal Theatre project last week, the Radio Division suffered a slice of 23% of its complement or around 40 people. Those dropped were mostly from the writing and acting depts. Pink slips were mailed out Friday (30) and take effect Jan. 15.

Shows to be dropped have not as yet been decided upon.

'Revival' Renewed on MBS

Gospel Broadcasting Corp. has renewed on 86 stations of Mutual network. 'Old Fashioned Revival' program resumes for 25 weeks as of Jan. 1.

R. H. Alber agency placed.



"Monkeys Is Da Cwaziest Peepul"

LEW (DRIBBLE-PUSS) LEHR

Radio—Half and Half Tobacco Pictures—"Movietone News" Radio Dir.: Henry Souvaine, Inc.

'UNFAIR' FLUNG AT NBC, CHI, BY AFRA

Complaint against NBC's Chicago branch was filed last Friday (30) with the Regional Labor Relations Board in Chicago by the American Federation of Radio Artists. Action, which was filed by Henry Jaffe, the union's attorney, charges the network with unfair labor practice. Specifically, it accuses NBC of intimidation to prevent the unionization of sound effects men in its Chicago studios.

According to AFRA execs, the sound effects men asked to be taken into the union and were admitted to membership on the theory that the organization's AF of L charter from the Associated Actors and Artists of America covers 'artists' as well as performers. It is alleged that when NBC learned of the unionization of the men, it discharged one, ostensibly for some other cause. Two others subsequently 'resigned.' Thereupon nine more AFRA-member sound effects men withdrew from the union and wrote a letter to NBC affirming their loyalty to their network and their opposition to AFRA.

Since there are comparatively few sound effects men with NBC in Chicago, the defection of the nine men following upon the loss of the other three, wiped out AFRA's majority representation in the group. Understood that in its NLRB complaint, therefore, the union will raise the novel point of whether the 12 men should be considered as AFRA members in figuring whether the union should be adjudged as representing a majority of the sound effects men employed.

Jaffe, who flew to Chicago from St. Louis last Thursday (29), was due back Sunday (1) in New York.

St. Louis Vote Jan. 1

Singers, actors and announcers employed by three St. Louis stations, KSD, KWK and WEW, will vote this Friday (6) on whether they want the American Federation of Radio Actors to represent them for bargaining purposes. Date was set at a conference held last week between Henry Jaffe, associate national counsel for AFRA, the local National Labor Relations Board and spokesmen for the three outlets.

Vote casting will take place between 10 a. m. and 5 p. m. at local NLRB headquarters.

Widow Succeeds Mark

Washington, Jan. 1.

Woman president was elected last week by the board of directors of WOL, Washington affiliate of Mutual. Mrs. Helen S. Mark, widow of Leroy Mark, former WOL prez, was elevated to the top post on the unanimous decision of the board.

Other officers elected were William B. Dolph, executive v.p. and general manager; W. L. Shaffer, treasurer, and H. J. Jett, secretary. Mrs. Mark had formerly served the station as vice president.

Television's Future—and When

By Bob Landry

There has been lots of television during 1938—if publicity statements, press showings and headlines are the measure. Separated from this battle of mimeograph the story is one of cautious stepping and obscure progress, if any. A reddish discoloring of the outer electronic epidermis during the year was pronounced a press agent's rash, but the threatened appearance of television receivers in New York department stores prompted a curtailment of RCA's regular schedule of programs which had been in progress for some months and which was obviously the one development encouraging indie set-makers to rush into the market with television receivers.

In a nutshell these are the broad facts about television:

1. Not only does the FCC still classify all television as 'experimental,' but in New York there is no television broadcasting whatever at the moment.

2. Only television activity in New York (latterly in 1938) has been some outside events by the NBC's tele-mobile unit which were monitored and studied by engineers but not put on the air. Indoor activity confined to improving equipment, etc.

3. Sometime in January or February, 1939, the NBC-RC transmitter in the Empire State Bldg. (where a new antenna is being installed) and the CBS transmitter atop the Chrysler Bldg., will begin operating intermittently. Each transmitter will be powered with 7,500 watts. CBS studios will be in Grand Central Terminal, RCA in Radio City and each transmitter will be linked to its studio by A. T. & T. coaxial cable.

4. According to his own announcement, Allen B. DuMont will launch a 50-watt television station in New Jersey sometime during 1939. Paramount Pictures has a 50% stock interest in this enterprise.

5. By April, 1939, when the New York World's Fair opens it is expected that NBC and CBS will have two hours a week of television programs and that television receivers, of several brands, will probably be placed on the market. How good they will be, how much they will cost, whether the public will buy them in any great numbers, are open questions.

Costs

6. Size of image will determine the price of sets. It is probable that sets selling for \$150 or thereabouts will throw an image of not over 3 x 4 inches. This is a 'chair-side' set. Around \$350 is the estimated cost of sets with an 8 x 10-inch frame which is called 'comfortable' for 3-6 feet scrutiny by small groups.

7. Meanwhile Scophony of Great Britain has set out to invade America. It is now engaged in promoting American capital and to make arrangements for the manufacture of its sets over here. Scophony sets throwing an image 18 x 24 are retailed in England for around \$1,200. They are described as producing 'good-looking images' from a mechanical type of television (RCA is electronic in principle).

8. First to apply for RCA television equipment is WTMJ, Milwaukee (owned by the Milwaukee Journal) and the prospective outlay of about \$100,000 suggests the costliness of going into television in even a small way. WTMJ envisages a 1,000-watt transmitter. Studios, cameras, coaxial cable, channels, lighting, properties, sound equipment, etc., add up the initial investment. (Lubke-Don Lee visio in California is off-standard for America, using a 375-line image instead of the 441-line approved at present by the Radio Manufacturers Assn.)

ATLANTIC REFINING DATA

One Game Rated 66 in C.A.B. — Lowest Was 10

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Tally just completed by N. W. Ayer & Son for Atlantic Refining reveals that oil firm during the season just passed bankrolled 20,000 hours of football airings, or 181 games on 71 stations, increase over 1937 and 1936, when it began sponsoring sports. First year it aired 129 games on 42 outlets and in 1937 156 contests through 60 transmitters.

Ayer reported to the sponsor that C.A.B. ratings taken one Saturday in October and one in November gave a composite figure of 23.6 for all games being played those days. Highest single rating, and one of the topnotchers in all radio, was the Pitt-Duke game, in Pittsburgh, for a C.A.B. figure of 66. Lowest rating found was 10. Largest single hook-up was the Harvard-Yale game, 41 stations.

Sweetheart Soap Back; Sponsoring Jack Berch

Sweetheart Soap goes back on the air Jan. 11 with Jack Berch on a curtailed CBS net. Berch is set for two 15 min. slots a week, Wednesday and Friday at 7:45-8 p.m. CBS Artists Bureau set the singer through the Franklin Bruck Agency.

Soap makers recently dropped a commercial airing of Little Theatre plays with William A. Brady.

Toscanini's BBC Series

London, Dec. 24.

BBC is organizing a series of eight Beethoven concerts at Queen's Hall in May, all of which will be conducted by Arturo Toscanini. Already flooded with application for seats.

It was much the same when Toscanini was here in 1937, when even some of the highest in the land couldn't rustle up a ticket, but had to be satisfied with picking it up on their radios.

Rock Island on Mutual

On Jan. 14 Rock Island, Ill., station WHBF, simultaneously raises its power to 1,000 watts and joins Mutual. It's 110th affiliate of Mutual.

BLACKETT YEN FOR BIG TIME POLITICS

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Though the Republican campaign on behalf of Alf Landon resulted in a record-breaking Democratic victory, Blackett-Sample-Hummert execs are still politically ambitious. Would like exploitative connection with the 1940 Republican campaign. They feel that despite the cost and defeat, they obtained contacts with otherwise aloof gentry. This offset the defeat and the cash outlay to Hal Blackett and others personally.

Now have angles out for contacts with Vandenberg of Michigan and Taft of Ohio as their guesses for the Republican presidential nomination.

Will again splurge with their favorite angle on radio assistance: and hinting to stations of a five-year license for stations should the Republican nominee win the nation's vote.

FOX OF KDYL ENTERS PROGRAM WAX BIZ

Salt Lake City, Jan. 1.

Presumably with an eye on the profitable side ventures of WXYZ, Detroit; KMBC, Kansas City, and some other local stations, S. S. Fox of KDYL here will shortly set up a transcription cutting department. Engineers have been doing ground work for several months.

Will record KDYL-produced programs for sale outside this market.

Andrews Girls with Dole

Andrews Sisters have been added to the talent lineup on the Dole Pineapple show set to start on a CBS net Jan. 14. Girls supplement Phil Baker and will work with the Eddie Delange orch, which was signed last week.

Trio is currently fulfilling a two-week date at the Paramount theatre, New York.

Radio Outlook For 1939 Is Good

TOTAL RADIO TIME SALES: 1937

From FCC Data

NETWORKS	\$33,902,487 retained by major networks	
	1,857,102 retained by secondary networks	
	52,949 retained by other networks	
	\$35,812,538.....\$35,812,538	
	\$19,266,127 paid stations by major nets	
	698,642 paid stations by secondary nets	
	135,626 paid stations by other nets	
	\$20,100,395	
	2,040,742 paid stations for commissions, etc.	
	\$22,141,137.....\$22,141,137	
NETWORK TOTAL.....		\$57,953,674
National Spot.....		23,117,136
Local		36,838,163
GRAND TOTAL (1937 Time Sales).....		\$117,908,973

The above figures are before agency or broker discounts. They do show, however, 'trade discounts' for the networks—i.e., frequency discounts. The broadcasting industry in 1937 paid out \$16,982,960 in commission to agents and brokers.

In duplicating the FCC terminology as regards network designations, it is assumed that 'major' networks means NBC, CBS and Mutual; 'secondary' networks means regionals; and 'others' means part-time or very small hook-ups.

Those who compare this chart with the FCC charts may note that the total network figure is \$57,953,674, whereas the FCC (table 4, FCC summary of information) gives it as \$55,917,189. This is due to the fact that this chart includes all time sales, whereas the FCC included (in the chart mentioned) only time sales to ADVERTISERS. The difference of \$2,036,484 is made up in payment to stations for commissions, sustaining programs, or other contract methods. Therefore, figuring only TIME SALES TO ADVERTISERS would give 1937 a total of \$115,872,488.

National spot business includes figures only from stations with net sales of \$25,000 or more during 1937. It is assumed that stations having a smaller net than \$25,000 did entirely local business. Their amount of national spot would be too small to disturb the figures above.

BUSINESS INDICES: 1935-1939

	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Dept. Store Sales Index.....	79	88	92	85	92
Business Week Index.....	86	105	112	86	105
Automobile Production.....	4,120,000	4,620,000	5,020,000	2,500,000	3,500,000
Residential Construction.....	\$478,800*	\$801,624*	\$905,293*	\$980,000*	\$1,100,000*
Farm Cash Income.....	\$7,100,000*	\$7,865,000*	\$8,521,000*	\$7,600,000*	\$8,000,000*

All figures in the 1938 column are preliminary, and all computations in the 1939 column are VARIETY estimates, compiled after consultation with J. A. Livingston, staff economist of Business Week.

It should be specifically pointed out here that while economists feel pretty safe in making 1939 estimates, they cannot estimate a month-by-month or season-by-season pattern. Thus, it is safe to say that 1939 will surpass 1938 by a considerable margin and compare favorably with 1937; but it is impossible to say whether this will be accomplished via an exceptionally high spring and fall, or via a steady trend from one end of the year to the other.

(*) Indicates that 000 are omitted.

By Edgar A. Grunwald

Prediction of radio's dollar volume prospects in 1939 can definitely be prefaced by a clearcut statement—it will be better (possibly much better) than in 1938.

From the network angle there can be no doubt of this, at least so far as the start of the new year is concerned. From the spot-local angle, the same situation would seem to apply if statistics on general business activity are brought to bear.

Translating a relatively certain outlook into relatively certain dollar signs, however, is plainly impossible. It would be tea-leaf reading. And it would be doubly folly in view of the fact that somebody first has to find out for the broadcasting industry on what basis dollar volume is to be computed.

For a long time annual computations were carried on by the National Association of Broadcasters. The NAB arrived at the gross by adding together the sales figures of major networks, regional networks, spot business, and local business. In the case of the major networks at least, the 'gross' was understood to be card rates before any discounts whatsoever.

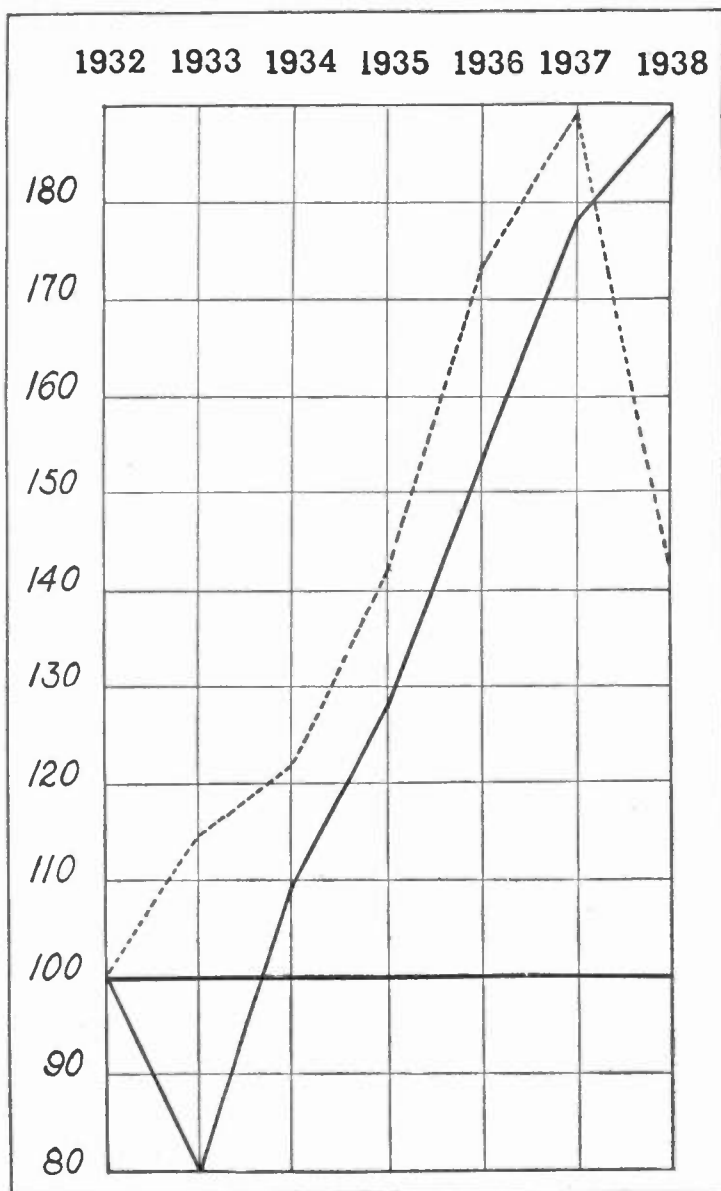
This summer (1938) the FCC issued a gross sales intake for the year 1937. However, the FCC played havoc with network revenue. For whereas the major networks reported (to the world at large) a combined 1937 gross of \$69,612,480, the FCC whittled this category down to \$53,277,905. The \$16,400,000 got lost in frequency discounts and similar 'trade' discounts. It was, in short, the difference between card rates and what actually went into the cash box.

Summing the whole thing up, the FCC credited the radio industry with gross time sales of \$117,908,973 during 1937. By certain additions and subtractions necessary to translate this figure into 'gross time sales to advertisers' instead of mere 'gross time sales' (which would include intra-industry sales of facilities), the actual total boils down to \$115,872,488. An accompanying table shows the division of this money by category.

1938 Revenue

What 1938 amounts to in terms of dollars is not yet known. The major networks, still counting by card rate, will do a possible combined \$72,055,000 if NBC is credited with \$41,780,000, CBS with \$27,340,000 and Mutual with \$2,935,000. That's roughly 4% above 1937, though there's no telling what the figure would turn out to be if the card-rate angle were discarded in favor of figures actually on the books.

Meantime, ASCAP's radio intake has been estimated to be off several percent during 1938. Since ASCAP revenue is based on that portion of network sales passed on to affiliates, plus local and spot revenues, it would seem apparent that at least two of these factors — local and spot — de-



Running index of network gross revenue (solid line) and general business as indicated by BUSINESS WEEK INDEX (dotted line).

clined in revenue, either singly or in combination. The industry as a whole, therefore, seems to be about where it was in 1937. Shifts in revenue downward may have occurred, but so far as actual calculation now goes, they appear to be quite small.

As against this picture, 1939 promises first of all a much brighter network outlook. A half dozen large network programs are already scheduled for the first of the year, and agencies predict a continued upturn in activity.

From a wealth of data (for which acknowledgment is hereby made to Business Week) certain factors especially pertinent to the radio industry may be singled out as hinting what 1939 has in store. These factors would tend to show that activity for the new year will compare rather favorably with 1937, a good year all things considered.

Thus department store sales are estimated to hit an index figure of 92 in 1939, the same figure as in 1937. General business levels could easily show a 20% gain over 1938. Auto factory sales (production) are slated to rise by 1,000,000 cars, and possibly more. Cash farm income (including benefit payments) should be increased by a half-billion dollars.

But the really heartening estimate concerns new residential construction. Not only is an upturn here valuable to radio as a lever for plugging associated lines of goods accompanying residence building, but the anticipated construction total itself actually promises to surpass the robust 1938 total.

To all of which must be added the inevitable government role as a distributor of money. If the expenditures continue steadily throughout the year—an apparently logical expectation—this tendency would naturally be reflected, to some extent, in a steadily high level of national income through the year.

Factors less intimately followed by the broadcasters, but highly important to those lines of activity most often scrutinized, are: credit, influx of foreign capital, and inventories. Credit should be 'easy' during 1939 because of the banks' backlog of coin, and the desire of the government to obtain cheap money to finance its deficits. Inventories meantime are not clogged up to excess, indicating

RADIO UNION'S 1938 RECORD

Outstanding development in the affairs of the American Federation of Radio Artists during 1938 was easily the union's contract with NBC and CBS for minimum pay and working requirements for sustaining programs. Negotiations began in January and the agreement finally went into effect late in the summer.

Negotiations with a committee representing the American Assn. of Advertising Agencies, which began at the same time, have been virtually without result, the admen having stalled every effort of the union to conclude an agreement. AFRA is now readying more drastic measures.

AFRA held its first national convention in mid-November in St. Louis. It was the first time a performer union had ever had such a get-together.

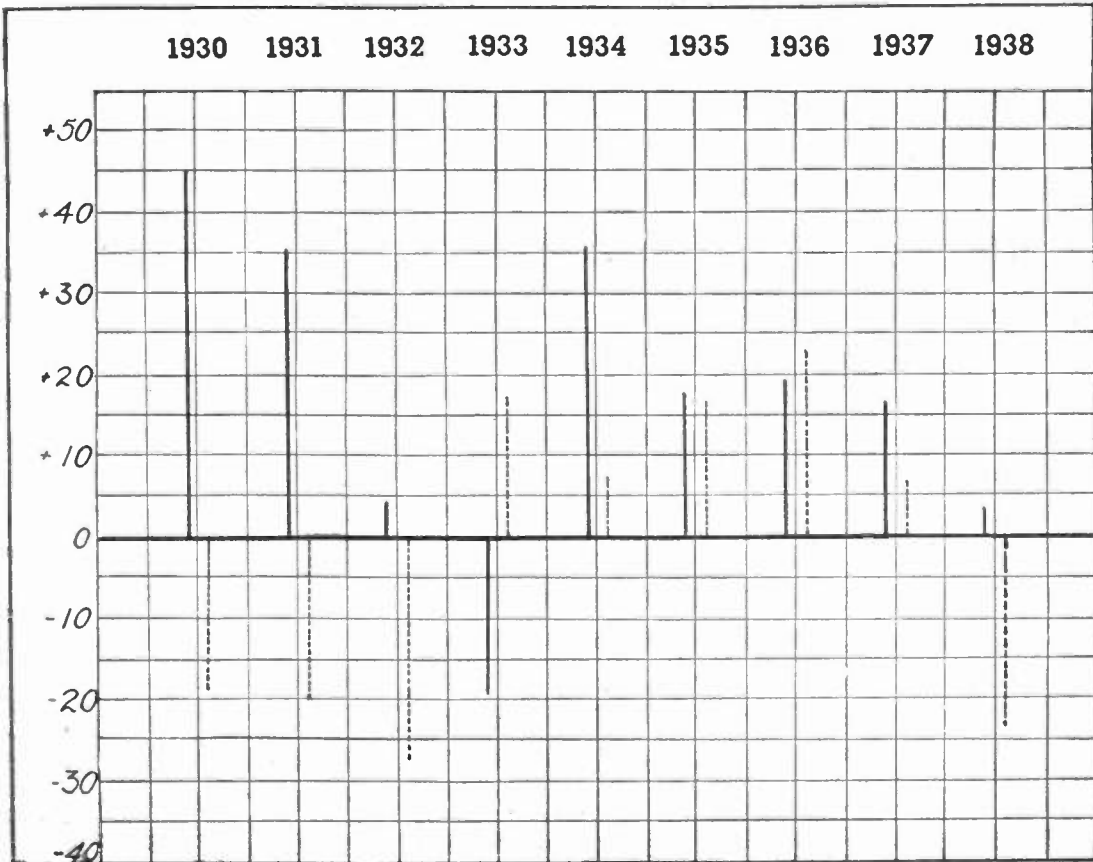
AFRA won reinstatement of employees discharged from Cincinnati and St. Louis stations for alleged union activity. It has a vital case pending before the NLRB, involving the question of whether announcers should be included with actors and singers in negotiations with St. Louis stations.

Although efforts were made to effect a merger with the unaffiliated American Guild of Radio Announcers and Producers, no agreement could be reached. Latter organization has been rather inactive during recent months.

In mid-December the statement of Chester La Roche of Young & Rubicam, brought the question of agency attitude toward the situation out into the open.

the necessity for continued replacements.

An accompanying table gives the trend for a number of these factors for 1935 through 1938 and estimates for the coming year.



Index of gain or loss over each previous year for general business as indicated by BUSINESS WEEK INDEX (dotted line) and network gross revenue (solid line).

Soap and Cinema Stage Big Meeting of the Minds

By Jack Hellman

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Spirit of camaraderie between the picture studios and radio has at the moment reached such a benign pass that it is hard to believe that such soul-mates ever were anything but. Time was, and not so far into the dim past, that the mere mention of the air trick in a film factory would send execs into quotation marks.

A little matter of education (or was it publicity?) has brought a new blush to the situation. It was accomplished, in the words of Danny Danker, 'by playing ball together.' More of the Danker philosophy:

'By proving to them that we had an understanding of their problems we won their confidence. We kept it by showing that we are on the level and not just interested in getting a star on the air. We tried not to interfere with production, saw to it that the player was well protected by an expert script and went out of our way to insert a plug for the picture and studio without any insistence or prodding. That won them over and there's no reason why it should be any other way.'

Danker may well be the spokesman for the Hollywood radio industry. He is one of the pioneers and, most important of all, knows the price tag of perhaps 500 film players by rote, which minimizes the necessity of bargaining. It's a matter of availability rather than price.

East Meets West's Problems

Other first line talent buyers, to name a few, Joe Sauter of Young & Rubicam, Bill Esker of Benton & Bowles, Tiny Ruffner of Ruffner & Ryan, Tom McAvity and Jack Dunyon of Lord & Thomas, Mann Hollner of Lennen & Mitchell, are taking a leaf from Danker's book and making it easier all around. It took a while for the lads from the east to savvy Hollywood production problems and front office whims. But they're bright laddies. Rotten news sources but definitely bright.

Ask any talent buyer which is the toughest studio to deal with for a guest star and he'll fumble for an answer, finally sputtering, 'Why, none of them is tough.' Don't believe 'em. Mecca is, and for good reason. Studio made an exclusive package sale to General Foods for its 'Good News' show and that doesn't leave many available for outside shots. However, those on whom waivers can be had are okay by Louis K. Sidney with good grace.

At 20th-Fox players can be had for the asking but the rub here is the price. Studio matches the player's pay for its cut, which runs up the price around double of what would be paid to a star of comparable value from another plant. Paramount has Rubby Cowan as radio liaison, and no reasonable demands are refused. Studio, however, has little to offer in the way of talent as several of its personalities have their own programs. Bing Crosby, Bob Burns, Jack Benny, Burns and Allen, Martha Raye, Bob Hope and a few of lesser prominence are exclusive to their sponsors.

For a time Warners was not so easy to crack. Not that the studio isn't air-minded but it had its own ideas how to best make radio do an exploitation job for its pictures and players. Several package shows were dropped up for sale but nothing happened and the principals were made available for guest shots. RKO-Radio is represented by Frank Henley, whose job it is to see that script and handling of the player is in the approved manner. It's a thin one-man list at this spot but with the exception of Fred Astaire, who isn't to be had, there's little need for the buyers to prowls Gower street.

The Stars Come Out

United Artists group plays ball all the way and theirs is a star-studded list. Most of the players enjoy star rating and retain for themselves radio privileges. In this constellation the earnings from radio in some cases exceeds the income from pictures. Always in demand are Carole Lombard, Fredric March, Madeleine Carroll, Brian Aherne, Constance Bennett and others who freelance.

Of the smaller indie plants Republic has of a sudden decided to cash in on the publicity accruing to pictures and personalities through radio. Studio show headed by Gene Autrey will hit the lanes in short order as a Columbia sustainer, to whom up interest in the company's product and player list. Outfit doesn't care

whether the show is sold out or not, figuring it will pay its way in exploitation.

Picture execs have finally come around to a unity of opinion that no publicity medium can do the job of radio. Carrying the message into millions of homes is looked upon as dwarfing all other media. Given a proper air setting, the player can make more friends than by peering from lithographs or printers ink. It's the next thing to direct personal contact, which has minimized the necessity of personal appearances so that the star can rub shoulders with her public.

Yep, radio and pictures are getting along like newlyweds.

33 FORM CORPORATION

Business Men Assure WPTF's Continuance in Raleigh

Charlotte, N. C., Jan. 1.

Some 33 business and professional men are organizing the Carolina Radio Corp. to take over Station WPTF from NBC and prevent its possible removal from Raleigh. NBC last month exercised its \$210,000 option on the station that has been owned and operated for a decade by the Durham Life Insurance Co.

Action followed rumors that a Greensboro group was seeking the 5,000-watt station. Julius C. Smith, Greensboro attorney, whose name was mentioned in the rumors as front man denied all knowledge of any such move. Meanwhile William C. Hedges, Frank Russell and Percy K. Ladner, of NBC, are due in Raleigh soon to make deal.



FRANK GALLOP

"Greetings"

'Gang Busters'—'Hilltop House'—'Nancy James'—New York Philharmonic Symphony.

And thanks for everything.

WTOC, SAVANNAH, IN GROUP VS. WSB

WTOC, Savannah, has served notice on Paul Raymer that it is quitting him for the Katz agency. The change became effective Jan. 1.

Savannah outlet has allied itself with WMAZ, Macon, and WGST, Atlanta, for the purpose of selling themselves on a combination basis against WSB, Atlanta 50,000-watter. Threesome calls itself the Georgia Group. Katz will represent all three either individually or as a group in the national field.

H'wood Agrees—Hollywood's Great

AD MEN'S REFUGEE AID

David Noyes of Lord & Thomas Is Exploitation Chairman

Chicago, Jan. 1.

David Noyes, chief of the Lord & Thomas agency here, is Chicago chairman of Jewish Welfare Fund drive. Out to raise \$2,000,000 locally for European refugees.

Noyes called a meeting of radio and newspaper executives here, all of whom promised full cooperation, according to the policies of their respective organizations. On the radio publicity division committee are Henry Selinger, Leonard Erickson, Leslie Atlass, E. Voynow, Niles Trammell, Larry Selz, Herb Sherman, Sid Strotz, Lou Lipstone, Holly Shively, David Stotter, Ken Laird, Maurice Needham, Sam Gerson, Richard Kross, Ralph Atlass, Ed Wood, Henry Kastor Kahn, Art Linick, Bob Jennings, Clarence Mense, Nate Pumpian, David Horwich, Glenn Snyder, Stu Sherman, Hays McFarland, O'Neill Ryan, Jr., Maurice Lipsey, Nathan Perlstein.

In the newspaper and periodical group are Leo Abrams, Lou Cowan, Rev. John Evans, Nate Gross, Jerome Karpf, William McDermott, Jacob Siegel and Leon Stoltz.

NILES GATES AT WCAU

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

New post of 'sales counselor' has been added at WCAU, effective today (Tuesday). It's S. Niles Gates, formerly of General Electric.

Gates will do merchandising, market research and co-ordinate work of the sales and program departments.

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

There's been a lot of loose talk and double-talk about radio broadcasts from Hollywood. Which is considerably less important than the loose change and the double-checks (payroll) that imbue Hollywood with a fascination that New York can't match for big names and buyers of big names. The swimming pools are here to stay because what's goose for the films is bound to get a rise out of radio. Or vice versa (if you're an advertising man!)

Is NBC crazy—building a pre-tentious studio setup just to have its call letters big? Is CBS soft in the noodle because it thinks Don Thornburgh deserves an expensive setting? Would Danny Danker be a big man in Janssen's Hofbrau on Lexington Avenue? Is the weather nice, are the ingenues nicer, in Manhattan?

Look the facts obliquely in the face and find out what anchors the radio on these Pacific shores. Lenox Riley Lohr even admits, 'Say, I'd like to live out here myself.' There you have the one big item. There's two. The other has to do with economics, that double wage-earning shot (for talent anyhow) which is not to be had anywhere else in this democracy of ours.

What, no badminton courts in the background? Radio sponsor makes a crack about going back east after picture is finished. 'What, and give up Palm Springs, Arrowhead, Santa Anita and the shack on the hill? Why, you must be crazy, man. I'm here to stay.' Only one stern Puritan, Fred Allen, refused to give in. Rudy Vallee periodically finds it hard to break away (New York—or have a good show in L. A.!) Now Fibber McGee and Molly are here and that's Chicago's loss.

What's to dislodge radio? One hears a lotta talk about 'overdoing the Hollywood thing' but you have to hold those corn-husking events where corn is growing. The big names have taken root here and radio follows the names whether you believe it or not. When Ward Wheelock padlocked Hollywood Hotel and went east for Orson Welles the alarmists chortled, 'There's the break; others will follow.' That one was knocked into a cocked hat fast. Comes the new year and three new biggies: Kellogg's hour show, Wrigley's Gateway to Hollywood and Screen Actors Guild Show for Culf. That puts Hollywood two up.

Tabled side by sides the east still holds an advantage in total commercial hours. Hollywood's claim is for the big shows, the ones requiring production and lavish outlay of coin. Not to rub it in, but what has the east to compare with Chase & Sanborn, Texaco, Kraft Music Hall, Kellogg, Good News, Lux? After you've said Fred Allen and Kate Smith, what then? In the half hour bracket the Coast is away overboard on names the east can't match. Hour for hour, however, the bugle is all toward the east. Just as one-sided is the coin being tossed around these parts for air workers.

\$20,000,000 Payoff

It has been figured by fairly conservative analysts that during the 39 weeks of the current semester picture names alone will take over \$20,000,000 out of the pot of gold. That might sound like Hollywood hyperbole, but the lads who make such claims have ruined much linen at the Brown Derby to arrive at their conclusions. All right, will you believe \$15,000,000 then? Now trot out the N. Y. talent payroll for the same period, and toss in Chicago and Cincinnati for good measure, and what has Hollywood to be ashamed of?

The hours belong to the east. The coin is all west by just as wide a margin.

Art Kemp Sales Chief For CBS on Coast

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Arthur Kemp, special rep on the Coast for Columbia's Radio Sales, last week was named sales manager for the CBS Pacific network.

Kemp is making his headquarters at KNX, which station he served as sales promotion manager during the Guy Earl regime.

Frank Gagliano's Accident

Milwaukee, Jan. 1.

Frank Gagliano of the WISN engineering and continuity depts., had two small boxes of 'safety matches' explode in his hand.

His physician predicts that he will never have any feeling in the tips of his fingers.

A Slight Case of Hollywood

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

LORD & THOMAS

To Mr. George McGarrett, New York

From Mr. Elmer Droop, Hollywood

Subject The 'Double Burp' Program

Date Dec. 26, 1933

Dear George:

Three months ago I packed my stopwatch, said good-bye to all the New York ingenues and came out here to make a name for myself as producer of the Double-Burp Theatre of the Air. Well, the programs have all burped on schedule, but I keep getting a funny feeling that someone is following me—I keep turning around and there's nobody there. The doctor says I've got rehearsal mildew.

Well, the first broadcast was from a bleeding heart. I get the script at the last minute and grab a cab to the studio. By the first red light I realize it's a blueprint for a clambake. The rehearsal is at 10 a. m. and me up all the night before on the teletype machine taking down those free verse commercials. I was asking myself without any answer why I was knocking myself out just because some Message-to-Garcia guy has gotten a hot feminine slant on the product from a dame he met at the Stork Club and has been inspired to mow me down with a change in the Client's story.

You know what I put into a show, what I have to give. Right now, let me say, George, that I'm a guy who don't mind losing a little sleep even if it don't help the stomach ulcers none. As you say, the thing to do is to put on a good show and take the shots later.

Anyway, I guess you're reading the Crossley as usual and shaking your head, but everybody knows that Crossley is a phoney, and if they had one on Sales Results it would be something! I hate a Frankenstein monster like a silly report the same's I hate any two-faced guy. The boys out here like the show and it's been swell hearing them say the things they do.

Oh, yes, I was telling you about the first show. Well, our star is very happy now and thinks the show is a knockout. I guess they must have told you about the script. Our star threw it out, of course. That puts us in a spot, but I called up Hymie Hendrickson and he loaned me Sam Bernwitz and Kelley Nathan from the Lust Show and that helped me out a lot, even though the boys were a little tight during rehearsal and got in a fight with our conductor so that he fired his arranging staff and it walked out taking its arrangements and the band had to ad lib. I guess that explains why you thought the music was a little fuzzy.

The soprano gave us a lot of trouble, too. She said she knew the client from Chataqua, and no guy like that was going to forget his obligations.

Really, George, the band was superb even if they had to ad lib, and if she sounded a little fuzzy it must have been because the engineer I drew was fresh out of a Radio Repair Shop. Of course, I had to set up the band myself while the writers were going over the material with our star.

About the guest stars—well, I guess it must have sounded silly after all the publicity had been released and everything, to have to put on a lot of tired acts,

but just as we were going into a dress, the studio called and cancelled because the director needed our talent on location somewhere, so they had to leave and I had to get Ben on the phone to fix me up with something!

I know our star went over, and our client can thank me for cutting the picture plugs from 40 to 35. Being around out here the way I am does pay off some dividends. Personally I think our star is terrific—he'll run that LT into three figures before he's through!

But I started out to tell you about the first show. Well, George, with a bad script, new acts, a temperamental comic, a New York name leader with a local union band, I had my hands full of the well-known Sack, but I'm keeping myself under wraps because I see I'm going to have to handle the thing without blowing my top. I get that soprano out in the foyer and give her the business.

I get those writers straightened out: I get the network to come through with Stock for the band, so it won't be laying out 84 bars on every tag; I get those sad novelties lined up in the one, two and three spots; I get the commercials ironed out so they make some sense in English; I get our star down to the Bar for a few quick ones and make him purr and everything looks jake for the show.

Mind you, nobody's talkin' to anybody, but I feel I got a show anyway, and as they say out here if you can't feel it—leave it alone!

Well, I guess the rest is History, George. I get the whole thing on its feet and standing in front of mikes waitin' for the Air. Then the phone in the control room rings and they tell me we're cancelled on account of a Fireside chat!

I ain't saying the Thing got out of hand, even though we were a little upset, and the hot milk I had afterward down in the drugstore brought back the old ulcers. But why we had to be told after all I went through is only something I'm going to take up with the network when I feel all right again. Only I don't guess I can find anybody over there to do anything about anything except show me a chart or a framed slogan. Sometimes I am sorry I left the Long Island Railroad for Radio, but what the aitch, if a dentist can do it, so can a Ticket Seller—as you always used to say.

But, anyway, George, I am better now and have been writing the script myself, and, George, don't you worry about the show! Tell the client that everything is Pear-Shaped, and we all feel out here that next week's show will really be something to give Crossley writer's cramp.

Best of everything to the gang.

Butch.

P. S. The Five Grand in my miscellaneous item on last week's expenses was for that Jill our Comic has been hot for. I think it's worth every cent of it to keep him happy.

Inside Stuff—Radio

Cornerstone of Buffalo's new convention hall about to be built will include a transcription of the ground-breaking ceremonies. Voices of council president, public works commissioner and others who participated were grooved via the WGR-WKBW mobile transcription unit.

Platter was used in a WGR broadcast and has been turned over to officials for the cornerstone.

Harry C. Butcher, Washington vice-president of CBS, reported last week he has wiped out his interest in the network through sale of 300 shares of Class A stock.

Conquest Alliance Co. states that it will continue to represent KGMB-KHBC, Honolulu, in all United States areas except the west coast on an exclusive basis under a contract which doesn't expire until June 1, 1939. Statement is made, explains (partially) Conquest, 'because of some misunderstanding which appears to be circulating through the trade.'

John Blair has the west coast franchise.

ROOSEVELT DENIES SHIFTS AT FCC

Washington, Jan. 1.

Recurrence of rumors that FCC personnel shifts are in prospect drew another denial in official quarters last week. This time President Roosevelt himself bluntly sought to put the silencer on whispering that the Administration will perform a major operation on the regulatory agency. Although he did not quiet all gossip, the Chief Executive flatly disclaimed any thought of setting up a different set of machinery to police the communications business and nixed repeatedly tips that Commissioner George Henry Payne is due to depart. Only feeble light, however, on Payne's recent visit to the Executive Offices, which set tongues wagging and caused wish-thinkers to conjecture about possibility he is being kicked upstairs.

The President's denial was the third in less than a month on the matter of replacing the seven-man board with a three-man body or a single administrator flanked by some semi-judicial review unit. Early last month, Chairman Frank R. McNinch and Thomas Corcoran, prominent member of the brain trust, joined in dousing cold water on the yarn that legislation was being drafted. Even before that, McNinch refuted suggestions he had urged some radical changes upon the President.

Definite answer to question of whether the President intends to alter the Commish membership is expected before the end of this week. In accordance with custom, he should send to the Senate without delay the name of Gov. Norman S. Case, to whom he gave a recess appointment only a few days after Congress quit last summer. If there is any prolonged wait, the implication will be that the Rhode Islander is to be supplanted, contrary to the general expectation that he will be nominated for a full seven-year term.

'ELECT' GEO. MURPHY TO M. C. GULF SHOW

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Screen Guild show for Gulf Oil will make a quick bid for dialer preference by triple starring the initialer next Sunday (8). In the upper bracket will be Jack Benny, Joan Crawford and Judy Garland. Reginald Gardiner is also in the cast of a musical revue being whipped up by Morrie Ryskind. Oscar Bradley has the music assignment for the series. Mitchell Leisen directs the show and Tom Lewis of Young & Rubicam produces.

George Murphy was assigned by Screen Guild officers to emcee show. They took a vote.

On the second show Jan. 15 will be Fred Astaire, Herbert Marshall, Loretta Young and Franklin Pangborn in a comedy with music. Script being supervised by Dwight Taylor.

Cecil Widdifield to N. Y.

Cecil Widdifield, radio director of the Russel M. Seeds agency, goes into New York this week for a talent hunt expedition.

Is angling for a comedy headliner on new 30-minute show idea that the agency has lined up for a new client.

Murderer on Lam After Jail-Break Is Quizzed Over Air by WOW Sleuth

Gretna, Neb., Jan. 3.

Foster May of WOW, Omaha, mike in hand, participated in the capture of four jailbreakers here, one of them a convicted murderer. May had the murderer on the air in an interview before the police arrived on the scene.

Foursome broke jail in Omaha, robbed a beer tavern of \$35 and made for open country (27). May took out WOW's mobile unit, followed the police to where the bandit car was crowded in a ditch. Occupants were momentarily under cover of darkness. May, with two Omaha World-Herald reporters, holed up in a nearby barn to keep warm.

First bandit, the murderer, came into the barn, cold, tired and bloody, seeking warmth. Ready to give up anyway, the man readily talked on the air. Meanwhile, the W-H reporters scouted up two more of the bandits. Airing was around 2 a.m.

USES WFIL ORGAN FOR WIP PROGRAM

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Henry Patrick, billed as 'The Romantic Troubadour,' yesterday started a daily chirp shot on WIP to the tunes of WFIL's new \$22,000 organ, in one of the trickiest deals ever worked out here. Sponsored by Dr. Mallas, Dentist, Patrick does a daily show on WFIL at 1:15 p. m. and on WIP at 6 p. m. But WFIL has an organ and WIP doesn't. So, through the efforts of the Feigenbaum Agency, which handles the account, Patrick will do his WIP warbling in WFIL's studios and the show will be piped five blocks down the street to the other transmitter.

Feigenbaum, incidentally, last week complained to KYW about its billing of a 'Wandering Troubadour.' Said it was conflicting with Patrick's nom de radio. KYW, thereupon, switched its tag to 'Wandering Minstrel.'

Levy Boys on the Lam

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Wandering Levys are on the loose again. Doc, prez of WCAU, in Florida over the holidays, will return tomorrow (Wednesday). Then Ike, v.p., who not so long ago returned from California, will sneak away again until it's Doc's turn to go back to Florida in February.

Doc also planning a trip to the Coast later in the year to look over rebuilding work on Arrowhead Inn, hostelry that was burned to the ground in recent California forest fires. He and Ike own a chunk of it.

Brown Moved to L. A.

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Charles Brown, sales promotion manager for the NBC's Western Division, leaves tomorrow for Hollywood to make his headquarters at the web's new studios.

Brown is the last of the network execs to be transferred south.

ADAPTS BOOK ON SPEC

Radio rights to 'We Saw It Happen' current best-seller by 13 New York Times writers, have been bought from Simon & Schuster by Roy Post. He will adapt it for a series.

Book deals with stories behind the news.

Burt Lambert joins Mutual sales staff in New York, Jan. 3. Formerly with Hearst Radio and KYW, Philadelphia.

ATLANTA COUGH SYRUP NOT MAGIC, SEZ FTC

Washington, Jan. 1.

M. L. Clein & Co., Atlanta, Ga., makers of cough-syrup and cold tablets, spanked last week by Federal Trade Commission for exaggerated and misleading advertising contained in radio broadcasts. Mentho-Mulsion—bark-stopper, manufactured by the company—does not cure every cough 'irrespective of the cause.' Commish insisted, nor is it capable of stopping coughing spasms, as advertised.

Also cracked down on Malco Cold Tablets, made by the same outfit, for beckoning to radio listeners on the grounds that it is capable of 'driving colds entirely out of the system.'

Complaint was issued against the company and against Max L. and Sadie B. Clein, prez and v.p., respectively. Cleins must file answer in 20 days or receive a cease and desist order.

FRANK WALKER STICKS TO RCA

Frank Walker has decided not to leave the special recordings division of RCA Manufacturing Co. for a proffered post with the American Record Co., which recently became a CBS subsidiary. Out of the offer came a salary and an executive board membership for Walker in his present organization. His new job will place him not only in charge of all the company's recording activities, but he will also direct the sales and merchandising for this division.

Edward Wallerstein, who quit the sales management of RCA Victor's phonograph record division to become president of the latest CBS acquisition, is slated to take over at ARC this week. Turndown by Walker of an ARC contract came as a disappointment to both Wallerstein and Columbia Broadcasting. Walker was to have charge of all ARC recording and manufacturing operations.

WALTER ELY SUCCEEDS BAKER

Lincoln, Jan. 1.

William Baker, manager of KGFW, Kearney, has resigned effective Jan. 1. Walter Ely, chief engineer since station was constructed last August, succeeds.

Fred Christensen, manager of KGFW's Grand Island remote studios, moves in as his assistant.

Sales Reps and Agency Buyers

By Ben Bodec

Station reps have got around to the point where they admit that agency time buyers are people. That in itself is quite a progressive step in the relations between the two clans. Not that there is any overt hostility between them. But boys will be boys and once out of sight or hearing of the other down will come the hair and the vocabulary.

It wasn't so long ago that station reps, which also takes in their sales staffs, split the time buyers into two classifications. They were either reasonable or good fellows or just something under the garden rocks. With the time buyers, even those assuming a scholarly seriousness about their work, the personal equations used to be a little more complicated. They used to marvel how guys with such limited knowledge of the radio business could accumulate such large income from station commissions.

This personal regard has changed somewhat, and for the better. Station reps are more inclined to credit the buyer with a knowledge of relative values and a tendency to curb the personal angle. Some buyers make no bones about having their favorites but contend that this personal leaning is justifiable. From experience they know that anything such favorites tell them is on the up and up. They can also depend upon them to produce requested material even if there's no assurance of a contract or of the solicited account okaying a spot campaign.

Not Just Social

These same time buyers pooh-pooh the effect of social entertainment. The friends they cultivate in the trade make more than pleasant companions. Invariably they're the sort that help the buyer along the rocky path of his job with co-operation and information and don't figure that every gesture in either direction entails an obligation. This philosophic sentiment is no gag either, solemnly assure these selfsame buyers.

Gripe that is most frequently aired among station reps and their salesmen concerns the limitation of their contacting spheres. It's a straight line to the agency time, buyer or else. Unlike the situation that prevails in the newspaper field, they're not only cut off from direct contact with the client but they mustn't take their story to the account executive. All this, say the reps, has created the kind of relationship that still makes them stepchildren of the advertising business. In the case of newspaper reps and space buyers even there's a more marked feeling of confidence. The

time buyer shrouds most of his inquiries in mystery with the result that the rep can't get the information from the station in all the fullness and frankness that the buyer has requested. These close-clipped queries make the rep feel that the buyer fears that he may tip off another agency to what's in the works.

Office Boys

Trouble in many of these agencies, say the station reps, is that they have to deal with youngsters whose rating in the office isn't much above that of apprentice. They lack the reputation or acceptance that is required to impress an account executive after they're convinced they have a good idea or something that ought to be passed on to the client. But this criticism is tempered with a sense of fairness. The reps realize that until stations adopt a uniformity of method in presenting information about themselves time buyers will continue to lead frustrated lives. Under the present system the task of co-ordinating the material for intelligent transmission to the client is frequently a brain cracker.

From the buyer's viewpoint most reps are no bargain when it comes to co-operation. A request for information is invariably followed by a demand to know whether it's for an account that is actually set to go on the air or whether it's for an account that the agency would like to sell on a campaign. Past experience has got the buyers in the habit of either refusing to commit themselves or stating that it's ready business. If the buyer is honest and replies that it's something that the agency is working on the rep says something about trying to get the information and, with few exceptions, proceeds to forget all about it. As the time buyers see it, the matter of getting information should be an avid duty of station representation, whether it means immediate business or otherwise.

Their job, say the ratecard students, is becoming increasingly complicated. The client is all the time getting smarter about radio, and unless the agency can marshal the facts upon which to base a sound recommendation it is spot broadcasting itself that will remain the major loser. After all, there are other media.

ROOSEVELT TALKED 32 TIMES ON NBC IN '38

Washington, Jan. 1.

President Roosevelt talked 32 times to radio audiences during the past year, NBC report shows. Total broadcasts over NBC since his inauguration in 1933 added up to 157 at year's end.

Next in line with his chief, Postmaster General James A. Farley rang the bell with 17 speeches during the 11-month period. Henry A. Wallace, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, was third with 16 broadcasts up to Dec. 1, and Secretary of State Cordell Hull trailed with an even dozen. All remaining Cabinet officers used the NBC network 17 times among them, but Assistant Secretaries hogged the air with a total of 34 broadcasts.

Usual orations by members of Congress were recorded, showing the Senate with a long lead over the House. Although only 96 Senators, as against 435 Representatives, Upper House members made 97 broadcasts in 11 months compared with the Lower House total of 111.

NBC brag also listed 'six Ambassadors and Ministers, 51 Army and Navy figures and 164 other Federal officials . . . 25 state Governors, 38 other state officials and 48 municipal officials'—bringing total of Government officers broadcasting up to Nov. 30 to 479.

W. R. Baker to N. Y.

William R. Baker, Jr., vice prez and Coast radio head of Benton & Bowles agency, returns to New York Jan. 5 to represent the firm on General Foods accounts. Tom Revere, B&B radio chief, arrives after first of the year to pass a couple of months here, thereafter dividing his time between N. Y. and Hollywood.

Baker has headed the local office for the past 18 months, having succeeded Herschel Williams.



DEL SHARBUTT

Thanks for Everything

Season's Greetings to Everybody, Especially to The Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., The General Electric Co., The Lorillard Co., The Coca-Cola Co., and All Prospective Companies.

BRITAIN'S FABULOUS INVALID, VAUDE, OWES MUCH TO DOCTOR KILOCYCLE

Operating Experience and Theories of British Broadcasting Corp. Seek Harmonious Relations With Box Office

They don't use the vernacular of show business at the BBC. In the matter of words, everything within that institution is governed by self-determined standards of English, whether spoken or written, and the utterances of departmental chiefs are not exempt from the standing rule.

If, therefore, the contribution which follows may appear in parts to exude the comfortable phraseology with which readers of VARIETY are more familiar, it needs explaining that the article has been by permission translated from original material which was impeccable in language.

By JOHN WATT

(Director of Variety, B.B.C.)

London, Dec. 20.

Show business spends most of its time knocking the BBC. That's ungrateful, because radio has given at least one side of the entertainment world the biggest and most continuous boost it ever had—and that aside from its nonstop plugging of other sections.

Just like the United States, England for years carried its own fabulous invalid—the variety theatre. All up and down the United Kingdom famous old music halls were putting up the shutters or, worse, drifting over to the all-conquering motion pictures. There remained, right until comparatively recent times, only a handful of key theatres that held true to the old traditions. It looked bad for business. Because, as the field closed in, the market for talent dwindled; there seemed no future for up-and-coming vaude performers, so the whole variety world looked set to be slowly strangled in its own vicious circle.

Then what happened? Along came radio with its potent serum, applied a hypodermic syringe to the invalid—and gave it such a shot in the arm that, not only were the flagging tissues fully restored, but new life went coursing through its veins, imparting a vigor such as it never had before.

It's a fact, and here's some of the evidence.

Exhibit A—Practically every top-liner on the road today is a personality or team that made good on the air; even the biggest of the old-timers have to fight to get their names bolder on the bills than those of the crooners, comics, instrumentalists or what have you who are familiarly known to millions of plain folks who heard 'em and liked 'em on the ether.

Exhibit B—Some of the regular air shows that we built big on our program schedules are now packing the music halls. 'Kentucky Minstrels,' 'In Town Tonight,' 'Carroll Levis' Discoveries,' 'Kerbside Kabaret,' and more recently 'Band Wagon,' are surefire bets of this nature. All of these shows were developed by BBC.

Exhibit C—And now we're getting down to cases—the drift from vaudeville to films was first arrested, and then the pendulum began a swing in exactly the reverse direction. Today, something of a landslide has set in throughout the country, and so fast are the old halls reverting to type that it's even got the picture people bothered. There's more active variety at this time in the U.K. than ever there was—even in the days when films hadn't been thought of.

Can you take it? I could dish out more facts still, except it's clear the case is already well proven. Maybe the defense might put up a line of argument to dispute my claim. I wouldn't know.

Sees Little Sign Of Surfeiting the Fans

An angle dangled in front of my face by a VARIETY mugg when we talked this thing over was that radio might in the long reckoning do disservice to the music halls by so gorging listeners with vaude shows that they would tire, or by putting up the big shots of the variety stage so frequently that their technique

would become threadbare. Familiarity breeds contempt?

Well, I didn't rise to that bait, first because I don't see any sign of it, secondly because what a trained observer of show business might notice wouldn't be apparent to John Public, who knows what he likes and is happy when he gets it. Of course, it's a point, but in Broadcasting House are not too dull-witted to manipulate our programs so as to prevent, as far as we can, killing the goose that lays our own golden eggs; in other words, giving the fans an overdose of their own favorites.

One contention I heard when I got in another argument on this same subject was that the biggest names in radio variety are those that established themselves on the boards long before broadcasting became a force in the land. But beyond a handful of names which immediately spring to mind—though I'm not going to fall into the trap of listing them here—where are the top-liners of the music halls? Admittedly, such as there are, are personalities in their own right, craftsmen at their job, and they didn't need radio to establish them, but they couldn't carry the whole variety business on their shoulders. What do you think?

The way it strikes me is that these are exceptions that prove the rule, and all the arguments you like to put up to challenge vaudeville's debt to radio go so far and no further.

We ran some months back a 'listeners' log,' an idea of mine to try and establish a cross-section of what the customers thought of the service they were getting. We listed all the different types of programs for which the department is responsible—all the many classes of light entertainment from organ recitals to straight variety shows—and invited our audiences to pass on them. Out of 47,000 listeners who offered to cooperate, we selected 2,000 at random, who heroically listened to everything on the list, whether good, medium or lousy, and week by week marked off their likes and dislikes for our guidance.

Dance Music Ranked

Low in Popularity

After the statistical experts had analyzed, collated, correlated, cross-referenced and given the results a

complete workout, what stood out a mile was that 92% liked variety and wanted more. That's just how popular vaudeville has gotten since the BBC.

Other fact that came at us like a poke in the eye was an emphatically expressed distaste for dance music! Why it happened that way I still can't figure out; but imagine what brain-flogging it implied if we were to accept the verdict and give them more variety and less music. Isn't it enough that we have to juggle and fake already to give 'em sufficient without either letting the shows go stale or drop steadily in quality?

Still, we had to solve it, and we flatter ourselves we discovered an answer that will satisfy everybody. We worked from the two factors aforesaid—loud pedal for variety, soft pedal for music—and out of those we created what we call the band show, a continuous entertainment with a band as its framework, but tricked out with comics, specialties and what all into a conglomerate whole.

It clicked! We started with 'Monday Night at Seven,' a regular weekly program that has in it a bit of everything, the same features recurring week by week. Then we raised the tabs on 'Band Wagon,' and of all the shows we regularly put over, this is the one that has jelled and tickled the pop fancy. This program has a slick band, Miff Ferrie's Jakdauz (a well-liked harmony trio), an organist, a couple or so other interest items—and a permanent comedian, Arthur Askey, with his sidekick, Dickie Murdoch.

Comics stick themselves in wherever there is a pause between acts, and the resultant impression is of a slick comedy show. The listeners love it, but don't realize just how they have been fooled.

For why? Because they get a 60-minute show, and out of that the comedy merchants are probably not on the air for more than 12. Everybody is happy, the customer gets a swingy show with a variety atmosphere about it, and the BBC doesn't have to overwork its available comedy talent.

There isn't any secret about the fact that, though variety is tops for appeal in the light entertainment class—which is all that concerns my department—we give listeners less straight programs of this nature than anything else. You haven't got to tell us that a slapbang variety program, putting over half a dozen acts,



RALPH EDWARDS

Procter & Gamble - Chrysler Corporation - Horn & Hardart - Kellogg Company—Thanks for the Honor of Serving You.

wam! wam! wam! is the best air show of them all. We know. But we'll let you tell us where we are going to get sufficient talent to fill out the bills we have to find three or four times a week—and keep up the quality.

Outlook of English,

Americans Not Similar

Barring a common language, English and Americans are foreigners to each other. The outlook of one is so entirely different from that of the other that there must be complete localization in approach to the job of providing entertainment. You might say that films contradict the argument, but, without overstepping on to some one else's territory, I still contend it goes to prove my point. Movies that are naturals in America are often less enthusiastically received in England, and it was only the backwardness of British production that caused audiences in this country to come to rely on pictures made in Hollywood, reflecting the American view and the American outlook.

Where radio is concerned, I'm pretty sure the average strong American program would not score in the U. K. Five gets you ten, in fact, that if Jack Benny's or Charlie McCarthy's hour were presented over the BBC air exactly as they now go forth, but without any indication of the talent taking part, they would be as like to flop as not. There are ideas in American broadcasting, naturally, that can be applied to our programs—and vice versa, we hope—but if either borrows a formula from the other it needs revamping more than somewhat if it is to get by.

A program like our 'Band Wagon'

is possibly the nearest approach we get at the BBC to the Rudy Vallee hour, for instance, but a similar broadcast has had to be done in English to satisfy our listeners' own conceptions of comedy, rhythm, tempo and atmosphere. Or, if a parallel is sought with the fast type of American band broadcast, the hour on our schedules that most nearly coincides with the formula is a recent series of shows introduced by Jack Hylton, in which the hot and sweet playing of his boys is supported by vocals, comedy interludes and gag presentations, played through without interruption. Even that, though, had to be re-conceived to suit the local taste.

Imitation Misguided;

Audience Research Needed

You can't solve problems by imitating the other fellow. You've got to be guided by audience reaction alone, which is far more difficult for us than for American networks, where response to sponsored programs can more easily be keyed, if not to the satisfaction of listeners, at least to that of the guy who is spending good money on the show.

But we certainly got on a winner when we hitched our buggy to variety as kingpin of our light entertainment section. If our work has put the music hall stage on the upgrade, it is quite incidental, though no less pleasing and stimulating. At the BBC, we assume it is our job to give radio owners the best show that means and circumstances allow. We are, as a precise fact, in show business.

For that reason, if for no other, we do not seek antagonism with other sections of the entertainment industry. As far as conceivably possible we make it our aim to work shoulder to shoulder with picture and stage interests. We may, at points, be rivals, but that is a broad issue more for the higher-ups than a departmental head.

A recent radio transcription of 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' as an example, gave the 20th Century-Fox picture a grand West End send-off. We were only concerned with it as a radio program, and I imagine our audiences agreed we did the right thing. In the year we also broadcast our version of Disney's 'Snow White,' which earned us much praise.

Regarding the stage, BBC has for some years aired as a weekly feature excerpts from current West End productions, in the intention of giving listeners an impression of what is happening in the London theatre. Players have been interviewed at the mike for 'In Town Tonight,' all of which means nationwide publicity.

We cannot see eye to eye the whole time with those elements which regard us as their opposition, which is only a natural thing. It was a disappointment when we were prevented from putting the Royal Command Performance on the air from the Coliseum, but even there the theatre folk had legitimate grievances. Our compromise was to engage many of the principal performers for a Saturday Music Hall bill just in advance of the event, when we could give our audience an idea of what the Performance would be, and at the same time pick a night when we would be less likely to clash with theatre business.

On the balance the department is very good friends with those same elements. It is understandable that we should, perhaps, sympathize most closely with the variety section and do our best to give it a leg up, because that's the section of show business we ourselves are in.

So, if we broadcast programs glorifying the showmen or the old music halls of England (as, in fact, we are doing at this time), or take an O. B.—outside broadcast to you—from the Variety Artists' Ball or the Water Rats Club, we are killing two birds with one stone and effectively serving two masters—our industry and our audience.

NBC's Happy

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Chimes which duplicate the tones of NBC's signal for station breaks are being used in the radio departments of several local department stores to summon salesmen when customers are waiting, following distribution of 13 of the chimes as Christmas gifts from the press staff of KPO and KGO, NBC stations here.

Unanticipated use of the chimes in that manner helps keep both salesmen and customers NBC-conscious.

INTERNATIONAL RADIO

By Bob Landry

Any consideration of international radio must necessarily be broken down under a variety of sub-headings. Term international radio may cover such widely separated and diverse activities and manifestations as Fred Bate reporting the Wimbledon tennis matches for NBC to the Cuban sales penetration of Sterling Products. International radio may refer to the respect-commanding news coverage of an Austrian or Czechoslovakia crisis by American networks, or it may be scented with the peculiar flavor of a fugitive doctor quack-quacking from some semi-illegal border station in Mexico.

Broadly speaking international radio's future importance to American business is in connection with and as part of the present effort to keep South America insulated against German, Italian and Japanese trade blandishments. In the Latin republics the opportunities for a widening export trade for American manufacturers suggests that the native radio stations will get increasing appropriations.

America is, by all odds, the world leader in broadcasting technique. Some 70,000 programs a year of all kinds are put on the air and the range of stellar personalities regularly available to the listener is way beyond the best array of talent or productions offered elsewhere. BBC in Great Britain is second to America in showmanship, finesse and regular scheduling of air entertainment on a pretentious scale.

What's Wrong With BBC

What's right and what's wrong with BBC has been discussed by experts. One of them, J. B. Priestley, the English dramatist, writing on this theme in the London Sunday Express in July of this year, asked the question, 'Why is the BBC so often and so severely criticized?' and answered by saying, 'What is really wrong with BBC is that it represents a monopoly. No other broadcasting system is allowed. Competition is barred. There is only one runner in the race. The listener is told to like it or lump it.'

Our American system of broadcasting under advertising auspices and substantially, although not entirely, for merchandising objectives is repudiated by Great Britain and South Africa adopted in modified form by France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and

loosely imitated by most of Latin America. Such hideaway spots as Yugoslavia, various Chinese ports, an obscure corner of Ireland, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, are also identified with radio advertising, whereas Holland, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and other European countries do not let Ex-Lax into the parlor, and do not, in fact, have by American standards a very advanced organization of advertising. It is noticeable that in some of these non-sponsor lands consumer cooperatives enjoy considerable eminence.

Commercial radio is doing nicely—in a small way—in the southern counties of England where satisfactory signals from France and Luxembourg can bring in English-language programs. This provides a gross advertising volume annually of perhaps \$3,000,000.

Mexico, the Bad Hombre

Mexico has been the bad boy of international radio and has not given any evidence thus far that it proposes to bring its 100 odd stations into any kind of decent conformity with other countries. So long as Mexican stations, notably those operated by American slickers just over the border, are able to continue their nauseous broadcasts, a smudgy stigma on the escutcheon of international radio will stand out.

And right now international radio in general is 10-12 years behind radio in America. This starts with equipment, much of which is obsolete, or discarded apparatus brought second or third-hand from the United States. Another black mark on international radio is the ranting style of advertising almost universal with announcer-salesmen. In marathon commercials, finesse is unheard of and printed advertising rates merely a starting point for haggling. Entertainment is apt to be confined to phonograph recordings in many countries and so-called 'networks' are sometimes strictly hit-or-miss conversion of short-wave signals into local longwave.

This crudity and backwardness is, however, being overcome as more advertisers, including Americans, are supporting native stations. Cuba and Argentine in 1938 showed considerable zip.

In the next few years an upsurge of importance is no rash prophecy for international radio.

Sponsored Radio In Great Britain

By Ian Radcliffe

London, Dec. 20.

Most Americans, except readers of *VARIETY*'s International Radio columns, will be surprised to learn that sponsored radio does exist in Great Britain—or at least listening to sponsored radio is general throughout this country, although the programs are transmitted from across the English Channel. It is generally thought that the British Broadcasting Corp. has the monopoly of broadcasting in English, and, although this is true for programs originating in Great Britain itself, radio waves know no frontiers. BBC gives a choice of two programs at most times, but vast numbers of homes in Great Britain actually prefer to listen to English programs transmitted from the continent of Europe and containing advertising plugs for British-made products. No sponsored programs are accepted by the BBC, so the I.B.C. (International Broadcasting Company, Ltd., and other companies operating concessions obtained from stations abroad, broadcast regular schedules of radio programs designed to please the ears of the British listening public—and that the programs really do please is evidenced by the results of the investigation carried out by Crossley, Inc., of New York, only some two months ago. It rather seems to show that, as in every other field, competition sharpens the wits and makes possible many things which were thought impossible before competition started.

So, although all sorts of different interests in Great Britain have done everything they can to keep radio advertising out, yet there it is—eagerly looked forward to and enjoyed in English homes and now accepted as a regular advertising medium by many of the biggest concerns in this country.

How It Began

Of course, it wasn't an easy thing to get started and when the first efforts to reach the English market were made as far back as 1926, those few people who noticed the effort thought that Captain Leonard F. Plugge, the originator of the idea and the founder of the I.B.C., was crazy. With a few hundred thousand sets, most of them crystal or two-valve, how could anyone hope to penetrate into England from a distance of over two hundred miles? However, the first commercial radio program in English in the form of a fashion talk, sponsored by the American-founded store of Selfridges, duly took the air from the Eiffel Tower station in Paris in the autumn of 1926. Exactly three listeners took the trouble to write to the sponsors and say they'd heard it. And that was the extent of radio advertising to the British public for 1926 and some time to come.

However, with the development of receiving sets and the increase in power of the transmitters, 1930 saw the formation of the I.B.C. and regular commercial broadcasting started—one half-hour on Sunday nights from 10:30 to 11 p. m. from Radio Toulouse, sponsored by a phonograph record manufacturer. About this time, experiments were made from all sorts of stations in France, Belgium, Holland, Spain and as far away as Poland. None of them lasted long and time-salesmen had a tough job even getting a hearing. Still, Radio-Paris came into the field the next year and from 1930 onwards some commercial programs in English were on the air every week, though many didn't last long. At one time every phonograph record company was on the air in the course of the week from one station or another, but it didn't seem to occur to any other type of business that radio could do a job for it.

The Language Problem

Made Stations Reluctant

By the spring of 1932, two important developments had taken place. Radio-Paris, now well known for its transmission in English, was running two hours of entertainment every Sunday, one sponsored by the Gaumont British Picture Corp. and the other by the Sunday Referee (a newspaper which was promptly thrown out of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association for daring to use radio) and Radio-Normandy had started regular sessions of sustaining programs far into the night. All BBC local programs finished—and still do—at midnight, but Radio-Normandy, a 500-watt transmitter situated on the north coast of France

and only just over 100 miles from London, made itself known to late-night knob twiddlers as the only transmitter on the air in English after midnight.

Irish Government Ended Athlone Sponsored Shows

In June, 1933, the 60,000-watt Irish Government station at Athlone threw open an hour a day for sponsored programmes and a rush started which resulted in the whole hour being booked out within four months, with an extension of four hours on Sundays a couple of months later. This station was short-lived, however, as a commercial broadcaster to England, as after 13 months' operation the Irish Government decided that English-made goods should not be advertised from an Irish station, and I.B.C.'s first year's concession was not renewed.

In the autumn of 1933 the French Government took over Radio-Paris, which ceased its English transmission, but at the same time the 200,000-watt transmitter in Luxembourg got going and this finally began to set the scene for the present-day position. About the same time the 60,000-watt Poste-Parisien transmitter in Paris started to broadcast a regular programme in English each evening from 10:30 p. m. From that time on, development has been steady and today Radio-Normandy (now 20,000 watts) broadcasts an English schedule of 73 hours weekly, Radio-Luxembourg 50 hours, Poste-Parisien and Radio-Lyons (a comparative newcomer) about 20 hours each week. Many of the transmission times are right outside the times of the BBC broadcasts (Radio-Normandy starts the day at 7 A. M., Radio-Luxembourg at 8, while the BBC starts at 10 o'clock) and the programmes from the Continental stations are regularly heard by millions of English listeners and used by dozens of manufacturers, including such well-known names in the American market as Horlicks, Kraft Cheese, Lux, Pepsodent, Phillips Milk of Magnesia, Colgate-Palmolive, Alka-Seltzer, Oxydol, Quaker Oats, Kolynos and many others.

With all commercial stations lying outside Great Britain, the two most vital questions in building up a listening audience are geographical position and power. Radio-Normandy, with only 20,000 watts, has a much greater audience in England than Poste-Parisien with 60,000 watts can ever hope to have. Situated only just over 100 miles from London, it can now be heard in the whole of the southern half of England in daylight—the Paris station, although three times more powerful is not so easy to get and Radio-Lyons (some 400 miles away) with 25,000 watts cannot be heard except at night. Radio-Luxembourg's 200,000 watts and channel on the long wave band enable it to penetrate England thoroughly, but even so, the signal is much stronger on the eastern side of the United Kingdom and the majority of its listeners are concentrated there, in the same way as the majority of listeners to Normandy are concentrated in South of England.

Cross-Channel Radio

Faces Many Difficulties

Some 163 hours a week of sponsored radio look mighty fine, but when you start to look a bit deeper into the workings of commercial radio in England, you begin to wonder how it ever got going at all. Here, very briefly, are some of the problems which the broadcasting companies have to contend with:

To start with, except for a few hours on Sundays, no commercial transmissions in English are on the air between 6 p. m. and 10 p. m. The stations require these times to broadcast in their native French language and put over types of programmes which do not appeal to England. So, practically speaking, the whole business has been built up on day-time broadcasting—to the tune of about \$6,000,000 annually. It took literally years to convince prospective sponsors that anybody listened to radio in day-time, and until one or two firms, more enterprising than the rest, tried out programmes at breakfast and tea-time, the broadcasting companies had big spells of sustaining programmes without a chance of a sponsor.

Once again, however, it's been

proved that if the entertainment appeals, the listener listens. Results from day-time broadcasting have been phenomenal and many of the firms already mentioned have been 'on the air' for two, three and four years without interruption. The record is held by a firm whose commercial plugs have been aired from Radio-Normandy for nearly seven years without a break. Apart from Sunday, when any time between nine o'clock in the morning and seven at night is booked solid on 52-week series, week-day mornings are booked pretty solid on both Luxembourg and Normandy and if the 1939 bookings are any criterion, it seems that the afternoons will be nearly as well booked before long. So, even the lack of night-time broadcasting (except a limited amount on Sundays) hasn't really slowed things up much.

British Commercials

Strictly Transcription

Then the program. British Post Office controls all lines to Europe; 'Rent them to commercial broadcasting companies for radio advertisers?'—'Never!!' So the broadcasters record all their programs, even when they're in theatres, and they go over the air a few days or even weeks later. Even this hasn't stopped the top artists going on to the commercial air. Gracie Fields, England's No. 1 star, is currently tops for Fairy Soap; George Formby, England's No. 2, for Feen-a-Mint (both handled by Erwin Wasey), while Charles B. Cochran, England's premier showman, comperes the current Lux Theatre of the Air, and Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon are on the Rinsol Music Hall (both by J. Walter Thompson). Reginald Foort, for two years the B.B.C. resident organist, has just signed with Macleans Toothpaste (leading brand in England) before going on a tour of the provinces, and one of the I.B.C. outside recording vans will follow him-around making platters for airing over Radio-Normandy Sunday afternoons and Radio Luxembourg Sunday mornings. So, once again, where there's a will there's a way, although what the final way is to be has yet to be decided. The majority of transcriptions are recorded on discs, but up to a year or so ago quite a large number of programs were recorded on the sound track section of ordinary films. Of course, this method was very much more expensive than disc recording, without offering any particular advantage, except that the average layman could easily visualize a half-hour program running continuously on film, whereas he knew that disc had to be cross-faded. The fact that the average sound-head only holds film for about 11 minutes and has to be cross-faded also, was not stressed when the film interests which at

that time were handling some of the time on Radio Luxembourg realized that they had studios installed, primarily for films, which could be used to make radio programs. The break-away occurred when the J. Walter Thompson Company provided a radio studio in the basement of Bush House, London, and installed the Phillips Miller strip system of recording. This system saved quite considerably over film, bringing the recording cost of a quarter-hour down from about \$150 to about \$95, while still retaining the strip idea. On the other hand, disc recording can be obtained for as little as \$60, according to the studio used. Newest likely development is direct process recording, which it is estimated will halve costs for advertisers and still do a job. Since three copies of programs are the maximum required (no sponsor using more than three stations) those in favor of direct process claim that it is wasteful for the advertiser to go to the expense even of using wax when the advertising campaign gains nothing by its use and merely makes the return obtained by the sponsor more expensive. Direct process may cost as little as \$25 to \$30 for recording a 15-minute program, and it seems the obvious move that unless some new and still cheaper process becomes available advertisers will eventually standardize on this system. Broadcasting companies hope that they will put the money saved back into talent or time.

There are only four or five studio set-ups available to sponsors. Latest news is that I.B.C. is just pulling out the back of its premises to make room for a third studio, which will be the first to have an audience gallery. The majority of programs are recorded with audiences, but some of the larger shows are staged at the Scala theatre or in film houses and produced on the same lines as the Chase & Sanborn hour or Jack Benny's show.

Audience Participation

Programs Breaking Out

Audience participation programs are coming in, too, and modified versions of Quiz programs have made their bows from both Luxembourg ('The Riddle Master' for Brown & Polson) and Normandy ('Teaser Time' for Genoa brand toothpaste) within the last two months. Up to a few months ago stations would not accept any programs containing less than 65% of music for fear of repercussion among Continental listeners who were liable to kick against too many foreign language broadcasts being put over their stations. The bait of Monday through Friday script shows offered to stations last fall by Blackett-Sample-Hummert proved

much for the stations, however, and have resulted in a considerable relaxation of restrictions. While Luxembourg still insists on a certain amount of music in each quarter-hour period, this has not prevented some five or six of this type of programs being aired daily, and Normandy allows complete 15-minute periods without music, provided script spot is well cushioned by music either side.

Sustainer programs have up to recently consisted of phonograph records announced by local station announcers (all companies maintain staffs of English announcers at the transmitters), but a recent development of the I.B.C. is to produce a certain number of their sustainers in their London studios. Luxembourg, with a smaller broadcasting schedule and fewer periods to sustain, still uses phonograph records.

Talent Costs Moderate;

Time Fees Sound Big

Cost of talent is still comparatively low, and although Horlicks Picture House (4 to 5 p. m. Sundays, Luxembourg and Normandy: 5 to 6 p. m. Paris) is said to cost \$2,500 for talent for the hour's broadcast, \$500 for a 15-minute program is still among the higher expenditures. Many 15-minute programs cost no more than \$250 to \$300.

News broadcasts are so far non-existent because of the inability of the broadcasters to rent lines or obtain news from regular services, and an amusing sidelight to this aspect of the question is the football results. Everybody in England is as crazy about football as are Americans over baseball, as much because of a natural interest in the game as because most Britishers have a few sixpence invested in football pools which pay gigantic prizes for accurate forecasts of results. So, naturally, they want to hear the results as soon as possible. But because it takes time to distribute the evening papers the results aren't known till nearly 6 o'clock, except in the centre of London, and are not broadcast from the B.B.C. until 6:10 p. m. Matches are all over by 5 o'clock, but when the commercial broadcasters wanted to radiate them quickly and applied for a service from the recognized sources, they were met with a blank refusal. So the I.B.C. set up its own service, gets the results to London headquarters by express telegrams and telephones them to Luxembourg and Normandy, and the listener gets them about an hour earlier than he did before, and two sponsors (one each station) cash in.

And so it goes—everything wrong from every point of view, everything more difficult than it ought to be, every vested interest against it—and yet a steadily growing business giving a vast and varied entertainment to the listeners and doing a swell job for the sponsors.

Advertising Rates

It has been several times mentioned in *VARIETY* that the rates for time on Radio-Luxembourg are the highest in the world. (Radio-Normandy isn't much lower; \$425 a 15-minute period as against \$500 for peak time on Luxembourg). True, the rate is high, but where else in the world can an advertiser cover an area containing 10,000,000 radio homes at that sort of cost?

Actually, Radio-Luxembourg can be heard pretty well all over England, with one or two bad spots, but it's listened to mainly in the eastern half. Radio-Normandy (its range vastly increased in recent years) services the southern half primarily, with about 10% of its audience scattered over the north. Although the two stations are in competition, advertisers find that to get complete coverage of Great Britain they've got to use both and most of them do. Normandy's strength of reception in the south holds the majority of listeners and Luxembourg's coverage of the remainder of the country is unchallenged, so between them almost complete coverage can be obtained. Paris and Lyons claim listeners in the Manchester and Liverpool area, less well serviced by the bigger stations, but they're usually only brought in after the bigger stations are already being utilized.



DR. CHARLES M. COURBOIN

Heard Sundays at 12 noon, EST, on Mutual Broadcasting System, Canadian Broadcasting Corp., and short wave to Belgium.

R.C.A.-Victor
Recording Artist

Available for
Guest Appearances

FCC BAR ASSN. GIVES DETAILED STUDY OF VALUE VS. SALE PRICE SINCE '35

Calls Bare Bones Theory Erratic—Impossible to Guess Commission's Policy—Wide Range Sometimes Sanctioned, Other Times Refused

Washington, Jan. 1.

Inconsistency of the FCC in applying the public interest yardstick to station sales was highlighted last week by a study of 34 cases in which the regulators rendered formal opinions since September, 1935. Analysis published in the Federal Communications Bar Association Journal revealed that in half the instances relatively wide spreads between valuation and consideration was tolerated and only three applications for permission to shift ownership in which the price question was important resulted in adverse action.

Point of the summary is that the strict interpretation of the act, voiced by the Commish majority in the recent Travelers Insurance Co. matter (WTIC, Hartford, and four short-wavers), can be put on and taken off as easily as a hat. No fixed principle has been followed, while the occasions when the regulators have looked askance at fat profits are about as frequent as blossoms of a night-blooming cereus.

Without making any extended comment, unidentified herd-rider observed tartly that while various theories have been urged upon the Commission at oral arguments by counsel appearing in behalf of applicants... no fixed policy or theory has yet been adopted. No attention was paid the cases where the Commish rubber-stamped the requests without bothering to take testimony or to set forth its reasons for final action.

Guessing Game

Starting with the WTAQ, Eau Claire, Wis., sale more than three years ago, the summary showed the Commish by implication has followed the principle that owners are entitled to recover past losses when disposing of their plants; that often no thorough analysis is made of financial condition of the properties involved, and that it has been a guessing game whether the FCC would find the public interest benefited through change of ownership.

Although other factors may have been responsible for the adverse action, in the following cases the regulators felt no alarm about ratifying deals where the purchase price was materially bigger than the declared valuation:

WKJC, Lancaster, Pa.; present appraised value \$19,000; price, \$22,500 for 70% of the stock of the licensee corporation although the station ran at a loss for previous two years.

KNX, Los Angeles; replacement cost \$217,237; purchase price \$1,250,000.

KGFG, Oklahoma City; depreciated value between \$11,000 and \$15,000; price paid for 133 1-3 out of 200 shares of stock \$22,500 although station had incurred losses.

KMPC, Beverly Hills; replacement value \$48,225; price \$125,000.

WPEN-WRAX, Philadelphia; replacement value, \$89,353; price, \$166,000 for 450 out of 750 shares of WPEN common stock, all WRAX preferred stock, and 60 out of 90 shares of WRAX common.

KFJZ, Fort Worth; net worth, \$33,981; price, \$57,500.

KFXR, Oklahoma City; replacement value, \$4,067; price, \$65,000.

KHUB, Watsonville, Calif.; original cost, \$28,054; price, \$35,000.

KMAC, San Antonio; replacement value, \$22,031; price, \$13,000 for half-interest.

WFAB, New York City; replacement value, \$55,459; price, \$85,000.

WJIM, Lansing, Mich.; replacement value, \$20,255; stock worth \$50,000.

WNAX, Yankton, S. D.; replacement value, \$84,956; price, \$200,000.

WBLV, Lima, O.; replacement value, \$24,937; price, \$27,000.

WMPS, Memphis; replacement value, \$36,578; price, \$50,030, plus underwriting of \$47,700 worth of obligations.

WCLS, Joliet, Ill.; replacement value, \$13,809; price, \$30,000.

WAYX, Waycross, Ga.; replacement value, \$9,944; price, \$20,500.

On the Other Hand

Only in the following instances where the spread was substantial did

the Commish withhold consent for the proposed transaction:

WGAR, Cleveland; depreciated value, \$77,922; price, \$139,000 worth of stock (flotation was object).

WREN, Lawrence, Kan.; depreciated value, \$68,562; price, \$295,000.

WTIC, Hartford; replacement value, \$513,473; price, \$500,000, plus assumption of \$1,500,000 liabilities.

The analysis brought out the lack of uniformity in obtaining evidence. On some occasions only the original cost was given while on others only the depreciated value of replacement value (latter usually is much higher) was listed; a few times none of the figures were cited while now and then two of the three figures were mentioned. Here and there net worth was taken into account. Many times the profit and loss statement was overlooked.

The bulk of the approvals, regardless of difference between worth and consideration, have come in the past year since Chairman Frank R. McNinch—advocate of the bare-bones theory—took the helm.

DENY WFIL TO OPERATE WHAT

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Reports current here that WHAT will be operated jointly with WFIL if its sale to Bonwit-Teller is approved by the FCC were repeatedly denied this week by Sam Rosenbaum, WFIL prez. Despite the fact that financial control of the two outlets will be in substantially the same hands, Rosenbaum said they would operate as separate entities and on a competitive basis.

WHAT is now owned and operated by the Evening Public Ledger, which itself is reported under option. Permission for transfer of 200 shares of stock, involving majority control, was asked last week. Bonwit-Teller, largest woman's specialty shop in town, is owned by Albert M. Greenfield financial interests, who also own Lit Brothers, which is a half owner of WFIL. Rosenbaum is v.p. of Albert M. Greenfield & Co.

F. Raymond Johnson, prez of Bonwits, said the station is being purchased purely as an investment, although the 100-watt time-sharing outlet has admittedly never made a profit in the entire eight years of its existence. W. Porter Ogelsby, g.m., is son-in-law of John C. Martin, Ledger publisher.

Greenfield interests are also reportedly eyeing WTEL, with which WHAT shares time, so that single-station full-time operation could be achieved.

Sale of WHAT to Bonwits actually took place on Sept. 8, it was revealed in Philly Friday (30), but was kept under cover until application for the transfer was made to the FCC. Terms of the sale were a full purchase price of \$10,000, to be paid \$1,000 down, \$1,000 within five days of the approval of the transfer, and the remainder at the rate of \$2,000 a year for four years.

Clear-Again on Mutual

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Clear-Again cold tablets have bought three 15-minutes weekly on the Mutual web starting Jan. 4 for a Hollywood gossip show by Stella Unger.

Set on nine stations, through the Erwin-Wasey agency.

Axton Takes Onslow

Boston, Jan. 1.

Axton-Fisher Tobacco (20-Grand Cigarettes) will sponsor Coach Jack Onslow over WNAC, Boston, in a series of 130 15-minute 'Sport Roundups.'

Five times weekly from Jan. 16 to July 14. Through McCann-Erickson, New York.

Cali Pabst Radio-Minded

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Lord & Thomas agency here has acquired the Pabst-Premium beer account.

While the beer product has backed away from radio in the past couple of years, it is understood that L. & T. agency is readying a coast-to-coast ether set-up for the account to start early in the spring.

FCC AIMS AT 'FIX IT FOR YOU' GENTRY

Washington, Jan. 1.

Closer ogling of station sales was set in motion last week with adoption of a new application form which will give the FCC mass of data never before required for consideration in trying to agree whether public interest would be served by change in ownership. Blanks are still subject to revision but will be put into use immediately in place of the familiar form in use for several years.

As result of attempts to standardize the yardsticks, the Commish is demanding lengthy and elaborate pedigrees. Not merely enough to give the bare outlines of the tentative transaction. From now on, the regulators want to know everything about the financial and operating plans, the corporate set-up, the identity of behind-scene principals, the other interests of the prospective purchaser, the past activities and possible other stakes in radio, etc.

Rubber-stamped by six of the seven members, the blank concocted by the Rules Committee is intended to remove anonymity and to bring into public sight the real controlling factions throughout the industry. Even transactions where minority blocks of paper may change hands must be submitted to the Commish in the event the result would be a virtual shift of control. Strict interpretation of the new rules and the instructions on the form will require a report in situations where several small deals are being engineered.

Regulators have made deliberate moves to crowd intermediaries, brokers, and disguises out of the picture. Henceforth, applications must state not only the actual officers and chief owners, but the original incorporators and the names of engineers, lawyers, accountants, or other experts consulted in connection with the deal and the request for official sanction. Nearly every salient bit of personal history except social security numbers must be unwrapped.

FRED WILLIS HAS NEW SHORTWAVE JOB

Frederic A. Willis, assistant to the CBS prez. William S. Paley, has been assigned to take charge of the network's shortwave broadcasts. It's a new executive post and was created in recognition of the rapid expansion of such operations, particularly as directed at South American audiences, has been making the past several months.

Willis, whose authority will be analogous to that of Frank Mason at NBC, will at the start co-ordinate the various phases of Columbia's network activities.

Crowley's Hospital Discs

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Jerry Crowley, one-time program director at WIP, has been named chief of the radio exploitation department of the three-cent-a-day hospital service here. He is now making a series of discs on the hospitalization plan for use on local stations.

They will also be made available later to similar services throughout the country.

'Power to Inflict License Revocation Diabolical Weapon of Censorship'

By Louis G. Caldwell

(Washington Radio Attorney)

Washington, Jan. 1.

Of the many problems that have attended Federal regulation of broadcasting from the outset, the three most important are (1) the necessity for improvement of broadcast service in the physical sense, through elimination of interference and through increasing the strength of radio signals over wide areas and to large populations not now receiving good service, (2) the danger of government censorship of broadcasting, an agency of mass communication which ranks with the press, and (3) the prevention of any attempt by a small number of private individuals or corporations to monopolize broadcast facilities.

The first is important because obviously the benefits of this modern miracle should, so far as possible, be made available to all the people in all parts of the country, throughout the hours of the day, the seasons and the years. The second is important because, in the use of this medium to reach the public, liberty of expression is essential to the advance of civilization, is the cornerstone of democratic government, and is the principal barrier against autocracy. The third is important because without competition in the market of ideas the principal social justification for freedom from government censorship crumbles.

There has, in fact, been government censorship of broadcasting since the enactment of the Radio Act of 1927. It has been based on a peculiar interpretation given the Act first by the Federal Radio Com-

mission and, since 1934, by its successor, the Federal Communications Commission, notwithstanding a provision in the Act which expressly forbids censorship or any interference with the right of free speech. The degree of censorship actually exercised has, in general, increased from year to year. It has been greater during the past year than during the preceding year, and, unless some measure is taken to check the tendency, will be greater in 1939 than in 1938. If proof of this be necessary, it will be found in the grounds on which applications for renewal of license are constantly being set for hearing, in scattered pronouncements found in examiners' reports, Commission decisions and press releases, and in the attitude and practices of broadcasters. The Mae West, 'Beyond the Horizon,' and Orson Welles incidents were only the more sensational developments, in which the tendency emerged from the procedural labyrinth in which it is usually buried.

Those who deny the existence of censorship rely on an emphasis on form with a disregard of substance. In its true meaning, censorship includes any governmental power of action which, through fear of penalty, prevents the utterance of facts and opinions and deprives the public of free interchange and competition of ideas. The loss of a license to broadcast is a punishment more feared under most circumstances and by most licensees than a fine or even a term in jail, and the power to inflict this penalty for past conduct at successive six-month intervals is the most diabolical weapon of censorship yet devised. To destroy a broadcast station for offenses in program service is about as reasonable as decreeing that a railroad cease operation because it has occasionally carried passengers travelling in violation of the Mann Act.

Broader Than Any Law

To be safe, the broadcaster must refrain from broadcasting any and all programs which some present or future majority of the Commission may, without advance warning, declare contrary to 'public interest, convenience or necessity.' No statutory prohibition could be as broad as this in practical effect. Rules or standards are almost completely lacking and in making its ex post facto determinations the Commission employs a loose procedure unaccompanied by most of the safeguards traditionally regarded necessary for protection against arbitrary deprivation of the right of free speech.

The vital question is not whether the listening public is or is not to be treated to an Orson Welles broadcast. It is whether the power of a federal agency shall be allowed to swell to such dimensions that, if and when a demagogue with a dictatorship complex is elected to high office, he will have this great means of mass communication at hand to control and abuse for his own purposes, with no legal or constitutional obstacle to bar his way.

Radio is a fast growing art and it is but natural that in its development problems are uncovered which require prompt solution. However, censorship is not the cure for these problems. In fact censorship is an even greater threat to our democratic form of Government than the evils it proposes to cure.

The will of the people rules only if it finds opportunity for expression. That is why the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, of assembly, of the press and of speech. Radio, which is also a means of communication of thought, must likewise be kept free and competitive. The power to determine what the people shall hear must remain with the people. No government agency will ever be wise enough to be entrusted with this power.

If the people of America fully appreciate the importance of the freedom of radio, and if the radio industry continues to be alive to its responsibility, we shall never have censorship. The danger lies in the possibility of impulsive action taken by the people at the time of some unfortunate incident or action taken by an administration in the spirit of retaliation.

Engineers Testing Gas-Filled Coaxial Cable in Cleveland

Cleveland, Jan. 1.

After 10 months of installation work, WTAM is testing a new type of gas-filled, aluminum coaxial transmission line developed by NBC. Invention is called the only one in operation in the country, running from transmitter building to antenna, and is part of station's \$50,000 engineering improvement program.

Coaxial cable has two tubings, with space between them filled with compressed dry nitrogen gas to keep moisture out and prevent freezing or breakdowns. Exactly 460 feet long, line is set on rollers in narrow runway to allow for expansion or contraction of at least three-and-half inches.

Developed by NBC with Raybould Coupling Co., Isolantite Co. and Aluminum Co. of America, it is regarded by William S. Duttera of Radio City's engineering staff as answer to establishment of a television network throughout the country. Advantage of it over copper television lines costing \$5,000 per mile is that it's not only cheaper but more practical. Only 1,000 pounds of lightweight aluminum are used in contrast to 3,000 pounds of copper used in previous set-ups. A new type of coupling also does away with soldering and speeds repairs.

Although not planning to transmit sound programs yet, WTAM claims coaxial cable will increase its reception in Northern Ohio and Eastern Pennsylvania by eliminating spurious radiations of power at other frequencies.

KFBI Moves Nearer

Wichita, Kans., Jan. 1.

Removal of radio station KFBI from Abilene, Kans., to Wichita was a step nearer Saturday when Federal Communications Commission announced charges of 'prejudicial conduct' against Examiner George H. Hill had been dismissed. Charges had been made by Marcellus Murdock, publisher of Wichita Eagle, which is owner of station; Howard T. Fleeson and Russell Lowe.

KFBI is owned by Farmers & Bankers Life Insurance Co., which has home office here.

THE THREAT OF CENSORSHIP

By Bob Landry

Although ostensibly a social problem, censorship directly bears upon both entertainment and advertising, the mama and the papa of broadcasting. What happens to radio on its public service front has or may have a direct bearing on radio as a trade. Radio is the apple of the propagandists' eye. Demagogues love the radio and correspondingly hate and revile those who set up rules that keep them (the demagogues) at arm's length. Probably broadcasting as an industry is big enough, and American democracy is sturdy enough, and the crackpot and reactionary threats presently are not dangerous enough, to justify too much fuss over the question. Still a re-reading of the 1938 news stories in *VARIETY* on the trade side and in the daily press on the general side does not encourage pleasant musings.

Is censorship a greater or a lesser threat today than, say, a year ago? It would seem so. There are more people now disposed, in the words of Edward Klauber, to say 'the Government ought to do something about it' and in the words of Oswald Garrison Villard who also responded to a request for a statement on the subject: 'The question is serious and is certain to become more so if the country cannot get itself out of the depression and put millions of unemployed to work.'

Outbursts of racial, religious and class hatred are just unusual enough in the United States to encourage nervous stomachs among the free-style worriers. This is probably a good sign in itself; prejudices and their ugly symptoms are not taken for granted, their very articulation when bold and open causes shock.

Antecedents

There have been intermittent flare-ups in American history. One election, it will be recalled, was thrown by the unfortunate phrase, 'Rum, Romanism and Rebellion' used by a Protestant clergyman. In the anti-Masonic, anti-Catholic, anti-Negro, anti-Semitic passages the history books remind us that from the old A.P.A. and Ku Klux Klan to the modern epidemics of 'hate thy neighbor' virus the paralysis of hard times has nearly always preceded.

What makes the present eruptions menacing is that radio gives the quack, the rabble-rouser, the venom-spitter an audience of a size never previously possible. On the other hand the same radio, used defensively and wisely can, and perhaps may, lead the populace safely through the bogs of vicious intolerance.

So great is the timeliness of this theme of censorship that the following expressions are especially worthy of study. They are appended alphabetically:

ROGER N. BALDWIN

(American Civil Liberties Union)

'Censorship of the radio is really two problems, first, political censorship by a Federal agency, and second, 'editorial selection' by station managers. By far the greatest obstacles to freedom on the air have come from station managers. Political censorship by the FCC is trifling in comparison with it, although the threat constantly remains, despite the prohibition of Congress, in the system of license renewals.

'Station censorship is based on fear of arousing antagonism by discussion of controversial issues. Some stations have followed the plan laid down in the law for equal facilities for political candidates by opening their programs to all sides of controversial issues. This is the right method. But the trouble in practice is that the conservatives with the money get the air and the liberals or radicals without it don't—not often. What Mr. Cameron can say in behalf of employers on Mr. Ford's sponsored program can be answered by Mr. William Green or Mr. John L. Lewis only on sustaining time. The networks, anyhow, will not sell Mr. Green or Mr. Lewis time.

'Another obstacle to free speech on the air is the fear of libel or slander suits against stations. That fear compels the submission of manuscripts in advance, with not infrequent warnings and deletions. The law should be changed to relieve stations of this liability in the discussion of public issues.

'Viewing the long record of complaints of censorship by stations and of indirect program pressure by the licensing agency at Washington, it is my observation that station managers have become more tolerant,

sometimes even courageous, in their handling of public issues. But the tendency to some form of censorship by the licensing agency has doubtless grown. It can be successfully resisted only if the grounds for complaint are abolished by a legal requirement that stations must deal as fairly with controversial issues as they now must with candidates for public office.'

GEORGE V. DENNY

(President, Town Hall, N. Y.)

'In spite of the westward march of dictatorship and censorship which, of course, go hand in hand, American radio is the freest institution in the world for the dissemination of news and information. Under the radio law, radio's primary responsibility is to the public. From the commercial viewpoint, its primary responsibility is to the public. During my three years' contact with the industry, I have never known a group in private business more keenly aware of their social responsibilities than the men and women in radio. They, like everyone else, are subject to human error, and that mistakes in judgment should be made in this relatively new industry operating under public scrutiny over seventeen hours a day every day in the year, can only be expected.

'I feel that the present system of competitive stations and chains licensed by a responsible government body is thoroughly democratic and in the public interest. I hope that any changes in the radio law will not depart from these basic principles.'

ROY S. DURSTINE

(President, B.B.D. & O.)

'Now that the tumult has died down about the Orson Welles incident I don't think there is any more chance of Federal censorship than there was a year ago and I don't believe there was any chance of it then. 'Certainly the networks and the agencies are more conscious than ever of the dangers involved, and aside from the ever present anxiety of some advertisers over hurting the medium by pressing too hard, I think the outlook is very wholesome.'

MARK ETHRIDGE

(Vice President and General Manager, Louisville Courier-Journal)

'My own feeling is that the threat of censorship of radio has somewhat subsided, but that it should never be regarded lightly. Radio must always be on the lookout for it. Censorship will come if radio broadcasters are not intelligent enough to adhere to non-partisanship and to good taste. No radio broadcaster has a right to use his station to propagandize for his own views, nor does he have a right for the mere sake of money to transgress the bounds of decency.

'There are sour notes in any democracy, and there will be sour notes in radio as long as it is free. There should be sour notes, because it is the best evidence of freedom. The only media of expression which play in symphony are those which speak with the voice of one man. I hope America is never so deluded as to feel that there is anything to be gained by giving any public agency or individual the right to set standards for her radio. The result would be bound to be mediocrity in the first place, because such an agency would be so timid and constricting that it would strangle creative enterprise. In the second place, it would inevitably take on the color of biased news presentation shaped to fit the policy of the administration then in power. In the third place, instead of elevating the standards, it would tend to lower them, because the standards of any committee are mass standards, and mass standards are always lower than the standards of creative individuals who are groping for new techniques. Nothing worse could happen to American radio than for the power to censor it to be reposed in a group of men.'

DONALD FLAMM

(President, WMCA, New York)

'The past year has witnessed greater stress upon management in radio for responsibility of opinions expressed on the air. In this connection, there is a measure of censorship exercised by radio which is inherent in the obligation of management to the public welfare. This type of censorship, which has been clearly defined as the station's responsibility rather than any Governmental agency, is not only desirable

but is expected by the Government and by the general public to safeguard good taste and democratic ideals.

'I think that events during the past year have demonstrated one particular factor in censorship not sufficiently stressed previously. That is, the obligation of a station to determine to the best of its ability the accuracy of facts in a speech calculated to assist public thinking. The usual waiver of responsibility is not enough because any harm that may result from distorted fact is already accomplished once the broadcast is permitted without refutation.

'This brings up the difference between opinion and fact. Radio should exercise no censorship on opinion, other than that which is in the interest of good taste. But it has a moral obligation to safeguard the accuracy of facts upon which the opinions are based. Show up the inaccuracy of fact and the public can be depended upon to realize the illogical position of the opinion. But permit distorted facts to go unchallenged and you confuse and incite the public to unreasonableness.'

GAYLE GRUBB

(Manager, WKY, Oklahoma City)

'Regarding Government censorship, it would seem the FCC is going to continue to leave the matter in the hands of the individual stations and networks, which in the past few years have done much to allay the fear of such governmental interference in broadcasting operation. Strict censorship of commercial copy is today being observed by most stations, which are watching more closely their program schedules as they apply to one of the fundamental demands of their licenses, namely, public interest.

'It is our judgment that the industry will more and more become its strictest censor, making the future possibility of Government censorship very remote.'

HUGH S. JOHNSON

(Columnist, Commentator)

'There was never any attempt to censor me on the air except on a speech I made on syphilis. That censorship was a great mistake by a subordinate official. It was corrected later.

'However, it is a fact that sponsors who would like to have returned me to the air for political comment were afraid to do so because some of my talks had been critical of the Administration. These fears were based on nothing definite but a sort of vague apprehension.

'The broadcasting companies, themselves, have never made an attempt to direct or delete any observation of mine.'

EDWARD KLAUBER

(Executive V.P., CBS)

(Columbia Broadcasting System)

'My impression is that as interest in broadcasting grows, and more and more people come to realize its importance as a social force, there are an increasing number of demands for censorship. These naturally come from people who think 'the government ought to do something about it' whenever they believe anything is wrong, and of course from people whose idea of free speech is that it should be a privilege only of speakers with whose views they agree.

'There are, however, three encouraging signs. The first is that every suggestion of censorship is met with much more emphatic and widespread opposition today than ever before.

'The second is, that in the great majority of cases, people who learn the actual facts in connection with a given situation which has aroused their criticism, usually become friends of broadcasting as soon as they realize the earnest efforts that are made to handle it properly under varying circumstances.

'The third reason for encouragement is that apparently the public is becoming pretty well aware that the broadcasters can, and do, act very swiftly to correct a fault when they find it, and thus the public is surely learning that the industry's power of self-regulation will in the long run be their best reliance.'

LENOR R. LOHR

(President, NBC)

'In any discussion of censorship it is first of all necessary to define the

term, for censorship has almost as many shades of meaning as there are persons discussing the subject.

'The term comes from the Latin word *censere*, meaning to value. Originally, censors were Roman magistrates who took the census, and gradually became overseers of morals and conducts. Hence, censorship implies an official or governmental jurisdiction over speech and action. It has come to mean, to a great extent, control of any kind. Therefore, we speak of government censorship, censorship by other groups, and a personal censorship or self-control.

'Censorship, in the broad sense, is one of the most important problems in radio, and has been from the beginning. The danger lurks in the degree to which it is exercised, and by whom. Prohibition as well as privileges are essential. This control comes from two sources in broadcasting—from the broadcasters themselves and from the vast listening audience.

'It has been said that one man's rights stop where another's begin. In broadcasting, this truth is acknowledged and care must be taken that the sensibilities of one portion of the public are not sacrificed to gratify the preferences of another. The obligation of radio is to enforce the simple code of civilized behavior, respect of one man for another, honorable dealing and honest intention, served with courtesy, good manners and good taste.

'This, the broadcaster, advised by the listeners, is better fitted to do than any other agency. Any attempt of the broadcaster to shirk this duty, or of any agency to usurp it, would tend to destroy one of the fundamentals of democracy. The government does not want this, the public does not, nor does the radio industry. Despite periodic agitation by those who, for their own purpose, would attack this freedom of the air, I do not believe that an iron-clad, official censorship would ever be permitted in America.'

FRANK R. McNINCH

(Chairman, Federal Communications Commission)

'Nowhere do I see any real danger of Federal censorship of radio broadcasting. So far as I know no one in the Government wants to blue-pencil the programs. Certainly I do not.

'If a censorship measure should be brought before the Congress for consideration, I would vigorously oppose it. It would be a Pandora's box out of which would spring to plague us innumerable and unimaginable evils.

'Sometimes the ghost of censorship by the Government is summoned up merely to frighten us against our insistence upon the broadcasters censoring themselves, as they must do under the law and in the public interest, even if at times they lose money by it. Broadcasters hold valuable Government licenses for the use of frequencies which belong to the whole people, and are obligated as trustees for the public to scan their programs critically and to try to better them.

'The proper and final arbiter of radio programs is the listening public. The Communications Commission has its function of regulation to perform, especially through the renewal of licenses. But as for censorship, the only kind we have in this country is exercised when the programs are selected and edited.

'The broadcaster is the one to exercise power over this and to answer to the public for the manner in which he exercises it.'

PAUL W. MORENCY

(Gen'l Manager, WTIC, Hartford)

'The problem of radio censorship is important not merely to the radio industry but is of much greater importance to the people of the United States. As I see it, radio in the United States is already censored by the best and most critical censor possible—the public. Any delegation of authority to censor radio programs to a body large or small, public or private, would be the first great step toward the suppression of the free expression of opinion on all problems. The Congress, wisely recognizing the importance of this fact, specifically denied to the regulatory body which it created, the power to exercise censorship. The head of that regulatory body has already expressed himself to the effect that there is no desire to impose censor-

ship by that body, and further, that it has no power to do so.

'The various organized bodies which have criticized radio on one point or another do not seem to realize the implications of some of their proposals. As changes are necessary in the radio structure they can be made by the regulatory body under the present law and by the industry itself. Any deviation from this system will inevitably lead to an entirely different system of broadcasting than that which the people now enjoy.'

JAMES D. SHOUSE

(Vice President, WLW, Cincinnati)

'It seems to me that any discussion of the dangers of approaching censorship in radio assumes that such does not now exist in effect; self-imposed, it is true, and through being self-imposed reflecting a wide variety of divergent individual reactions as to what should or should not be said, advocated or discouraged on the air.

'Programs are already censored, not uniformly but through the application of extremely heterogeneous standards. This is not necessarily an unfortunate situation, but I believe that clarification of the whole subject is indicated.'

JAMES G. STAHLMAN

(President, Nashville Banner)

'Radio is in for censorship of some degree, whether it likes it or not. The present government is determined to control every method of communication possible. It can easily control radio, because of license.

'Unless radio be on guard against every encroachment beyond the law, it will soon be wholly at the mercy of those who would hamstring it, just as they hope ultimately to hamstring the American press.'

OSWALD G. VILLARD

(Former Editor, The Nation)

'The question of radio censorship is serious today and is certain to become more so if the country cannot get itself out of the depression and put the millions of unemployed to work. That means a threat to property, and the instant that threat appears the effort to keep men from saying things unpalatable to those whom Woodrow Wilson called the 'masters of America, the great capitalists,' will become intensified. Today the menace is already here. It may be that Boake Carter was not forced off the air, as has been stated, because of his outspoken peace views, but there were any number of people gunning for him. There are others the radio chain managers probably do not dare invite to speak.

'It is less a direct censorship today. It is usually self-imposed by the managers of the big stations who are dreadfully afraid of offending the FCC, often, I think, unnecessarily so. When I attacked Hoover over a well-known station just before the Presidential campaign in 1932, its managers got the jitters. Yet what I said was nothing like as severe as what Mr. Roosevelt and other Democrats said after the campaign was under way. The managers said they agreed with me, but they were afraid of what the commission might do to them. I continued to talk only because I had paid for my time.

'Censorship is nearer than a year ago. The threats to free speech on or off the air multiply as shown by Boss Hague in Jersey City and others elsewhere. Nothing but eternal vigilance will save the freedom of the air.'

HARRY C. WILDER

(President, WSYR, WJTN, WNBX)

'Broadcasters on this side are at the crossroads. The American system is on trial as never before, as we have the bizarre spectacle of the air propaganda of European dictators producing chaos in international affairs. Decisions in this country have again to be made on free speech and censorship.

'A member of the British Parliament recently told me that all Europe has been saturated with German and Italian propaganda over the air so that it has become difficult to obtain popular support for any position, except that of Hitler's at the Munich crisis.

'This nation is one that must not be placed in such an unhappy predicament, but we will be if censorship passes out of the hands of licensees.'

In Los Angeles, That Ga-Ga Burg; Radio Becomes Self-Conscious

By Jack Beaman

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

New highs in the commercial coin brackets of independently owned radio stations in the Los Angeles area, exclusive of network owned or affiliates, were reached during 1938. Season just closed has been considered one of the most successful in the history of broadcasting on the West Coast, according to Leo P. Tyson, president of the Southern California Broadcasters Association, Inc., and general manager of KMPC in Beverly Hills.

Concentrated efforts to build programs that appealed, offering of foreign language news broadcasts for the cosmopolitan population of the southland and airing of old-time stage productions and reviving of minstrel shows for the air were some of the contributing factors for the increased sale of air time.

Child Commentator

Quiz games and audience participation programs along with educational series for the kiddies are other types of airers that have helped boost the stations' income. One small indie operator has virtually paid his freight with a child commentator who interviews top name picture people and has little difficulty getting guests. Program has been set for year's bankrolling.

Hillbillys still hold their own for sponsored programs. During the recent political campaign one Hillbilly devoted his entire efforts to winning the Congressional nomination on his sponsored program. He was defeated in the run-off when his attorney-opponent went on the air with a girl singer of the range songs.

Special Funds Help

Politicians gave the needed boost to hoist some of the smaller broadcasters over the top for the season. California's Ham and Egg proposition dumped more than \$500 weekly for three weeks into the local air lanes. Musicians Mutual Protective Association, leading the drive of other unions, dumped approximately \$10,000 into the radio cash registers in two weeks to defeat a non-picketing ordinance.

Then Los Angeles had a cleaner-upper campaign dethroning Mayor Frank L. Shaw by recall and putting Judge Fletcher Bowron into the City Hall throne chair. Some \$8,000 in radio time went into this campaign alone. It was purely local and gravy to many of the smaller stations.

However, when the campaigns simmered down, that time, generally speaking, was rapidly filled in with commercials on the 15-minute spot announcements and variety programs.

As a result the outlook for the first quarter of 1939 stands out as a bright spot in the business. Build-up of commercials is general with local merchants taking to the air through the local stations in greater volume than ever before.

Not So Corny

Little over a year ago, when Tyson took over the reins of the SCBA, he directed a campaign for better programs, closer cooperation between sponsors and agency executives and the radio station and the newspaper advertising men. National agency men and bankrollers were also called into these meetings, along with network executives. As a result the independent station owners are offering an entirely different type of program schedule throughout the day. Where the different air lanes were cluttered with hodge-podge offerings of the filler type, they have been revamped for programs that fit the time of day.

SCBA is the only incorporated organization of its kind in the country. It has raised the standard of broadcasting in the southland region as well as making competition keener. Trade account regulations have been tightened and free air time for charity propositions must have the complete sanction of the association before any station releases plugs.

As a result flesh airshows have been given a decided hypo and are helping to work the stations onto the black side of the ledger. On the nine independent stations in Los Angeles county the increase in live show time reached 21% this year as

compared with last year. Programs on these stations are bankrolled to the tune of 723 hours per week out of the 1,198 hours they are on the air.

Increase in general business for the year will run from 23% to 27% over the same time last year. Stations included in this survey are KEHE, KFVD, KGER, KGFJ, KMPC, KFOX, KFAC and KMTR.

Network owned, or affiliate stations, not included in this group are KFI, KECA, KNX, KHJ and KFWB.

WHEELER NO LIKE MILLER STATEMENT

Washington, Jan. 1.

Stern disapproval of the protect-yourself policy outlined for the guidance of National Association of Broadcasters recently came into sight last week and foreshadowed further repercussions from the attempt of radio to handle the problem of spiliers who incite religious and racial animosity. Sharp slap at Neville Miller, trade unit president, by Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, one of the industry's severest critics.

In a Voltaire act, the Montana solon—who wields influence by virtue of being chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee—charged Miller with censorship inclinations and warned that the Constitutional guarantee of free speech must not be infringed. Although he did not defend bigotry and intolerance, Wheeler asked 'Who is Mr. Miller that he should set himself up to say when free speech should be denied to any citizen of the United States? What special knowledge does he possess that he can judge when I or anyone else abuses free speech?'

The solon explained he does not share the political views of Rev. Charles E. Coughlin—whose bitter anti-Jew microphone talks have ignited a raging controversy—but declared that any station which shuts him off is equally as intolerant as the cleric has been accused of being. No question of agreeing or disagreeing with opinions is presented, according to Wheeler, but the danger of denying privileges set forth in the bill of rights.

'In times of hysteria which sweep through this country, there are always those super-patriots who believe they are destined to regulate the actions and speech of their fellowmen,' the Montana law-maker commented. Added the resistance to the Coughlin talks is evidence that such hysteria 'is very apt to lead us into war with Germany or some other totalitarian power.'

Here and There

Don O'Brien, KMBC announcer, enlisted Paul Fonda, station engineer, in a race against the stork last week. Fonda, a private pilot, flew O'Brien to Omaha, where his wife was confined in St. Joseph's hospital. Before the father arrived baby (girl) was born.

Father O'Brien was returned to Kansas City studio after missing less than a day's work.

George R. Givan, program director at KFRU, Columbia, Mo., father of baby girl.

Art Rekart, chief engineer of KKOK, St. Louis, and KFRU, Columbia, Mo., commuting between two stations checking equipment.

Toby Nevius, comes for KKOK, St. Louis, worked for station all day and for a nitery half of the night. Trying to stretch hours in a day to catch up on his shuteye.

Haskell Schwartzberg, free-lance actor, doing Santa Claus stint for KKOK, St. Louis. Jingle contest woven into program adds interest. Lauer Furniture Co. is bankroller.

George Givan, former program director of KFRU, Columbia, Mo., has been upped to asst. to Station Manager C. L. Thomas.

For past years Shafer, Jcatabee Ann Hopkins, WOW scripter; Jack Hansen, KFOR program director, and Vera Nelson have gotten together in Lincoln for the holidays.

'REFUGEE THEATRE OF THE AIR'
Songs, Talk, Drama, Orch.
30 Mins.—Local
HOROWITZ-MARGARETEN
Wed., 7:30 p. m.
WMCA, New York

(American Advertiser, Inc.)

Openly borrowing the billing originated by WHN some weeks ago. Debut (29) of this troupe of unfortunates, all refugee actors from Austria, sounded anything but felicitous. It wasn't their fault because among the 10 of them there was solid and worthy talent. Impediment was the sloppiness of the production. It not only reeked with bad showmanship, but gave evidences of poor taste in building up sympathy. Most of the dialog which sought to paint the troupe's background and the plight that befell them when the Nazis took over Austria was so forced and slapdash that the story lost much of its inherent force.

Interlarded through the scenario were dramatic recitations and songs, with English and Yiddish alternating during the dialog and recitation phases and the lyrics confined to their original Viennese. Among those whose talents stood out were the mixed pair of lieder singers and comedienne who did a folk character study in Yiddish. The m.c., whose English was approximate enough to make himself fairly understood, gave himself up at one point to an excerpt from Shylock with telling effect.

Underwriting this venture is Horowitz-Margaretten, manufacturers of matza and noodles. Program closes with a plea for letters. These refugees, the announcer states, have toiled to learn the English language. They need a word of encouragement. The listeners in writing would do the troupe its greatest turn by suggesting that the program get itself a competent producer and dialog writer. A program of similar title was launched some weeks ago on WHN.

'RATS TO YOU'
With Fred Russell, Will Hay, Will Fyffe, Wee Georgie Wood
60 Mins.
Monday (5)
BBC, London

First time the Grand Order of Water Rats, famous association of members of the variety profession, has been on the air, and done by them for the sake of their own charity fund. Listener interest centered on appearance of most every topline of modern vaude in a composite show, though few had opportunity to do more than sing out a hullo to the mike. That apart, narrated history of the Order lent a touch of romance, because Mr. Man-in-the-street is always a sucker where the glamor of the footlights is concerned.

Given an hour to put over show, Rats necessarily presented a sketchy entertainment, but excellent emcee work by Will Hay and the informality injected into his production job by BBC's John Sharman, who is a member of the Order, kept it alive. Those who contributed bits included Will Fyffe, Georgie Wood, the Palladium Crazy Gang, Tommy Trinder, Claude Dampier, George Jackley, Charlie Kunz, Clarkson Rose, Ronald Frankau, George Doonan, and dozens who will not be offended at getting no mention. Along with its snatches of melody, unforced gaiety, comedy and interest was a note of sentiment, meaning it was all of a good entertainment.

BBC Variety Dept. got a star-studded bill at a ridiculous fee at the same time as the Water Rats coined a welcome contribution to funds.

'BRADLEYS OF PRAIRIE FARM'
With Dan Hasmer, Marie Nelson, Rita Ascot, Ken Fagerlin, Chuck Grant, Fred Howard, Dick Earl, George Menard
Rural Serial
30 Mins.—Local
PRAIRIE FARMER
Sunday, 7:30 p. m.
WLS, Chicago

Presented by Prairie Farmer paper which owns WLS, the show is a weekly serial script and presents farm life without a comedy rube, and as such, okay piece of radio drama and story-telling.

(Show is bucking a tough rival by spotting itself opposite the last half of the Chase & Sanborn program.)

It's a typical family of father, mother, two sons, and a daughter, a grandfather and the hired hand. They talk of selling cattle and of harvest of the International Livestock Exposition, of basketball and picture shows. There is love interest and human interest, comedy and a touch of sadness; all good and proper elements in the simple design of the story-telling by Walter Hank Richards.

Cast is able, with Hasmer as the grandpappy wading into his role with both feet and coming up with a solid character. Marie Nelson as the mother and Rita Ascot as the daughter are turning in warm impersonations. Gold.

NATIONAL LAWYERS' GUILD
(New York Chapter)
Talk
30 Mins.—Local
Sustaining
Tuesday, 9 p. m.
WMCA, New York

This is a series of debates on social problems which the local chapter of National Lawyers' Guild promoted. Though definitely an instructive and informing type of program there must be some other underlying motive behind barristers. Manage to sneak in sufficient number of plugs for themselves and counselling in general. Looks to be goodwill builder designed to beat the ethical law of 'don't advertise.'

Third is rather irregular series (there's no set time or dates) presented George Gordon Battle, Dr. John Haynes Holmes and New York Post columnist Ernest L. Meyer word-battling on whether or not there should be a federal law prohibiting incitement to racial or religious hatreds, etc.

Topic was thoroughly covered with Stanley Faulkner of Guild acting as feeder. Hurl.

JOHN McCORMACK
'Scrapbook for 1939' with Gertie Millar, Patrick Curwen, Andrew Churchman, Lionel Gamlin, Eve Curie, Griffith Brewer.
Tuesday (6)
BBC, London

Two famous personalities who had never broadcast from a BBC studio previously lent lustre to what would else have been no more than an average contribution to 'Scrapbook' series, normally brilliantly assembled by co-compilers Leslie Bailey and Charles Brewer. John McCormack sang Irish ditties to put a period to his recent farewell to the concert stage, and Gertie Millar—now the Dowager Countess of Dudley—was on hand to recall the days of her musical comedy fame and link her contributions with that of McCormack, who made his debut as a singer in the year reviewed. (1903.)

McCormack gave three homely folk songs and also entertained listeners with his joyous Irish brogue and easy mike manner. Too bad that such a first radio appearance should also be a farewell performance.

Gertie Millar sang, making a truly valiant attempt to recapture the lilt and impertinence of the number from 'The Toreador' at the old Gaiety with which she scored her first hit. She described vivaciously memories of a third of a century ago. Here, too, was an artist whose superb mike technique suggested a seasoned performer rather than a debutante.

Bill included as well such historic 1903 events as King Edward VII sealing the Entente Cordiale in Paris. Orville Wright's first flight (from his own description supplied to BBC). Madame Curie's discovery of radium, and a link with the Dickensian days of the stage coach. A laurel wreath to Patrick Curwen for flawless emceeing.

Follow-Up Comment

Joseph M. Schenck, 20th-Fox chairman, spoke in behalf of the motion picture industry on NBC's red network show, '1939 Outlook on Business,' last Thursday (29) night, stressing optimism of the producers despite setbacks in 1938. Schenck, speaking from Palm Springs, Cal., was spokesman as president of the Association of Motion Picture Producers.

Pointing to the way American pictures serve as advance salesman for U. S. goods and the nation as a whole, Schenck stated that the industry felt the Federal Government should furnish encouragement to the film business for what it has done for American trade. He indicated that more money than ever would be spent for productions in 1939, the Silver Jubilee year of the industry.

Representatives of the automobile, food, publishing, banking, drug, railroad and retail industries also spoke on this 30-minute broadcast. Something apparently went haywire when the representative speaking for the railroad companies was tuned in from Washington, not being named or subject listed. Explanation finally came through from the N. Y. end, after he had concluded.

Andre Kostelanetz was saluted by Edgar Guest, the Lake Erie bard, on the Household Finance program last week. Compared to the slithery verbal syrup that Guest poured, the usual radio 'salute' is a curt brush-off. Guest made it clear that Kostelanetz was not just an able musician, but a public benefactor. It may have sounded to some folks like a super-whopper publicity build-up. To others, perhaps, it was cheapened by the lack of restraint and common sense. Nor is Andre Kostelanetz one of the orchestra-conducting gentry that can safely be allowed to open his mouth. His speaking voice is thick and unpleasant. His personality is in his baton.

The formula 'It Can Be Done' is good, but does the flattery have to run to the consistency of taffy?

ANDY WALKER
With Otto's Melodians
15 Mins.
ALADDIN LAMPS
Sunday, 4:30 p. m.
WGY, Schenectady
(Presba, Fellers & Presba)

Series of transcriptions possess mellowness, sentimentalism and restfulness that should please the group at whom they are primarily aimed, ruralites in lamp-lit homes. Unso-phisticated oldsters, off the farm, can be held, too. Fact platters are loggy with advertising probably will be no great hindrance.

Walker, who emcees another disked farm program heard here, is a skillful exponent of the homey-folksy technique. He uses it not only on number announcing, but in the splicing. Some of latter is direct and some indirect; patter and poems, for instance, leads into plugs. Walker lays whole thing on thick, but farm folks are not supposed to mind.

Aladdin Singers, well-balanced male group, click with old-fashioned selections, including hymns. Otto's Melodians, a small string ensemble also on other waxes, play fast-tempo bits for a change of pace. Otto features a German dialect in talking and singing, which may not be the strongest asset in current temper of affairs. In addition to Walker's drum-beating, heart-throbbing dramatizations 'tell' the benefits of Aladdin lamps. Company theme, of course, is 'Lamp Lighting Time.' Station miker also whacks the skins, mentioning not only oil, but electric lamps, shades, vacuum bottles and circulating oil heaters. Jaco.

'OF GOOD FAMILY'

Sketch
Sustaining
Sat., 8:30 p. m.
WJZ-NBC, New York

Scripted by Herbert L. Jacobson, 'Of Good Family' tries to tell an old story in a new way but doesn't quite come off. Subject is the oft-repeated yarn of the boy in moderate circumstances and the heiress—whether to money or important name was not made clear, but the treatment inferred an heiress—who have to overcome the boy's lack of background in order to consummate their love.

Scripted in semi-narrated form with the younger brother of the girl coming in to explain previous events, then fading off for dramatizations, one of it's major troubles is its length. Half hour seems to be too much for a family serial, especially when the yarn is a single thread. This might have been better condensed into 15 mins., but even that's dubious.

Cast, however, handled themselves admirably.

'MELODY OUT OF THE SKY'

With Jay Wilbur Band, Sue and Her Boy Friends, Sam Costa, the Mad Hatters, Phyllis Frost, Pat O'Regan, Dudley Beaven and Noel Gay
Saturday (10)
BBC, London

Highspot of a 40-minute melody program was performance by Noel Gay of a version of 'The Lambeth Walk' he scrapped before writing the one that became a world hit. Number bore vague resemblances to the ditty we all know, but was too full of notes, and in spite of melodious construction sounded an ordinary and undistinguished effort. Gag, though, was an interesting side-note to a best seller.

Next best in the bill was band's rendering of 'Lambeth Walk' as it might have been composed in many lands—Vienna, China and Cuba—and orchestration was effectively done to make amusing show. Plugging of the number was in honor of Gay, who turned up on the program as guest artist. The customers like this sort of intimacy, but band leaders continue to waste air time by introducing personalities with fatuous compliments.

Show was fairly well blended, with spots of music for all tastes, but perhaps lacking fluidity and slick presentation. Interesting contribution was by singer Pat O'Regan, recent discovery in BBC 'Band Wagon' series, who may win fame after he brings his enunciation under control. Work of other artists was of good standard.

'THE WHISPERING CHOIR'

15 Mins.
Sustaining
Thursday, 8:30 p. m.
WJZ, New York

Furnishes a pleasant musical interlude. A mixed chorus sings softly with piano accompaniment, the selections all being chosen to fit the mood of the 'whispering chorus.' Joseph Lilly arranges and directs the programs. This one included 'Dancing on the Ceiling,' Stephen Foster's 'I Dream of You,' 'Love Is the Sweetest Thing,' 'Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes' and a group of Christmas carols which included 'God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen,' and 'Gather Around the Christmas Tree.'

Program is sustaining filler subject to time change. It's well done.

WHY THEY DUCK SUSTAINING PROGRAMS

By JOHN HURLEY

Rebelling at routine type of programs they have to conduct, some of the NBC musical guiders are balking at use of their names on such shows. Complaint is that association with any old thing that comes along, many of which are frequently poor, places a stigma on their work which it is hard to work off when commercial possibilities have in view. Politics and teacher's petting of favorites who get better things is also in the complaint.

Conductors are frequently made subservient to mediocre singers which hurts prestige. Further damage is done, it's claimed, by tone of general performance. Absence of proper buildup for publicity is also deplored. Boys figure they get the stuff off jobs as well as the brush off. Rather be anonymous if obliged to stand the gaff. Situation is slightly similar at CBS but the complaint there is not as strong since it is considered that CBS is more liberal in build-up to staff people.

Musical economy is another obstacle. Programs start with sizable number of men and are then gradually cut, sometimes in half. Musicians are shifted around shop, never making for regular body or organization familiar with each other's work. Latter condition is again practised more on smaller fry, hurting quality. Use of stock arrangements and library stuff, with little time to alter same for improvement, is still another blow.

A comparison of number of graduates to commercials and better things on both nets is regarded as proof of the beef. Whereas CBS has graded Mark Warnow, Andre Kostelanetz, Howard Barlow, Freddy Rich, et al., NBC points to Peter Van Steeden.

WANT SPIELERS PUT IN WITH ENGINEERS

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Joint contract covering both announcers and panelmen at WIP is being sought in confabs with prez Ben Gimbel by the Broadcast Division of the American Communications Association, CIO. They have refused to negotiate further with Gimbel on a new term for the knob-twirlers, which expired at the end of the year, unless gabbers are included in the talks. Spielers a couple weeks ago came into the ACA in a body.

Contract being sought at WIP will have separate scales of wages for the two groups of employees, but all working and other conditions will be uniform. Term for the fishbowlers at WFIL is also about to expire. Pact for WIPB panelmen is under discussion now, while vertical contract for all WPEN employees is being redrafted and readied for inking this week.

Normandy's New Wave

London, Dec. 20.

Radio Normandy has been shifted to 274 metres (1095 k.c.). New wavelength lies slightly above British Broadcasting Co.'s station at Stagshaw and the London, North and Scottish transmitters.

International Broadcasting Co., which builds Normandy's programs and sells its time, has launched an extensive advertising campaign to call attention of British listeners to the change. Drive includes, film theatres, magazines and billboards.

Harry Clarke to CBS

Hartford, Jan. 1.

Harry Clarke, spieler of WTIC, has resigned to join the announcing staff of CBS. Successor not chosen as yet.

At WHTT new faces include Thomas York, operator; Sylvia Crowley and Jeanette Demieillers, commercial department.

Massachusetts Federation of Taxpayers Assn. 26 15-minute programs, 'What's Happening in Massachusetts' from Jan. 6 to June 30. Through Advertising Management, Inc., Boston. WNAC.

Slap at Press Agent

Washington, Jan. 1.

Those free television sets for President Roosevelt and Federal luminaries never were delivered, it turned out last week, because the White House would not lend itself to a commercial build-up. Plan to install latest model sight-sound receiver in the White House went awry when Marvin H. McIntyre, secretary to the President, got wind of publicity being inspired by the American Television Co., scheduled donor. Arrangements were cancelled in resentment at the free advertising play.

WCAU Recites Fears Of Losing CBS Connection; Brief Raises Eyebrows

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Hearing is slated in Harrisburg Tuesday (3) on an injunction demanded by WCAU against new Pennsy law which forbids the furnishing of private leased wires for the dissemination of gambling information. Anything concerning horse racing is made prima facie evidence by the act that the wires are being used for gambling. It prohibits, therefore, Pennsy outlets from airing the Kentucky Derby or any of the other famous races which are regularly broadcast.

Principal point in the plea for the injunction is that the station's contract with CBS is jeopardized by the law. Brief, which was filed Dec. 19, points out that WCAU's contract with CBS pays it \$250,000 a year, in return for which the station must broadcast concerts, news events, sports and other occurrences without question, comment or alteration. If CBS sees fit to cover a horse race, the brief declares, WCAU must carry it or abrogate its contract.

Observers here cocked a brow at WCAU's obeisance to the web, disregarding the legal aspects of the brief. Further cause for a chuckle, of course, is the outlet's fear of losing its CBS termer, inasmuch as Dr. Leon Levy, WCAU prez, is third largest stockholder in Columbia; Isaac D. Levy, WCAU v.p., is second largest stockholder, and Bill Paley, CBS prez and largest stockholder, is Doc Levy's brother-in-law.

Suit was filed for WCAU by former Attorney General William A. Schader in Dauphin County (Harrisburg) court. It asks a rule against the five members of the Public Utilities Commission to show why an injunction should not be granted to prevent any action being taken against the Bell Telephone Company, the plaintiff, or any other person or corporation by reason of the phone company's leasing of private lines or wires.

G. E.'s Wanderlust

Maxon agency has again requested NBC to clear a different half-hour for the General Electric show with Phil Spitalny and Dorothy Thompson.

Program is now opposite the Lux Radio Theatre Monday nights and the account has become convinced that the competition makes it impossible for the name combination to draw anything like the audience that it would be entitled to otherwise.

Survey of Loathing

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

WDAS is running a program popularity poll in reverse.

Working on the premise that listeners forget the shows they like, but remember forever those that irked them, it is questioning its listeners as to those programs they found most distasteful during the year. Query is: 'What Didn't You Like About WDAS and Its Programs During 1938?'

John Dodge's Sea Trip

Washington, Jan. 1.

John Dodge, WRC-WMAL sales manager, Washington, off on Jan. 27 for a 21-day cruise to South America.

Will visit principal ports of S. A. via the Grace Lines and make a study of South American broadcasting in his spare time.

The Producer Should Hold the Bag

By Walter Craig

(Street & Finney Agency)

When an advertiser invests from \$5,000 to \$25,000 per performance in a series of Radio Programs, only to have a gigantic floppo on his hands, he yells bloody murder. This too-well-known cry is the agency's cue for routine A—the regular give him service routine which consists of (1) Tinkering with the band (2) Getting a new script writer (3) Riffing through talent lists for new and better (or, at least, more expensive) voices to replace what probably is already a thoroughly competent cast. Never, (oh well, hardly ever) does anyone question the production of the program.

Nevertheless, if radio entertainment is to improve, that improvement must come in more effective production. It certainly can't come from bigger names. The advertisers' coffers have been bled white paying for the biggest names in the entertainment world. No, that's not the way out. Radio will have to begin to offer entertainment instead of entertainers. Webster says production is to create. Radio seems to define it as keeping split second timing of a radio program by means of a stop watch. Sooner or later, radio will have to concede the point to Webster.

With all the money at its command, with all the best actors, writers and facilities in the palm of its hand, why has radio so neglected this matter of production? Why is there so very little of it? There are certainly many, many reasons. But it is just as certain that they are all born of one basic mistake on the part of the goat himself—the advertiser. Some day, advertisers as a whole will wake up and see through the whole system. Then there'll be hell to pay—and much better radio.

This basic mistake on the sponsor's part is allowing—yea, even demanding—that the agency pass the buck directly to the advertiser himself. What happens when a Captain of Industry decides to spend a million or so in radio advertising? The agency gets together an audition—a complete performance of the proposed radio production—and presents it to the advertiser for his consideration. Object, 15% of that million! Whether or not said agency gets it depends upon whether or not said audition 'clicks' with the advertiser. Ergo, the show is designed, not to please the public, but 'his nibs.' Long association with 'his nibs' has made the agency thoroughly familiar with each of his separate likes and dislikes. The program will feature his favorite artists (whether they logically 'belong' or not). It will present his favorite songs (whether they routine and pace well or not). It will avoid touching on subjects that the agency knows are 'taboo' with 'his nibs' (even if such avoidance cuts all the drama out of the presentation). It will be long on commercial and necessarily short on showmanship. But it will get that million.

Stay Away in Doves

When this little private entertainment gets on the air and the listeners stay away in droves, who's to blame? Why, the advertiser, of course. The agency doesn't blatantly tell him so—doesn't have to. He picked it and, nine times out of ten, he'll defend it. 'A rotten Crossley? Must be the band'—or the star—or the script writer. Seldom, if ever, will he admit that there wasn't any show there in the first place—only a hodge-podge of things he liked and a conspicuous absence of the things he didn't. Yes, he's a victim of his own system. Choosing the show may save his vanity but it surely puts him in an awful spot. The agency is satisfied. It gets 15% of the million, shoulders no blame and can spend the next million in newspapers and magazines where it knows what it's doing.

Like Topsy, the present system 'just grew.' And like a house or a city that's built without a plan, it eventually arrives at the point where alterations are essential. Excellent manufacturers and first rate advertising men have been stumbling along trying to learn show business themselves instead of delegating that highly technical work to men who've given it their entire attention for years. Under this system, money is substituted for thought. For a bigger and better show, the average advertiser and his agency have only one formula—bigger and better names. Radio buys its glamour 'on the hoof.' But we're rapidly ap-

proaching the day when there'll be no more ready-made glamour for sale. For radio not only buys its glamour... it also destroys it.

How many times have you heard a star, glamour acquired in some other branch of show business, brought to the microphone with, 'And now Lizzie Gilch will sing...' As far as the listener is concerned, there she stands in a bare-walled room containing only a microphone. How long can any star stay glamorous under such conditions? Performers are just people... believe it or not, just ordinary human beings... with a little talent. They become glamorous when some producer, in one branch of show business or another, creates a bit of 'make believe' around them that enhances those talents. He 'sells' them to the public with 'production.' Zeigfeld used to work weeks, I'm told, just designing a glamorous entrance for a star. Hollywood goes further and keeps huge publicity departments busy making stars glamorous off as well as on the screen. And radio says, 'And now, Lizzie Gilch will sing...'

When the stock of ready-made glamour runs low, radio is going to have to mend its ways. And most all showmen seem to agree that 'it won't be long now.' A sufficient number of flops and any advertiser is driven to one of two things: (1) Dropping the air as an advertising medium, or (2) recognizing and rectifying the 'basic mistake' about which we've been talking. If he follows the former course, his competitors are liable to run away from him in sales. If he follows the latter, something like this will happen.

Idyllic

Our new-era Advertiser will call in his agency man and say, 'Joe, we've decided to institute a radio campaign. We're convinced that radio is a powerful advertising medium, so we want to go on the air to sell Spelvin's Spiffy Sponges. Now, we know a lot about sponges but practically nothing about spangles. Show business is not our racket. We want you to put on a radio show for us that will get a big audience to whom we can sell sponges. We've appropriated a million dollars for this campaign—the rest is up to you. Let us know when the program starts on the air so we can tune in the first performance.'

Puts a different complexion on things, doesn't it? The agency is now on the spot. He's got to deliver—or else. If he's at all cautious (and what advertising man isn't) he'll want to play it as safely as possible. He might even try to dig up a showman and ask advice. Suppose he does. What has he a right to expect? He has a right to expect a production instead of an amateur show... an entertainment instead of a group of entertainers. Every good entertainment should be a one-man show with the producer handed and holding the bag. He should be responsible not only for the selection of the script, cast and music, but also for the creative effort necessary to weave these units into a well rounded and cleverly dovetailed entertainment that the vast radio audience can see as well as hear... and I do mean see.

An Ear Picture

For the radio listener is, of necessity, a visualizer. Give him a series of recognizable sounds arranged in the proper sequence to suggest a complete picture and his imagination does the rest. This partnership with the listener's imagination is what makes radio entertainment possible. It gives the radio producer everything to work with that his Broadway contemporary enjoys... costumes, scenery and lighting effects. For costumes, there are dialects, delivery styles and voice qualities. A wide Irish brogue will costume a man as completely as Gutenberg himself could do it. Scenery is a matter of only a few suggestive words and carefully chosen sound effects. Sometimes the latter alone are sufficient. A ship's whistle and a water tank are all you need for the finest ship set any Broadway producer ever boasted. For lighting effects, the radio producer can employ music. Where the stage producer dims his stage and spotlights two characters for a love scene, the radio producer uses soft, beautiful music to mellow the scene and spotlights his characters by putting them right on mike.

No, the limitations of the medium are no alibi for unsuccessful produc-

tion. As a matter of fact, when a showman is turned loose in radio, he experiences the same sort of reaction that John Murray Anderson once voiced to me on a Hollywood set during the filming of his first celluloid production. Murray couldn't get over the absence of any limitation. 'Walter,' he said, 'you ask for the world with a fence around it... and they build it for you!'

If the limitations of the medium are not responsible for so much bad production (or perhaps we should say such an absence of production) then we must conclude that the trouble lies in the producers' lack of showmanship. Perhaps we throw the title 'producer' around too lightly. Of course, under our present system of passing the buck to the advertiser, there isn't any need of showmanship. Just take the boss's formula and get it on in a half hour. A stop watch, and you're all set. Anybody out of college can do it. Even the college isn't necessary. But under the new-radio-era plan, when advertisers wake up and rectify this mistake of such long standing, the title may again come to mean something. To earn it, perhaps a man will have to be a showman... will have to be able to select talent, supervise script, direct the actors, pace the show, make use of costumes, scenery and lighting effects to give his production that glamour which has been the very essence of show business since time began.

The Comedy Shows

You've heard of the exception that proves the rule? Radio has its exceptions too. These are notably the comedy programs on the air today. The fact that, as a class, they are the most showmanlike examples of radio is directly ascribable to the fact that they are supervised by the comedians themselves... men who have had a long training in the theatre, actual contact with many audiences and hard knocks in the school of experience. In most of these programs, one thing leads naturally to another... seems to be done in preparation for the following unit of entertainment. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to spot the exact place where one unit stops and another begins... albeit they are carefully arranged for variety of mood, pace and tempo. The scenery is always there... costumes and lights too. There's a complete production for the listener to enjoy... not just voices. When such a perfectly produced program is tuned in, the end comes around before the listener knows it... certainly before he is ready for it. And that's as good a formula for the air as it always was for vaudeville... 'Leave 'em wanting.' In radio it means they'll tune in next week and hear your sales story all over again. Yes, if all types of shows gave as much thought to production as do our popular comedians, radio would be a safer place for advertisers today.

So, Mr. Advertiser, before you start to tinker with the band, change the script writers, fire your vocalists and malign your actors, check up on your production. Is it a showman's idea of a program—or your own? Are the scenery, costumes and lighting all they should be? Has everything been done to give the entertainment pace, tempo, continuity and a veneer of glamour? Are you giving the radio audience a production... or just a lot of voices and sounds? Can they see or only hear your show? Are you creating a bit of 'make believe' for them... or offering bought glamour in a void of studio walls? Perhaps a little attention to these details will turn your clambake into a radio show.

OBSURE TUNES USED BY TENOR HAYWOOD

Charles Haywood, tenor, frequently heard with New York Oratorical Society, has started a five week series of American folk songs over station WXQR, N. Y., beginning Monday evening (2) at nine p.m.

Haywood sings songs of early white settlers in various sections of the country.

My-T-Fine desserts (Fenick & Ford) is supplementing its NBC campaign with the placement of disc versions of its 'Circus' show on stations in a half dozen cities.

Canadian Radio In 1938

By Robert McStay

Toronto, Jan. 1.

Opening of two new high-powered stations, one to serve the Maritimes and the other the three Prairie Provinces, will mark the completion of the first stage of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.'s policy of national coverage whereby CBC programs will be carried from Coast to Coast over its own transmitter system.

CBA at Sackville, New Brunswick, is scheduled to go into operation in early April. The 50-kilowatt station to serve the Atlantic coast area. CBK, a similar powered station, will go into operation this summer at Watrous, Saskatchewan, and will cover that province together with Manitoba and Alberta.

In surveying radio development in Canada throughout 1938, it should be remembered that when the CBC took over, there was a basic plan for nationalized radio; but existing equipment consisted of only a few small stations. The first aim, therefore, was to bring into being a system of high-powered stations that would serve all regional needs.

Because of population concentration, the first two units in the new set-up were CBL, Toronto, and CBF, Montreal. Both these 50-kilowatt stations, serving Ontario, the Great Lakes region and Quebec, went into operation on Xmas day, 1937, but did not really get into their respective strides until the early part of '38.

The establishment of CBR, Vancouver; the modernization of CBO, Ottawa, and the establishment of a modern and efficient switching system at Windsor, Ontario, for incoming MBS and CBS programs, rounded out the CBC engineering operations of '38. (NBC programs for CBC coverage are switched at CBL, Montreal.)

With the completion of the new Prairies and Maritimes stations, the first stage in the plan of nationalized coverage has been achieved. The second stage will be the erection of smaller stations in certain areas which, because of terrain or atmospheric conditions, are not now adequately served. These additions will be made from time to time as CBC resources permit.

Noticeable Improvement In Program Quality

Noticeable has been the pronounced improvement in the quality of program transmission in recent months. The CBC system is a long attenuated set-up, Canada's population being mainly centered within a narrow Coast-to-Coast strip. In addition, the Rockies and the wastes of the Northland must be surmounted; but transmission has reached the stage of outstanding and even quality.

There is one exception, however, and it is hoped that this will be remedied during 1939. That is the Mexican interference which is destroying the reception of CBC's Toronto station programs in certain parts of the province. While the Havana agreement of 1938 distributed available broadcasting channels among the United States, Canada, Cuba and Mexico, the latter country has not as yet set its signature to this allocation.

Despite diplomatic representations that have been made by the Canadian Government to Mexico regarding the blasting out of CBL, Toronto, the offending Mexican station continues to operate in the same channel. Attempts to have this situation remedied will be one of the CBC tasks of '39.

In connection with the avowed intention of CBC to increase national broadcasting hours, these have doubled during the past year, early jumping from an average six hours a day to a minimum average of 12 hours daily. In some areas, the network service is averaging 15 hours a day.

Sequel to the trans-Canada survey jaunt of Rupert Lucas, CBC production chief, a more tightened system of general operation and the dovetailing of balanced program broadcasting has been an outstanding feature of nationalized radio in this country; it is expected that, in the light of experience, this will be carried to an even more efficient degree during 1939.

During 1939, the field of exchanges will be enlarged. CBC is now carrying musical programs from Germany and opera from Italy; arrangements are nearing completion for regular

programs from France and the Netherlands. It is also hoped that exchange programs with other units of the British Empire will be increased. Arrangements for the 1939 schedule, for instance, have been completed with Australia.

From the cultural standpoint, music and the drama hold an important place in the CBC schedule. In addition to the American programs already mentioned, CBC is carrying during 1938-39 the Toronto Symphony, the Montreal Orchestra, the Calgary Symphony, and Les Concerts Symphoniques de Montreal. During the summer of '38, the Promenade Symphony series from CBL, Toronto, had a heavy listener interest over the CBC national network.

In the field of drama, the Shakespearean cycle of 13 plays was the most ambitious undertaking in the short history of CBC. Such stage stars as Walter Huston, Dennis King, Walter Hampden, Eva Le Gallienne, Margaret Anglin and Nan Sunderland journeyed to CBL, Toronto, to play the lead roles supported by Canadian talent. The first important drama offering scheduled for '39 is a radio serialization of the 'Jalna' books which will run in nine weekly one-hour installments.

Anschluss and Munich Widen News Coverage

News coverage of a type never attempted by CBC before was an outstanding activity during 1938. A policy of obtaining exclusive rights to Canadian sports events was adopted, the mobile unit being used for such activities as the Allan Cup hockey series, the Canadian Golf Open, the Davis Cup matches, the Canadian football championship, and the King's Plate turf classic.

Use of mobile equipment also stepped up the calibre of such actuality broadcasts as the arrival of the Mercury pick-a-back plane after its trans-Atlantic crossing, the National Parks descriptive series, the Calgary Stampede, and the Ivy Lea international bridge opening by President Roosevelt which CBC supplied exclusively to the three American chains and to BBC.

The use of mobile equipment is expected to be heavy during the Royal visit to Canada in May and another unit is now under construction which, after the departure of Their Majesties, will be turned over to CBF, Montreal, for French-language actuality broadcasts. Coverage of the Royal itinerary in Canada will be exclusive to CBC but will be made available to the three American chains and to BBC in exchange for past and current favors.

In the field of commercials, approximately 15% of CBC's national network time is occupied by sponsored Canadian and United States programs. These include such top shows as the Chase & Sanborn Hour, the Jello program, Ford Symphony, General Motors, Imperial Oil, Imperial Tobacco, St. Lawrence Starch.

In connection with the national coverage given by CBC's chain of high-powered stations, CBC has also entered into an arrangement with a number of private stations who agree to carry sustaining CBC programs and undertake to accept CBC commercials. These 34 basic stations, which get a percentage of the revenue from commercials contracted for by CBC (this agreed upon according to population, area, type of market served, etc.), coupled with the CBC set-up, is giving Canadian listeners bettered coverage.

Role of American Sponsors in Canada

By MORI KRUSHEN

Montreal, Jan. 1.

During the past year radio has come into its own in Canada (belatedly by American standards) as an accepted medium for the dissemination of news. This has roused the resentment and fear of powerful publishing interests who see in radio news broadcasting a form of competition which publishers have as yet found no means of offsetting.

Activity in the Canadian radio program field has been limited. Overshadowed and topped by superior American production methods, the great reservoir of talent from stage, screen and Broadway available to American radio, added to practically unlimited bankrolling, American radio programs have con-

tinued to dominate listener interest in Canada.

Popular Shows

Canadian production continues to lag through lack of sufficient financial backing. With the exception of a few local French-language shows like 'Fridolin,' the American programs like Charlie McCarthy, 'Information Please,' Jack Benny, Bing Crosby, Lux and others still top the field for both French and English listener audiences.

French and English-language serials are popular. So is opera and symphony. But the strongest draw is still exerted by musical variety shows, song and comedy programs. American programs and American sponsors are still the mainstay of Canadian radio.

There has been a marked improvement in regard to technical performance in Canadian broadcasting from the studio end. There is more widespread use of better and more up-to-date reproducing equipment and especially greater care and study in the use of the latest equipment. And while program production has lagged behind the technical end of radio the old idea of throwing a batch of performers into a studio and waiting for a show to come out is beginning to fade.

Rural West Tastes Run To Strictly Homefolksy

By ANDY McDERMOTT

Regina, Sask., Jan. 1.

With nearly two-thirds of her population rural or sod-minded, Saskatchewan still places 'homey' programs above anything else in radio. That goes for music, plays, comedy and what-else.

Recent surveys by radio stations showed that tops was a department store's recorded program of home melodies, sacred songs, etc., heard over various stations for past 10 years. Similar style stuff on other stations oke. This like reflected in big following for 'Big Sister' and similar type serials, 'One Man's Family' over combined U.S.-Canada nets, and Art McEwing's Farmer Fiddlers on CBC. Cowboy and ballad singers are considered delectable.

Serials Spaced Badly

Only kick on serials is they're too badly spaced, coming one after another as they do.

Rating right up with Old Time stuff is news and sports. News has leaped into first place over sports with recent European crisis. Interest is tremendous, beyond anything eastern or metropolitan radio execs realize, principally due to crop failure that left farmers no money to buy papers, making radio their only news source. Sports, especially hockey, draw tremendous audiences. Tops is Imperial Oil Hockey network from Toronto-Montreal weekly.

Top American network show used to be Jack Benny but Lux Theatre has major audience now with Benny second, and McCarthy the Dope third. 'One Man's Family,' Bing Crosby, 'Big Sister' and 'Good News of 1938' rate high, while 'Carnation Hour' tops imported musicals. Symphonies are well down list, though N.Y. Philharmonic-Symphony has good audience.

WXYZ Invades Yukon

Detroit, Jan. 1.

First of WXYZ's new series of dramas, 'Challenge of the Yukon,' will hit ozone this week over parent station and Michigan network. Will be aired each Tuesday and Thursday at 6:45 p.m. Written and produced in WXYZ studios, new serial will be directed by Charles Livingstone, station's dramatic chief, with Jay Michaels in lead.

New show glorifies the band of 20 police officers who were sent into the Yukon territory of Canada when the first great Klondike gold strike was made in 1895. 'Yukon' brings to four the number of dramas now being produced at WXYZ, the others being 'Lone Ranger,' 'Green Hornet,' and 'Ned Jordan, Secret Agent,' which was recently added.

J. Walter Thompson (San Francisco), placed 50 and 100-word announcements for the Washington Wenatchee, Wash., on stations in 25 State Apple Advertising Committee, key markets throughout the country in a three-week campaign during the holiday season.

Nat'l Emergency Council Charts Radio

Undertakes to Get Detailed Facts on Gov't Use of Air—To Avoid Boreome Stuff

Comparison

Jerusalem, Dec. 10.

At recent press conference of the Palestine Broadcasting System it was stated that the entire annual budget of the P.B.S. was less than the money spent by the British Broadcasting Corp. on flowers and decorations every year.

Only one transmitter here for Hebrew, Arabic and English.

STATE TOLD, 'DON'T BOTHER WITH NBC'

Trenton, Jan. 1.

NBC got a permanent injunction from a special statutory federal court last week restraining New Jersey's Board of Public Utility Commissioners from interfering with the operation of one of the network's experimental stations in Bound Brook, N.J. The commission had insisted that NBC conform with a state law requiring builders of radio transmitters to apply for a certificate of public convenience and necessity, but the statutory court took the position that no state body has authority to regulate interstate broadcasting.

In asking for the court order NBC argued that the state board was trying to arrogate to itself authority that has been invested in a federal body by the 1934 communications act, and that the Jersey statute passed in 1930 was unconstitutional. FCC has already approved the station's construction.

NAB-RMA Booklet On American Way in Radio Now Ready for Distrib

Washington, Jan. 1.

Long-awaited 'radio primer,' through which the National Association of Broadcasters and the Radio Manufacturers' Association will furnish the listening public with an understandable explanation of the mysteries of broadcasting, came off the presses last week and is ready for launching. Slated for free distribution with all new radio sets, 50-page booklet—tagged 'The ABC of Radio... So That The Average Listener May Understand How It Works In America'—contains capsule resume of the elementary mechanics of broadcasting, explanation of the powers and duties of the Federal Communications Commission, dope on programs, explanation of network setups and other factors. Numerous pokes at 'controlled' foreign broadcasting throughout the pamphlet, with particular emphasis on freedom of U. S. air.

Attired in sky-blue covers, latest NAB promotional stunt contains raft of black-white-and-blue and salmon and black full-page prints, showing course of sound waves from transmitter to receiving set, family groups conjuring up scenes from the 'world's theatre' while listening to programs, and pictorial explanations of various phases of the industry. Liberally decorated on the margins with sketches of antennas, spinning globes, dance bands and other insignia denoting transmission and production of programs.

While not all purchasers of new sets are expected to read the book from cover to cover, and some customers will undoubtedly be stumped by terminology, radio primer is written with a breezy style which should make the contents easily understandable to anyone with average vocabulary. Starts with ABC explanation of actual physical process of transmission and reception—illustrated in color—and winds up with page on transcription programs.

Washington, Jan. 1.

Centralized direction of government broadcasting activities, in manner that should lighten the burden on station executives and provide more fruitful use of facilities, lies just below the horizon. Scheme already is getting a limited test, with more ambitious efforts nearing the starting point providing Congress approves and requisite cooperation can be achieved.

In accordance with idea outlined exclusively in VARIETY several weeks ago, the National Emergency Council—super-administrative agency to coordinate various Federal activities—is finishing the most complete and comprehensive survey ever made to find out how much use government units make of radio, nature of programs, and extent of duplication, overlapping, and conflicts. Similar review of transcription activities also nearing an end. Object is to find out whether there is any hogging of microphones and if so the identity of offenders.

Disclaiming any desire to apply censorship or use coercion, officials of the N.E.C. promise the chief aim is to reduce boring, tedious, and uninformative speeches and harangues, insure balanced presentation of worthwhile dope about national problems and government operations, and cut down the pressure on stations for time. Not an attempt to invade show business, since the government people realize the industry can do a better job in most instances and principal reason for using the airwaves is to educate and inform, not entertain or divert.

Some Programs Flopped

Survey and trial stunt are the result of awareness that some government ventures flopped through insufficient preparation and poor technique, plus the complaints that excessive din is resulting from the oratory instincts of some Federal creations. Network people have yipped about impossible requests for facilities, while political foes have accused New Dealers of trying to perpetuate themselves in office with airwaved propaganda. Excursions of unauthorized government officers into controversial fields also have caused embarrassment and dissatisfaction.

Some concrete problems are being studied. As for instance whether the Farm and Home hour, veteran NBC feature, cannot be used to accommodate all of the government agencies trying to hit the farmers. This would cut down—if the thought proves practicable—some of the demands from field men for local station time. Another angle is the wasteful rivalry between persons who love to hear themselves speak and who often compete with each other in the race for auditors. Desire to reduce expenses also is behind the study.

In the transcription field, the N.E.C. has discovered extravagance. Wide range of prices for platters looks unjustifiable in some cases. Instances turned up where minor bosses, fired with enthusiasm, misjudged the possible worth of their radio ventures, piling up stores of superfluous discs. Bad program-building is another headache, since it creates a prejudice against government recordings in general.

Some signs of progress already. During the chain-monopoly hearings, the FCC recently heard from NBC execs that steady spielers in the government have come, through experience, to appreciate the practical problems confronting station and web managers and now are more reasonable in their requests. But there still are too many occasions when some little wig with officious manner screams and rages to the point where licensees make costly donations to avoid incurring displeasure of Uncle Sam.

The scheme being perfected is admittedly not perfect. Leaves room for abuse if the wrong approach is used and may prove to be the egg of a Frankenstein. So far, however, the promised benefits appear likely to outweigh the potential disadvantages, providing the N.E.C. continues to maintain sympathy for both the broadcasters' and the listeners' viewpoints.

Gillette (electric shaver) renews for 39 participations in Yankee Network News Service, thrice weekly, starting Jan. 2.

YOUNG & RUBICAM announces TWO IMPORTANT NEW RADIO SHOWS for 1939



Early In 1939, Young & Rubicam will initiate two new, widely different radio shows for Young & Rubicam Clients...



The Screen Actors Guild

All the motion picture stars, with the cooperation of their writers and directors, in the greatest radio effort yet attempted by Hollywood. Unusual combinations of stars in dramatic, comedy, and musical shows. Premiere on January 8 includes Jack Benny, Joan Crawford, Judy Garland, Reginald Gardiner, George Murphy, and Oscar Bradley's Orchestra—produced by Young & Rubicam for the Gulf Oil Corporation... Gulf Refining Company.

Premiere Sunday, January 8
7:30 P.M., C.B.S.



Phil Baker

With Bottle, Harry Von Zell, The Andrews Sisters, DeLange Orchestra, and the "Man in the Box"—a new comedy program—produced by Young & Rubicam for the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, Limited.

Premiere Saturday, January 14
9 P.M., C.B.S.

Other radio shows put on by Young & Rubicam for Young & Rubicam clients...

- FRED ALLEN in "Town Hall Tonight" for Sal Hepatica, Ipana and Minit Rub
- JACK BENNY for Jell-O
- BEN BERNIE and Lew Lehr for Half & Half Smoking Tobacco
- EDDY DUCHIN and his orchestra for Pall Mall Famous Cigarettes
- "HOBBY LOBBY" with David Elman for Fels-Naptha Soap Chips
- "LONE RANGER" for Silvercup Bread
- LUM & ABNER for Postum
- MARY MARGARET McBRIDE for LaFrance & Satina
- "AL PEARCE & His Gang" for Grape-Nuts and Grape-Nuts Flakes
- "THE PHANTOM PILOT" and "NEWS DRAMAS" for Langendorf United Bakeries, Inc.
- "SILVER THEATRE" for International Sterling Silver and 1847 Rogers Bros. Silverplate
- KATE SMITH in The Kate Smith Hour for Swans Down Cake Flour and Calumet Baking Powder
- "WE, THE PEOPLE" with Gabriel Heatter for Sanka Coffee

YOUNG & RUBICAM, Inc., Advertising

NEW YORK • CHICAGO • DETROIT • HOLLYWOOD • TORONTO • MONTREAL

Columbia sets the table.



Mr. Robert F. Lund

Mrs. Robert V. Russell

Mr. Lyman Bryson

Mr. Alexander H. Watt

Mr. George H. Soule

A few of the subjects discussed on "The People's Platform"

Public Opinion and the Press
 Public Opinion and the Radio
 Should We Spend Our Way to Recovery?
 What is a Liberal?
 Do We Need a Larger Army and Navy?
 What Should We Do About Our Surpluses?

Public Opinion and Magazines
 Is There Politics in Relief?
 A Third Term for Presidents?
 Do We Need a League of American Nations?
 Should We Admit the Refugees?
 How Can You Succeed in the Arts?

...and people talk!

Mr. Amos Pinchot dined with a cabby. A housewife from the Bronx and a Connecticut grocer exchanged views with an industrialist and an economist. A pacifist and a rear admiral debated armaments. Secretary Wallace and General Hugh Johnson had coffee—and an argument. A truck driver, a former president of Panama, a policeman's wife and a famous socialist—all have been Columbia's dinner guests, all have helped make The People's Platform, created by the CBS Department of Education, one of the most provocative and most interesting of all radio programs.

Every Sunday night, a little before seven, a small group of people meets for dinner in Columbia's dining room. Each week it is a different group, men and women from all walks of life, brought together at the dinner table by Lyman Bryson, chairman of Columbia's Adult Education Board. Each week a subject of particular moment is introduced, and conversation, stimulated by good food and pleasant surroundings, flows smoothly across the board.

No microphones are in evidence. Hidden under flowers, they are suddenly and silently cut in as the discussion gathers momentum. No person in the room knows just when the voices go on the air. Nor does he care. He's much too interested in what is being said and what he wants to say.

For a half hour, spontaneously expressed opinions and beliefs—and sometimes heated arguments—are broadcast from coast to coast. Unrehearsed and informal, they reveal a cross section of American ideas, the ideas of groups of different occupations, different party affiliations, different economic levels. And Columbia, while having no editorial interest in the opinions expressed, is pleased to present them to the American radio audience as an immediate reflection of American thinking and American feeling.

The Columbia Broadcasting System

GREETINGS

JACK BENNY

... and me too ...

MARY LIVINGSTONE



Management—ARTHUR S. LYONS • LYONS & LYONS



AIR FEATURES
INC.

247 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK



NEW YORK'S
HIGH-FIDELITY
STATION

The Only
Station
That Reaches
People Who
"Hate Radio"

Owned and Operated by
INTERSTATE
BROADCASTING
CO., INC.

730 Fifth Avenue
NEW YORK
CO. 5-6366



**"THE EARLY BIRD"
CATCHES THE WORM**

... and the worm in this case is a load of sales for the participating sponsors of this easy-to-start-the-day-with program filled to the brim with music, weather signals, temperature reports, etc., under the direction of popular Charlie McCarthy. Write, wire or 'phone for details.

{WHN}
DIAL 1010
NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVES
EDWARD PETRY & CO., INC.

TOM FIZDALE

INC.

NATIONAL PUBLICITY AND
EXPLOITATION FOR ADVERTISING
AGENCIES AND ARTISTS

- NEW YORK... 485 MADISON AVE. TEL. ELDORADO 5-5580.
- CHICAGO... 360 N. MICHIGAN AVE. TEL. CENTRAL 7571.
- HOLLYWOOD... 8532 SUNSET BLVD. TEL. WOODBURY 6-3101.
- LONDON... 17 SOHO SQ., W. 1. TEL. WHITEHALL 7010.

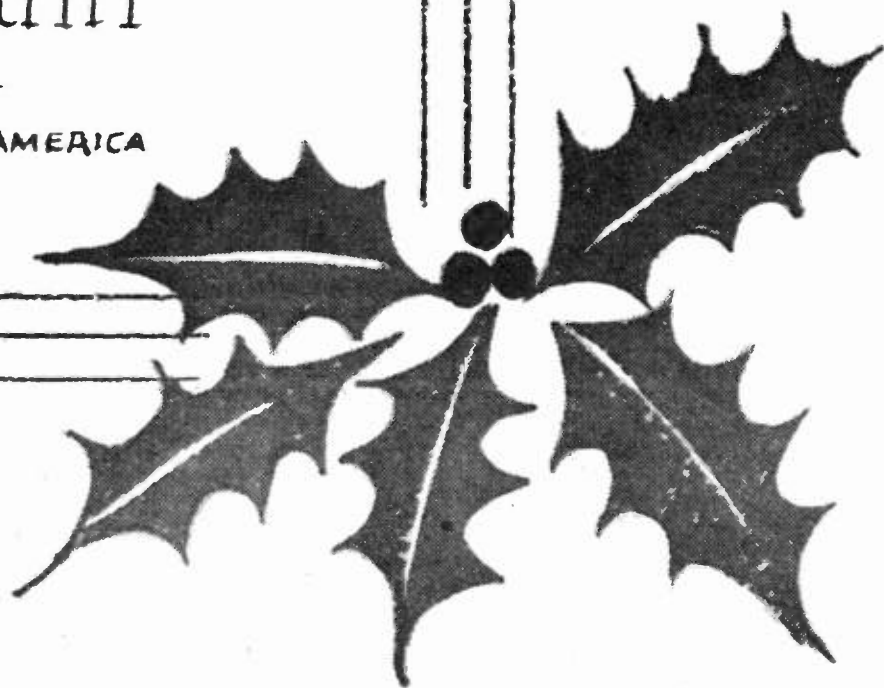


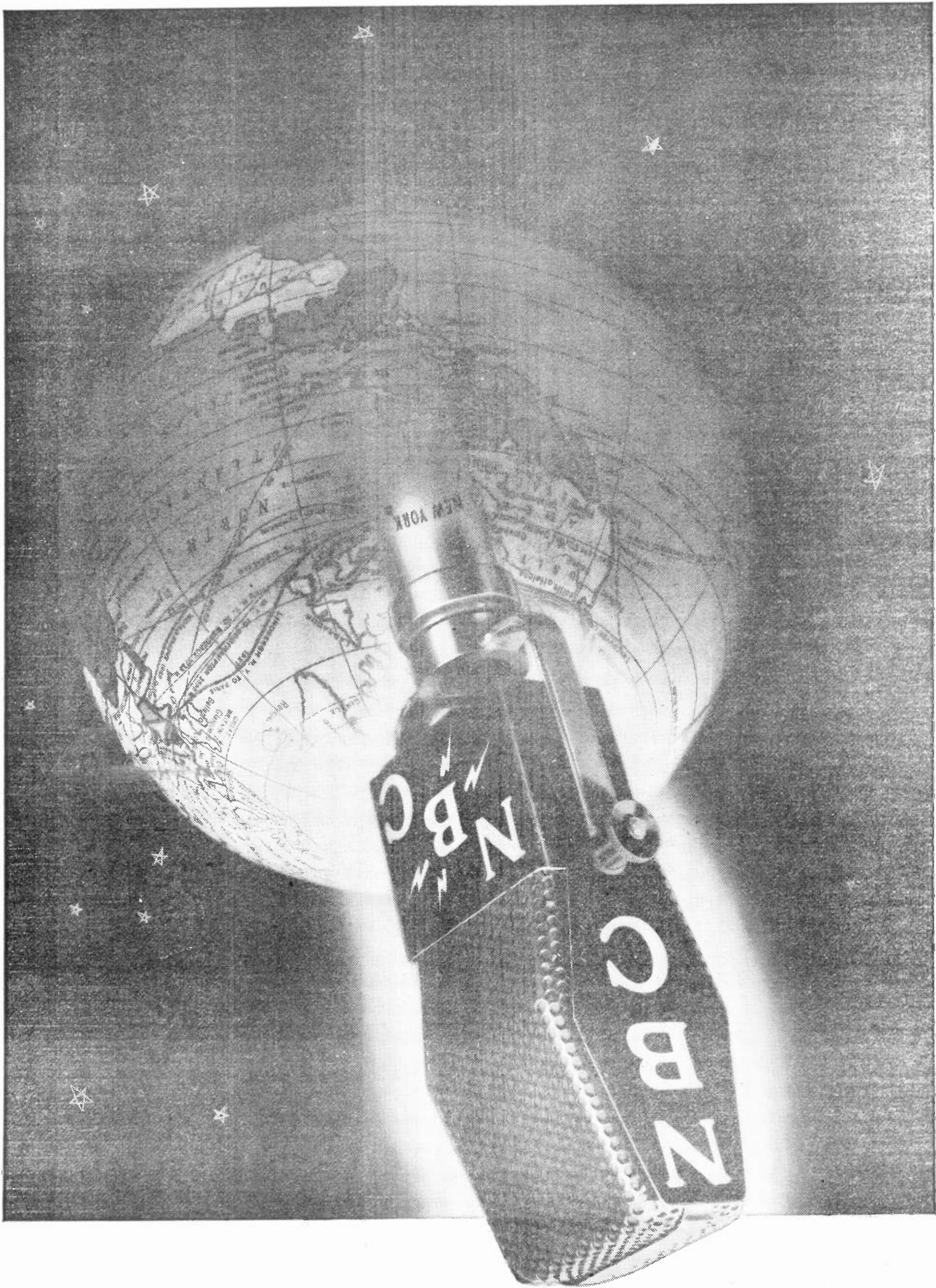
The Season's Greetings

FROM

EDGAR BERGEN
CHARLIE Mc CARTHY

EXCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT
MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA





The World's Greatest

Broadcasting System

is a title that NBC has earned by performance

THE reference to NBC as The World's Greatest Broadcasting System is no self-imposed title. Everywhere, the majority of listeners consider Radio City, New York, to be the world center of broadcasting. Radio City is the home of NBC. A brief glance at some of the outstanding NBC services explains how NBC has rightfully won its title—The World's Greatest Broadcasting System.

Program Leadership

The Red and Blue Networks of NBC are each on the air for an average of 17½ hours a day, or a total of 35 hours. During the year 1938, NBC has sent out more than 56,000 programs. All of these programs were free for the tuning to some 26,000,000 radio owning families in the United States. In addition, many of them reached other millions through short wave and through arrangements with broadcasting organizations in other countries.

At its inception, NBC felt that one of the most essential features of successful broadcasting would always be the planning of programs. Throughout 12 years, the style in programs has been set by NBC. Many of the most important types of programs now broadcast were first conceived and put on the air by NBC.

Network Leadership

Through its two great networks, NBC offers double nation-wide service for advertisers. The NBC Red Network provides more intensive nation-wide circulation than any other network. With unexcelled station facilities and top flight programs it commands the biggest audiences in broadcasting. On the Blue Network, NBC offers national circulation at the lowest cost per listening family ever offered by any network. Advertisers obtain this unapproached low cost through means of the new economy discounts recently established for the NBC Blue and important supplementary groups.

Whether the advertiser wishes to obtain the most intensive available nation-

wide circulation, or whether he prefers to "go National" at a new all-time low cost, NBC can serve him.

Leadership in Transcriptions

The outstanding entertainment provided by NBC Transcription Service is the result of facilities which no one else can offer. To produce these transcriptions, NBC and RCA cooperate. Through RCA is obtained the benefit of leadership in mechanical reproduction recording of sound.

National spot and local advertisers can obtain from the NBC Record Program Service complete facilities for the creation, casting, and recording of programs. The NBC Thesaurus is used by 221 station subscribers.

Leadership in Spot and Local Advertising

By every measurement NBC Managed Stations are unquestionably "Tops in Spot." Spot advertisers find these stations particularly economical because fewer stations are needed to cover broad territories. The majority of these stations are super-power transmitters on clear channels covering major markets. The combination of adequate power and favorable frequency delivers the most complete obtainable coverage.

Leadership in Artists' Service

One of the largest talent organizations in the world is the NBC Artists' Service. As a division of NBC, this Service provides artists with personal management, and in addition, valuable guidance. NBC Artists are available for every type of entertainment, both public and private. A particular function of NBC service is to provide radio advertisers and their agencies with talent specifically suited to the advertiser's sales problems. In addition, the service furnishes sound program ideas and complete casts.

"In the Public Interest"

At all times the National Broadcasting Company aims to operate its networks

in the interest of the public. We feel it is our obligation to provide through radio an instrument of free discussion ...to give both sides on important public questions an equal opportunity to weigh the evidence each side offers in support of its opinions. And, in this way, an informed electorate is built up—an electorate which can express itself intelligently at the polls.

News of national interest to American citizens is reported skilfully and impartially... "in the public interest." This principle accounts for such notable services as the reporting of the Czecho-Slovakian crisis, and the day by day broadcasting of events at the Lima Conference, as well as hundreds of vital news broadcasts, from at home and abroad. Our basic principle of impartiality also governs the conduct of all programs which go out over the NBC Networks.

That these and similar services of NBC are outstanding in broadcasting is due in large measure to the fact that NBC draws freely upon the experience, research and resources of the Radio Corporation of America, the only organization that makes and does everything in radio and sound. All the points of leadership enumerated above are the factors which make NBC The World's Greatest Broadcasting System.

**NATIONAL
BROADCASTING
COMPANY**

THE WORLD'S GREATEST
BROADCASTING SYSTEM
A RADIO CORPORATION
OF AMERICA SERVICE

First FOR 10 YEARS

KSTP

Northwest's Leading Radio Station

For the past 10 years, every authentic survey in the Twin Cities Area has shown KSTP with more than 50% of the listening audience. That means *more listeners per dollar* in the 7th U. S. Retail Market, where Annual Retail Sales total a billion and a half dollars . . . and the **BEST BUY** in the entire Northwest.

FIRST in the Nation for Showmanship.

FIRST in percentage of renewal contracts each year.

FIRST in the Leading Test Cities in the 500,000 population group . . . Sales Management 1938 survey.

FIRST choice and designated as the Twin Cities official radio station in 1938 Salesmen's Crusade.

It's no wonder
that MORE local and national advertisers select KSTP
FOR GREATER COVERAGE IN THE NORTHWEST

KSTP

Northwest's Leading Radio Station

MINNEAPOLIS

SAINT PAUL

Stanley E. Hubbard, Pres. & Gen. Mgr.

EXCLUSIVE OUTLET BASIC RED NETWORK N. B. C.

For Rates and Schedules, Address: Ray C. Jenkins, Sales Manager, KSTP, MINNEAPOLIS—ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, or our NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: In New York, Chicago, Detroit, and San Francisco—Edward Petry & Co., Inc.

Joyous Greetings

JACK MILLER
and HIS ORCHESTRA

Expressing our appreciation for the many years of joyous association with KATE SMITH and TED COLLINS.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

GUY LOMBARDO
AND HIS ROYAL CANADIANS

LADY ESTHER
MONDAYS 10 P.M. EST CBS NETWORK
FRIDAYS 10 P.M. EST NBC NETWORK

HOTEL ROOSEVELT
NEW YORK CITY
NOW

Management—MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA

WFBR PREDICTS FOR BALTIMORE 1939

☉ January, February: Lots of cold, lots of precipitation, lots of slush, lots of "dirty weather."

Baltimoreans will buy drugs, cold remedies, coal, fuel-oil, anti-freeze, skid-chains, galoshes, good, solid foods! And a lot of them, fleeing to kindlier climes, will buy vacation togs.

☽ March, April: Spring rains, spring sunshine, relapse into winter, Easter weather.

Baltimoreans will splurge on spring finery, new cars, more gas and oil, will attend races and "Point-to-Points", will visit the cherry blossoms in Washington. Lots of parties; grocers and liquor dealers wear happy smiles.

☼ May, June: Spring flowers and a foretaste of summer. The Preakness at Pimlico. Graduation. Brides of Beautiful Brides.

Baltimoreans go home - hunting, furniture business booms, jewelers celebrate their "second Christmas", caterers work overtime. Golf gets going; nineteenth hole gets busy.

● July, August: "Is it hot enough for you?"

Brewers and bottlers rush; ice cream goes on the daily diet. Summer clothes and air-conditioning sales soar, sun-burn counts its victims by the thousands. Lots of Baltimoreans vacation right on the beautiful Chesapeake, so food sales in Maryland know no summer drop-off.

☾ September, October: Late hot spell that lingers after Labor Day—then snappy fall—with Indian summer. Football weather at last.

Baltimoreans change into winter-weights, lay in season's supply of fuel, shop for new oil-burners.

● November, December: From Indian Summer to zero. Auto Show—Last of the races; Turkey Day and Christmas Spirit.

Baltimoreans will spend more money in November and December than in any other four months!

In short -- there are going to be lots of business opportunities -- and the best way to meet those opportunities half way is on Baltimore's favorite air-way -- WFBR.

IN BALTIMORE
IT'S
WFBR
NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES
EDWARD PETRY & CO.
ON THE NBC RED NETWORK



It may be a third of a century to youse guys, but it's Half and Half Tobacco to the Ole Maestro and All the Lads. Yowsah!

EACH SUNDAY AT 5:30 P. M. E.S.T.
VIA CBS FOR AMERICAN TOBACCO CO.

The NATION'S
LARGEST
INDEPENDENT
STATION

W J J D
CHICAGO

20,000 WATTS

Extends Greetings of the Season

Season's Greetings

from

W-I-N-D

CHICAGO'S FAVORITE SPORTS STATION

W-I-N-D

"The Tip-Top Spot on Your Dial"

GARY

National Sales Offices
201 NORTH WELLS ST., CHICAGO, ILL.

WILLIAM G. RAMBEAU CO., National Representatives
5,000 Watts Daytime—560 Kcys.—1,000 Watts Nighttime

"HER HONOR NANCY JAMES"—

An ED WOLF PRODUCTION
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY—C-S—12:15 P.M. EST
Presented by KLEENEX

BARBARA WEEKS

STARRING
As NANCY JAMES

BASIL LOUGHRANE

Director

GUY LOMBARDO For LADY ESTHER SERENADE
HER HONOR NANCY JAMES For KLEENEX

JOHN GRIGGS
AS
ALFRED KANE

KATHLEEN NIDAY
as MRS. PHYLLIS MARTIN
Also "HILLTOP HOUSE"

KAY STROZZI
AS
EVELYN WHARTON

JOAN BANKS
AS
ELLEN CLARK

KINGSLEY COLTON
AS
LARRY

LEW WHITE
(VICTOR ARTIST)
ORGANIST

DAVID VICTOR and HERBERT LITTLE, Jr.
Writers of "HER HONOR NANCY JAMES"

Greetings Everyone

GABRIEL HEATTER

Afraid you'll have a Prosperous Year



I HOPE, I HOPE, I HOPE!

AL PEARCE

Exclusive Management: FANCHON & MARCO

HAPPY DAYS

From

CARL HOFF

and ORCHESTRA

GRAPE NUTS PROGRAM

GREETINGS
FROM

THE SWEETHEARTS OF THE AIR
MAY SINGHI BREEN

AND

PETER DE ROSE

THANKS

for

1938

MORE

NATIONAL SPOT ACCOUNTS

MORE

NETWORK ACCOUNTS

MORE

LOCAL ACCOUNTS

than ever before in
the history of

WIRE

INDIANAPOLIS

DO YOU HAVE ALL THE
FACTS CONCERNING
THE NEW WIRE?

REPRESENTED BY
THE KATZ AGENCY

AL MAISTER

Radio Script and Gag Writer

Season's Greetings

Meet the Ma(G)sterpieces:

Organ Grinder

and Song Meets Author series
20 Browning Ave., Boston (DOR.), Mass.

Season's Best Wishes to All My
Friends and Listeners
Everywhere

N.B.C.'s

ALICE REMSEN

GREETINGS FROM

THE KING'S JESTERS

and

THEIR ORCHESTRA

CONSOLIDATED RADIO
ARTISTS



SEASON'S GREETINGS

from

JOSEF CHERNIAVSKY

In Charge of Music WLW—CINCINNATI

SEASON'S GREETINGS

DON VOORHEES

GREETINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO

VARIETY

HAROLD BETTS

"DOGGY DAN"

Sponsored by JOHN MORRELL & CO.

Originates from Station WMAQ, Monday Through Saturday
12:30 to 12:45 Noon

Direction FRANK FERRIN, HENRI, HURST & McDONALD



New Year's Greetings...

For
1939:

NEW TRANSMITTER

Its new RCA Type D High Fidelity transmitter, with 586-foot tower now in operation, WLS offers for 1939, 862,660 additional radio homes in its .5MV/M area. WLS offers this improved coverage and improved signal at no increase in rates.

NEW RECORDS

750,000 persons have paid to see 354 performances of the WLS National Barn Dance at the Eighth Street Theater since March, 1932. Millions more have attended personal appearances of WLS acts from coast to coast and border to border. 1939 will be another "sell out year."

NEW REPRESENTATION

WLS has appointed John Blair & Company as new national sales representatives. John Blair offices are located in key cities throughout the nation: New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle.

For
1938:

ANOTHER "MILLION LETTER" YEAR

With another million letters in 1938, WLS again proves its loyal and responsive audience, for "Audience mail is Audience Proof." 1938, another year and another million, and WLS mail has reached more than Nine Million in Nine Years! WLS GETS RESULTS!

National Representatives: JOHN BLAIR and CO.

Exclusive WLS Artists Booking
WLS ARTISTS, INC.

Earl W. Kurtze

George R. Ferguson



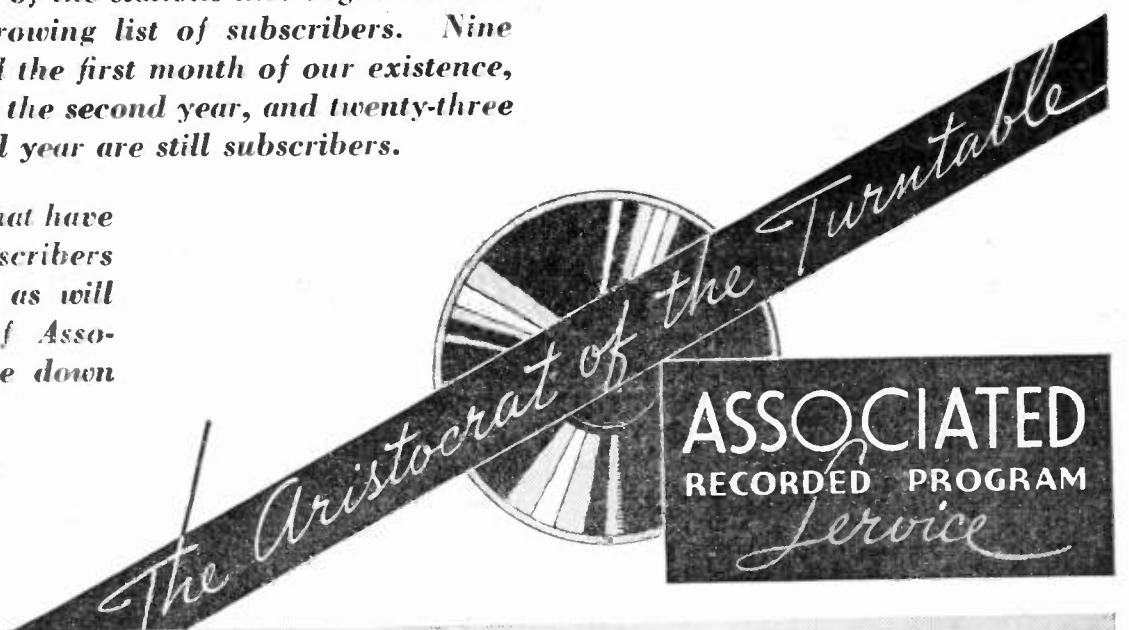
THE PRAIRIE FARMER STATION
Burridge D. Butler, President (Chicago) Glenn Snyder, Manager

Through the years...

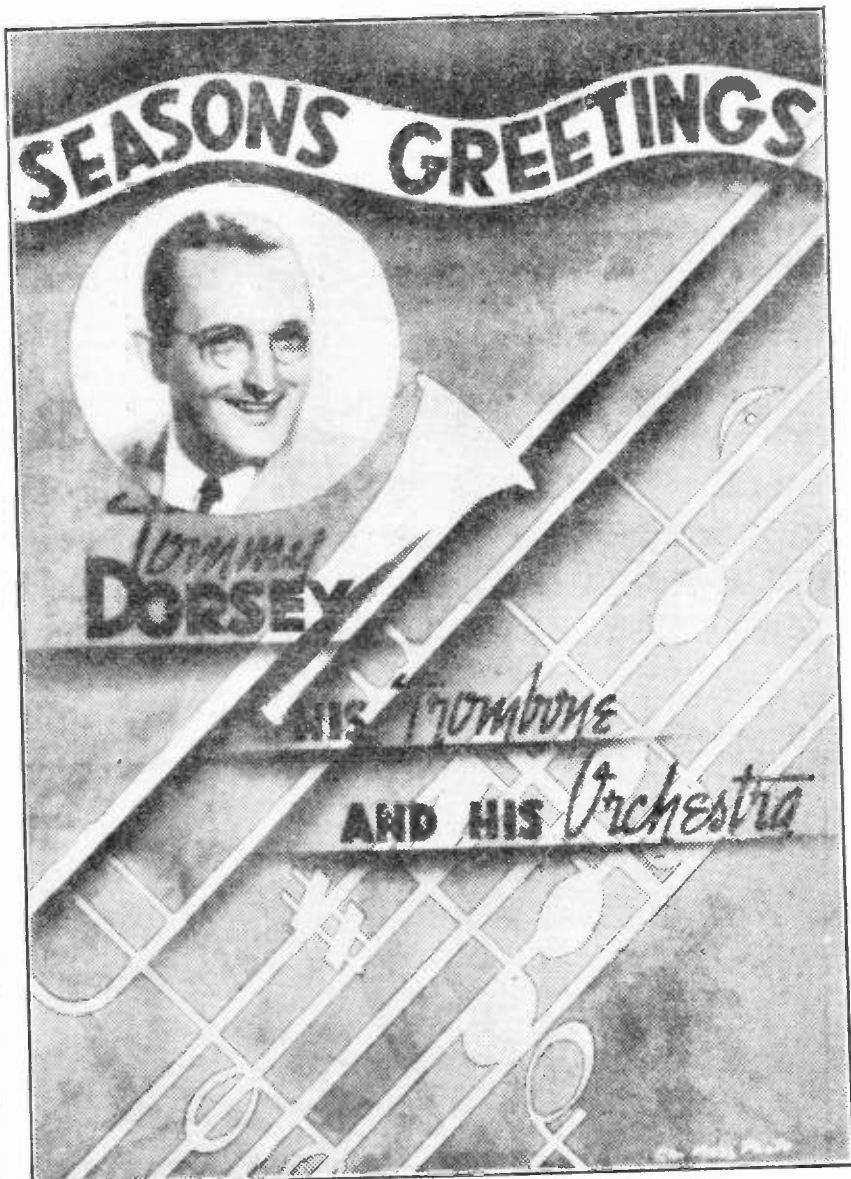
WHEN important radio stations for four, three, or even two successive years continuously use one transcription service there can be but one reason. These stations have received year in and year out recorded programs that build listening audiences and that return dividends to themselves and to their sponsors.

WE originally offered our recorded library to broadcasters in August, 1935. We are proud that through the years most of the stations that began with us are still among our growing list of subscribers. Nine stations that subscribed the first month of our existence, eighteen that joined us the second year, and twenty-three that joined us the third year are still subscribers.

TO the many broadcasting stations that have recently become Associated subscribers we pledge the same quality product as will make them also continued users of Associated Recorded Program Service down through the years to come.



ASSOCIATED MUSIC PUBLISHERS, INC., 25 WEST 45th STREET, NEW YORK CITY



GERTRUDE BERG

AND RADIO'S BELOVED

"The GOLDBERGS"

Now in Their Tenth Year of Broadcasting

Extend
Holiday
Greetings

Sponsored by Procter & Gamble for OXYDOL

CBS Network • Mondays Through Fridays • 1 P.M. EST

Lord & Thomas offers congratulations to show business on 33 years of Variety

WE ARE GLAD to join the throng who are wishing Variety many more years of usefulness. Thirty-three years of success is quite a record in a country where things change the way they do in the United States.

Lord & Thomas have seen lots of changes, too. Fact is we have been at our job for 65 years, and that just about covers the history of adver-

tising. Time was when we were not so conscious of Variety. That was before radio tied the knot between advertising and showmanship.

Another nice thing about Variety. The pages are large enough so that when we run an ad like this we also have room to say a few words about ourselves. So what we'll finish off with is a list of some of our own efforts in radio on behalf of our clients.

A Few News Items of Interest at L & T

89,000 seats behind the demand... So many people want to see Lucky Strike's Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge, that 89,000 are now on the waiting list. We doubt whether this record has ever been faintly approached in radio.

Oldest show on air renews for 13th year... The Cities Service Show has just been renewed for another year, its 13th, making it the oldest major show on the networks, its 13th year of continuous appearance. It is still building an audience and getting listeners at an extraordinarily low cost per thousand.

Your Hit Parade continues to set the pace in popular music... The Lucky Strike Hit Parade, shortly to begin its fifth year, is still the guide by which the popularity of all songs is gauged

and with the addition (7 weeks ago) of Lanny Ross and the Raymond Scott Quintette it becomes more of a radio "must" than ever.

First or second every year... Since radio began and through 1937, Lord & Thomas has been first or second among advertising agencies in total billing with the two major networks every year save one. (In 1935 we were fourth.)

New shows during 1938... Among the new shows presented for our clients during 1938 are Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge for Lucky Strike, the Bob Hope Show for Pepsodent, Guy Lombardo for Lady Esther (twice a week), the Sophie Tucker Show for Roi-Tan (three times a week) and Her Honor Nancy James for Kleenex (five times a week).

Some L & T "Firsts" in Radio

First Daily Radio Contest of National Scope—It rocked American streets with conversation. Made an average of 10,000 one-dollar sales a day for months.

First Daily Network Strip Program—Started a whole new technique of commercial program building.

First to Rebroadcast Commercial Program—Repeat same program late at night for Far West coverage.

First Big Hit Variety Musical Show Sponsored on Network—Set the pattern for big commercial musical production shows in radio.

First Commercial Broadcast of Metropolitan Opera Series

First Commercial Series of Pick-ups of Foreign Dance Orchestras

First Sustained Commercial Series of Spot Pick-ups—Artists and orchestras from all over the country picked up on same program.

First to Present Authentic Police and Department of Justice Dramas

First in Contest Returns—2,250,000 forty-cent purchases in two weeks.

First Chain Sponsorship of Football

First Network Daytime Serial Show to Women

Some of the talent first sponsored or popularized nationally through us

Amos and Andy; Bing Crosby; Eddie Duchin; Bob Hope; Hal Kemp; Walter O'Keefe; Phil Cook; Kay Kyser; The Goldbergs; Louella Parsons; Fred Astaire; Lucille Manners; Lum and Abner; Walter Winchell; Jack Pearl; Clara, Lu and Em; B.A. Rolfe; Mary Marlin.

LORD & THOMAS

NEW YORK • CHICAGO • HOLLYWOOD • LOS ANGELES • SAN FRANCISCO
TORONTO • PARIS • LONDON



Now 50,000 Watts

PLUS established preference through leadership in covering local events.

PLUS dominance in the prospering Deep South.

PLUS the economy of using 1 station with five times the power of any station within 400 miles.

Tell—Sell—over WWL—the 50 Thousand Watt Station in New Orleans

C B S AFFILIATE ★ REPRESENTED BY THE KATZ AGENCY, Inc.
VINCENT F. CALLAHAN, GEN. MGR.

Season's Greetings

LOUISE WILCHER

Staff Organist and Pianist
WOR

CHARLIE WAYNE

EMCEE

BOONE COUNTY JAMBOREE

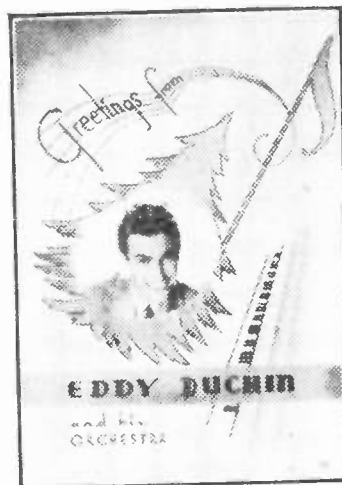
WLW

NBC

Griffin Shoe Polish

Vick's Vaporub

Agent - - - - - CROSLEY RADIO CORP.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

ABBOTT and COSTELLO

"COMEDY STARS OF THE KATE SMITH PROGRAM"

EDWARD SHERMAN
Personal Manager

Special Material by
JOHN GRANT

WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY, Inc.
Exclusive Representatives

Season's Greetings

**ELAINE
STERNE
CARRINGTON**

Author of

"PEPPER
YOUNG'S
FAMILY"

NBC-RED NETWORK
3:30 P.M.

BLUE NETWORK
11:30 A.M.

Five Times Weekly

and

SIX

"Doctor Christian"

Shows Starring
JEAN HERSHOLT

WABC-CBS NETWORK
10 P.M. Tuesday

**Results
COUNT
MOST**

WTAG

WORCESTER,
MASS.
Leading Station in
Worcester and
Central
Massachusetts

WEED & COMPANY



**RADIO STATION
REPRESENTATIVES**
NEW YORK - CHICAGO
DETROIT - SAN FRANCISCO

*Sports and
Special Events
Greetings from*

**DICK
FISHELL**

WHN and N.B.C.

CONGRATULATIONS TO *VARIETY* ON ITS 33rd ANNIVERSARY

Rudy Vallée

A MIDNIGHT CALL!

It may be a call at midnight that sends announcers, production men and technicians hurrying to the scene of a disaster. It may be a feature that has been on the BBC's Special Events calendar for weeks—but you may be certain that when something unusual happens in Buffalo it will go on the air through BBC stations!

BBC's remote truck with its portable transcription equipment travels more than 1,500 miles each month covering special features. It goes to the airport for an interview with H. V. Kaltenborn as he waits for plane connections. It goes to Central Terminal, where the current celebrity is put on the air. It takes listeners to fires. It covers the waterfront!

That isn't all! BBC's idea of "Mikemanship" starts with scheduling. Did it happen during the day when many listeners were at work? Record it and put it on at night. When Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich his memorable speech was broadcast to this country in the afternoon, but listeners in Buffalo also had an opportunity to hear it at night. We think that is a public service. We also think it's good showmanship!

When speakers request time BBC discourages the cut-and-dried dial twisting "talk." We dramatize the idea or make it a round table discussion. We think that, too, is a public service. It makes the message more effective. We also think it's good showmanship!

WGR...AT THE ENDS OF THE DIAL...WKBW

FREE & PETERS, Inc., Nat. Rep.

McCANN- ERICKSON, INC.

offers

Complete Radio Services
in all four major radio centers

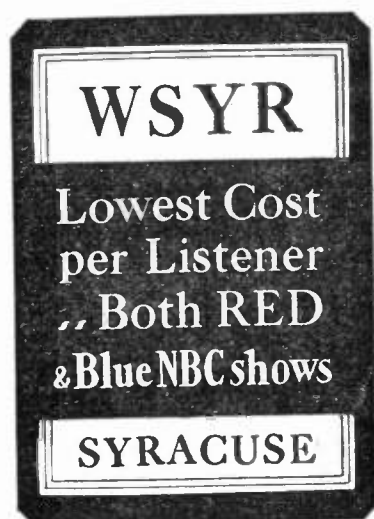
IN NEW YORK - - - 285 Madison Avenue
IN CHICAGO - - - 910 S. Michigan Avenue
IN HOLLYWOOD, 448 S. Hill Street, Los Angeles
IN SAN FRANCISCO - - 114 Sansome Street

JESSE L. LASKY'S "Gateway to Hollywood" C. B. S.

Sunday, 6:30-7:00 P.M., E.S.T.—3:30-4:00 P.M., P.C.T.

Talent Search
for
R.K.O. RADIO PICTURES, INC.

Sponsored by
WM. WRIGLEY, JR., COMPANY
The makers of Double Mint Gum



★
**BOB
HAWK**

★
THE
QUIXIE-DOODLER
ON THE
People's Rally

Mutual Network Sun., 3:30 P.M. EST
For the Mennen Co.



GREETINGS TO ALL RADIO PERFORMERS

From the
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF RADIO ARTISTS
(Affiliated with the American Federation of Labor)
Representing more than 6,000 Radio Artists
throughout the United States and Canada

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
2 West 45th Street, New York City

NATIONAL OFFICERS

EDDIE CANTOR President	JAMES WALLINGTON Vice-President	PAUL N. TURNER Counsel
LAWRENCE TIBBETT Vice-President	EMILY HOLT Executive Secretary	HENRY JAFFE Associate Counsel
NORMAN FIELD Vice-President	GEORGE HELLER Asso. Sec'y and Treas.	LAURENCE W. BEILENSEN Associate Counsel
JASCHA HEIFETZ Vice-President	LUCILLE WALL Recording Secretary	

LOCAL OFFICES IN
Chicago - Los Angeles - San Francisco - Detroit - St. Louis
Cincinnati - Denver - Montreal

EASY ACES

Season's Greetings
SCHWIMMER & SCOTT
ADVERTISING
CHICAGO

*For specialized
and intimate approach
to the FOREIGN RESIDENTS*

69%

OF METROPOLITAN
NEW YORK

the answer is **WBNX** NEW YORK
1000 WATTS DAY AND NIGHT
The Station that Speaks Your Language

PICK and PAT

For MODEL SMOKING TOBACCO

8:30 Monday Nites, EST

CBS

TUMS PRESENT

BERT LYTELL

in

"DRAMA TIME"

Radio Versions of the Famous Short Stories from Liberty Magazine

WJZ New York

SUNDAY, 5:45 P.M., EST

Management—WM. MORRIS AGENCY

FRIDAY, 7:45 P.M., EST

Which are the *important* radio programs?



Here are some of the people who have
appeared regularly on IMPORTANT radio programs
directed by the J. Walter Thompson Company during 1938

During 1938 we have directed radio programs
for the following advertisers:

P. Ballantine & Sons	Lamont Corliss & Company
Bowman Dairy Company	Lever Brothers Company
Canned Salmon Industry	Libby, McNeill & Libby
The City Baking Company	The Northern Trust Company
Coca Cola Bottling Company	Penick & Ford, Ltd., Inc.
of Los Angeles	Safeway Stores, Incorporated
J. & J. Colman (U. S. A.) Limited	Scott Paper Company
Elgin National Watch Company	Shell Petroleum Corporation
Emerson Drug Company	Standard Brands Incorporated
The R. T. French Company	Swift & Company
Griesedieck Western Brewery Company	United Air Lines Transport Corporation
Group V (The Savings Banks of	Washington State Apples Advertising
Brooklyn & Queens)	Commission
Johns-Manville Corporation	Weco Products Company
Kellogg Company	The J. B. Williams Company
Kraft-Phenix Cheese Corporation	W. F. Young, Inc.
	Zenith Radio Corp.

PEOPLE often speak of "important" programs. By an "im-
portant" program they mean one that is conspicuous.

The fact is that every radio program—big or little—local or
national—has an important job to do.

The list of the ten most popular programs for many years
has contained from three to seven J. Walter Thompson Com-
pany productions. Less spectacularly but none the less impor-
tantly, many smaller programs directed by the Thompson Com-
pany are accomplishing substantial results for their advertisers.

Certain situations call for a dominating hour coast-to-coast;
others for a ten-second announcement in a single city.

Big or small—the program most important to you is the
one that will bring the most profitable sales return.

J. Walter Thompson Company

NEW YORK CHICAGO ST. LOUIS SAN FRANCISCO LOS ANGELES HOLLYWOOD SEATTLE MONTREAL TORONTO LONDON PARIS ANTWERP THE HAGUE BUCHAREST
BUENOS AIRES SÃO PAULO RIO DE JANEIRO CAPE TOWN JOHANNESBURG BOMBAY CALCUTTA SYDNEY MELBOURNE LATIN-AMERICAN AND FAR EASTERN DIVISION

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM

FIBBER McGEE and COMPANY**JIM JORDAN****BILL THOMPSON****IRENE VERMILLION and CO.****SYLVIA CLARK****PALACE, CHICAGO**

Week of Jan. 6th

THE FOUR NOTES**HAROLD PEARY**

**THE NATION'S
GREATEST
REGIONAL NETWORK**

DON LEE

BROADCASTING SYSTEM
L. A. WEISS . . . Vice-President and General Manager
1076 West Seventh Street Los Angeles, California
AFFILIATED WITH
MUTUAL
REPRESENTED BY
JOHN BLAIR & CO.

AT YOUR SERVICE!



For fifteen years, W-G-N's staff of expert producers, salesmen, program advisers and talent have been serving advertisers with consistent success. In the hands of these men and women, whose production record is unequalled in the Middle West, your company, your name and your product are not only safe, but assured of the best creative thought, the most brilliant program execution and the soundest follow-through. The production record speaks for itself. Three hundred employes, from page boys to executives, are **AT YOUR SERVICE!**

Go Commercial

WITH

WGN

CHICAGO

441-445 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

50,000 Watts — 720 Kilocycles

Eastern Sales Office:

WILLIAM E. MCGUINEAS
220 East 42nd Street
New York City


Pacific Coast Office:

EDWARD S. TOWNSEND
Russ Building
San Francisco, Cal.



Here's a market with total retail sales only a fraction under that of Metropolitan New York! A single area in which the effective buying income is more than twice that of Chicago! A compact territory in which there are more than two and one quarter million families . . . their wants supplied by over one hundred thousand retail outlets! It's your market within the Golden Horseshoe . . . that part of the great Middle West blanketed by WJR, the Goodwill Station, Detroit, and WGAR, Cleveland's Friendly Station. There's gold for you within the Golden Horseshoe. And these two great stations are your *pick and shovel*!

W·J·R
 THE GOODWILL STATION
Detroit



W·G·A·R
 THE FRIENDLY STATION
Cleveland

THE GREAT STATIONS OF THE GREAT LAKES
 Basic Stations...Columbia Broadcasting System
 Edward Petry & Company, Inc., National Sales Representatives

"The SINGING VIOLIN"
JACQUES RENARD
 And HIS ORCHESTRA
 COCOANUT GROVE, BOSTON, MASS.
 Mutual Broadcasting System (WOR)
 Monday-Thursday-Friday-Saturday
 Management WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY



JOSEPH RINES
 and His Orchestra
 HARRY RICHMAN'S
 ROAD TO MANDALAY
 WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY

NBC
 Tues.
 Thurs.
 Sat.

ALL NEW YORK IS TALKING ABOUT THE NEWEST **WMCA** PROGRAM CREATION

*"Jimmy Walker's
 Visiting Hour"*

REMEMBER?

"RICH KID" with Freddie Bartholomew and the Dead End Kids

"CAT-WIFE" with Boris Karloff

"DARK WORLD" with Joan Crawford

"ADAM AND EVE" with Can't-mention-the-name

"I DO" with Henry Fonda and Brian Aherne

"ALTER EGO" with Bette Davis

"THE HARP" with Maurice Evans and Brian Aherne

ARCH OBOLER

RADIO PLAYWRIGHT

WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY

NBC

SEASON'S GREETINGS **GARNETT MARKS**

ANNOUNCER
 NEWS AND SPORTSCASTER

YOUR BEST BET
 FOR
 1939 BASEBALL REPORTING

Exclusive Management
 JACK LAVIN
 The Park Central, New York

RAY BLOCH

Thanks Everybody for a Record Year

Management
 CBS ARTIST BUREAU



Thanks, Variety!

WE APPRECIATE your recognition of an Ayer client, **THE ATLANTIC REFINING COMPANY**, in your 1938 Showmanship Awards.* In 20,000 station-hours of broadcasting during the past football season, ATLANTIC has made entertainment of its listeners paramount. No untimely commercials. It has found that "once over, lightly" does the best job.

We also appreciate the splendid co-operation of the 71 stations that formed the Atlantic Football Network, and of the 40 expert play-by-play and commercial announcers who helped to earn **VARIETY**'s pat on the back.

N. W. AYER & SON, Inc.

* This is the second consecutive year that ATLANTIC football broadcasts have received a major award. Last year they were given the ADVERTISING & SELLING award for excellence of commercial announcements.

WOR

PRESENTS

A ★★★★★ STAR COMBINATION

★ **ERNIE FIORITO**

AND HIS ORCHESTRA

in

"Studies in Contrast"

featuring

★ **DON ARRES**

Continental
Singing Star

★ **SHIRLEY HOWARD**

Popular
Songstress

★ **NOVELTY CHOIR**

SEVEN BRILLIANT VOICES

Every Monday, 8-8:30 P.M. EST

COAST-TO-COAST, MUTUAL NETWORK

Produced by WILLSON M. TUTTLE

STEADFAST POLICIES

KOIN has consistently refused advertising of spot medical accounts, alcoholic beverages, advertising dentists, small loan companies, per inquiry basis and all other objectionable programs and announcements.

THE RESULT

KOIN enjoys the complete confidence of the Northwest's largest radio audience and should be on any schedule which includes the great Oregon market.

— Representatives —
Free & Peters
World Broadcasting

KOIN

PORTLAND, ORE.

VARIETY IS THIRTY-THREE YEARS OLD!

SO WHAT?

The Bronx Zoo is 39 years old.
Grant's Tomb is 41 years old.
The Aquarium is 42 years old.
Ellis Island is 46 years old.
The Statue of Liberty is 54 years old.
The Brooklyn Bridge is 55 years old.
The Union League Club is 75 years old.
Snug Harbor is 107 years old.
A Pen in the Main Post Office is 80 years old.
A joke in Hellzapoppin is 460 years old.

WHAT HAS VARIETY GOT TO BRAG ABOUT?

Don't Ask

FRED ALLEN

"Town Hall Tonight"

Ipana-Sal Hepatica

Direction, WALTER BATCHELOR

CROSSLEY, INC. REPORTS

WNEW first as local station!
WABC first as chain station!

—From Variety, June 22, 1938

WNEW

NEW YORK

ON THE AIR 24 HRS. A DAY

Serving New York City and
its environs . . . the entire
Metropolitan Trading Area.

1250 KILOCYCLES

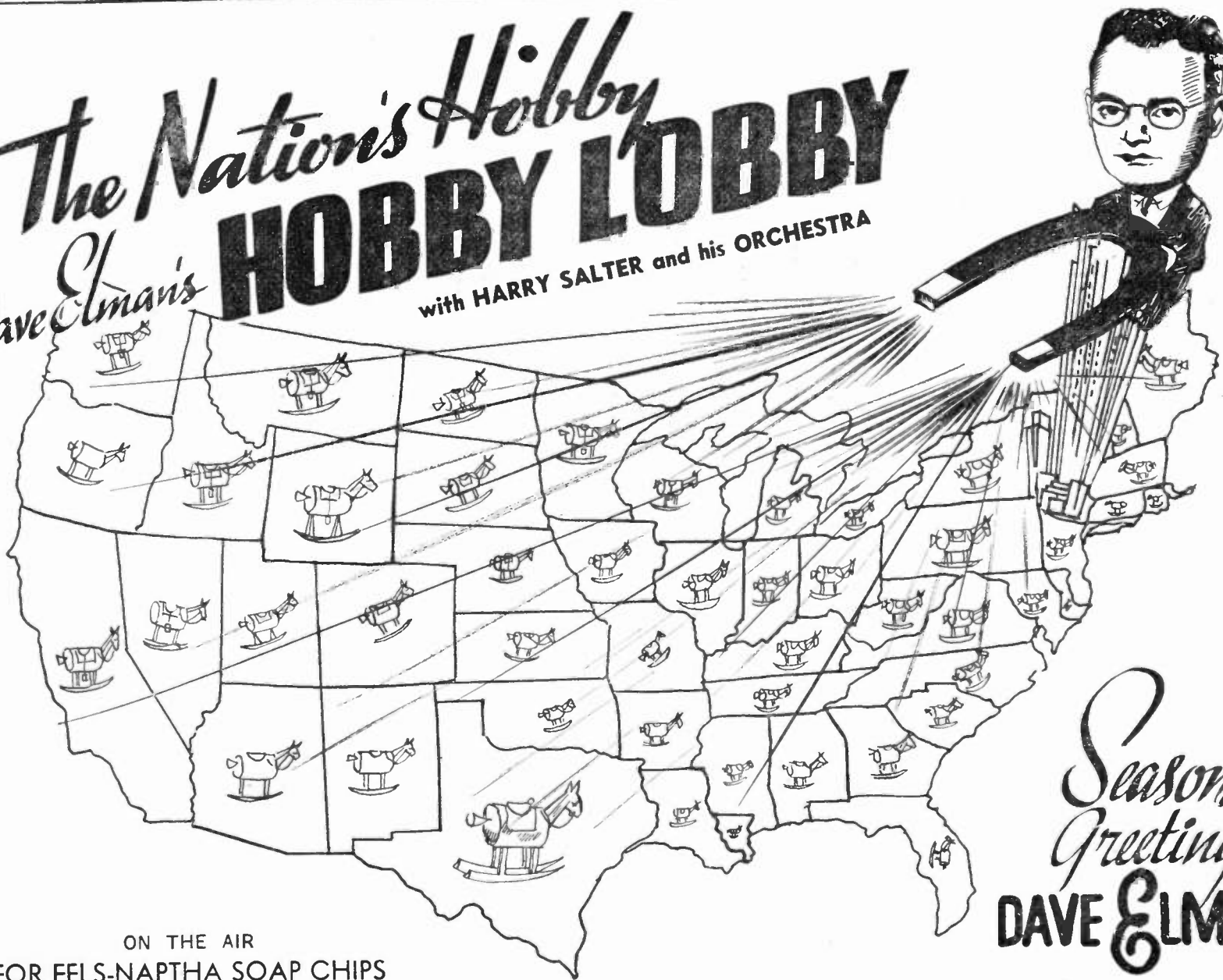
2500 WATTS BY DAY • 1000 WATTS BY NIGHT
STUDIOS—501 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

The Nation's Hobby

HOBBY LOBBY

Dave Elman's

with HARRY SALTER and his ORCHESTRA



Season's
Greetings
DAVE ELMAN

ON THE AIR
FOR FELS-NAPTHA SOAP CHIPS
EVERY WEDNESDAY, 8:30-9:00 P.M. EST
WJZ BLUE NETWORK, NBC
YOUNG AND RUBICAM

485 MADISON AVE. • NEW YORK CITY



MAJOR BOWES' ORIGINAL AMATEUR HOUR . . . Sponsored by Chrysler Corporation for Plymouth, Dodge Passenger Cars and Trucks, De Soto and Chrysler Motor Cars.



EDWARD G. ROBINSON in "BIG TOWN," with **Claire Trevor**. The racket-smashing serial of the newspaper world. Sponsored by Rinso.



AL JOLSON with **Martha Raye** and **Parkyakarkus** on the Lifebuoy Health Soap Program.



TOMMY RIGGS, with "Betty Lou," his famous child character creation. Sponsored by Quaker Oats Company.

12 OUTSTANDING RADIO PROGRAMS PRODUCED BY RUTHRAUFF & RYAN

★ Ruthrauff & Ryan radio programs for 1938-39 reveal unusual diversity in the kinds of entertainment represented. This is characteristic, for Ruthrauff & Ryan programs are not limited by any one formula, nor restricted to any particular type of show.

All major classifications of radio entertainment (comedy, musical, variety, drama, daytime serial shows, "spot" broadcasts, etc.) find one or more Ruthrauff & Ryan programs among the national leaders.

Such diversified success is not the rule in the agency field. For example, some agencies excel in producing daytime shows,

others in producing evening shows. But very few agencies have enjoyed outstanding success in producing *all* types of shows.

In addition to producing leading network programs, Ruthrauff & Ryan was virtually the pioneer of "spot" broadcasting. Today this agency directs hundreds of "spot" campaigns, including news, sports resumés, transcribed programs and station breaks on stations from coast to coast.

RUTHRAUFF & RYAN, INC.
NEW YORK Advertising CHICAGO
ST. LOUIS • DETROIT • HOLLYWOOD
SAN FRANCISCO • SEATTLE



"PROFESSOR QUIZ," originator of the popular "Battle of Wits" program. Sponsored by Noxzema Skin Cream.



"THE SHADOW," in a new series of mystery dramas sponsored by D. L. & W. Coal Company for 'blue coal.'



"GOOD WILL HOUR," with **John J. Anthony** as conductor. Sponsored by the Ironized Yeast Company, coast to coast.



"AUNT JENNY". . . In the popular daytime dramatizations, "Real Life Stories," broadcast 5 times weekly. Sponsored by Spry Shortening.



"BIG SISTER," with **Alice Frost** and **Martin Gabel**. Dramatic daytime serial, broadcast five times a week, coast to coast, for Rinso.



"SMOKE DREAMS". . . In the popular musical-variety program sponsored by H. Fendrich, Inc., for La Fendrich Cigars.



"VOX POP," the original and best known of the audience participation type of program, conducted by **Parks Johnson** and **Wally Butterworth**. Sponsored by Kentucky Club Pipe Tobacco.



"GIRL ALONE," popular daytime serial broadcast 5 times a week, coast to coast. Sponsored by Quaker Oats Company.

★ WHAT ABOUT SALES?

Radio is a fascinating medium. As a result, very often the glitter and glamour of show business are likely to obscure the fact that the most important thing in radio is SALES!

Mindful of this, our radio departments in New York, Chicago and Hollywood maintain special staffs of commercial writers whose sole job is to put "SELL" into the radio programs of our clients. Masters of radio salesmanship, these writers weave into each program powerful, reason-why sales messages that create a desire and demand for the product advertised.

How productive this "sales-minded" view of radio has proved for many of our clients should be interesting to executives who are contemplating a radio promotion now or later. Why not have your secretary arrange an interview at your convenience? There is no obligation, of course.

Season's Greetings



Chick WEBB
featuring **Ella FITZGERALD**

AMERICA'S GREATEST SWING BAND

Season's Greetings N.B.C. AR

Miss ~~Betty~~ Rose Marie

Greetings from the

Four Ink Spots

Greetings from the 20th Century Gabriel

Erskine Hawkins
& HIS ORCHESTRA

MANAGEMENT *Gale* INC. 48 W 48 STREET N.Y. CITY



Season's Greetings



WARWICK & LEGLER, INC.
Advertising

230 PARK AVENUE • MURRAY HILL 6-8585

Greetings

BENNY GOODMAN

Just Completed a 10-Week Engagement at the	"CAMEL CARAVAN" Program
WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL NEW YORK	9:30-10:00 P. M. (Tues.) WABC

Commencing Jan. 4
**PARAMOUNT THEATRE
NEW YORK**

Direction
MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA



Home Town Stations Grow Up

Michigan Radio Network affiliates now broadcast Big Time shows (commercial and sustaining) with resulting distinction of doubled listening hours per family in the big Michigan market of over 4,000,000 people. . . . Entertainment from all over the world originating from the National Broadcasting Company (blue) and WXYZ, Detroit, keeps each local station tuned in consistently every day in the year. The far-reaching effect for national advertisers is now recorded on many a sales chart.

The Radio Buy of 1939

The only regional network in America operating in one state on a full time schedule that includes for advertisers 100% merchandising and sales service.

(1) Doubled market value per station through doubled listener volume—(2) Only one radio station in each market zone (except Detroit)—(3) More intensified retailer identity per market zone—(4) Home Station in each market is heard loudest and clearest insuring audience supremacy—(5) Audience supremacy makes for maximum opportunity for sales volume increase—(6) Combined markets present broad scope of buyers from farmers to city folks embracing industrial, commercial and professional classes—(7) Rejoining of WBCM, Bay City and Saginaw markets, completes the primary coverage of Michigan Radio Network in Michigan's eight major markets.



WXYZ (Key Station) DETROIT

Bay City Flint Lansing Jackson
Battle Creek Grand Rapids Kalamazoo

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM

HAL KEMP

AND THE GANG

JUDY STARR
MICKEY BLOOM
PORKY DANKERS
EKE KENYON
CLAYTON CASH

BOB ALLEN
EDDIE KUSBY
C. A. VAN NORDSTRAND
HARRY WILIFORD

SAXIE DOWELL
JACK Le MAIRE
JACK SHIRRA
LEO MORAN
BEN WILLAMS

A HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO YOU!

WTIC . . . speaking for
Southern New England

50,000 WATTS, HARTFORD, CONN.

The Travelers Broadcasting Service Corporation
Member NBC Red Network and Yankee Network

Paul W. Morency, General Manager • James F. Clancy, Business Manager
Representatives: Weed & Company
NEW YORK • DETROIT • CHICAGO • SAN FRANCISCO

How Wages-Hours Works in K. C.;
Tough for Writers to 'Create'
On Any Fixed Time Schedule

By JOHN QUINN

Kansas City, Jan. 1.

Survey of local broadcasters finds all stations complying with wage and hour law thoroughly. Stations in general were operating previously on a basis comparing favorably to the specifications of the new law. Regulations have caused revision of operating schedules at most stations and have brought out couple of other problem angles already.

Chief difficulties appear with continuity departments where scripters previously have been allowed to get it done when and how they please, or when and if the idea strikes. New time schedule is proving too confining for this department in particular.

At KCMO strict regulation of the continuity writers required Manager Larry Sherwood to add Charles Busch to the staff of scripters. While at KCKN, Kansas City, Kansas, 100-watter, Ellis Atterbury found it necessary to add Dave Hamlin to the writing department.

KMBC is following advice of NAB legal department and that of its own counsel, both of whom see eye to eye on the interpretation. NAB counsel thus far has been the needle point of the compass for all its member stations hereabouts. Changes at KMBC have required only the addition of a part time janitor to the staff.

WDAF, property of the Kansas City Star, which in turn is owned by the employees, has operated on a 40-hour week basis since NRA and

has continued without any appreciable changes.

Operating only on daylight time, WHB is experiencing no difficulties in keeping within requirements.

Time Clock

Ellis Atterbury, boss of KCKN, Capper outlet, has also found it necessary to add Don Macon and Wayne Stipp to the announcing staff and to employ two more feds on clerical work.

Moot point generally is creative departments where new law is claimed to be working hardships on initiative and originality, but benefits as a whole are figured to offset this.

One exec expressed opinion the new law would eventually find radio stations on a time-clock punching basis as in any factory, but had hope that future interpretations would give some latitude to the air industry.

At KMBC the subject was chief interest at the annual party attended by all 80 employees. Plans for employees group hospitalization and credit union were also brought up, but thus far await action.

Gordon Owen Back to KYA

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Gordon Owen is back on the staff of KYA, local Hearst station, as account executive.

He left the sales force some months ago to go on the payroll of KUTA, Salt Lake City.

Season's Greetings

'ROCHESTER'

JACK BENNY'S PROGRAM

GREETINGS BILLY HOUSE

JUST COMPLETED 26 WEEKS AS

SKIPPER OF WRIGLEY'S 'LAUGHLINER'

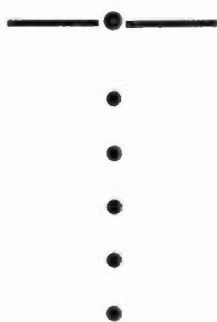
CBS (112 STATIONS) COAST-TO-COAST

Produced by ROBERT HAFTER

Written by HUGH WEDLOCK, JR., and HOWARD SNYDER

OPENING TOUR
PALACE, CHICAGO
WEEK JANUARY 13

CINCINNATI, DAYTON
CLEVELAND, PITTSBURGH
TO FOLLOW



DIRECTION
—•—
Personal Appearances
INGALLS & DAVIES
RKO BUILDING, NEW YORK

Radio
HERB ROSENTHAL
COLUMBIA ARTISTS

"WE KNOW—DON'T WE?"

HUGH WEDLOCK JR. AND HOWARD SNYDER

Now on Our Tenth Typewriter

JACK BENNY
BEN BERNIE
EDDIE CANTOR
STEWART ERWIN
JACK HALEY

MARK HELLINGER
JACK OAKIE
PARKYARKARKAS
GEORGIE PRICE
CHARLIE WINNINGER

Also 20TH CENTURY-FOX

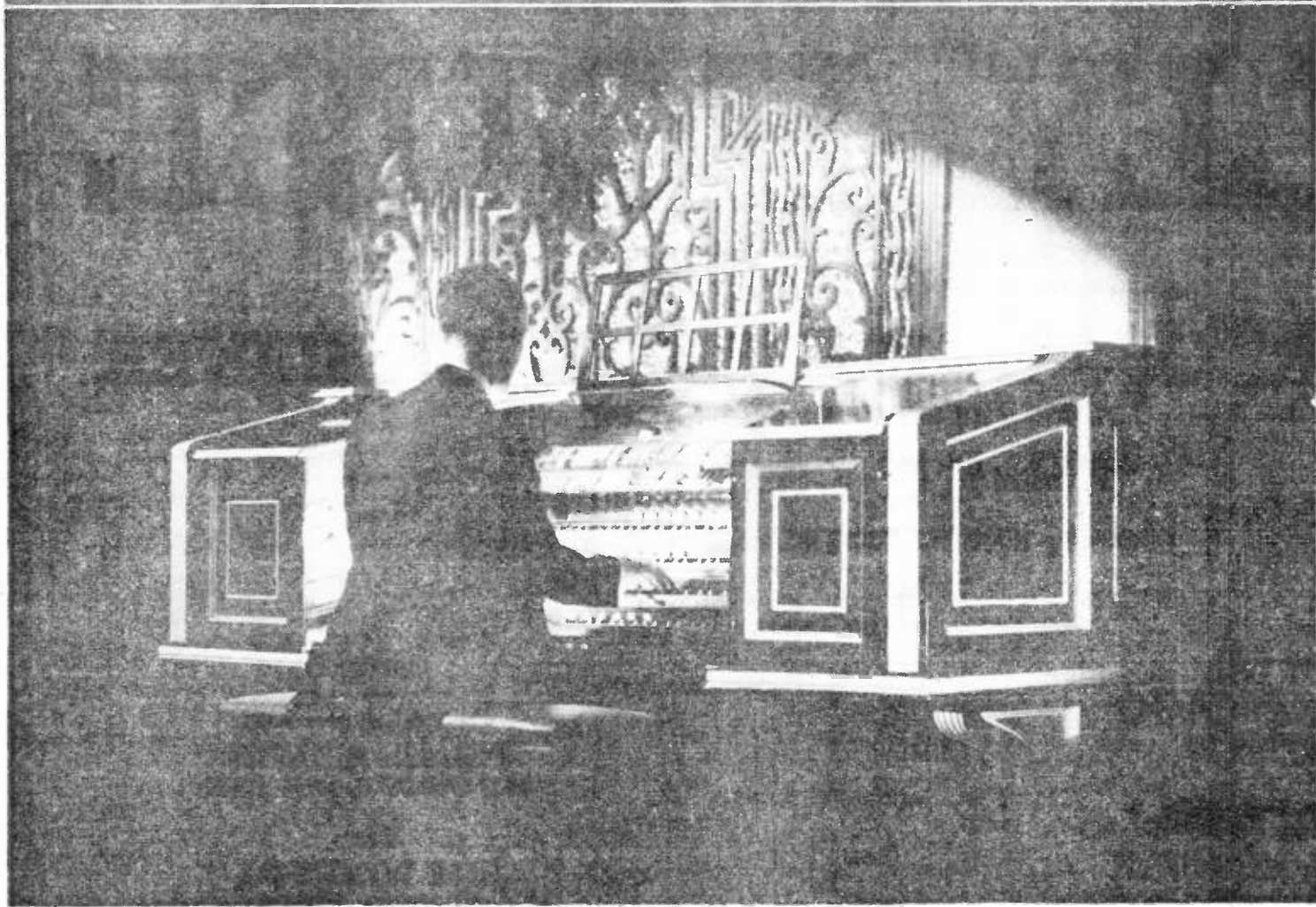
JUST COMPLETED 26 WEEKS FOR BILLY HOUSE

JOHN BARRYMORE
ANDY DEVINE
JIMMY DURANTE
ALICE FAYE
SAM HEARN
ADOLPH MENJOU

UNA MERKEL
MARTHA RAYE
ERIC RHODES
LIONEL STANDER
SOPHIE TUCKER
LUPE VELEZ

Personal Rep. DAVID WARNER

The Finest Organ in the Land



... SO WHAT?

So This: WKY ranks high among the finest radio showplaces of the nation. In beauty, design, completeness and technical excellence WKY's new studio facilities far outclass those of any other Southwestern station.

WKY's physical perfection has been directed toward a consistent goal of service. Staffed with experts, WKY's policies and programs have built the largest, the most loyal and the most responsive day in and day out listening family in the entire state of Oklahoma.

only measure of the value of the methods and machinery at its disposal is the ability they possess to increase the quality of service they can render in this important marketing area.

WKY is a station built of the best... given always to the same pioneering spirit that prompted the famous "Run" into Oklahoma just fifty years ago... guided by a management whose

WKY Oklahoma City

NBC AFFILIATE • 900 KILOCYCLES

THE OKLAHOMA PUBLISHING CO. • THE OKLAHOMAN AND TIMES • THE FARMER STOCKMAN • MISTLETOE EXPRESS
KVOR, COLORADO SPRINGS • KIZ, DENVER (Affiliated Management) • REPRESENTED BY THE KATZ AGENCY, INC.

A NETWORK FEATURE FOR LOCAL SPONSORSHIP

Fulton Lewis Jr. NOW AVAILABLE!



70 MUTUAL Stations Coast to Coast. People everywhere are interested in news from Washington. Fulton Lewis, Jr., is the only daily commentator from the Nation's Capital offered on any network! This network feature is now available for local sponsorship. Monday through Friday 7 P.M.

National Representatives:
WM. G. RAMBEAU CO.

★ WOL ★

WASHINGTON D. C. — 1000 WATTS — 1230 KC

Affiliated With Mutual Broadcasting System

FOURTEEN ACCOUNTS HAVE USED

WOWO

For a Total of 103 Years

Conclusive Proof That the WOWO Family of Listeners Supports the Station's Advertisers

Write for your copy of "Half a Million Good Mornings" telling the story of the Morning Roundup—one of the fine audience-building programs which keep WOWO advertisers and listeners constant through the years.

WOWO FORT WAYNE

Westinghouse Radio Stations, Inc.

10,000 Watts
NBC Basic Blue

1160 KC.
Clear Channel

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

FREE & PETERS, Inc.

INDIANA'S MOST POWERFUL RADIO STATION

PAULINE ALPERT

WHIRLWIND ARTIST

WOR

• GREETINGS • DAVE BACAL ORGANIST

WBBM- COLUMBIA, CHICAGO

BYOIR WANTS FREE TIME FOR A. & P.

Washington, Jan. 1.

Pointed reminder to broadcasters that radio is entitled to an even break with newspapers contained last week in notice from the National Association of Broadcasters that the Carl Byoir agency is trying to chisel free time. Stations were encouraged to turn down offer to supply free disc tagged 'Parade of Business.'

Rebuff was provoked by inclusion in the waxed program of remarks by John Hartford, head of the Atlantic & Pacific grocery chain, on the subject of anti-chain store propaganda. Radio trade group observed the A&P—reported to have given Byoir carte blanche in building up good will to ward off Congressional enemies—saw fit not long ago to splurge to paid newspaper campaign.

Washington Lobby

Washington, Jan. 1.

Chance to make more money on the outside has lured a second FCC attorney into private practice now that the old two-year rule has been modified. Latest government barrister serving notice is Theodore Pearson, who has been aiding the chain-monopoly investigation. He will leave within a few weeks to hang out his own shingle.

Round-up of good recorded educational programs is being attempted by National Association of Broadcasters and the American Council on Education. Stations are being asked if they will allow suitable programs to be waxed and would provide copies of script for school-room use. Movement has the backing of American Federation of Musicians, which has been fighting for years against any step which might discourage employment of union members.

Tiff between the radio lawyers and the FCC about practice and procedure did not end with promulgation of new rules several weeks back. After thorough analysis, many barristers have found conflicts and jokers in the regulations which Chairman Frank R. McNinch hailed as constructive attempt to simplify procedure. Principal grievance is the Commish failed to accept many of the customs in the Federal courts which simplify filing of papers. Another complaint is the new FCC code does not prevent harassment of applicants by last-minute interventions.

Trouble is feared from the recent N.L.R.B. decision establishing American Federation of Radio Artists as the spokesman for all talent at KMOX, St. Louis. Ruling opens the door for AFRA organizers trying to enlist announcers, who belong to various unions, and raises prospect of jurisdictional squabbles. Board snooted the argument that announcers are in different category from singers and actors because their duties are routine, pointing out that often these three groups perform the same work.

Another get-acquainted move is being made by NAB to help the industry counteract threats of undesirable legislation. Every station belonging to the trade fraternity has been asked to present personally to members of Congress a copy of the new 'primer' about the American system of broadcasting. That personal touch is deemed highly important in building up political fences.

Moral victory over FCC Chairman McNinch was scored last week by Hampson Gary, ousted general counsel, whose execution marked the start of the recent Commish personnel purge. Despite McNinch's assertions that he was unqualified to steer the FCC legal department, the former Texan connected as solicitor for the government-owned Export-Import bank. Appointment effective Dec. 16, day after his accumulated annual leave from the FCC runs out.

Radio Rogues, currently in 'Hellzapoppin' at the Winter Garden, N. Y., will do a repeat guest Jan. 28 on the Tommy Riggs program.



A Curtain Call

FOR BRILLIANT ARTISTS!

The Radio Corporation of America applauds those who made the Magic Key of RCA even greater in 1938!

EVERY Sunday from coast to coast, listeners tune to NBC Blue Network stations to hear the parade of great artists who lend distinction to RCA's "Magic Key" program.

Because the nation has shown its appreciation of this kind of radio entertainment, the Magic Key of RCA now begins its fourth year on the air. The Radio Corporation of America takes this opportunity to thank

the many stars who enhanced the reputation of the "Magic Key" in 1938.

NBC Programs are known by the vast audiences they keep!

All America is covered by the Red and Blue Networks of the National Broadcasting Company. 35 hours a day, NBC programs hold vast audiences... giving artists on NBC nation-wide network shows an opportunity for fame.

How new stars are made

NBC Artists' Service, as many of today's major artists will tell you, is one of America's greatest star-builders. This division of the National Broadcasting Company helps launch and guide careers of scores of new stars each year.

PERSONALITIES APPEARING ON THE RCA MAGIC KEY PROGRAM SERIES—1938

Magic Key Orchestra
Frank Black, Director
Joan Edwards, vocalist
Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt
Carl Hartmann, tenor
Kirsten Flagstad
Karen Flagstad
Victor Glee Club
Emma Boynet, pianist
Dusolina Giannini, soprano
Vincente Gomez, guitarist
Nola Day, singer
Ezio Pinza, basso
José Iturbi, pianist
Philadelphia Orchestra
Eugene Ormandy, Director
Ria Ginster, soprano
Jean Ellington, singer
Walter Damrosch
Glenn Darwin, baritone
Tunetwisters, vocal trio
Helen Jepson, soprano
Charles Kullman, tenor
Felix Knight, tenor
The Revelers, quartet
Bruna Castagna, contralto
Ania Dorfmann, pianist
George O'Connor, singer
Carlos Salzedo, harpist
Jan Kiepura, tenor
Norman Corwin, comedian
Hortense Monath, pianist
Pasquier Trio (chamber music)
Gladys Swarthout
Yale Glee Club
Zinka Milanov, soprano
Ferde Grofé, guest conductor
Helen Traubel, soprano
St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
Valdimir Golschmann, Director
Lotte Lehmann, soprano
Golden Gate Quartet
Mme. Marie Flagstad, pianist
Lauritz Melchior
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Eugene Goossens, Director

(To and including December 18th)

Marjorie Lawrence, soprano
John Charles Thomas, baritone
C. M. Tremaine, speaking for the
National Music Week Committee
Lew White, organist
Cecilia Loftus, impersonations
Leonard Warren, baritone
Marian Anderson, contralto
George Gaul, reading Arthur Guiterman's
"Ode for Memorial Day"
Morton Downey, tenor
Larry Clinton Orchestra
Art of Musical Russia Chorus
Ann de Ohla, singer
Georges Barrere, flautist
Yella Pessl, harpsichordist
Bob Hope, comedian
Benny Goodman Swing Quartet
Bunny Berigan Orchestra
Rose Marie, singer
Irving Caesar, songwriter
Igor Gorin, baritone
Nathaniel Shilkret Orchestra
Jane Froman, singer
Sonny Schuyler, baritone
Anne Jamison, soprano
Hal Kemp Orchestra
Cornelia Otis Skinner
Edward Becker, baritone
Roy Shields Orchestra
Edward Davies, baritone
Vic and Sade, sketch
The Vass Family, vocalists
Colonel Stoopnagle
Richard Himber Orchestra
The Songsmiths, quartet
Suzanne Fisher, soprano
Clifford Menz, tenor
Sammy Kaye Orchestra
Clifton Fadiman, M. C.
Franklin P. Adams
Todor Mazaroff, tenor
Cesare Sodero Orchestra
Cesare Sodero Jr., violinist

Doris Doe, contralto
Conrad Thibault, baritone
Ozzie Nelson Orchestra
Harriet Hilliard, singer
Beveridge Webster, pianist
Irene Wicker, "The Singing Lady"
Tommy Dorsey
Marion Telva, contralto
Greta Stueckgold, soprano
Lubeshutz and Nemenoff, piano duo
Gray Gordon Orchestra
Joan Britton, singer
Arty Shaw Orchestra
Efrem Zimbalist, violinist
Ignace Jan Paderewski (from Switzerland)
Oscar Levant, pianist
Fred Stone, sketch
Sabu, Hollywood "Elephant Boy"
Alec Templeton, pianist
Virginia Rea, soprano
Elizabeth Lennox, contralto
Rose Bampton, soprano
San Francisco Opera Company
Gaetano Merola, Director
Richard Bonelli, baritone
Dino Borgioli, tenor
Ebe Stignani, mezzo-soprano
Yoichi Hiroaka, xylophonist
Benny Goodman and Budapest String Quartet
Emanuel Feuermann, cellist
Minnie Dupres, sketch
Margaret Speaks, soprano
Gertrude Lawrence
Ransome Sherman, M. C.
Swor and Lubin, comedy team
Vivian Della Chiesa, soprano
Fairchild and Carroll, piano duo
Marie Caniglia, soprano
Sheila Barrett, monologist
Leonard Joy Orchestra
Marie Louise Quevli, contralto
Dorothy Chapman, soprano
Alan Holt, baritone
Eric Blore, comedian
Schola Cantorum
Hugh Ross, Director

Listen to the "Magic Key" every Sunday, 2 to 3 P. M., E. S. T., on the NBC Blue Network



RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA

RADIO CITY, NEW YORK, U. S. A.

National Broadcasting Company
R.C.A. Communications, Inc.

RCA Manufacturing Company, Inc.

RCA Institutes, Inc.
Radiomarine Corporation of America

JAMES M. CECIL, JOHN H. CECIL and **CHARLES PRESBREY** are happy to announce, that effective as of January 1, 1939, the firms of Cecil, Warwick & Legler, Inc., and the Frank Presbrey Company have united under the name of Cecil & Presbrey, Inc., with head offices at 247 Park Avenue, New York.

Cecil & Presbrey, Inc., is fortunate in being able to present to its clients as special associates

PAUL CORNELL

NORMAN BEASLEY

ALEXEY BRODOVITCH

All Cecil & Presbrey, Inc., radio, television and motion picture programs will be produced under the personal direction of **HENRY SOUVAIN**

We wish the entire professional trade a most Happy and Prosperous New Year.

CECIL & PRESBREY INC.

247 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK

MIAMI

RICHMOND

CHICAGO

NEW YORK

Season's Greetings

HARRY SALTER

AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Now playing on Dave Ellman's

"HOBBY LOBBY"

Express their appreciation to Young and Rubicam and Fels Naptha

Season's Greetings

ED. STRONG

Visit Our New Studios

At 71 West 45th Street
NEW YORK

BRyant 9-5758



HAUNTED
by the thought of
TURNING HANDS

You can power a station with a billion watts and send a signal roaring around the universe. But all in vain—unless the hands that turn the radio dials want to stop at the proper place to hear that station. Here at WSM we think in terms of entertainment designed to stop those turning hands. That is why we maintain a huge and varied talent staff of our own. Why we comb each commercial, study each script, to eliminate any hint of offensiveness, the faintest evidence of poor taste. Having taught a goodly portion of American hands to turn to the WSM wave length and to enjoy and trust what they hear from WSM, we consider it good business, for us as a station and you as an advertiser, never to relax our vigilance. The hands that stop belong to people who buy your goods. May we show you how our concern for stopping hands can start a flood of buying for your products?



The Faith of Our Audience Comes First



'THE O'NEILLS'
By JANE WEST
NOW RADIO'S MOST POPULAR
FAMILY BRINGS YOU MORE
LAUGHTER TEARS AND HEART-THROBS
Presented by Ivory Soap 99 1/2% pure

LISTEN TWICE DAILY
NBC Red Network, 12:15 to 12:30 P.M. EST
CBS - WABC— 2:15 to 2:30 P.M. EST
IN . . . COAST TO COAST
Dir. COMPTON ADVERTISING AGENCY
MGT., ED WOLF—RKO BLDG., NEW YORK CITY

SEASON'S GREETINGS

LOUIS KATZMAN

Musical Director

HEARST RADIO

A MEETING OF MINDS

It takes many minds and diverse talents to create, produce and present a radio program. This is the season of appreciation. Let me, therefore, step out of a solo role to acknowledge the individual contributors to the "HUSKIES" show. Here they are:—

SPONSOR: GENERAL FOODS CORPORATION

AGENCY: BENTON & BOWLES, INC.

WRITERS:

DON PRINDLE - SID CORNELL - WENDELL NILES

PRODUCERS:

KENNETH MACGREGOR . . . MAX E. HAYES

ARTISTS:

ROY ATWELL . . . GAY SEABROOK
CLIFF HALL . . . DICK RYAN
MARGARET BRAYTON . . . JOE FORTE
MEL BLANC

LYRICIST-COMPOSER:

HAL RAYNOR

ANNOUNCER:

LEW CROSBY

MUSIC:

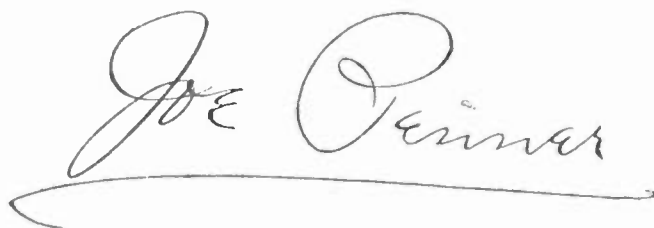
BEN POLLACK AND HIS ORCHESTRA

VOCALISTS:

TOMMY LANE . . . THE "HUSKIES" OCTETTE
AND THE STAFF OF CBS

To each and all, my sincere recognition of their generous cooperation, my thanks and best wishes.

Cordially.



Rockwell-O'Keefe, Inc.
Radio Representative

Monroe M. Goldstein
Personal Representative

The "HUSKIES" program is presented every Thursday evening. over the Columbia Broadcasting System, at 7:30 EST, 6:30 CST, 6:30 MST, and 5:30 PST.

WLW

Plays Santa Claus to the Food Industry!

Thousands of Retail Grocers (in WLW Territory) Identify
Their Stores with "Give Foods for Christmas" Drive

FOOD can be an everyday, somewhat prosaic necessity, or one of the most glamorous compliments to a connoisseur's taste. As such it deserves extremely honorable mention on ANYbody's gift list, and we deemed it an especial privilege to turn the spotlight on the hundreds of grocers who were ready and waiting to help their customers play Santa Claus with "GIFTS FOR APPETITES."

Glancing along the well-stocked shelves of the average or finest grocery store is like taking stock of WLW's food advertisers, and we deemed it our especial privilege to give those fine products an added boost for 4 weeks previous to Christmas.

TIME and TALENT!

A fifteen-minute program, broadcast three times a week, was dedicated to all retail grocers in WLW territory, stressing the idea of giving FOOD and other grocery-stocked products for Christmas. The lovely Janette, and Steve Merrill—both prime favorites with Nation's Station listeners—were featured, with an all-string orchestra under the direction of Josef Cherniavsky.

POINT-OF-PURCHASE Display Materials!

Display sets, consisting of window streamers and star, broadside for ways to use materials in various size stores, reprints of article telling how to make up Christmas baskets from the December issue of Grocers' Bulletin, were supplied to all grocers upon request.

MERCHANDISING LISTS were also supplied, featuring WLW-advertised products, with the suggestion that these products be allowed to add their tremendous impetus of their sales acceptance to the sale of Christmas baskets.

IT WAS A GIFT . . .

Grocers wishing to participate were under no obligation, charged nothing. If we succeeded in turning a few customers' heads toward "Gifts for Appetites"—if the beam of our spotlight served as pathfinder to the doors of more grocers who, in turn, used the power of the persuasive selling appeals behind all WLW-advertised products—then we feel more than amply repaid; grateful recipients of a little of that warm, benign glow that every Santa Claus must feel when he looks back—after it's all over—and determines, fervently, to do a BETTER job NEXT year.

These things, too, we think are part of the story of

WLW

N. Y. BASEBALL MAY NOT AIR WEEKENDS

Disposal of the broadcast rights to the home games of the N. Y. Giants and the N. Y. Yankees has developed a new complication. The Giants' owners don't want any broadcasting on Saturday and the Yanks' management no like the idea of airing the team's Sunday games. Both fear that the loudspeaker reports might interfere with field attendance on these peak business days.

All concerned in the Giants and Yankee deals aren't doing much but marking time. While General Mills has obtained estimates for time from WABC, CBS key, and WJZ, New York release for the NBC-blue link, the Lorillard Co. (Old Gold) has evinced an interest in getting the rights to the Yankee games. Indications are that the two teams will sell to the same underwriter.

Elimination of Saturday would prove agreeable to Columbia since it holds the rights to champion tennis and golf matches and major horse races which usually break on that day.

5,000

Watts
Day
1,000
Night.

ALL YOU
NEED IN
CENTRAL
OHIO

CBS
wbns

Columbus, Ohio
John Blair, Rep.

DON
REDMAN

and His
ORCHESTRA
Concluding 14
Weeks Run
SAVOY BALLROOM
NEW YORK

•
AVAILABLE
AFTER JAN. 8
•

Management
JOE GLASER, Inc.
RKO Bldg., Radio City, New York

The Very Thought of You

RAY NOBLE

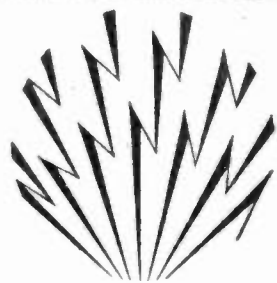
WITH BURNS and ALLEN

ON

CHESTERFIELD PROGRAM

COLUMBIA NETWORK, FRIDAY EVENINGS, 8:30-9:00 P.M., E.S.T. — 8:30-9:00 P.M., P.S.T.

Management: WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY, INC.



WINS *New York*

WBAL *Baltimore*

WCHE *Pittsburgh*

WLS *Chicago*

WSAI *Cincinnati*

WISN *Milwaukee*

WACO *Waco*

KNOW *Austin*

KTSA *San Antonio*

KOY *Phoenix*

KEHE *Los Angeles*

KYA *San Francisco*

KOMA *Oklahoma City*

TEXAS *State Network*

Exclusive Representatives

INTERNATIONAL RADIO SALES

20 East 57th STREET

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

LOS ANGELES

SAN FRANCISCO

SEASON'S GREETINGS

•

GEORGE BURNS

AND

GRACIE ALLEN

•

Exclusive Management Lester Hammel
WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY, INC.

Again

KSL

Thanks You

For a greater program schedule than ever before in its 18 years of brilliant radio history!

1939 promises even more noteworthy advancement for "The Voice of the West" in business, in showmanship, in service to its loyal listening audience.

KSL

Columbia's 50,000 Watt
Affiliate in Salt Lake City

TUNING IN THE WORLD

By Eric Gorrick

Sydney, Dec. 15.

It's summer in Australia at present and the best listening time to overseas' air material ranges from 9 p.m. until 6:30 a.m. the following day. Any fan with the courage to stick by his set over this entire period, as this *VARIETY* mugg did recently, will find the doorway to the world open.

Most powerful station heard here is the Berlin DXer, with 'Uncle Billy' listed as the chief announcer of the English shows (10 p.m. Sydney

time is 1 p.m. Berlin time). Quarter hour is devoted to 'news' which is propaganda from start to stop. It is also possible to tune-in a Japanese station and get an earful of a German announcer insulting the other Powers.

With Germany on the urge for a return of colonies, and with the Australian government controlling New Guinea, which was formerly a German possession, it is understood that politicians are paying particular attention to all matter being aired here by Berlin. Apart from the propaganda stuff, however, the musical

programs presented via Berlin are unequalled elsewhere. Highlights are the band recitals from Kiel and the symphony concerts from Vienna. In every instance reception is perfect.

British

British Broadcasting's DXer at Daventry is now shooting out some fine programs. Best coverage from entertainment viewpoint is in the small hours of Sunday morning—Saturday night in London. Recently, Gary Cooper was heard giving a short interview prior to proceeding to Paris with his wife. Cooper talked a little about pic-making, and also of his early life in Montana. This was followed by a wandering mike session in which chatter was given by people waiting in a line to

see the show at the Ambassadors. After this came community singing with Elsie Day, to be followed by a session of corking dance music.

After listening to the BBC it's clear just how slavishly programs presented in Australia's radio imitate London. 'In Town Tonight,' is heard here weekly from a local commercial with exactly the same routine including music and effects as in England. Another, 'The Man in the Street,' is aired daily here by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Biggest thrill, however, to any Aussie with a DX set is to hear the chimes of London's Big Ben direct.

American

U. S. units, excepting the amateurs, do not strike Australia with the same power as either German or British air units. With the U. S. football season in full swing, Station W1XAL came through with great clarity with descriptions of the various games played Saturdays—early Sunday over here. Cornell-Dartmouth tussle was a highlight, and on the following Saturday there was exciting coverage of the Yale-Harvard match. During the intermission, a guy named George Perkins thanked U.S. listeners for sending telegrams concerning the broadcast.

With U.S. operation of a high-powered DX station beamed this way Pacific dwellers would have a better understanding of U.S. radio fare. American amateurs find the Antips a happy hunting ground, and they are doing grand work in cementing a friendship between the two nations.

Sensation Cigaretts through Lennen & Mitchell agency, add stations KSO, WHK, WKBW, WSAY, WSYR, WMT and WNBK to Mutual net coverage on Jan. 24.

Season's
Greetings

... and thanks a
million for your
help in making
1938 a banner year

The
POPULAR
STATION

KDYL

SALT LAKE CITY
Representative:
John Blair & Co.

NBC
RED
NETWORK

WBAL

means business
in Baltimore

Our Congratulations to

VARIETY

WADE

Advertising Agency
and Complete Radio Staff

W. A. WADE, Director

P. C. LUND, Asst. Director

RADIO PRODUCTION

W. E. JONES
E. E. SIMMONS
R. E. DWYER

RADIO CONTINUITY

G. A. WARNE
L. W. DAVIDSON
JEFF WADE

RADIO TIME

E. N. NELSON
L. J. NELSON

The National Barn Dance — Uncle Ezra Programs
Murphy Jamboree — Sachs Amateur Hour

208 W. WASHINGTON ST., CHICAGO

For a Prosperous 1938

THANKS

*To The Finest Clients Any Agency
Could Ask For*

Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co.
West Allis, Wis.

Keystone Steel & Wire Co.
Peoria, Ill.

Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp.
Louisville, Ky.

The Pinex Company
Fort Wayne, Ind.

General Mills, Inc.
Minneapolis, Minn.

W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.
Fort Madison, Iowa

RUSSEL M. SEEDS
COMPANY

CHICAGO

Indianapolis

Cincinnati

From FIVE-A-DAY to FIFTY

VARIETY'S third-of-a-century has seen both vaudeville's five-a-day and radio's fifty.

Fifty shows a day?

More than that. At least at WBBM, middle-west key station of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

From early morning until late at night, every day, WBBM broadcasts the best in music, drama, news, comedy, education — CBS programs and local programs — broadcast with 50,000 watts and *invited into the homes* of the second largest market in the nation. A market that likes it.

What does market have to do with it?

Plenty! The size of the market and WBBM's leadership in popularity have made programs over

WBBM highly profitable to some of the country's shrewdest advertisers.

More listeners tune to WBBM more regularly than to any other Chicago station; and they buy WBBM-advertised products . . . so well that for more than five years WBBM has led all other Chicago stations in advertising. And WBBM's renewal ratio is consistently more than 80%!

Because of the excellence of its more than fifty shows a day, every day, WBBM has built up a leadership with *audience*, with *dealers*, and with *advertisers* in this great market that cannot be denied; and it means one thing: if you have a product to sell, the one most effective way to sell it is . . . *use WBBM*.

WBBM

50,000 WATTS • CHICAGO'S CBS STATION

Owned and operated by the Columbia Broadcasting System. Represented nationally by RADIO SALES:

New York • Chicago • Detroit • Milwaukee • Charlotte, N. C. • Los Angeles • San Francisco

The Network Viewpoint

By Miles Trammell

(Executive Vice-President, National Broadcasting Co.)

I wonder whether the members of the advertising profession often pause to realize the vital part which advertising has played in the creation and development of radio broadcasting in the United States. For it is advertising which has made it possible for Americans to enjoy a radio which is free in every sense of the word. Americans not only enjoy the best programs in the world without cost, but, infinitely more important, we have the privilege of hearing both sides of every subject of public interest.

Like the press, radio in America can be free because it can pay its own way, and both press and radio can pay their own way because of the revenue they obtain from advertising.

To realize just what a free radio means, we have only to go back to recent European events. NBC, for example, has received many letters from European listeners who stated that our broadcasts brought them their real knowledge of what was happening in their own lands. When we realize that the people so close to the scene of action knew little or nothing of what was going on, we can appreciate what a free radio as in the United States means.

American business besides constantly striving to better its own sponsored programs also provides the revenue which enables the networks to present such outstanding non-commercial programs as the National Farm and Home Hour, the Toscanini concerts, the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, America's Town Meeting, the NBC Music Appreciation Hour and the University of Chicago Round Table. Of the 20,000 hours of programs which our company broadcast last year, 30% were commercially sponsored. The remaining 70% were sustaining programs, paid for out of the revenue obtained from commercial sponsors.

It is the money paid by our advertisers which enables us also to place our facilities at the disposal of eminent authorities for the discussion of important public issues of the day; to schedule regular periods for the religious programs of Protestants, Catholics and Jews, and to keep our listeners informed of the news of the world. Some 12 years have passed since the broadcasters adopted the present plan of free radio. What has been the result? Has the American system of broadcasting proved satisfactory to its audience?

The answer is to be found in the number of American homes which now are equipped with receiving sets. In 1926, the year our first national network was established, the number of radio homes in the United States was perhaps 6,000,000. Today the number of radio homes is estimated at 26,600,000.

The advertisers who foot the bill for the entertainment of these 26,600,000 American radio families are not, of course, trying solely to entertain. Like all good business men they must receive a fair return on the money they invest. Has radio proved as satisfactory to the advertiser as to the listener?

The answer to the question of radio's value to the advertiser is revealed most graphically, however, in the appropriations of sponsors for advertising during the past 11 years.

The Blur

Radio has, of course, been criticized for a number of things, one of them being the advertising message on its sponsored programs. There was a time when people said they would enjoy radio a great deal more if they did not have to listen to the advertising. I believe that people now are becoming more and more conscious of the fact that an advertiser, in seeking a few moments of their time in which to tell them of his product, asks little enough in return for finer entertainment than the wealthiest monarch of any other land could buy.

There never has been a medium which has given to the public so much and asked so little in return.

We welcome constructive criticism, but attacks on radio advertising in general are not only attacks upon the principle of advertising, and therefore upon our entire economic system, but they are attacks upon the very existence of a free and uncensored radio. I be-

lieve the overwhelming majority of our people now realize this, and see the dangers inherent in such attacks.

Dealers

The dealers, the last link in the chain that connects the manufacturer with the consumer, deserve special mention. It is impossible for the advertiser, no matter how effectively his campaign is planned to do the whole job of selling. By means of display material and personal salesmanship, the dealer must follow through. When the dealer uses the display material furnished by the advertiser, he places himself in position to capitalize to the fullest extent on the pulling power of a radio campaign. When I use the term 'pulling power,' I am reminded of what I once heard an advertising expert say. It was this: 'A sale is composed of two things—a pull and a push. Advertising furnishes the pull, and it is up to the dealer to furnish the push.'

Finally, what do the advertiser or the broadcaster owe to the public?

On the part of the advertiser, this obligation means the adherence to high standards of accuracy, common sense and decency in his advertising copy. Not only his obligation to the public, but his own interest compels him to adhere to these standards. In the long run, he will only be digging his own grave by doing otherwise. American advertising has long realized this, and has demonstrated its belief by a willingness to be governed by reasonable restraints.

Must Be Unbiased

On the part of the broadcaster, the obligation to serve the public means the presentation of the finest programs available; strict adherence to taste and decency, and, most important of all, the maintenance of an unbiased attitude on all controversial questions of public interest.

Our experience has proved the wisdom of several basic policies in this respect. We do not, for instance, sell time to any religious group or to any group wishing to present a controversial public issue. We refuse to sell time to such organizations because we realize that the group possessing the most money would obtain the advantage.

Instead we offer our facilities free to the leading religious groups of this country, and to eminent authorities on both sides of every question of national public interest.

For the same reasons, we exercise editorial supervision over what is broadcast through our facilities. Because of the peculiarly intimate nature of radio and because of its great appeal to the emotions of its listeners, we forbid, for instance, the overplay of insobriety in dramatic programs. We forbid the dramatization of suicide, the ridicule of physical infirmities, derogatory references to racial and religious groups, appeal to superstition and any misrepresentation of fact.

These, and many other standards we have established and followed in our effort to serve the public.

We believe that, with the indisputable support of advertising, the American system of radio does serve the public, and serves it well. We believe this because we know that our system of radio provides the best programs in the world; we believe it because ours is a free radio, dedicated to the unbiased presentation of every side of all questions of national public interest; and finally, we believe it because, by increasing the sale of American products and thus lowering prices to the consumer, the American system of broadcasting has raised the American standard of living.

WCAU's DX Linked With Shortwaver of CBS Net

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Sked for alternating service to Europe and South America has been worked out between W2XE, CBS shortwaver, and W3XAU, WCAU's high-frequency transmitter. As soon as local outlet's two directional antennae are completed, plan is for it to beam to Europe while the Columbia station aims south and vice versa.

When shows of particular importance to either continent are slated, both stations will beam in that direction, but on different frequencies. Its own program department was recently set up for W3XAU.

F. C. C.'s WASHINGTON DOCKET

Washington, Jan. 1.

(Week before Christmas was marked by sudden spurt of energy on the part of Commissioners anxious to clean up pending biz before enjoying themselves. Holiday scramble resulted in announcement of nine decisions in condensed form in addition to earlier actions which appeared in regular form. New policy is in effect whereby decisions are announced immediately—followed in a day or two by detailed info.)

PRELIMINARY REPORTS

District of Columbia: WJSV (CBS), Washington, granted license to move transmitter to new location. Principal reasons for decision: Elimination of difficulties resulting from harmonics to the services of Army and Navy receiving stations and to an aircraft station; reduction in existing interference to KSTP, St. Paul, Minnesota; need for extension and improvement of service.

Florida: Martin Anderson, Orlando, denied new station to be operated on 1500 kc with 100 watts nights, 250 watts days. Reason: No showing of public need; adequate service from existing station WDBO.

Kentucky: WLAP, Lexington, denied frequency change from 1420 to 1270 kc and power jump from 100 watts nights, 250 watts days, to 1 kw all times. Reason: No sufficient need for proposed service, in view of severe limitation which would occur to transmitter's nighttime service.

Massachusetts: Hampden-Hampshire Corp., Holyoke, denied new station to be operated on 1240 kc with 500 watts nights and 1 kw days. Reason: No justification for allotting a regional frequency in the locality.

Minnesota: KSTP, St. Paul, granted power jump from 10 to 50 kw and installation of a directional antenna for day and night use. Reason: Existing night interference with WJSV, Washington, would be reduced by the grant and public need served.

New York: (1) Citizens Broadcasting Corp., Schenectady, denied application for use of frequency 1240, with 1 kw nights, 5 kw days. Reason: No need to grant regional frequency to a city which requires only a local service; serious limitation would result to the proposed transmitter from WXYZ, Detroit, and CJBH, Sydney, N. S.

(2) Thomas J. Watson, Endicott, denied new station to be operated on 1240 kc with 1 kw, using direct aerial antenna nights. Reason: Same old story of requesting a regional frequency where sufficient need cannot be shown.

Washington: KUT, Walla Walla, denied frequency change from 1370 to 560 kc, power increase from 100 to 250 watts. Reason: No need shown for additional facilities; limitation by existing radio service to KUT's 3.35 millivolt per meter contour at night, if the change were made.

West Virginia: Williamson Broadcasting Corp., Williamson, granted new station to be operated on 1370 kc with 100 watts, days only. Reason: Public need exists for proposed service; no interference problems concerned in the application.

MAJOR DECISIONS

New York: Doghouse occupied by WMBO, Auburn, over possibility that it had violated the Communications Act, vacated last week when the Commission decided to okay transfer of control of the corporation from Roy L. Albertson to Auburn Publishing Co. No violation of the act was involved in a contract agreed to by the interested parties in July, 1936. Commission ruled, since the publishing company at no time exercised control over the management of WMBO, although \$15,000 was paid to Albertson for all of the stock in WMBO, Inc. Station has been on the anxious seat since Oct. 13, 1937, when its application for regular license renewal was set aside while the F.C.C. investigated charges of control of the license had been transferred without its consent. In granting the application, Commission also returned the regular six months license privilege to the transmitter.

Albertson's acceptance of the \$15,000 purchase price, in advance of Commission permission, was due to the hot water in which he found himself soon after acquiring a controlling interest in the station in 1936. It was shown, when he found the corporation in urgent need of capital for purchase of equipment, in need of operating funds, and harassed with claims and law suits not disclosed until after his purchase of its stock. Money advanced by the Auburn Publishing Co. was used to pay claims against the station and purchase necessary equipment, and loans approximating \$20,000—additional to the \$15,000 purchase price—were used for the same purpose.

Applicants were represented by H. H. Shinnick. **Texas:** Tangled affairs of KPDM, Beaumont, finally straightened out by Commission permission for voluntary assignment of license from Magnolia Petroleum Co., owner of the transmitter and Sabine Broadcasting Co., licensee, and Beaumont Broadcasting Corp.

Station, which was started in 1924 as a non-profit venture, was rented in 1932 to the Sabine group at a monthly rental of \$300—plus an option in favor of the lessee to buy the plant for not more than \$100,000. License was assigned, with the okay of the old Federal Radio Commission, to the Sabine Co., but the options to buy was never exercised. The monthly lease expired in the summer of 1937 and was never renewed, but KPDM continued operation under the control of Sabine Broadcasting.

Second move was an option agreement—entered into by both lessee and licensee—to sell the station to C. W. Snider, for a total consideration of \$115,000. Under this scheme \$90,000 was to go to Magnolia, with the remaining \$25,000 earmarked to Sabine as a special fund to be disbursed in payment of Sabine's debts. A supplemental agreement substituted the Beaumont Broadcasting Co. for Snider, but a provision in the agreement was interpreted by the Commission as creating a mortgage upon the right to operate the station as security for payment of purchase money obligations. Agreement between the three participants must be modified to exclude the objectionable statement which secures the notes of the purchaser by a chattel mortgage lien on all assets purchased as well as the right to operate said station and all other rights pertaining thereto or connected therewith. Commission decreed.

Beaumont Broadcasting Co. is capitalized at \$125,000 and is authorized to issue 1,250 shares of stock at a par value of \$100 each. All of the stock has been subscribed and \$75,000 has been paid in cash for part of it.

While the licensee corporation has been heavily involved financially, and at one time permitted an outsider to take over management of the station for "several weeks," without Commission authority, it was found that the proposed assignee was well fixed to own and operate the transmitter and that the service of KPDM would be materially improved by the change. Subject to deletion of the offending paragraph in the agreement, Commission ordered an okay for the deal.

George E. Elliot appeared for all three applicants.

MINOR DECISIONS

Alabama: B. H. Hopson, Birmingham, application for new station to be operated on 1310 kc with 100 watts nights, 250 watts days, dismissed without prejudice.

Alaska: KGBH, Ketchikan, present license further extended on a temporary basis only, pending action on renewal application, but in no event longer than Feb. 1.

California: KXAN, San Francisco, granted renewal of license on temporary basis, subject to condition that it shall not be construed as a finding upon the application for renewal of license now pending before the Commission.

Illinois: WCRV, Chicago, present license extended temporarily, pending Commission determination on renewal plea, but in no event later than Feb. 1.

Maine: WRDO, Augusta, granted temporary renewal, subject to Commission action on pending application for renewal.

Michigan: WMBC, Detroit, granted temporary renewal pending Commission action on regular license application.

Minnesota: WMXN, St. Paul, granted renewal of license temporarily only, subject to action by the Commission on the pending application for renewal of license.

Mississippi: WOBC, Vicksburg, present license extended temporarily, pending determination on application for renewal, but in no event longer than Feb. 1; Julius H. Dixon,

Tupelo, application for new station to be operated with 100 watts nights, 250 watts days denied as default for failure of applicants to file a written application at hearing.

New Mexico: KOB, Albuquerque, granted extensions of special temporary authority to operate unlimited time on 1180 kc with 10 kw, employing directional antenna system after sunset at Portland, Ore., until Jan. 22.

New York: WCNW, Arthur Fiske, Brooklyn, granted temporary renewal of license subject to action of the Commission on pending application for regular renewal.

Oregon: KEX, Portland, granted operation on 1180 kc with 5 kw until Jan. 22.

South Dakota: KOBH, Rapid City, granted renewal of license on a temporary basis only, subject to Commission action on pending applications for renewal and assignment of license.

SET FOR HEARING

Arkansas: KFPW, Southwestern Hotel Co., Fort Smith, boost day power from 100 to 250 watts, install vertical radiator and make changes in equipment designated for hearing because of involving interference to KHBG.

Michigan: WHDF, Calumet, renewal of license for regular period, set for hearing, and temporary license granted subject to Commission action on pending applications of the licensee corporation for renewal of license and consent to operate during unlimited hours, and the pending application of Lane J. Horrian, which requests part of the hours now licensed to WHDF.

New York: WCNW, Arthur Fiske, Brooklyn, install vertical radiator, move transmitter locally, make changes in transmitting equipment and install automatic frequency control (application designated for hearing because of violation of Rules 132, 143, 131, 121B and 142, and to be heard in connection with application for renewal and with application of WWRL for facilities of WCNW).

Oregon: Southern Oregon Broadcasting Co., Grants Pass, new station to be operated on 1310 kc with 100 watts (designated for hearing because it would involve interference with KRND and to determine economic conflict with a pending application for new facilities in Grants Pass by the Oregon Broadcasting System).

Virginia: WTAR, Norfolk, boost night power from 1 to 5 kw, using directional antenna for night operation, install new equipment, make changes in directional antenna system (to be heard by the Commission—designated for hearing because of violation of Rule 120 and in order to determine need for additional nighttime service in the area proposed to be served).

Washington: Lee D. Mudgett, Everett, application for renewal of license designated for hearing and temporary license granted pending outcome of hearing. (Application set for hearing to permit an inquiry into the manner and extent to which the licensee has control over the operation of the station, his financial ability to continue operation, whether or not control has been vested in others in violation of the Communications Act and into other matters normally considered upon any such proceeding.) Commission also designated for further hearing Mudgett's applications for construction permit and for voluntary assignment of KRKO's license to the Everett Broadcasting Co., Inc., and the application of Cascade Broadcasting Co., Inc., for a new station at Everett. All of the requests will be heard in a consolidated proceeding.)

EXAMINERS' REPORTS

Alaska: Shift in technical ownership of KFQD, Anchorage—result of falling out between partners—was recommended by Examiner Tyler Berry, despite failure to comply with FCC regulations. Report also urged denial of same group's request for permission to erect an experimental broadcast station using channels 342.5 to 642.5 kc with 175 watts. Effect of the transfer of control would be academic, since R. E. McDonald, President of Anchorage Radio Club, Inc., which owns the transmitter, has been in possession of the disputed stock for over two years. In agreeing the rules were disregarded, Berry remarked there apparently was no intention to flout the government and that denial of the belated application would gag an outlet in an area where radio service is badly needed.

Examiner rejected charges of J. P. Hannon, seller, that fraud and misrepresentation occurred in October, 1934, when he agreed to sell his 166 shares to McDonald for \$3,000. In cold-shouldering the proposal to erect an experimental plant, Berry said other agencies are better fitted to contribute to technical lore and the research program outlined in support of the request was not sufficiently definite or promising. James W. Gum was applicant's representative.

Kentucky: Lack of need for additional coverage caused Examiner Robert L. Irwin to enter adverse recommendation on the application of WQML, Owensboro, for frequency shift from 1500 to 1200 kc. Power, 100-250 watts, would not be changed. Management claimed the move would add 16 miles to the secondary area but while Irwin agreed the plant renders meritorious service and resulting objection would be slight he could not see any public benefit. Alan B. David did the legal work for the station.

Minnesota: Additional time for KWNO, a daytime 250 watt at Winona, was recommended by Examiner Irwin as means of providing after-dark coverage to the town area now lacking primary signals at night. Extra hours would permit the station to solicit more business and benefit listeners who cannot turn dials in the daytime. Plant would use 100 watts after sunset, remaining on its present 1200 kc ribbon. Clarence C. Dill and James W. Gum were attorneys.

Texas: (1) Granting of permit for new local transmitter at Victoria, heart of recently discovered oil field, was recommended by Examiner Irwin. Station would be owned by Radio Enterprises, Inc., using 100-250 watts on the 1310 kc channel unlimited time. Sponsor is Fred W. Bowen, oil operator, who will be vice-president and has put up the money to launch activities. Charles C. Shea, formerly connected with numerous stations in the Southwest, will become president and station manager. Advertising rates proposed are \$25 hourly during day and \$45 at night. No local service in this section, which is 92 miles from Corpus Christi, nearest large city. Legal chores by Melvin D. Hildreth.

(2) Frequency change for KFRO, Longview, which will permit higher power and unlimited operation, was cheered by Examiner Tyler Berry, who recommended adding another station to the 1340 kc ribbon. Plant, now running only daytime with 250 watts on 1370, coincidentally would become a 1 kw outlet. Additional network service—prospective Mutual and Texas State Network affiliations cited—and better signal over a wider area swayed Berry. Day audience would be virtually doubled, while night market of over 90,000 listeners would be opened up. Although some interference would result to stations on this tripe, all now suffer trouble from other transmitters and net result will not be objectionable. Only string tied to the report was recommendation the Commission insist the contemplated towers, shorter than standard, be checked to see that performance is satisfactory. Elmer W. Pratt and James R. Curtis were the mouthpieces.

Utah: Because of superior program plans, Examiner P. W. Seward picked Clifton A. Tolboe (operating as Citizens Voice and Air Show), a local contractor, over a coterie of businessmen led by Democratic political luminary (using label Provo Broadcasting Co.) as individual who should be given permit to build a local plant at Provo. Station would use 100-250 watts, functioning unlimited hours on 1210 kc. Evidence produced by Tolboe showed definite need and sufficient economic support—points on which the rival group fell down—and a better program structure. Since a choice must be made on account of inability of the town to support two transmitters and the conflicting requests for facilities, Seward favored Tolboe who promised to present 31.5% talent programs against 10.4% promised by the rival faction. Moving spirit behind the plans of the nixed applicant was Dan Shields, Federal prosecutor for the state. Rates of the favored applicant, who will not have a network link, would run from \$23.80 to \$25 hourly for national advertising. Counsel for Tolboe was Elmer W. Pratt, while Ben S. Fisher and John W. Kendall fronted for the loser.

Virginia: Insufficient showing of both need and economic support led to an unfavorable report by Examiner Robert L. Irwin on plea of Fredericksburg Broadcasting Corp. for a daytime outlet at Fredericksburg. Facilities sought were 250 watts on 1260 kc. Although the town, midway between Washington and Richmond, has little radio service, Irwin said the evidence did not demonstrate any strong reasons why a local outlet should be constructed and the tentative contracts for the time were only for limited period with no assurance of sustained revenues. Case handled by W. Marshall King.

THE YEAR IN MUSIC

By ABEL GREEN

By and large it was a good year in Tin Pan Alley. Pop songs sold more in the number of hits, and the average sales upped a bit.

Significant, of course, was the fact that quite a few of the year's song outsiders came from independent channels—'surprise' hits, either by unknowns or from abroad. Numbers like 'Ti-Pi-Tin,' 'Cigaret Was Burning,' 'Tisket-a-Tasket,' 'Mulberry Bush,' 'My Reverie,' 'Flat Foot Floogie,' 'Oh Mama (The Butcher Boy),' an Italian importation; 'Cathedral in the Pines,' 'Lambeth Walk' (which, incidentally, placed Jack Mills' song pluggers in the position of teaching prospective plugs how to do a snatch of the dance step); 'My Marguerita,' 'Beir Mir Bist du Schoen,' and others, seemed to lend credence to the plaint of certain music publishers, being heard of late. Latter have been squawking that the vet tunesmiths now seem content to hang around Lindy's and live off their ASCAP income, lacking any creative incentive. All of the above mentioned songs are by comparative songwriting newcomers or by bandman-composers who are maestros first and songwriters second (notably Larry Clinton, whose dansapation version of 'Reverie' is one of the year's outsiders. He was also responsible for 'Dipsy Doodle').

Filmusicals' downbeat scurried quite a few writers back to Broadway from Hollywood, which did have a favorable influence on Broadway musicals and likewise on the pop song output in recent months. Furthermore, the lack of Coast filmusical creativeness achieved an even more important favorable effect in that it eliminated glutting the market with a flock of mediocre picture songs which, otherwise, would have had to be fully exploited in order to get the film title into the public consciousness.

That's always been a major bone of contention between the picture bunch and Tin Pan Alley, where Hollywood subsidy obtained, but the studios seem adamant that the screen songs get as wide a radio plug, regardless of ultimate commercial achievement, so long as the films benefit from this form of exploitation. However, Hollywood did contribute the No. 1 composite sock of the year—the 'Snow White' songs. The disks sold over 1,500,000 and the sheet music of the entire score over 900,000 to date.

In the field of sweet vs. swing, a pop song crisis that's been going on for three years now, and looks to be with us equally as long, seemingly the swingo vogue is by no means on the downbeat. If anything, it's proved a vital influence on many an heretofore smooth combination.

Furthermore, swing has been gathering new dignity from a new crop of jive savants.

Swing's vogue sent Benny Goodman into Carnegie Hall for a recital where the longhair crix didn't savvy his jive, and he later this fall played Mozart with the Budapest String Quartet at Town Hall. Paul Whiteman also repeated a Carnegie Hall trick, being the pioneer of ultra-jazz recitation in classic environs.

Bix Biederbecke became the hero of 'The Boy with the Horn,' a new novel (Burgess Meredith may do it as a film). B. A. Rolfe, with Jimmy Gillespie's exploitation assistance, promoted a John Philip Sousa Memorial, and that, too, may lead to a film on Sousa. A George M. Cohan film has been mentioned, and Irving Berlin's 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' may also lead to sundry other filmusical cavalcades.

From swing, the jitterbugs became a national phenomenon, giving rise to jitter contests, merely a switch on old stuff. The relationship of 'muggles' and 'reefers'—marijuana cigarettes—with cats, alligators and ickeys became the subject of some discussion, since the adolescents were so closely thrown in with the 52d street killer-dillers.

In the field of song styles and evolutions, the cycle of swinging the Scotch classics has been followed by swingo nursery rhymes, perhaps the best known of which became 'Tisket-a-Tasket' and 'Mulberry Bush.'

Songwriters

In songwriting fields, the sole remaining established teams today are Gordon and Revel, Rodgers and Hart and Robin-Ranger. Al Dubin broke away from Harry Warren, a long-time Warner Bros. songsmith partner, because Dubin felt 'the grind was too tough' writing situation lyrics for musicals. Arthur Freed became a Metro film production executive and Nacio Herb Brown is freelancing. Johnny Mercer and Harry Warren have been on-and-off teams. Sam Coslow and Arthur Johnston have gone their separate ways.

Long with Jimmy McHugh, Dorothy Fields lyricized to Jerome Kern's melodies, but is also with divers other tunesmiths, latterly with Arthur Schwartz, who first came to the fore when writing with Howard Dietz. Burton Lane and Ralph Freed have parted. Frederick Hollander, Gus Kahn, Sigmund Romberg and Jerome Kern are also off 'n'-oners, as ditto Hoagy Carmichael and Frank Loesser, although the former's 'Small Fry' and their joint 'Two Sleepy People' stem from the same Paramount film sources. Arthur Johnston and Johnny Burke and, later, Burke with Jimmy Monaco, have been other haphazard tunesmith evolutions.

Publishing Changes

The publishing side saw many evolutions, too. Sam Fox sued Metro-Robbins-Loew and 20th-Fox for alleged conspiracy in taking away his former music affiliations with Fox Film. This was settled. The heretofore acquisitive Metro-Robbins firm concluded only one deal, with Villa Moret, on a sales agency basis. Metro-Robbins, which also has a tie with 20th-Fox, still points all its copyright pooling activities towards the future of television.

Donaldson, Douglas & Gumble became extinct when the new Bregman, Vocco & Conn firm bought it as a nucleus. Jack Bregman left Robbins after many years as general manager; and Rocco Vocco and Chester Conn (now Conn) are w.k. as topflight professional men. With DDG's bow-out, Walter Douglas became the first paid chairman of the Music Publishers Protective Ass'n; Harry Fox took over the licensing department and E. H. (Buddy) Morris, of the Warner Bros. music group, was elected president of the MPPA, an honorary post, to succeed John O'Connor. Mose Gumble joined WB and is now professional head for that film-music group on the Coast. Walter Donaldson, of the DDG firm, of course, has long been out of it, freelancing.

Irving Berlin, Inc., revived its ABC Music Corp. catalog into a vital sub-unit, throwing many valuable plugs to that firm, under Frank Henning, including some of the old Berlin tunes from the 20th-Fox filmusical, 'Alexander's Ragtime Band.' Harry Link, prof. head of Berlin, Inc., gave that firm

a top year with a flock of freak pop hits — wherein Nick Kenny, radio editor of the N. Y. Mirror, figured as co-author with his brother, Charles—with result that Link was wooed by Metro-Robbins to become g.m. of the Feist firm. He will move over there this month.

Though Abe Olman is g.m. of Robbins, the Olman Music Corp., which he started, has been acquired by the Lombardo freres who use that as a subsid venture. Lombardos, incidentally, switched from Victor to Decca recording this year, as did Paul Whiteman. More about the disks anon, and elsewhere in these columns.

Another major music publishing deal was Archie Fletcher's buy-up of Joe Morris Music Co., of which he had long been g.m. Morris retiring. Paramount's Famous Music almost had the Morris catalog until Fletcher decided to shell out some \$67,500.

Larry Spier rounded out the executive changes. After many years with the Dreyfus firms as professional manager he left Crawford Music Corp., after the Chappell firm took that over when Bobby Crawford decided to become a Hollywood agent, and formed Spier, Inc. His nucleus were two old catalogs, Helf-Hager and McKinley Music.

Music jobbers Maurice Richmond and Max Mayer remerged, having been together before. Maybelle Weil, widow, decided to continue Milton Weil Music Co. in Chicago, and Jimmy Campbell bowed out of Cinephonic Music and Campbell-Connelly in England, to go into the radio and music management business in Sydney, Australia, where his wife, the former Betty Balfour, has stage and screen offers.

The Perennial Payola

Other executive aspects included the perennial payola charges, which finally got to the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, which (1) frowns upon this unethical (i.e. bribery) practice; (2) likewise looked askance at an alleged dominance of Tin Pan Alley by Hollywood, thus presumably resulting in profligate subsidies for plugs.

ASCAP was told of the rampant bribery through cut-ins and 'co-authoring' bandleaders, resulting in the Society wanting to make sure that a co-writer really did more than dot the i's and cross the t's. The payola thing also spread to England with the BBC there starting to get inquisitive.

Santly Bros.-Joy and Select Music, heretofore affiliated, but indie firms, did a merger and Bing's brother, Larry Crosby, became a v.p. and financially interested along with Lester Santly and George Joy. Bing heretofore had a piece of it.

Renewal Raids

Renewal raids became another major casus belli among the publishers. With some of the oldtime hits of 28 years or so ago having their copyrights technically expiring this or next year, a mad scramble is on for the renewal privileges. Division of copyright, between lyricist and composer; dickering with the widow, where an estate was involved (as often happened), pre-payment of advance royalty where copyrights don't lapse until two to five years hence, all complicated matters. It was cautioned that this confusion of copyright ownership defeated the very purpose for which most of the publishers want to acquire the songs — performing rights for screen, radio, etc. The film companies, no matter how anxious to use a familiar theme, which oftentimes fetches a fancy fee of from \$2,500 to \$5,000 or a single 'grand right,' laid off when faced with the possibility of incurring bothersome litigation.

A leading spirit in this renewal grab has been Jerry Vogel, who frankly wants to enhance his catalog by adding oldtime hits. He has a strong nucleus in the George M. Cohan catalog, among others, plus some old Howley, Haviland & Dresser tunes, et al.

It was Vogel, incidentally, who m.c.'d a tin pan alley and radio 'salute' to Cohan on his 60th birthday, done altruistically, in this case, despite the fact that the medleys of Cohan tunes must naturally incur a generous plug. Cohan, incidentally, is still dickering with Metro for a possible screen biog on the Four Cohans.

On the subject of 'salutes' to composers, this summer, with much program time open on the air, almost every radio station utilized a reprise of this or that name composer's works as a basis for a half-hour or hour show. George Gershwin, on his first anniversary, was widely performed, and the memorial concerts on the Coast and in New York heavy sellouts.

But Vogel has by no means been alone in the renewal thing. Louis Bernstein, enterprising head of Shapiro-Bernstein, even went abroad for such valuable old copyrights as 'A Little Love, a Little Kiss,' thus precipitating an intra-ASCAP row with Max Dreyfus, original copyright owner. Both are officers and directors of the Society and charges flew anent alleged usage of their office for private song deals, but ASCAP wisely concluded that these publisher squabbles are individual affairs and should be kept without the board room.

Shapiro-Bernstein, long a dominant independent publisher, and highly successful with strictly pop songs, despite the ups and downs of Hollywood's influences, also engaged in not a little litigation with film companies, and other publishers, this year. Old themes, owned by him, cropped up in several pictures, and he sued, as in the 'Bank of Monte Carlo' case, detailed later on. Song infringement activities also included the S-B firm, as with many other publishers.

Copyright suits became a nuisance in general. Metro's lawyers, because of their interest in the Feist-Robbins-Miller firms, stated in open court it was fast becoming a legal racket, and rather than be subjected to continuous mulcting, because of 'nuisance value' settlement, many a publisher is now fighting all such claims to the fullest, and making the plaguing plaintiffs pay full costs. Too often, however, they're financially irresponsible.

It was for this reason the pubs decided anew not to dicker with amateur songsmiths, although an incidental keynote that perhaps we are truly on the road to recovery was evidenced by the fact that not so many amateur song mss. were being submitted. The publishers have learned that in bad times they get more amateur songs; when business improves they're too busy with their jobs to bother composing round-lays and cluttering up the mails.

ASCAP's Legal Woes

More executive headaches in the publishing end of the biz included a \$850,000 legal bill to ASCAP, fighting antagonistic statutes on several fronts, with some states choosing to ignore previous U. S. Supreme Court rulings that ASCAP is w

within its legal rights as a collector of fees for the public performance of music for profit.

With the Society so vitally a financial fountain-head for the business, its \$6,000,000 annual collections now rating as the major source of revenue—instead of being the by-product that it was in former years, when sheet music sold well—all sorts of squabbles are a constant trade problem, as regards the methods of dividing the income.

The rating, by points, as it obtains in ASCAP today, brought up certain fallacies in the system, according to some proponents, who pointed to the medley of 16 tunes which a certain radio maestro galloped through in 21 minutes, playing choruses only. Another plug exploiteer advocates grading the plugs according to values, as for instance, how much more it means for a ballad as spotted vocally by Kenny Baker on Jack Benny's high-Crossley-rating show, as against another performance.

Daytime Plugs

The daytime plug advocates also steamed things up, among them Buddy Morris who argued, and not without justification, that the housewife, listening to music all through the day, perhaps spells a better potential buying market than a comparable plug at night.

In the field of litigation, the Canadian courts ruled against Shapiro-Bernstein, which complained that 20th-Fox unauthorizedly borrowed 'The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo' from an old song copyright, for a film. But on the other hand Warners settled with the writers of 'Sweet Adeline,' when WB used that as a film title, and this despite the fact that WB also owns the basic copyright of the Harry Armstrong-Richard Armstrong classic.

World affairs were reflected in Tin Pan Alley by refugee Austro-German songsmiths being unable to 'resign' from their original native organization, but that didn't deter the now regimented Nazi performing rights societies from collecting large sums due the non-'Aryan' writers, and keeping them. The Viennese and Berlin songsmiths, when squawking, were told they were being given a 'paper credit.' ASCAP, highly sympathetic with this high-handedness, is still nonplussed by its foreign treaties with the Naziland performing societies and finds it can do nothing, either (1) to defer accounting abroad, or (2) take into membership the names of mid-European composers, many of whom now have Hollywood and other U. S. connections, which give them sizable American incomes.

Songwriting offshoots of Hitlerism were such curiosa as the Austrian pop, 'We Are on the Dolfuss Road to Better Times,' written as a 'Youth Song' before 'anschluss,' and which eventually landed Hermann Leopold, its author, in a Nazi concentration camp when the march on Austria was consummated. Eventually, 'Soldier from Berlin, Girl of Vienna' sought to romantically link the political maneuvers in song. As for America, usually responsive to topical songs, we laid off any such 'war' stuff, excepting Irving Berlin's 'God Bless America,' actually an old 1917 war song which Kate Smith unearthed somehow and featured. 'Wrong-Way' Corrigan holds the distinction, in the songs-from-the-headlines cycle, as the sole pop entry.

After ASCAP took up the mid-Europa writers' situation it was appraised that 'resignation' could only be considered from non-'Aryan' songsmiths by '10 years notice.' Kurt Weill, now active in the American theatre, who joined the Italian Society, found himself complicated also, not by another manifestation of racial restrictions, a growing phenomenon in this fascist nation, but through the similar necessity, as with the Austro-German writers, that he must first resign from the Rome society before joining ASCAP.

The Dutch courts established a precedent in the case of a refugee Viennese composer, now residing in Amsterdam, by refusing to have the Netherlands performing rights society turn over some \$6,000 to the Austrian society, because they (the Dutch courts) knew that this money would never fall to its rightful owner—the non-'Aryan' songsmith.

ASCAP's \$5,926,941 in 1937

ASCAP's statistics for 1937, disclosed early in 1938, showed collections of \$5,926,941, broken down as follows: Radio yielded \$3,878,751; pictures, \$1,099,512; restaurants, \$492,118; hotels, \$209,649; dance halls, \$127,806; miscellaneous, \$119,100. Of this nearly \$6,000,000—it will be about the same for 1938—72% net was divided among the ASCAP publisher-writer members. Of the remaining 28%, 18% went for administration and the remaining 10% as dividends to foreign affiliates. Collections from radio in 1938 went off about 5%, but this was compensated for by the income from some 2,000 other licensees added to ASCAP during the year.

Another statistical breakdown for the preceding year, not by ASCAP, but VARIETY's own findings, showed the following 15 to be the top sellers for 1937: 'Chapel in the Moonlight,' 'When My Dream Boat Comes In,' 'Little Old Lady,' 'Boo Hoo,' 'September in the Rain,' 'It Looks Like Rain in Cherry Blossom Lane,' 'Moonlight and Shadows,' 'Sailboat in the Moonlight,' 'So Rare,' 'Harbor Lights,' 'You Can't Stop Me from Dreaming,' 'Once in a While' and 'Vienni, Vienni.'

ASCAP vetoed a \$25 weekly 'dole' idea for indigent songsmiths as being 'beneath the dignity' of unfortunate member-writers. The Society, of course, takes care of matters in other ways.

Licensing of coin machines, now that one group is going into commercial plugs, as part of the waxings, is also occupying both the phonograph and publishing ends.

Musical westerns gave rise to another cycle of cowboy ballads, but nothing as big as 'The Last Roundup' of yesteryear came of it. It did create a flock of corral crooners, and some of them even got on the wax—notably Gene Autry, Tex Fletcher—but it was just fleeting fame.

Untimely death of Addy Britt pointed up the alleged frustration of a song plugger's career. Sam Serwer, 42, WB song exec, died from a heart ailment; songwriter Anatole Friedland, 54, after suffering leg amputation, also due to heart, died suddenly. Mort Harris, songwriter, ex-publisher and latterly in radio, was killed in an auto accident on the Coast, aged 44.

Pluggers for a time talked union; now the wage-hour law is occupying them, due to their long and irregular hours. A proposed strategy, initiated by counsel for the Professional Men, Inc., is to make the bribery the cause for banishment from the industry.

British Tin Pan Alley

By John Abbott
(General Manager, Francis, Day & Hunter)

London, Dec. 20.

A third of a century in the music or any other business in the normal way isn't long, but much more seems to have happened in that short period than in the previous century.

In the early years of the 20th century the only thing that counted in the life of a songwriter and publisher was the number of piano copies sold of a hit and the top wasn't so wonderfully high as considered in later years. Around 100,000 copies was distinctly good and 200,000 put an extra inch on to the chest measurement of the writer, and possibly induced his publisher to increase his office accommodation by another 20 square feet.

Neither writers nor publishers, however, had extravagant tastes—there were no automobiles or expensive apartments, and winter vacations on the Riviera or Florida hadn't been thought of.

In England the principal pop houses were Francis, Day & Hunter and Charles Sheard. Bert Feldman was a young, ambitious newcomer into the field, whilst Chappell & Co. and Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew were engaged in publishing standard ballads and hits from musical comedies. In America the important ones were Remick, Shapiro, Bernstein and Harry Von Tilzer who merged and unmerged; M. Witmark & Sons, Joseph W. Stern (now Ed. B. Marks Music Co.); Howley, Haviland and Dresser; T. B. Harms, whose fortunes at a low ebb were being resuscitated by the brothers Max and Louis Dreyfus, and a healthy young firm, Helf & Hager. Leo Feist was considered as a rising young man.

Gramophone records were looked upon as a harmless kind of toy, and although performing rights did exist legally no one ever thought of charging a fee, and if anyone had had the temerity to prophesy that music could be taken over the air by wireless straight into the home he would have been considered a suitable candidate for a mental home.

The home of Tin Pan Alley in America was West 28th street. In England there were hardly enough pop publishers to constitute a center, but Francis, Day & Hunter, recently removed to Charing Cross Road, had Feldman, just round the corner, and Sheard for neighbors.

Stuart's 'Florodora'

In England the outstanding author and composer was Leslie Stuart. For some years he had been writing popular hits for Gene Stratton and others, such as 'Lily of Laguna,' 'My Little Octoroon,' 'Sweetheart May,' but his greatest achievement was the score of 'Florodora,' which established him as an international hit tune writer, and his 'Tell Me Pretty Maiden' is still a standard. He wrote the music for many other plays, including 'Belle of Mayfair,' 'Havana,' also subsequently produced in America, but nothing that achieved the same standard of popularity.

In addition there were Billy Murphy ('Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?'), 'Let's All Go Down the Strand,' Bob Weston ('I've Got Rings on My Fingers'), Fred Leigh and Harry Pether ('Waiting at the Church' and 'Poor John').

The star song writers of America were Billy Jerome, Jean Schwartz, Harry Von Tilzer, Al Von Tilzer, Teddy Morse, Al Bryan, Charles K. Harris and the greatest of them all, George M. Cohan.

Jerome Kern had just broken into the hit class with 'How Would You Like to Spoon With Me?', followed by 'Poker Love' and 'Won't You Buy a Paper, Dearie,' and, encouraged and helped by Max Dreyfus, was haunting Charles Frohman's office trying to get numbers interpolated in imported English musical productions. He did this so successfully in one instance (I believe 'The Dairy-maids') that he practically supplanted the original score.

The musical comedy field was fairly equally divided between the English and Viennese schools. The greatest, of course, was 'The Merry Widow' but others were 'Waltz Dream,' 'Chocolate Soldier,' 'Dollar Princess,' 'Belle of Mayfair,' 'Quaker Girl,' 'Girls of Gottenburg,' 'The Dairy-maids,' 'Pink Lady'—most of them duplicating their success in England and America.

Irving Berlin, too young to be a writer, was serving an apprenticeship plugging Harry Von Tilzer's songs

at Tony Pastor's, learning the game and waiting his opportunity.

Foreign Rights Values

America and England began exchanging songs. Until the turn of the 20th century American publishers had not realized that there was a value in foreign rights, and when David Day crossed the water and offered real money for all rights outside of the United States and Canada he was greeted as a rich foreign relative. In passing I should like to add that representatives of the firm he founded are still heartily welcomed, but the present financial considerations bear no resemblance to the modest advances paid in those halcyon days.

David Day reaped the reward of his enterprise by getting such hot favorites as 'Bedelia,' 'Irish Molly,' 'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree,' 'Honeysuckle and the Bee,' 'Goodbye My Blue Bell.' In exchange English artists were commencing an invasion of America. Led by demure Alice Lloyd and followed by the vivacious Vesta Victoria, Rosie and Marie Lloyd, Harry Lauder, Whit Cunliffe, there was a continuous stream of English talent at Hammerstein's, at Percy Williams' Colonial, and Klaw & Erlanger's Broadway theatres. My firm took advantage of this wave to establish an office in New York, but the majority of the songs they introduced were written to fit particular characters and, while having a stage value, were not big sheet music sellers.

The American slump of 1907-08 had its effect on the music business, but the passing of the American Copyright Act of 1909 and the English Act of 1911, giving recognition to mechanical rights, acted as a definite stimulant, and the revenue from the sale of gramophone records became a steadily increasing and welcome one.

The ragtime craze commencing about 1911 gave American compositions a tremendous lead. Irving Berlin's 'Yiddle on Your Fiddle,' 'Alexander's Ragtime Band,' 'Everybody's Doin' It,' and Lewis Muir and Wolfe Gilbert's 'Robert E. Lee,' 'Hitchy Koo,' 'Ragtime Cowboy Joe' and others sent the whole world ragtime crazy. Teams from America, like the Ragtime Octette, Hedges Bros. & Jacobsen were starred in West End music halls with these songs and remained at the Hippodrome, the Oxford and other London music halls for weeks on end. The first revue produced at the Hippodrome was 'Hello Ragtime,' starring Ethel Levey.

About this time saw the establishment of a new music publishing house destined to be a prominent force. Henry Waterson, for some time a shadowy figure behind other musical enterprises, assimilated the firm of Rose & Snyder and later, taking Irving Berlin into partnership, became the powerful Waterson, Berlin & Snyder.

Jazz Eclipses England

The ragtime wave rather overshadowed English songs because, with the exception of 'Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?,' 'Rings on My Fingers,' 'Somewhere a Voice Is Calling' and 'The Sunshine of Your Smile,' very few achieved popularity in America.

Things progressed steadily, with little change in the character of each country's output, until the commencement of the Great War, 1914. The necessity for and popularity of 6-8 marching songs again gave the English writer his opportunity with 'Tipperary,' 'Pack Up Your Troubles,' 'Keep the Home Fires Burning,' 'Goodbye-ee,' all of which were reproduced in America. America's principal contribution to this series was George Cohan's 'Over There.'

The termination of the war saw the beginning of a new era of prosperity in the music industry, with a bias strongly in favor of America. Dancing, which previously had been looked upon as a social pastime, became a serious occupation and the American writer's aptitude for dance rhythm gave him a good start. Fox-trots, one-steps and waltzes were all popular. George Gershwin's 'Swanee,' Walter Donaldson's 'My Blue Heaven' and Irving Berlin's waltz series commencing with 'What'll I Do,' and continuing with 'Alone,' 'Remember' and others were immensely popular. Lawrence Wright, who had established himself just before the war, was doing very well with ballads of his own composition under the nom-de-plume of Horatio Nicholls, and one of them, 'My Souvenirs,' written in collaboration with Edgar Leslie, scored in each country.

The successful war musical shows were mainly contributed by Amer-

1938's 15 Best Sellers

(LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)

Alexander's Ragtime Band.
A-Tisket, A-Tasket.
Bei Mir Bist du Schoen.
Cathedral in the Pines.
Heigh-Ho.
I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams.
Love Walked In.
Music, Maestro, Please.
My Reverie.
Rosalie.
Says My Heart.
Thanks for the Memory.
There's a Gold Mine in the Sky.
Ti-Pi-Tin.
Whistle While You Work.

ican writers. Drury Lane had a sequence in 'Rose Marie,' 'Desert Song' and 'Show Boat' that should have brought joy to the hearts of the shareholders, whilst 'No. No. Nanette' was a big money-maker at the Palace, much of the credit going to the songs, 'I Want to Be Happy' and 'Tea for Two.'

In a musical graph the high peak was about 1928. The sale of sheet music copies had been on the upgrade and gramophone records were selling in millions at good prices. In England the statutory rate of royalty has been increased by the Board of Trade from 5% of the retail price of the record to 6½% and on a big popular song the sales could be anywhere from 250,000-500,000 records. Also the revenue from performing rights was becoming a welcome addition.

Films Entry Into T.P.A.

This prosperity was bound to attract the attention of outside interests. Film producing companies saw, or thought they saw, in the acquisition of some publishing houses a source of supply of music for their sound films, for which they would not be obligated to pay copy-right fees. The first to enter the field were Warner Bros. who, at a figure that still seems stupendous, acquired a group consisting of Witmarks, Harms, Remick & Co., Crawford Music and a few minor companies. Metro gave Jack Robbins a nice piece of change for a 51% interest in his company and further extended its holdings by later taking over the old established company of Leo Feist, Inc. RKO's venture in this race for publishing houses concluded by obtaining control of Feist and Carl Fischer, Inc., which was not so good for the film producers or the publishers, and both sides agreed to a divorce after a few years incompatible alliance. Then followed the Metro-Feist buy.

In England, the acquisition of American catalogs had become more important. Campbell, Connelly & Co., starting in business with 'Show Me the Way to Go Home,' together with Feldman, Keith Prowse, Chappells and even Lawrence Wright were offering tremendous sums for these agencies. New American companies were started mainly with the idea of getting capital by selling foreign rights.

The detrimental effect of radio commenced to be felt by the writers and publishers about 1929-30. Hailed as an additional form of publicity, it was soon realized that if the public could get the best entertainment that each country could provide, at practically no cost, there was no reason why they should buy sheet music or gramophone records; in fact, the money so saved would pay the installments on the radio set.

This competition was felt chiefly by the phonograph industry because it was just an exchange of one mechanical means of reproduction for another, whilst there will always remain the urge by a certain section of the public to do something itself instead of listening to others—just as there are some individuals who prefer to play football or some other game instead of watching others.

To compensate themselves for the loss of revenue on phonograph records and sheet music, publishers and writers began to demand a better return for the performance of their material and the two societies, ASCAP and the P.R.S., with practically a 100% membership and the control of the copyright music of the world are doing a great work in trying to get adequate recompense for their members from all places of entertainment, and broadcasting companies making use of copyright music.

Both of these societies were started in 1914. By persistent effort and in the face of tremendous opposition from users of music they have become virtually the trade unions of Authors and Composers. Despite the fact that these societies control

Top Song Plugs of 1938

By Edgar A. Grunwald

(This article represents a statistical approach to the song plugger's realm.)

Between 250 and 300 pop songs (excluding a few holdovers from 1937) got enough plugs on the major webs during 1938 to qualify as promising. Some stayed in the promising class only a week or two, and then wilted quickly. Others ran up a string of plugs that looked like the last accounting on the war debt.

Boiling the whole thing down: about 80 numbers can be called 'hits' on the basis of key station network performance. Admittedly, the label 'hit' involves some arbitrary reckoning. Tabulations on plugs have a human element, atop of which they are treated in so many different fashions that the eventual total, to be worth much of anything, has to be statistically weighted until it is well-nigh phoney. This statement is intended as no slur on the original plug tabulators, but rather as a commentary on how the work is later handled by the industry.

But aside from dealing with a potpourri of adding machine work, the question goes deeper. Let's assume that two songs garnered 500 performances in 10 weeks, thus giving a mighty 50 plugs per week. The other song took 40 weeks to accumulate its 500 plugs, thus averaging a mere 12 plugs per week. Obviously, the first song is a hit in the full sense of the word. That is, it was intensely played and enjoyed a concentrated vogue. The second song meanwhile displayed no intensity whatsoever, but simply duration. Maybe it was a good 'pace changer' or fine for trick arrangements. Such a song will show up nicely in ASCAP ratings, but is not a 'hit' in the sense that a hit is tied down in intensity to a time limit.

Hence, for purposes of this tabulation, intensity is the keynote. Not totals on an adding machine.

The songs listed here were chosen thus: each had to show at least 10 weeks in which it could command a minimum of 15 plugs. During these 10 weeks, each had to show three weeks in which the plugs reached over 25. In short, unless a song could get an absolute minimum of 180 plugs within a certain time limit, it was rejected.

How Many Are Fatal

After glancing at the 80 odd hits, the question naturally arises: how many plugs does it take to kill a hit? Inasmuch as the music industry has from time to time groaned over radio and the shorter and shorter life of songs, the question is important. But to answer it another question must first be asked: how many concentrated plugs does a song need before it's a hit in the first place? For, unless the foregoing question is asked, any old flop could be deemed as having been stabbed to death by overwork on the radio early in the song's career.

To answer this complicated theorem takes better figures than now available. But this much can be said: a real hit will get anywhere between 500 and 800 plugs on major web key stations before it droops into the unsteady class. And its life should be anywhere from two and half months to four and a half months.

The following songs are hits in the sense that they were most plugged over network key stations. In order to qualify for this list, each song

had to show 10 weeks wherein it received at least 15 plugs each; and during these 10 weeks it had to show at least three weeks in which the plugs totaled 25 per week or more.

Song and Publisher.	Derivation.
Alexander's Ragtime Band, ABC.	Alexander's Ragtime Band
All Ashore, Shapiro.	Alexander's Ragtime Band
A-Tisket, A-Tasket, Robbins.	Pop
At a Perfume Counter, BVC (originally Donaldson).	Pop
Bewildered, Miller.	Pop
Cathedral in the Pines, Berlin.	Pop
Change Partners, Berlin.	Pop
Cry, Baby, Cry, Shapiro.	Pop
Day Dreaming, Remick.	Pop
Deep in a Dream, Harms.	Pop
Don't Be That Way, Robbins.	Pop
Flat Foot Floogie, Green Bros.	Pop
Garden in Granada, Schuster-Miller (originally Southern).	Pop
Girl in the Bonnet of Blue, Crawford.	Pop
Goodnight, Angel, Berlin.	Pop
Having Myself a Time, Paramount.	Pop
Heart and Soul, Famous.	Pop
Heigh-Ho, Berlin.	Pop
How'd You Like to Love Me? Famous.	Pop
I Can Dream, Can't I? Marlowe.	Pop
I Double Dare You, Shapiro.	Pop
I Fall in Love with You Every Day, Famous.	Pop
I Hadn't Anyone Till You, ABC.	Pop
I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart, Mills.	Pop
I Love to Whistle, Robbins.	Pop
I Married an Angel, Robbins.	Pop
I See Your Face Before Me, Crawford.	Pop
I Won't Tell a Soul, Crawford.	Pop
I'll Dream Tonight, Witmark.	Pop
I'm Gonna Look My Heart, Shapiro.	Pop
In a Little Dutch Kindergarten, Fox.	Pop
In My Little Red Book, Marks.	Pop
It's the Dreamer in Me, Feist.	Pop
It's a Wonderful, Robbins.	Pop
I've Been Saving Myself for You, Harms.	Pop
I've Got a Date with a Dream, Feist.	Pop
I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams, Santly.	Pop
Joseph, Joseph, Harms.	Pop
Lambeth Walk, Mills.	Pop
Let Me Whisper, Chappell.	Pop
Let's Sail to Dreamland, Spier.	Pop
Little Lady Make Believe, Olman.	Pop
Lovelight in the Starlight, Paramount.	Pop
Love Walked In, Chappell.	Pop
Lullabye in Rhythm, Robbins.	Pop
Music, Maestro, Please, Berlin.	Pop
My Margarita, Feist.	Pop
My Own, Robbins.	Pop
My Reverie, Robbins.	Pop
Now It Can Be Told, Berlin.	Pop
On the Sentimental Side, Santly.	Pop
Phantom of the Opera, Robbins.	Pop
Please Be Kind, Harms.	Pop
Says My Heart, Famous.	Pop
Simple and Sweet, Miller.	Pop
So Second Got Together, Santly.	Pop
Small Fry, Famous.	Pop
So Help Me, Remick.	Pop
So Little Time, Shapiro.	Pop
Something Tells Me, Witmark.	Pop
Stop Beating Around the Mulberry Bush, BVC.	Pop
Spring Is Here, Robbins.	Pop
Summer Souvenirs, BVC.	Pop
Sunday in the Park, Mills.	Pop
Sweet as a Song, Robbins.	Pop
Thanks for the Memory, Paramount.	Pop
There's a Faraway Look in Your Eyes, Tenney.	Pop
There's Honey on the Moon, Miller.	Pop
This Time It's Real, Spier.	Pop
Ti-Pi-Tin, Feist.	Pop
Toy Trumpet, The Claude Rains Farm.	Pop
What Goes on Here in My Heart, Paramount.	Pop
When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby, Santly-Joy.	Pop
When They Played the Polka, Robbins.	Pop
While a Cigarette Was Burning, ABC.	Pop
Whistle While You Work, Berlin.	Pop
Who Blew Out the Flame? Feist.	Pop
Why'd Ya Make Me Fall in Love? Feist.	Pop
Ya Got Me, Lincoln.	Pop
You Couldn't Be Cuter, Chappell.	Pop
You Go to My Head, Remick.	Pop
You Leave Me Breathless, Famous.	Pop
You're an Education, Remick.	Pop
You're a Sweetheart, Robbins.	Pop
You're a Sweetheart.	Pop

* Film tune.
† Stage tune.
Pop speaks for itself.

BENNY GOODMAN MAY OPEN FRISCO EXPO

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Jules Stein, president of Music Corporation of America, was in town last week for a huddle with Harris Connick, president of the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition, on a proposed plan to bring Benny Goodman's band here for the first two weeks of the fair, which opens Feb. 18.

Contract reputedly calls for \$12,000 per week, for which Goodman will play nightly in the Treasure Island ballroom, and, in addition, stage an afternoon 'swing concert' opening day.

James, Take the Stick

Meyer Davis will play this year's Butler's Ball, Jan. 11, for the fourth straight time.

As usual, he will have his own butler baton one number.

The Bands' Bonanza Days

By Bernie Woods

Dance orchestras played the most dominant role in show business during 1938 that that phase of entertainment probably has ever enjoyed. Not that bands haven't always been a major part of the industry, or that the number of ace crews is higher now than before, but the widening of opportunities made 1938 a peak that the band biz will find hard to top.

Not the least important factor in the upsurge is the close conformity of dancing styles of the younger element, of high school and college age, to the style of rhythm dished up by current crews. Theatre dates and location stops are great things for prestige, but not half so lucrative as the road where the aforementioned youngsters contribute greatly to the support of hundreds of aggregations, from big names to regional favorites.

Bandmen may be inclined to belittle the part played by these late terp styles, on the thought dansapation is and always has been the function and support of dance bands. That can't be denied, but the fact remains that the biz received tremendous impetus the past year since the introduction of the Big Apple and its many offshoots, most notable of any being the Shag. Of course the hops are based on the rocking rhythm of swing, but the wildfire spread of the screwy stomps in turn skyrocketed the stock of the band biz.

The hold that swing and its leading exponents has on the younger portion of the music-minded populace, and, it might be mentioned, a percentage of the more conservative portion, was apparent during the past summer in the series of outdoor concerts in New York and elsewhere. Most of them were benefit performances involving the presentation of as many bands available at the time and place. First to be put on, and the biggest and most important, was the session at Randall's Island, N. Y., May 29. The later festival at Soldiers' Field in Chicago drew many more addicts than did the Randall's shindig, but that was gratis and didn't draw the talent lined up in New York. The Chi turnout approximated 100,000.

The Randall's Island outing, plugged for weeks in advance by Martin Block on his Make-Believe-Ballroom recorded program on WNEW, N. Y., drew close to 24,000 fans from all points to listen to between 25-30 of the biggest names. That was for the benefit of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians and kicked almost \$14,000 into its fund.

Outdoor Jitterbugging

This idea of Block's was followed by others along the same lines, some beneficial and others purely promotional. At Madison Square Garden June 12, baited with Benny Goodman and Count Basie's orchestras, another was in behalf of the Los Angeles Sanitarium. It was a click in every department but the b.o., setting its promoters back \$5,200. On July 10 Goodman was again the draw at a concert at Jones Beach State Park on Long Island, N. Y. This one was strictly for private pocketbooks, staged by Nicky Blair, with the Shuberts who leased the stadium for Fortune Gallo's operettas, and the State Park Commission taking a cut. Goodman drew close to 10,000 at 55c to \$1.65 for less than two hours of jive.

Following closely on the heels of Goodman's showing came the announcement that a series of four such sessions would be staged at Randall's Island in September for the benefit of the blind musicians of New York. It was sponsored by the National Bureau for Blind Artists and aimed at garnering \$50,000 to remove sightless musicians from the streets and provide the wherewithal to train them in legitimate music, or some other trade. Details were taken care of by George Clarke, ex-city editor of the N. Y. Mirror, and Frank Berend, a N. Y. promoter, both of whom originated the idea. First two outings managed to draw slightly over 10,000 across the Triboro Bridge and left the promoters in the red to the tune of \$5,500. Combined, the two showcased some 30-35 bands, the second being an all-colored affair. The final two outings were temporarily cancelled, then combined and re-scheduled for Madison Square Garden, N. Y., on Oct. 31. This was subsequently called off a week prior to the event. Reason for the cancellation was the fact the promoters got themselves in wrong with Local 802 by failing to pay off some of the bands concerned in the first two. They were advised, after complaints, to pay off before Oct. 15, subsequently the Local informed the Garden it didn't sanction the date, latter simplifying things by making the spot 'unavailable' due to previous commitments.

Also in the outdoor concert field, although not from a jitterbug angle, was Paul Whiteman, who drew 23,000 into the Newark Schools Stadium, Newark, N. J., and repeated later with the same fare before 10,000 at Jones Beach. Concerts aren't strange to Whiteman; it just meant a shift of operations from Carnegie Hall to roofless bandstands.

They are, however, strange to other well-known leaders, such as Benny Goodman. That is, concerts along the lines of the ones the clarinet-tooting maestro took part in during the year. Goodman's initial effort was his stand at Carnegie Hall late last winter. This one included his entire band, but subsequent showings had Goodman alone delving into the works of old masters of serious music with the Coolidge and Budapest String Quartets.

The dates left Goodman open to many kidding notices from the press, which got a kick out of the Pied Piper of the Pantywaists performing for the lorngetted strata. However, he's serious, evidently, about keeping a hand in on both sides of the musical fence, as is shown by his continuing to book

showings at the Town Hall and Carnegie Hall, N. Y. Middle of last month his crew became the first purveyors of swing to invade Town Hall when it served to illustrate points in a discourse on the 'Rise of Swing' by John Erskine, novelist and music critic.

More Concerting

The urge to jump the gap from popular to longhair is not only apparent in Goodman, but extends to other leaders as well. Artie Shaw, currently riding the crest of a pro-Shaw jitterbug wave, and Goodman's most serious competitor as clarinetist-leader, also invaded Carnegie Hall along with Louis Armstrong and Raymond Scott. They appeared with Paul Whiteman in his Christmas Day concert there last week. All this seems to indicate that John Erskine, in the aforementioned discourse, knew what he was talking about when he said swing, as it is known today, will form the basis for a new style of serious, thoroughly American music. Kay Kyser also went in for serious music in a concert of light classics at Boston's Symphony Hall New Year's night.

Repeated trips of Goodman into the realm of serious stuff, and the news that several of his individual stars will leave his baton in the near future to build bands of their own leaves the trade wondering whether he is allowing his once No. 1 band to gradually come apart at the seams, while setting the stage to step into serious stuff exclusively. That's stretching the imagination, as Goodman is not averse to the lucrative side of the band biz. These thoughts are in contrast to others which have Goodman fading from the picture to step into Music Corp. of America as an official to handle new bands he would develop. Another report has him stepping into the booking end with Willard Alexander, his MCA handler.

The changing around and sniping of musicians by band leaders, a thing that's been much more in evidence the past year than ever before, is claimed responsible by many for the musical excellence, and the all-around progressiveness of the current crop of bands. This is based, of course, on the keen rivalry among leaders for the top men, changes being brought about by any means possible. Although all sections of a band come in for coveting glances of the opposition, percentage of changes, comparatively, is higher among drummers.

New Bloods a Help

The constant circulation of men keeps band standards at a high level, and the infusion of new blood when a new man is added tends toward injecting new life and ideas into a crew. This, it is opined, is the health and backbone of the band biz today. Cited as contrasts to this practice, and as reason for failure to hit the high brackets, are co-operative crews, which, it is maintained, become stale and lag in a groove with the same complement year after year. There are outstanding rebuttals to that assertion, namely the Casa Loma orchestra, which is co-op, and the Guy Lombardo outfit, which, except for one or two changes, is essentially the same crew it was when it started out.

Almost all the ace outfits have indulged in the exchanges this past year to a point where in some instances more than half a band has been replaced, either through losing 'em or bouncing 'em. Outstanding among these are Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Larry Clinton, Artie Shaw, Bob Crosby, Bunny Berigan, Gene Krupa, et al. Krupa has less than half the complement he started out with, when he formed his own crew last April. However, they were mostly shakeups of a new crew settling to a style.

There have been comparatively few new outfits to hit the top brackets this year. Krupa is one of them, Larry Clinton is another, as is Artie Shaw. In Krupa's case the path to success was a little easier than for his embryo contemporaries. Krupa was a name before he even thought of his own crew, but if the band hadn't had the stuff, the name wouldn't have kept him working. And he's been pounding his skins steadily since debuting last April 16 at Atlantic City.

Clinton's Upshoot

Larry Clinton got two fairly good breaks to help him along beside his outfit's ability. Clinton's crew currently rates high among band lovers. Introduction of his own novelty hit, the 'Dipsy Doodle,' at a time when he was getting started didn't hinder, capped by the wide acclaim given his arrangement of Debussy's 'My Reverie.' It's one of the most popular song hits of the year.

Kay Kyser's ascension was not due as much to his band as to the 'Kollege of Musical Knowledge' idea, the basis of his Lucky Strike radio program. His crew, however, is very popular. Split of Will Hudson and Eddie DeLange put another new band in the field. DeLange starts Jan. 14 with Phil Baker on a new radio commercial on CBS. Hudson's band disbanded due to the latter's illness.

Artie Shaw, Goodman's orch-rival and very close to the latter in style, is probably the most important addition to the top name roster. Shaw's is not exactly a new crew, but its rise to prominence puts it in that category. It enjoys the distinction of rating very high in the trade, and has added much to its popularity since debuting with Robert Benchley on the Old Gold program. Blue Barron is another to step up. Though not new, the band made a name for itself while

located at the Edison Hotel, N. Y. Remotes helped Barron plenty. There are other lesser knowns which have come along but so far haven't made much of a splash.

Mentioning Barron, who was quite a fave in the middle west before shifting east, brings up the fact that for every big name crew operating in the keys, with remotes to impress their style on hinterland listeners and possibly set up good trips through the one-nighters, there are two or three comparatively unknown regional favorites just as popular. These bands seldom if ever reach the prominence, nationally that is, that others enjoy, but in their own territory they have the ability to draw just as heavily. In some sections they outdraw the big guys.

That's not so strange in view of the fact that different sections of the country have definite likes and dislikes anent various styles and crews. Some of the biggest names in the biz lay an egg in sections adverse to their stuff, and naturally are setups to be topped by local faves. Very few of the biggies are powerful enough to draw wherever they light.

Sweet vs. Swing

This past year also made the question of sweet vs. swing more acute than ever before. It's been the subject of numerous arguments among proponents of both styles, and was even carried to a point where the Hitz Hotels ran a poll to determine which style its patrons preferred. Sweet isn't minus swing; it's simply more refined than the blaring output of some of the brassier sending aggregations. At the end of last month the Paramount, N. Y., which conducts a poll of the popularity of bands it has played, gave a prize to the No. 1 leader. Benny Goodman took down the award, but the bands following him were all on the sweet side, namely Tommy Dorsey, who leans toward both styles with the accent lately on sweet; Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo and Kay Kyser.

This controversy over the two brands of swing was brought on mainly by the upsurge of Sammy Kaye, Kay Kyser, Blue Barron, and others employing less headachey methods of swinging the latest pops. It's bound to make even bigger inroads during the coming year, for various reasons. Most important is that swing is settling down; getting away from the hysteria of its start when it was thought that to be swingy, a band had to be loud. Other is that publishers are getting wise that the music-buying public, no matter how much in the jitterbug groove, still leans toward sentimental ballads.

The controversy between the two top sweet outfits concerning the origination of the style of singing titles of tunes also came to a head this year. Sammy Kaye and Kay Kyser both use the methods of heralding forthcoming tunes. As a matter of fact neither introduced it and both admit it. Their argument is over who picked it up first for current use. Research gives the palm to Gus Arnheim, who included it just once on a record he made. Even then there are rumors of an earlier use. Blue Barron also sings his titles, but he doesn't count in the set-to. His is a copy of the two mentioned.

As far as Sammy Kaye is concerned the singing title angle takes a back seat to his tag line. Kaye's 'Swing and Sway' catch phrase is probably the best known of all and is probably the youngest of the known bands employing the tags. It's also probably more indicative of his style than the phrases of any other. It's a natural from all angles, rhyming with his name, and perfectly labelling his style. It's analogous to the pioneering 'Lopez Speaking' as a radio signature.

Now It's 'Tick Tock Rhythm'

Recurrence of arguments over ownership of tags used by several bands at once also was quite prevalent last year. Earlier in the year Teddy King, Tommy Tucker, and Gray Gordon were threatening lawsuits over 'Tick Tock Rhythm.' Then came George Hamilton and Johnny Messner's glares over 'Music Box Rhythm,' which went to the Musicians' Union for settlement. Then came Henry Busse, Lee Shelley, and Jan Savitt's orchestras with claims of prior rights to 'Shuffle Rhythm.' Busse dropped out of this by changing his to 'Busse's Rhythm,' but Savitt threatened Shelley with a suit, which hasn't been settled yet, as both bands are still using the tag.

While some of these tag lines are indicative of style, or the proficiency of a leader on some instrument, others are so much prestige appendages. Such as the new Art Kavelin band's 'Cascading Chords,' Blue Barron's 'Music of Yesterday and Today Styled in the Blue Barron Way,' Dick Barrie's 'Linger Awhile with the Dick Barrie Style,' Lou Breese's 'Breezing Along with the Breeze,' Frank Dailey's 'Stop and Go Rhythm,' another name for the Sammy Kaye style; Richard Himber's 'Musical Pyramids,' and others, attached to big bands and lesser knowns, but too numerous to mention. Himber's 'Pyramids' has sufficient substance to become a formidable b.o. item in 1939. Catchphrases or no, if a band hasn't got the stuff it doesn't get far.

Though 1938 was a peak that the band biz will find hard to top, 1939 should provide the opportunity for it, and renewal of opportunities for bands so far unable to hit the high brackets. That should come about with the further widening of theatres with name band policies such as the Paramount and Strand, both on Broadway, coupled with more locations with remotes for the benefit of hinterlanders, and the effect of the New York and San Francisco World Fairs which will undoubtedly go far toward hypoing all forms of entertainment. Name bands are in for a particular boom at the latter expo.

On the Upbeat

Louis Prima's band reports for work in 'Rose of Washington Square' at 20th-Fox.

Jackie Brooks and orchestra at Stage One in Hollywood.

Wingy Mannone signed to CRA management this week.

Austin Wylie plays midwinter ball of Penn State, Feb. 11.

Charlie Agnew signed to Rockwell-O'Keefe office.

Manuel Contreras' tango band into Hotel Henry's Silver Grill, Pitts-

burgh, New Year's Eve for indefinite engagement, replacing Nita and Her Townsmen. Placed by Ralph Harrison.

Larry Clinton set for a Warner short.

Frances Carroll's all-girl crew just completed a briefie for Warner.

Eddie DeLange orchestra signed for series of shorts at Warners.

Etzi Covato of Pittsburgh goes to Jacksonville, Fla., late this month for winter engagement and will be succeeded at Italian Gardens, Pitts., which Covato owns, by Joe Schaffer band.

Frank Gagen's orchestra playing

De Witt Clinton Hotel, Albany, and broadcasting over WGY, Schenectady.

MCA will book Four Swinging Strings, Pittsburgh strollers.

Leonard Keller's orchestra opened Dec. 29 at the Marcel Lamaze, formerly Club Seville, in Hollywood.

CREDIT VALUE OF PLUGS

Only One Cent More in Final Quarter Over Third

Credit value of a performance point for publishers in the royalty distribution of the American Society

of Composers, Authors and Publishers for the final quarter of 1938 figured only 1c. more than it had for the previous quarter. Lowest amount allowed for a plug was the 12c. paid as part of the divvy for the third quarter. Just before that period the pubs got 19c. a plug.

It was after the second quarter of 1938 that the ASCAP management decided to boost the performance base substantially with the twofold purpose of discouraging radio performer payoffs and obtaining a broader insight into usages. When the pubs got 19c. the cumulative plugs amounted to 1,600,000. By the subsequent quarter this base had been increased to 2,087,000 performances.

KAYE'S CIVIC STAFF A LA MAJ. BOWES

Sammy Kaye starts a key city musical salute policy Jan. 7 on his tour long Saturday afternoon Mutual air spread from the Commodore Hotel, N. Y., where the band is located. Somewhat along the lines of Major Bowes' salute to various cities. Worked via hookup with Scripps-Howard newspapers. Week prior to the broadcast describing the civic virtues of a town and its industrial setup, local S-H sheet will publicize the airing and poll readers for a fave tune which will be played.

Debuts with Columbus, Ohio, Jan. 7. City and Houston follow.

Plugging Through the Years

By Mose Gumble

A third-of-a-century ago song plugging (exploitation, if you please, at the present time) was something of a romance, as the saying goes. Yes, sir, I can remember my boss telling me that for the weekend I could go to Coney Island and stay there Friday night, all day Saturday and all day Sunday. What a treat to me that was when he first told me I could go! Just think, Coney Island over the weekend—what a thrill! But wait. He decided to send a singer with me (as I was a pianist in those days), with these instructions:

First, he said, while there take a bunch of orchestrations and professional copies and 'make' all the places. There were many music halls, cafes, etc., where many of our headliners of today received their start, as well as quite a few dance halls spotted around the village.

Here was the routine. First find a room to live in, and how tough it was to find one! I said room. Boy, oh, boy, what a room! Then, arrange your orchestrations and copies. For a good time start up or down Surf avenue. About every other door was a dance hall, cafe or music hall, as they were called in those days. We would go in and see the manager between shows (they ran 15 or 20 shows a night). It was a case of waiting around to catch the singers between performances. They usually had a piano backstage, and then we would do our stuff.

Now, in those days, even as it is now, it was a sales talk—but then, they would give us an opportunity to play the songs over and would immediately put them on for the public's approval. We would move on from there to the saloons or cafes, and try to interest the singers, grouped around the piano, to do our songs. After a siege with those boys and girls, we would make the big dance halls, such as Stauch's and many others, often carrying a megaphone with us to sing one or more choruses with the band, for that was considered a great plug on a song. In the interim there were the big vaudeville music halls, where we would go backstage and contact the performers. When we were fortunate enough to land them it was really something.

The Ill. Song

At about this same time, or a little further along, came the illustrated song; that is, picture slides with an extra chorus so the mob could join in and sing. All this helped to popularize the songs.

Now comes a period with a little more class to song plugging, or should I say, contacting? We moved into the better grade vaudeville houses, wherein it was the last word to land a headliner with a pop song. If the headliner used it every act in the country wanted to pick it up. With so much vaudeville in those days there was plenty of work for the song-plugger. The greatest stars of today started in vaudeville; many of 'em still living. There was nothing as interesting as song plugging along those lines.

In conjunction with that there was many a musical show into which the publishers thought, or hoped, the pluggers could interpolate a song or two.

'Tin Pan Alley,' originally on 28th street, moved up into the now famed 40's. Along with the moving came better days and better ways of exploitation; then radio and filmicals with full scores to give a contact man a great start on a song.

Same Routine, New Backdrop
Publishing offices have now moved further northward and eastward. Rockefeller Center is the high spot in the song field. With the progress of radio the big commercial programs on the air, handled by the large advertising agencies, now engage the greatest stars in the world. Thus, today the contact man has a new angle of plugging. He can't just walk in, lay his music down and say he would like to have the numbers on the air. Oh no, it can't be done that way!

First of all, the man's chief job is to sell himself. Very important contacts can be made by the professional man during the artists' leisure hours by enjoying the same amusements—golf, bridge, fights, etc. Contacting necessitates attending orchestra lead-

ers' 'openings', and also many of their closings.

The advertising agencies are a great medium to popularize songs, and their friendship, as well as that of the artist, is very necessary. Deft placing can literally make a song—a good spot with an outstanding band or a nationwide hookup is invariably surefire. Yea, verily, the work of the contact men these days is much different from a third-of-a-century ago. Between the rehearsals of the commercial programs, visits to the radio stations, openings, closings and 'special nights' that are going on at the present time, his hours are as variable as the wind.

STOKI-DISNEY NOVELTY FOR S. F. EXPO

San Francisco, Jan. 1.

Leopold Stokowski has a musical invention that may be revealed at the Golden Gate International Exposition starting in Feb. Stokowski was here last week for negotiations with Harris Connick, the Exposition's managing director. Words 'electric orchestra' have been used in discussing the invention of which Walt Disney is supposed to be the co-inventor. Stokowski is reported to have described the invention as 'revolutionary.'

Stokowski is reported to have told Exposition officials that, if and when he comes to terms with them, he wants to write his own description of the invention and be his own press agent.

Philly's Name Bands

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Arrangements have been completed by Benny (the Bum) Fogelman with Music Corp. of America to bring name bands into his nitery here.

New policy will start in February when present six-month termers with musicians' union for a local band expires.

FULL STRENGTH MUSIC WANTED

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Saturday afternoon audiences at Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra concerts refuse to be pampered. They've risen in indignation and by an 80% vote demanded that the 'heavy' Friday night programs be repeated for them. Because many school-children attended the matinee sessions, Fritz Reiner, conductor, has been substituting simpler selections for heavier fare played evening before.

Policy caused so many complaints that afternoon subscribers were asked to vote on issue. Four out of every five balloted for the regular program. As a result, beginning this week-end, same selections will be played at both concerts.

'THE GOLDBERGS' ON CJOR

Vancouver, B. C., Jan. 1.

'The Goldberg's' added to the CJOR platter list starting Monday (2). CJOR picks up plenty of transcription business due to 125 mile agreement Seattle stations have with NBC and CBS networks which keeps certain network commercials off CBR, government outlet here, which are carried by the rest of the government chain across Canada.

Big accounts want Vancouver representation with consequent break for local.

Eastern Publishers Scornfully Call H'wood Masterminds Flop-Pickers

By Ben Bodec

THOSE responsible for the exploitation of picture songs apparently haven't a kind word for Hollywood producers. Mention the subject of Coast studio relations and the retort bristles with scorn, invective and indictment. The opinions are the same, regardless of whether the music publishing firm is producer-owned or it's just a contractual affiliation.

Exploiting faction are agreed on, one point, and that is that the producers haven't the least conception of what constitutes a good commercial song. They don't pick 'em with an ear to the public, but according to their own tastes and circumstances. All a staff writer has to do is get a producer in a spot where he can demonstrate his song. Producer may be tone deaf and totally impervious to the cadence of a lyric, but if the mood strikes him, or the writer is a good salesman, the song goes in.

What especially gripes the fellows that have to sell the picture tunes to band leaders and radio vocalists is that they're never consulted about the score material in advance. They feel that they're closer to the public's musical pulse than those that have to worry about stories, screen personalities and the interplay of studio politics. By personal contact with the writers it might be possible to bridge two conflicting motives or points of view. The producer pays big salaries to the writers and is mainly interested in getting performances. The publisher is primarily interested in getting music that will sell sheet copies and help him show something on the credit side of the ledger.

Values Lopsided

Another source of resentment on the eastern end are the lopsided ideas that the producers have of the value of their scores. You're only as good as your material. Bands and vocalists on the air are no longer impressed by the fact that the manuscript derives from a filmical. If

the score has outstanding songs they'll play them. Otherwise it will have to get in line with the general run of Tin Pan Alley releases, which means it will be slipped in for a quick once-over if the open spot on the program becomes available. It's got so that these radio maestros look on a film score with suspicion. They've been high pressured so much into giving major play to picture songs that have smudged up their programs, that an exploiter finds himself approaching these batonists with an air of apology whereas it used to be a question of picking the leader with the best hookup. As for themselves, say the exploitation execs, when they hear that a film score is coming into the house they start shivering with apprehension.

Object of both contempt and humor in the eastern publishing houses is Hollywood's addiction in squeezing a song with the film's title into the score. With but rare exception, the publishers' men hold, this type of tunes sounds as forced as the motive is obvious. The studios turn 'em over to the publishers with instructions to give the theme all they've got. With the publisher it becomes strictly a problem of forcing the song on the leader, and if it does go into the book it's because only of friendship. These tunes as a rule count big in overhead for the publisher, but little if not zero in copy sales.

Just to Make It Tougher

The plight of the exploiter when it comes to film songs has been made substantially tougher by various measures passed among branch unions of the American Federation of Musicians. One of these rules bars the mention of film credits on sustaining programs unless the prevailing commercial scale is paid the bandmen. The music men realize that the producers, to get around such obstacles, have had to increase the output of film, but they are not worried about having to contend with this angle for long. They figure that the studios will in quick

COLLEGE RHYTHM

The ninth and last of a series of articles on collegiate life, as regards dance music and dance bands.

The writers, staff members of publications at their respective colleges, have been asked by VARIETY to give the opinion of the student body rather than pass personal judgment. Neither has VARIETY further instructions as to what was to be said or how. These articles appear as the undergraduates have written them, with the expressed opinions being their own.

VARIETY publishes the series to give music men and band leaders a cross-section of current undergraduate opinion on dance music and bands, with the hope that it will be both informative and instructive. For what the college group has to say about dance music is deemed important in the trade.

MISSOURI

By Geo. J. Schulte, Jr., '39
(Missouri 'Showme')

Perhaps because of the general conservatism of the middle west, the Showme campus frowns on jitterbug music. Jitterbug talk is even smiled at as too, too modernistic for college men. The undergraduate instead prefers smooth dancing over the eccentric steps in vogue as the present jitterbug style. Rather the Missouri prom-goer chooses a flowing, even moving type of music to the college movie version.

In this section of the Bible Belt, popular choice for honors goes to Kay Kyser as the leader in swing. Despite a few brief mad flights off to applaud fast music, the general preference is by far in favor of his brand of smooth and sweet melody. Few really topflight orchestras ever hit the Missouri campus, but certainly interest is shown in radio programs. Definitely the leader, Kyser's soft melodious tone is aided by the personal and friendly touch he puts into his programs.

Preference for Kyser depends a lot upon his individuality in introductions and also upon an outstanding group of vocalists—a rare combination that supplements a perfectly smooth style. Little fast music but sweet swing makes the popular Kyser appeal at Missouri.

An unusually fast climbing favorite at Columbia is Larry Clinton. Clinton's 'Reverie' leads the league of popular music with 'Heart and Soul,' another favorite, especially among the Greeks (frats). But in swing talk-fests, Clinton is judged as being all out to out-Goodman Benny.

Ella Fitzgerald seems to lead the chore of vocalists. Her 'Tisket-Tasket' is played again and again at student sessions, whether under the control of a local band or imported orchestra.

Branching off into colored bands, of those who have visited the Missouri campus, Andy Kirk's outfit proved most popular. His orchestra showed all the Negroism of Harlem music, yet had the appeal of good music. Lots of fast pieces by Earl 'Father' Hines during his visit to the Missouri campus did receive a fair reception. A good show, typically Negro swing, won over a college audience usually opposed to such tactics.

Chick Webb depends strongly upon Ella Fitzgerald to carry his combination. Fats Waller's wallerings have definitely passed out, at least out this way. Every piece the same, a college audience soon tires of them. Too much yeh-man and tritely effervescent syncopation stifles the effect after hearing him several times.

Unique arrangements form the mainstay of the Fletcher Henderson aggregation. Following in his footsteps, though at a slower pace in the middle west at least, is brother Horace Henderson, a coming band in radio popularity.

Probably the best trumpet player in the world, Louie Armstrong's satchel-mouth detracts but still allows music that is liked. High note specialty pleases a college audience. Passing on to Duke Ellington, we come to the No. 1 Negro outfit. Excellent musical interpretation, by a musical genius. Ellington's ability to compose is often talked of in the 'Black and Tan Fantasy' and, in general, his ability to interpret the modern Negro is notable.

For showmanship rather than good music Cab Calloway leads in the Showme state league. Scat singing, however, overshadows the band and many times trite vocalizing spoils the performance.

Kemp, Waring, Dorsey and Lombardo

Jumping back to leaders in college bands in the east, the opinion is that Hal Kemp's brassy bring out a leader. Exact precision of the brass section definitely places that orchestra in the outstanding category. Loss of Skinny Ellis and the shaking up of a train wreck set this aggregation back, but the band still holds tight to the reins of popularity with the campus crowds, probably because of the collegiate background of the members.

The Fred Waring vogue has pretty well died down in the middle west. An outstanding show band, we thought long of the chance of bringing Waring to Columbia, Mo. They broadcast a rollicking yet dignified and artistic radio performance, and while novelties receive a great deal of interest from a college listener, for a prom the band must be able to sit up on the platform and play socko dance music.

Tommy Dorsey's outstanding arrangement of 'Marie' stamps his band as a modified swing band, far more smooth than the run-of-the-mill, so-called swing. Jimmy Dorsey's frivolous saxophone allows revelations comparable to the famous Clyde McCoy 'Sugar Blues' renditions.

Guy Lombardo, though pleasing to many, has slowed up in the consideration of the Missouri man. Stereotyped sweetness spoils the pleasantness of the music after a short time. Lombardo, though, ranks tops in this class of super-sweet. Wayne King and Jan Garber align themselves in a sub class under the same heading.

Soft and sweet Ted Weems ranks near the top in college estimation. And here again vocalists come in for a large share of the applause for Elmo Tanner and Perry Crovo fill the bill to give a real show. Bands, nationally famed, such as Paul Whiteman and Freddy Martin, receive good support of course. Martin's smooth style particularly creates awe hereabouts on the first hearing. Definitely the Martin way of easy rhythm is the Missouri way.

time overdo this device to the point where it will be laughed out of vogue by the public, as happened eight or nine years ago.

The situation between the producers and themselves, over the exploiters, has also its humorous side, even though the humor is on their side and it is tinged with wormwood. The studios have got into the habit of blaming the publisher if the filmicals flop. Its score hadn't received enough and the right kind of exploitation. It has also become common for the studio to advise the publishing adjunct or affiliate that the fate of the musical at the box-office depends on how it's ballyhooed over the air. The music boys say that instead of becoming filled with a sense of responsibility they merely shrug their shoulders with despondency. The oncoming score must indeed be terrible. Otherwise there wouldn't have been the SOS.

Band Bookings

Carl Moore, Music Box, Omaha, Jan. 31 to Feb. 12.
Don Bestor one-niting for CRA in midwest.
Earl Mellen, 400 Club, Wichita, Kan.
Dean Hudson touring South for Gus Edwards office.
Dusty Rhodes current at Greyhound Club, Louisville, Ky.
Howard Jacobs, 500 Club, Atlantic City, N. J.
Freddy Fisher's Schnickelfritzers, St. Paul hotel, St. Paul, Jan. 9, four weeks.
Maurie Sherman, Oriental Gardens, Chicago, Dec. 30.
Bob Grayson, Van Cleve hotel, Dayton, O., Jan. 5, four weeks.
Howard Le Roy, Lowry hotel, St. Paul, Dec. 31, two weeks.

15 Best Sheet Music Sellers

(Week ending Dec. 31, 1938)

My Reverie	Robbins
*Two Sleepy People	Famous
Deep in a Dream	Harms
All Ashore	Shapiro
Umbrella Man	Harms
*You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby	Remick
They Say	Witmark
You're the Only Star in My Blue Heaven	Shapiro
While a Cigarette Was Burning	ABC
Mexicali Rose	Cole
I Won't Tell a Soul	Crawford
*I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams	Santly
I Must See Annie Tonight	Bregman
Hurry Home	Spier
†This Can't Be Love	Chappell

* Indicates film musical song.

† Indicates stage production song.

The others are pops.

HARRY LINK JOINS METRO SETUP

Harry Link has quit Irving Berlin, Inc., to become general professional manager of the Metro-Robbins publishing group. He assumes his new post after a two-week vacation in Florida on which he started this week. Link will function under a contract which will give him professional authority over the professional activities of the Robbins Music Corp., Leo Feist, Inc., and Miller Music Co. He will also serve as the studio contact for all three firms.

Under the terms of the contract, which stipulates five years and an option for five more, Link will receive a guarantee of \$20,800 a year, 5% of the profits earned by the publishing group and necessary expenses. Although he wasn't required to report on his new job until Feb. 1, Link succeeded in straightening out pending matters with Saul H. Bornstein, v.p. and general manager of the Berlin firm last Friday (30). After establishing his staffs in the three Metro-Robbins concerns and co-ordinating their operations Link will make a trip to Hollywood.

While Jack Robbins had talked to Link about coming over for months the latter didn't decide to yield to the proposition until last week. Link then engaged Samuel Jesse Buzzell to represent him in drawing up the contract.

One of Link's main causes for hesitancy was the treatment that he got from Bornstein around Christmas. Berlin not only gave him a bonus of \$12,500 but arranged to have Link take a Florida vacation at the company's expense. Link joined Berlin as professional manager three years ago, coming from Donaldson, Douglas & Gumble where he had a piece of the business.

Before departing for Florida Link arranged for Elmore White, now with Kalmar-Ruby, to join Feist as New York professional manager. Also for Mary Murray to move over with him from Berlin.

FROSTBITTEN SNOW BALL

Pittsburgh Won't Pay \$5 a Couple—
Russ Morgan's Handful

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Local backers of 'first annual' Snow Ball at William Penn hotel Xmas night took it on the chin to tune of several grand when less than 150 couples showed up for music of Russ Morgan, Tommy Tucker and station WCAE's Airliners. Steep tariff of \$5 couple and worst storm of year combined to produce woe. Also bad break for Morgan since date was figured to help publicize his coming engagement Jan. 27 at Stanley theatre.

Floperoo just about washes up one-night biz for names in Pittsburgh for time being inasmuch as promoters have been dropping heavy sugar consistently since early last summer in effort to snare dance coin. Kid trade has switched to the cheaper roadhouses where they can hoof it all night and sit at tables for buck minimum.

Snow Ball was an attempt to revive old Xmas intercollegiate shindigs here when at least 2,000 couples used to pack entire 17th floor of William Penn at \$10 a throw. No dice in 1938.

ASRA, NAPA Merge

American Society of Recording Artists, of California, has merged itself with the National Association of Performing Artists. Al Jolson, who was president of ASRA, becomes v.p. of the amalgamation. Fred Waring retains his title of NAPA prez and Maurice Speiser remains general counsel.

Liquidated outfit was the first to attempt to set up a licensing right for recording artists. Arthur W. Levy, who started the California proposition, becomes a member of the NAPA board of directors.

Eddie Cherkose and William Lava wrote two songs for Republic's second Higgins Family series. Tunes are 'Daddy Mine, I Love You' and 'Over the Hill to the Poor House.'

Phonograph record industry has just closed its most prosperous year since 1930. This business, which only four years ago showed every sign of being in its last throes, sold 35,000,000 records in 1938. These figures have convinced the manufacturers that Americans have again become disc conscious in a big way, with the outlook so bright that they wouldn't be surprised to see two or three new recording firms bloom out during the current year.

Comeback of the industry has been more of a bounce than a gradual upclimb. Phonograph records reached their lowest ebb in 1934. The turnover was 10,000,000 records. Whereas in those days a Leo Reisman version of 'Night and Day' selling 40,000 copies became an item of trade wonder, today the sale of a 75c label in 150,000 quantities, as happened in the case of Tommy Dorsey's variations on 'Marie' and 'Song of India,' is treated as a natural development in the trend of the industry.

Manufacturers themselves aren't in close agreement on what started the comeback and why the pace in their favor has been so rapid. One talks about the new merchandising approach. Another holds that the boom has been mainly due to the public's discovery that on records it can get a style and quality of entertainment that is not readily available in radio.

Credit College Trade

A third analytical viewpoint credits much to the college trade. With a vast majority of the collegiate element the phonograph record was a new experience. Before the depression they were too young to appreciate it, while during the depression their folks probably couldn't afford to buy a phonograph machine. As enthusiasts the collegiates have few equals. As swing slowly but determinedly filtered into the stream of dance music the interest from this source quickened and the matter of discovering new styles and leaders became an exciting avocation as well as diversion.

In the opinion of most record manufacturers the contribution of coin-operated machines to their sales was an aftereffect rather than a cause. The recording companies had developed distinctive styles and stylings which the nickel-dropper craved but could not obtain at his own convenience from the radio loudspeaker.

Of the total amount of records sold last year 20,000,000 of them

ASCAP Squad in West

Field force of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, which Richard Powers heads, will operate in California for the next four months. Crew's job is to standardize rate structures and check up on music users that aren't licensed.

Powers' assistants, George Kopp and Larry Schulms, left New York Sunday (1) and are due to join Powers in Dallas for a joint trip to the Coast.

PUTTING TEETH INTO BRIBE CONTROL

Walter Douglas, chairman of the Music Publishers Protective Association, will call a meeting of the association's membership in a couple of weeks to consider the plan of the Professional Music Men, Inc., for eliminating bribery and other evils from song-plugging. PMMI's idea is to make this plan binding on publisher-employers so that the latter will have no alternative but to drop men deemed by the PMMI to have violated the plugger organization's by-law on unethical practices.

This by-law as devised by Samuel Jesse Euzzell, new PMMI counsel, was approved by a special PMMI committee last week. Douglas is mailing out copies of the by-law to publishers for study.

Shut Out of Performance Fees By Nazis, Refugee Attaches German Funds in United States

T. Dorsey's Date Book

Tommy Dorsey replaces Kay Kyser at the Pennsylvania Hotel, N. Y., April 21. Dorsey leaves his current spot at the New Yorker Hotel, N. Y., plays a series of one-nighters and theatre dates, and opens at the Paramount theatre, N. Y., April 5, following it with the Penn opening. Jimmy Dorsey replaces Tommy's crew at the New Yorker. Tommy's band is booked solidly until next Sept. 17.

No new vocalist to replace Edythe Wright yet signed by Tommy Dorsey. Expected deal with Nan Wynn went cold on money.

'SIGMA CHI' BOYS NEVER REPEATED

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Melrose Music Co. here has snagged the renewal rights to 'Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.' Song was originally written by F. Dudleigh Vernor and Byron Stokes while students at the U. of Michigan, strictly as a frat song. Walter Melrose bought the publishing rights in 1928 for popular distribution and it has been established since as a top standard tune.

Team of Vernor and Stokes has never written any other successful tune. Stokes is in ad biz in Chi and Vernor is an organist in Detroit.

Robert Katscher, noted Austrian composer, rates as the first refugee who has attempted to collect royalties due him from a Nazi-dominated performing rights society through resort to American courts. His counsel, Sol A. Rosenblatt, has attached \$1,700 in funds belonging to the Austrian performing rights society. Rosenblatt proposes to move for a summary judgment in Katscher's favor in a New York court the latter part of this week.

Katscher, who wrote, 'When Day Is Done,' came over last summer and worked on the Shubert's production of his 'You Never Know,' which had been adapted from his own score of 'Candle Light.' Katscher's equity in the Austrian performing rights society, AKM, was wiped out when the German Nazi government by decree merged AKM with the German performing rights society, STAGMA.

Hears From Berlin

After Katscher had retained Rosenblatt to see what could be done about collecting money due him from AKM the lawyer discovered that the foreign organization had some \$1,700 on deposit in a New York bank. Rosenblatt got a court order attaching this money and then served notice of the act on AKM through publication. Last week Rosenblatt received a letter from a Berlin lawyer representing STAGMA which informed him that AKM had been liquidated and that under such circumstances it could not be sued. Since this Berlin lawyer had no authority to act in the New York courts Rosenblatt put the letter in an envelope and mailed it back to him.

It is expected that Katscher's action will serve as the forerunner of a number of similar suits in the United States against Nazi controlled organizations. Pertinent to this case is the finding of a Dutch court which recently held that the defendant, a Viennese composer, was entitled to similarly seized funds since the Nazi collections will never reach the rightful sharers.

New Nebraska Atty.-Gen. Called Anti-ASCAP Law Offside from the Start

Lincoln, Jan. 1.

No reason why ASCAP shouldn't look to Nebraska with a glint of Happy New Year, what with Attorney General Richard C. Hunter skidding from office (5) in favor of recently elected Walter Johnson. Hunter's office prepared the case for the anti-ASCAP bill, passed in the 1937 legislative session, which slaps any music combo for price fixing \$5,000 fine for each operation in the state.

Walter Johnson was a member of the 1937 legislature, which passed the measure, but he wouldn't vote for or against it at that time. Said he believed it was unconstitutional then and has nothing brought to his attention to change his mind.

When the case was filed Judge Munger, one of the three to look the bill over for infringement on powers of congress, said he had 'grave doubts' about the bill passing constitutional inspection. This, with Johnson's known feeling, leaves the legislation standing pretty well alone.

Harry James Pencilled In

New band to be headed by Harry James, first trumpet with Benny Goodman, goes into rehearsal Jan. 6. Embryo outfit has already been dated for a short stay at the Statler Hotel, Boston, opening Feb. 10. James has taken Buddy Rich from Bunny Berigan's orch to handle the drums.

Lionel Hampton and Teddy Wilson, also stars in Goodman's band, will not pick up their own batons for some time yet. Ed Stein will manage James on the road with Willard Alexander and the Music Corp. of America booking.

BOOM ON WAX IN 1938

By Ben Bodec

came within the popular classification. The manufacturers contend that the number of coin-operated machines in this country have been considerably over-estimated. Their count is 175,000 such mechanisms. It is pretty well agreed among them that these machines absorb about 60% of their popular output.

Foreign Biz Off

A curious corollary to the record trend is the fact that as business has gone up in this country sales in Latin American and other foreign language versions have fallen off. The manufacturers can't account for this reverse movement unless that it is that the Latin American trade is now going through the phase that was experienced in the United States prior to 1930. Radio set sales have been on the sharp upbeat in recent years through the South and Central American companies and it is likely that the new found toy has forced the wax-playing mechanism into temporary discard.

Another contributory cause to the increased sales of the past year or two has been the resourcefulness of American set manufacturers in turning out low-priced turntables that could easily be attached to the living room radio. Practically every set manufacturer now offers a combination machine. An added stimulant to sales has been the wide spread of record clubs. RCA Victor, which has made this angle an important adjunct of its merchandising policies, figures that its own record club absorbs a minimum of 4,000 of its own labels a month.

Of no little uncton to the pride of recording managers is the attitude of the general run of performing names. The very artists who but a couple years ago scorned having their talent imprinted in phonograph records are now anxious to tie up with some label. Quite a number of the top-runners who quit when the royalties got paltry are to be found on one or another of the current release lists.

As for major sellers in the pop field RCA Victor gives the nod to Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Larry Clinton, Sammy Kaye and Hal Kemp. Decca finds the call best with the product of Bing Crosby, Russ Morgan, Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Dorsey and Bob Crosby. Latter label's top sellers for 1938 were Crosby's version of 'Lilani' and Ella Fitzgerald's 'A-Tisket A-tasket' (both in the 250,000 class) and the Andrews Sisters' 'Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen.' In the realm of the American Rec-

ord Co. the mainstays under the Brunswick label proved to be Eddy Duchin with Patricia Norman ('Ole Man Mose'), Duke Ellington ('I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart'), Kay Kyser ('Music, Maestro') and Red Noble-Mildred Bailey ('Weekend of a Private Secretary'), while the leading Vocalionites were Johnny Hodges ('Jeep's Blues'), Slim 'n' Slam ('Tutti-Fruiti') and Al Donohue ('Stop Beating Around the Mulberry Bush').

The richest manuscript source of the past year for the entire recording business was the score of Walt Disney's 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.' The record turnover all around on this one was well over the 1,500,000 mark.

CBS Buys Columbia

From an organizational viewpoint the biggest event in the recording industry for '38 was the purchase of the American Record Co. (Brunswick, Columbia and Vocalion) by the Columbia Broadcasting System from the Herbert J. Yates interests. I. D. and Dr. Leon Levy, CBS stockholders and owners of WCAU, Philadelphia, have 20% of the new acquisition. While the Yates-CBS negotiations were going on reports cropped up that Harry Cox, formerly head of the Columbia Phonograph Co., was preparing to return to the industry with Ben Selvin as his recording chief, and that Percy L. Deutsch, president of the World Broadcasting System, proposed to enter the phonograph record field this spring.

Problem of no mean proportions which faces the phonograph industry involves the demand of music publishers that they be counted in on the rewards stemming from the coin-machine business. The legalistic wedge that the pubs have elected is based on that provision in the copyright law which invests the copyright owner with the exclusive right to make arrangements of his work. The disc manufacturers have so far declined to recognize this right as part of a new publisher's licensing form with the result that they must either pay the statutory 2c. royalty or refrain from including the latest tunes in their forthcoming releases. Even if they pay the 2c. fee there's the question as to whether the copyright owner would, by injunction proceedings, restrain the manufacturer from selling such records for other than home use. As 1938 ended the manufacturers started to show the effects of this dilemma. Fear agitating them was that the situation might seriously diminish that major source of their income, the coin-operated machine.



DECCA RECORDS, Inc.

Congratulates **VARIETY** on its
"Third of a Century"



DECCA RECORDS, Inc.

Band Reviews

HAPPY FELTON Orchestra (20)
With Lorraine Barrie, Louise Dunn,
Billy Gilbraith, Eddie Platt
Sherman House, Chicago

Felton is a newcomer to Chicago but on his first week's reaction in the College Inn he indicates that he

can stick around. It's hokum entertaining band, and for medium-priced, general-run-of-public spot, Felton's group rates.

Felton is a big overgrown fellow with ease of movement and a relaxed personality that will grease with most audiences.

Felton's orchestra goes in for a flock of special material items. Practically every song, even the straight pop tunes, has a special lyric sprung in on it somewhere. They open with a special lyric routine, and close with a specially written finale. It's all nice stuff, intelligible and pretty clever. It's hokey for the most part, but the audience gobble it.

Besides Felton's easy yodeling there are four standard warblers with the outfit. None of them is permitted to snare the center of the floor and wear out the microphone.

They are on and off quickly after one or two songs. Eddie Platt sings semi-pop songs with plenty of deep baritone and power; Billy Galbraith is an Irish crooner and okay; Louise Dunn is the femme counterpart of Platt, singing semi-classical stuff with plenty of soprano, and Lorraine Barrie is the swinger sister and full of jive. Clean-cut and youthful. Entire band has an air of youthfulness that gives it a bouncing quality highly suitable for the type of entertaining they toss out.

Gold.

GRIFF WILLIAMS ORCH (13)
With Buddy Marino
Hotel Schroeder, Milwaukee

Griff Williams offers sweet, interpolations of swing. A likable lad. Buddy Marino, only member left of the original band organized five

years ago, rates okeh on the pipes and is smooth on interps of swing ballads. Williams strives for the unusual and orchestra is built around his piano duos.

Direct from Victor Hugo in Hollywood, after stretch here, Williams shifts next to the Aragon, Chi.

Weber.

AL KAVELIN AND ORCH (19)
With Patti Morgan, Al Shelleday
New Penn, Pittsburgh

New band and a new idea for Al Kavelin. 'Cascading Chords' is the rhythm style tag Kavelin's peddling and it's ear magic and danceable, too. Steel guitar effects are obtained by melodic successions in the reed section, with the saxes hitting them off first and then the clarinets, buried in large megaphones for muted sweetness. Showy and original. Crowd gathers around the bandstand trying to figure out how Kavelin achieves tones.

It's a small crew, three reeds, three brasses, drums, guitar and piano, in addition to Kavelin, who picks up the fiddle only during broadcasts, but for style Kavelin's concentrating on, that seems to be sufficient. Particularly when in the swing for dansapation, band sounds as if it has double the personnel. All in the arrangements, and what batoneer labels the 'cascading.'

In these days of stylized combos, Kavelin's been wise in happening on something that not only sounds good, but also makes 'em talk and wonder.

Cohen.

Edward Kay did the scoring for 'Tough Kid' at Monogram.

Johnny Lange and Lew Porter sold 'A Rainbow Is Riding the Range' to Sam Katzman for his next Tim McCoy western.

Music Notes

Gus Kahn and Ormond Ruthven ditted 'Rendezvous in Rio,' to be sung in 'I Take This Woman,' at Metro.

Constantin Bakaleinikoff scoring Metro's 'Woman in White.'

Sigmund Romberg and Edward Heyman clefted 'The Night We Named the Day' for Metro's 'Ice Follies of 1939.'

Herbert Stothart handling the score of 'Idiot's Delight' (M-G).

THE HOUSE OF 1000 HITS

Nearing the Top!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LOVE

Watch Out For
AMONG THOSE SAILING

Xavier Cugat's
NIGHT MUST FALL

Emery Deutsch's
BEAUTIFUL DANUBE
No Wonder You're Blue

Joe Cherniavsky's
STRANGE

EDWARD B. MARKS
MUSIC CORPORATION
RADIO CITY, NEW YORK

An acknowledgment of a most agreeable and pleasant three and one-half year association with Mr. IRVING BERLIN, Mr. SAUL BORNSTEIN and Mr. MAX WINSLOW, and many thanks for the splendid co-operation of my staff whose integrity and loyalty I appreciate so much.

HARRY LINK

December 31, 1938

Season's Greetings
JULIAN T. ABELES
745 Fifth Ave., New York

Interoffice Communication . . .

From—**JACK ROBBINS**

To...—**HARRY LINK**

At...—**LEO FEIST, INC.**

January 3, 1939.

We're all thrilled, Harry, because we regard you as the top man in our profession.

Each and every one of us is with you one hundred percent.

Good luck!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Robbins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name of the sender.

FOR

ROBBINS MUSIC CORPORATION

LEO FEIST, INC.

MILLER MUSIC, INC.

Nitery Reviews

EARL CARROLL'S (HOLLYWOOD)

Hollywood, Dec. 26.

Harrison & Fisher, Susan Miller, Beryl Wallace, Reginald Craig, Dorothy Garron, Denise, Vivien Fay, Paul Gerrits, Three Sophisticated Ladies, A. Robins, Arren & Broderick, Archie Bleyer Orch, Edward Durant Orch.

Picture mob sampled an Earl Carroll nitery revue Christmas night amid the splendor of his theatre-restaurant. Carroll took a lacing from this crowd, the dressiest and most critical any night spot ever played to en masse, for unveiling his two-hour show in a half-baked

state. Everything went sour, routines askew and mechanical gadgets failed to click.

Despite it all, Hollywood went for the enterprise in a big way and will keep it going big for the first half of the new year at least. Other niteries are already feeling the effects of the spot's popularity and the casualty score after New Year's will be heavy.

It's a typical revue that Carroll is tossing in with the dinner and dancing on stage before, after and between the two acts of his extravaganza, which is overrun with girls, some 60-odd of them, brilliantly and at times scantily clad. While massive, it's also slow, but considerable tightening and speeding up of the big numbers, which is bound to

come, the revue should level off to something for which the town has long hungered. The Carroll stamp is everywhere evident and the town with its transients and racetrack devotees should give it a heavy play.

Nut is estimated at around \$17,500 a week. From present indications the weekly take should run from \$21,000 to \$25,000. Opening night was good for \$15,000 at \$10 a head. To woo the after-theatre crowd, Carroll is offering a supper for \$1.50, which includes dancing and a look at the second act, which starts rolling at midnight.

Much publicized 'inner circle' presently is serving as a wine store-room. Its completion is still three weeks off. Membership is open to anyone plunking down \$500 for the privilege of its exclusive quarters and a seat on the first terrace at show time. About 100 is capacity for the closed-off room, wherein a private bar, secluded dancing and lounging appointments are available. Thus far the 'circle' membership is

around 200, with the lists still open. The five C's does not include waivers on the dinner or liquid tab.

First half of the Carroll revue is largely big production and comedy. Harrison and Fisher, Denise and Vivien Fay intersperse dancing with a generous backing of flimsy femininity. Three Sophisticated Ladies scored with their knockabout routine, a la Three Stooges. Also panicking the mob with broad comedy are A. Robins, clown, who carries all his props on his person, and Arren and Broderick, slapstick singing turn. Paul Gerrits, in for his monolog and skating trick, also m.c.s. Susan Miller has a pleasing voice.

Carroll burns out several production numbers. 'By Candlelight,' 'Can Can,' 'Temple of Beauty,' 'You're So Lovely' and radium spectacles being outstanding. Beryl Wallace's Bolero number was dropped when musicians union demanded scale for 20 dusky tom-tom thumpers.

Ray Noble opened with his band for the dance and production, but the English maestro bowed out the second night after a series of disagreements with Carroll. His band remains, with Archie Bleyer rushed in to baton. Carroll also ran into a maze of union troubles that threatened to postpone his premiere, but he squared matters and the spot is now running 100% union in all departments.

Harry Long staged under Carroll's direction. Costume and scenery designs are by Jean Le Seyer. Original music by Louis Alter. Paul Webster, Noble, Charles Newman, Walter Samuels, Dorcas Cochran and Charles Rosoff. Eddie Prinz staged the dances and the ballet numbers are by Nico Cherisse. Helm.

International Casino, N.Y.

Jay C. Flippen, Harald and Lola, The Bo Brummels, Tito Valdez and Corinne, Emma and Henry, The Maxellos, Gertrude Hoffman Girls, Denett and Dae, Grace and Nikko, Three Stooges, Franklin D'Amore and Anita, Ray Kavanaugh band, Eddie Brand and Rhythm Boys.

Merging the two Clifford C. Fischer shows which opened here recently—one had gone on for dinner, the other for supper—and adding Jay C. Flippen, plus other acts, the International Casino has freshened up its stage department. 'Plaisirs de Paris,' billing of the former dinner show, is retained. Supper presentation had been known as 'Montmartre a Minuit.' Best features and backgrounds, as

well as numbers, of productions, are in pace is fast. A mission, however, oldtime two-a-day ner. During this permitted on the

Although the show in background, it Broadwayish, with ers helping to l. Flippen, as m.c., dit as he's capable of do ing night, Wednesda probably will expand some bits, too, and sings usually clever arrange 'Small Fry' that's well do.

Supporting talent is only though the colorful Fischer staging, the girls, costuming, lighting, etc., provide a kick. In addition to the regular showgirls here, Casino augments with the Gertrude Hoffman Girls in well-executed routines. A colorful rumba is included, topped by the dance specialty of Harald and Lola, holdovers, in which the girl simulates a snake effectively.

Others added to the show are The Maxellos, veteran risley artists, the Bo Brummels, a stooge type of comedy instrumental trio, who are quite funny; and Corinne with Tito Valdez in the finale with their saucy dancing.

The Maxellos are trying for laughs in a manner similar to various roller-skating acts, which have drawn recruits from the audience to participate in some risley work.

Holdovers, in addition to those named, are Franklin D'Amore and Anita, who recently doubled into the Radio City Music Hall; Grace and Nikko, comedy dance acts, more subtle than the average team; Emma and Henry, comedy acrobats, and various lessers. Ray Kavanaugh's band, playing the show smartly, replaces Yascha Bunchuk. Eddy Brand's outfit, the relief combo, is a holdover. He also performs in the Streets of Paris room. Char.

Oscar Levant and Harry Tobias turned over their song, 'Made For Each Other' for publication by Crawford Music Publishing Co.

Max Steiner and Arthur Quenzer clefled 'Judy' for 'Dark Victory' at Warners.

OLD SONG SUGGESTIONS

FOR YOUR PROGRAMS
JIMMY McHUGH'S

"I Feel a Song Comin' On"
ROBBINS MUSIC CORP.

Season's Greetings from HARMS

The nation's favorite ballad—

DEEP IN A DREAM

The song everybody's humming—

UMBRELLA MAN

Still the season's novelty sensation—

THE GIRL FRIEND OF THE WHIRLING DERVISH

Two early candidates for your hit parade—

I WON'T GO HOME

and

WAIT UNTIL MY HEART FINDS OUT

And this new hit will soon be ready—

GRANDMA SAID

HARMS INC. — R. C. A. Bldg. New York — Mack Goldman, Prof. Manager

With the Season's
Most Cordial Greetings



JACK BREGMAN
ROCCO VOCCO
CHESTER CONN

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM

CRAWFORD MUSIC CORPORATION

OUR BIG HIT

I WON'T TELL A SOUL

(I Love You)

(I'm Afraid)

THE MASQUERADE IS OVER

By Herb Magidson and Allie Wrubel, Writers of
"Music Maestro Please"

IN PREPARATION

SING MY HEART

By Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler
From RKO Picture, "Love Affair"

ENGLAND'S NUMBER ONE WALTZ HIT

THE SWEETEST SONG IN THE WORLD

LIKE A GHOST FROM THE BLUE

PLAYWRIGHTS' PRODUCING COMPANY, INC., present
WALTER HUSTON

"KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY"

By Maxwell Anderson and Kurt Weill

SEPTEMBER SONG

IT NEVER WAS YOU

THERE'S NOWHERE TO GO BUT UP

From Olsen & Johnson's Broadway Success: "Hellzapoppin'"

IT'S TIME TO SING ALOHA

FUDDLE DE DUDDLE

WHEN YOU LOOK IN YOUR LOOKING GLASS

CRAWFORD MUSIC CORPORATION

1619 BROADWAY

NEW YORK CITY

SEASON'S GREETINGS

CHAPPELL & CO., Inc.
RKO BUILDING
1270 SIXTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

BERLIN BULLETIN

The Song That Will Bring Back the Waltz . . .

IRVING BERLIN'S

WE'LL NEVER KNOW

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN SO SOON

By Abner Silver, Edward Heyman and Sam Coslow

IT'S A LONELY TRAIL

(When You're Travelin' All Alone)

By Nick Kenny, Charles Kenny and Vaughn De Leath

HAVE A HEART

By Mickey Rooney and Sidney Miller

IRVING BERLIN, Inc., 799 Seventh Ave., N. Y.

ABNER SILVER

Greets Y-O-U and the New Year with

"HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN SO SOON"

and

"AN OLD CURIOSITY SHOP"

*Happy New Year
To All My Friends
From Hawaii to Miami
And Oslo to Sydney*

SAMMY

(That Old Feeling)

FAIN

Season's Greetings from WITMARK

A triple threat from the Cosmopolitan Production "Going Places" —

JEEPERS CREEPERS

SAY IT WITH A KISS

MUTINY IN THE NURSERY

The ballad that's sweeping the country —

THEY SAY

In preparation . . .

A swell new tune —

GOOD FOR NOTHIN'

(But Love)

And a smash score from M-G-M's "Honolulu" —

HONOLULU

THE LEADER DOESN'T LIKE MUSIC

THIS NIGHT

(Will Be My Souvenir)

M. WITMARK & SONS—R. C. A. Bldg. New York Norman Foley, Prof. Manager

Season's Greetings from REMICK

The song sensation from Warner Bros.' "Hard To Get" —

YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY

By the writers of "You Go To My Head" —

LET'S STOP THE CLOCK

That beautiful ballad —

OLD FOLKS

Two hits that are still going strong —

SO HELP ME

and

THIS IS MADNESS

(To Love Like This)

Almost ready . . .

A new song by the writers of the two above hits —

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

REMICK MUSIC CORP.—R. C. A. Bldg.—New York—Charlie Warren, Prof. Manager

'Variety's' Oldest Subscriber, Or The Bad Notice Still Pursued 'Em

By Joe Hayman
(Hayman & Franklin)

London, Dec. 20.

We became the first subscriber to VARIETY 33 years ago, and today we still remain its oldest customer. Funny how it happened. In 1904 my pal, Houdini, booked us (Hayman and Franklin) in England. We played 40 weeks and then went 'home' for a season booked by the 'greatest of them all,' William Morris.

Proud of our success abroad, we opened at Proctor's 23rd St. theatre new act, new wardrobe, raise in wages, everything just perfect. Then came the bump. Star abroad, but just an opening act at Proctor's, New York.

A new theatrical paper was born that week called VARIETY. You should know what I called it, after I read the notice we got in its first issue. Believe it or not, everybody in show business must have read that notice, including our agent, Bill Morris. Consolingly, Bill said, 'Don't you believe it'. The next day I went to the office of that new paper and met for the first time the man who owned it. I paid a year's subscription, because I wanted to make certain I would read what they said about the other actors. I paid the money to Sime personally, four bucks for a foreign subscription. He knew who I was, his face lit up and his eyes twinkled when he said, 'Hayman, you are my first subscriber, and \$4 a year is all you are ever going to pay for my paper', a promise which has been carried out, of course, since that day in 1905.

We got better notices later on when we changed the act around, and got acclimatized, and we knew what it was all about.

But that 'first' notice, wow! On the 15th anniversary of VARIETY, that lousy notice was again flung in our faces. We were stars by then in England, and VARIETY was being read by the English actors, agents and managers. Quite a few actors showed us that notice gleefully, and every time we asked for a raise in salary the managers dug up that notice. Our agent knew it by heart, no foolin'. He could recite it to us—and he did.

So what? So 10 years later, in 1930, VARIETY must have another birthday party, and—well, maybe you guessed it? They reprinted that notice again, but this time I laughed. I had ceased being an actor; I was a producer and author, and doing okay at it.

Now this 'third-of-a-century' pops up, and maybe they will do it all over again. To hell with it, I don't mind now; it's a laugh. Time mellowed everything, yeah! even a bad notice. Things have happened to the show business in England since we came here in 1904. We've seen it change from the 'music-hall' to 'variety', to 'vaudeville' and then to 'pictures'. In 34 years playing thru from N.Y. we have seen the game shot to pieces, and I'll bet you a year's sub to VARIETY that live vaudeville will be back here in the very near future.

We played for Barrasford, De Frece, MacNaghten, Adney Payne, Walter Gibbons, Sir Edward Moss, J. L. Graydon, all dead, all gone, names only a memory of days that were. Not one of those great showmen owned less than 10, and some of them 25 and more theatres where variety was played. We played 72 weeks in one theatre without moving our trunk out. That was the London Pavilion—it's a picture house now. Darn it, nearly all of them are. We played 26 weeks a year for 11 years at the Oxford and Tivoli, one show a night, an actor's paradise. It was show business, that was!

I've long since come to the conclusion that the late Chicot did us a great big favor. Maybe if that had been a good notice we might not have become the 'No. 1 cash customer'. Also, maybe, we might have remained in show business in the U. S., and that is too terrific a fate to even think of.

Evelyn Nesbit's Dates

Evelyn Nesbit went into the Palace, Buffalo, Friday (30) for a week, to be followed by the Roxy, Cleveland, Jan. 6. Then shifts to the Silver Dollar club, Boston, for two weeks. Theatre date in Toronto may top that.

• 15 YEARS AGO •

(From VARIETY and Clipper)

Denver downtown managers worried because the nabe houses seemed to be getting all the best of it. Prices were more attractive, and patrons willing to wait for the pictures.

So many church organizations playing pictures for their own profit the regular exhibs were complaining to the Hays organization.

Wired Wireless making a test on Staten Island. Claimed to have 2,000 subscribers at \$2 per month. Only radio company paying for talent.

Texas Interstate Circuit, which was playing occasional touring shows, advertised that unless patronage bettered the legit shows would be cut out. Not paying.

VARIETY getting out its anniversary number. Ran 164 pages.

One anniversary story told of the gradual disappearance of Coney Island.

Yiddish shows were selling \$100 worth of tickets for \$20. 'Benefit' system was a lifesaver for midweek business. Anyone could have a benefit who would buy out the house for 20%.

Christmas week was a disappointment to Broadway legit. Business did not come back until two days after the holiday. 'Follies' was tops with \$42,000.

In its resume of trade papers, VARIETY said: 'Clipper was in miserable shape when taken over by VARIETY. VARIETY turned Clipper into an outdoor sheet and it has been almost as miserable ever since.'

Heavy drive on for the repeal of the N. Y. censor laws. Had the backing of Gov. Al Smith. But the reformers were too strong.

Ralph Whitehead took a half page for an open letter from Rennie Riano telling him he was the best comedian ever. He agreed with her.

Palace, N. Y., faced its first damage suit over its action in refusing to recognize tickets purchased from specs. Benjamin Sachs was asking for \$10,500.

Shortage of dancing acts for productions and vaude. Bookers could not seem to dig any up.

Bill Calhoun reopened his Hawaiian Paradise Isle, Hollywood, with Andy Iona's orchestra and Princess Luana.



GREETINGS from
SONNY KENDRA
and His Orchestra

Now in his second year at the Stork Club, New York.

Indie Pittsburgh Performer Unit Reaches CIO OK

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Entertainers Federation of America, independent Pittsburgh group of actors and nitery performers which recently broke off negotiations for affiliation with the American Federation of Actors, organized the Congress for Industrial Organization last week. Organization, which has 169 members, was granted first charter of its kind to be issued by CIO and henceforth will be known as United Entertainers Local, Industrial Union 921.

Application for charter was made, officials said, when Actors Federation refused to accede to their demands for local autonomy.

Local Entertainers Federation was formed three years ago as a social organization and last year was converted into an independent collective bargaining agency. Officers are James L. Loster, president; Bobby Fife, vice president; Sidney Magidson, treasurer; Betty Simon, recording secretary, and Amy Berlinger, corresponding secretary.

Billy House Set for Vaude After Closing Air Show

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Closing his radio show for Wrigley's after 26 weeks, Billy House, returns to vaude and has eight weeks set. Starts at the Palace here Jan. 13 and then goes to Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Washington and eastern burgs.

For the most part the act will be a presentation of the radio 'Laugh Liner' comedy.

Australian Vaude Brisk

By Eric Gorrick

Sydney, Dec. 15.

Strong public yen for flesh-blood saw vaude-revue take a high swing into popular fancy during 1938. Looks like sticking that way, too, and building even higher in 1939. Australia has been good going for U. S. acts.

There are no split weeks over this way; acts play a city like Melbourne for five weeks straight on two-a-day, with Sabbath show taboo, and then move over to Sydney for similar playing time. If the act clicks, then an option is taken giving added dates, plus the possibility of dates in New Zealand.

To Frank Neil, m. d., Tivoli Theatre, largely goes the credit for revitalizing vaude-revue. Neil took a chance. He saw that the only way to win trade would be to import talent from England and America. Early acts brought out were mainly Pacific Coasters. Better acts were needed. More risk. Fortunately the b.o. did go up and today quality artists are commonplace. Top ones at the moment are Larry Adler and Will Mahoney.

Imported acts got an even bigger break when Neil made a deal with Greater Union to spot them in their

houses in conjunction with pic policy. Deal continued for some months, but G.U.T. decided to quit this entertainment sphere and stick to pix alone.

At this stage Hoyts, G.U.T.'s opposition jumped in a deal made with Neil for talent. British and U. S. acts are now finding pay envelopes increased with a run over Hoyts chain with pix, in addition to their Tivoli dates. And to make matter nicer, the Australian Broadcasting Commission, national station operators, gives air time at pay to suitable acts. Currently, Larry Adler is doing a twice-weekly session for the A.B.C. All of which goes to show the dough is right for the right type of acts in these parts.

Marcus Wowed 'Em

A. B. Marcus was the first one to put vaude-revue into legit theatres at \$2 top. In conjunction with the Fullers and Snider-Dean, the Marcus show, after cleaning up in New Zealand, came to Sydney and created an absolute furore, repeating in Melbourne and other ace spots of the Commonwealth. It's gossip that Marcus left here with a profit of \$28,000. Nice dough to take out of any country.

Fullers then imported Harry How-

Speaking of vaudeville First—who was?—we must not forget the firsts who blazed the trail and laid the foundation of Vaudeville. Their names may mean nothing to the present generation but it was due to their skill, talents and originality that made Vaudeville the first on the list of America's entertainment for over two decades. It was through these firsts, pioneering in free-and-easies, barrooms, museums and honky-tonks that made it possible for us to have our present day stars of the stage, screen and radio. And so I give you a few of the names that learned their 'trade' the 'hard way.'

Nick Norton & Bill Emmett did the first 'double-dutch' act in 1864. They sang, 'Going to the Fight Mitt Siegel' for a finish.

Harry Montague did the first double-entendre act in 1870.

Maggie Weston introduced the first 'Irish Biddy' in variety 1872.

Sanford & Wilson did the first musical act in 1873.

Diamond & Ryan and Scanlon & Cronin were about the first Irish teams in 1873.

First real sketch artists were John & Maggie Fielding, 1873, followed in 1877 by another great sketch team Charles Rogers & Mattie Vickers.

The French Twins and the Raymond Sisters were the first sister acts, 1873.

The Nicholl Sisters did the first blackface sister act.

Walter Wentworth did the first contortion act in 1872.

In that same year Hughy Dogherty and Add Ryman were the first to do the 'stump speech.'

First to wear big comedy shoes was Col' Burgess in 1872. Tom Hickey, of Hickey & Nelson, was also considered one of the originators of this comedy make-up.

Sam Rickey was a bit ahead of the original Pat Rooney as the first Irish comic. That was in 1872 but Pat Rooney was the first single act to ever receive \$100 a week.

The first blackface quartet was called 'Hamtown Students,' 1873.

John LeClair was the first single juggler, 1873.

The original comedy acrobatic act was performed by Johnson & Brun, 1873.

It was in 1874 that the first German comedians first appeared. Gus Williams, George S. Knight and Lew Spencer.

In that year De Witt Cook did a club juggling act.

In 1876 E. M. Hall was considered the greatest of all banjo players. Frank Bush, Howard & Thompson and Sam Curtis started the 'Jew comic' vogue in 1876.

Jimmy Bradley originated the sand-jig dance and Kitty O'Neill was the first woman to do it.

Barlow Bros. and the Girard Bros. were the originators of the double sand-jig dancing.

'FIRSTS'

By Joe Laurie, Jr.

In 1877, the Poole acrobatic pedestal climber. Gus Hill was the first club swinger in 1878.

Jap & Fanny Delano did the first man and woman talking act, 1878.

The first water tank act, such as eating under water, was Wallace, the Man Fish, 1878.

Lurline was the first under-water tank act performed by a woman.

Maggie Cline was the first single woman comedy Irish singer, 1879.

In that same year Fanny Bean, Millie and the Barretts did the first 'lady' song and dance act.

First vaudeville children stage artists were Baby Rhinehart, Little Rosebud, Baby McDonald and Master Dunn, 1879.

The first male trio singing act appeared 1879, the Three Rankins.

Imro Fox was the first comedy magician, 1880. Bunt & Rudd did a double comedy magic act in 1879.

Carrie Swain was the first woman blackface knockabout acrobatic act, 1881.

Leon, William Harry Rice, Charles Heywood and Lind were the original female impersonators, they all did acts around 1885.

Blockson & Burns did a comedy perch act in 1888.

Will H. Fox did the original pianolog.

The American Four was considered the greatest quartet. It consisted of two two-men acts doubling up—Wayne, Lovely, Cotton and Bedue. The Big Four came later, with Lester & Allen & Smith & Waldron.

The first 'kidding act' and 'topical songsters' were Lester & Allen.

Low Randall was the first buck and wing dancer.

Dainty Katie Seymour (of London) was the first 'skirt' dancer.

Charles Guyer and Nellie O'Neill were the first 'roughhouse' dancers.

Deleahanty & Hengler were the first to do 'neat' song and dance.

Prof. Davis and Trovillo were the first ventriloquists to introduce the mechanical walking and talking figures.

The first 'electrical clown' was Herr Tholen. He sang with a poodle.

Topack & Steele were the first 'knockabout' comedians.

Major Burke was the original 'lightning drill' artist with musket and bayonet.

Melville & Stetson, a sister act, were the first to do imitations.

Lester & Williams, Arthur O'Brien and Lew Carroll were the first to introduce parodies.

Caron & Herbert were the first acrobatic clowns.

Borani Bros. were the first to do a somersault. They were Englishmen and the originators of the 'Borani somersault.'

Garnella Bros. the first to do the 'shoulder to shoulder' double.

The Sigrist Family were the first American acrobatic act.

Bohee Bros. the first to do a double banjo song and dance act.

Harper & Stencil were the first and about the only double one-legged song and dance men. Harper had his right leg off while Stencil had his left leg off. They wore the same size shoes and would buy a pair for both of them, one wearing the right and the other the left.

Yeamans & Titus (Annie Yeaman's daughter) did the first 'piano act.' Jolly Nash was the first extemporaneous singer.

George Cain did the first 'smoke' singing. He would have a butt of a cigar in his mouth while singing, put the full lighted cigar in his mouth and have smoke come out while singing his songs.

George Wilson introduced the first 'laughing song.'

Al Jolson was the first to sing on his knees.

Harry G. Richmond was the first to do a 'tramp' act.

Kelly & Murphy did the first boxing act on the stage.

It was in 1905 that acrobats first starting wearing pads on head while balancing.

Lumiere's motion pictures were first shown at Keith's Union Square in July, 1895.

First 'Continuous Vaudeville' was at Keith's Boston in 1898, and at Proctor's 23rd St., New York.

It was in 1907 that the first 'Family Vaudeville' was started.

Tony Pastor had the first vaudeville 'roadshow.'

Mike Leavitt the first to use the term Vaudeville.

Jack Norworth was the first actor to write a column in VARIETY.

FEAR-CHILLED VAUDEVILLE

By Joe Schoenfeld

Like the barroom brawler who could have licked the crowd if somebody hadn't held his arms, vaudeville wasn't permitted to answer the bell this past year. It had all the healthy symptoms of a comeback except one—major circuit co-operation.

Public demand for stage shows has been at its highest pitch in 10 years; theatre operators acknowledged the need of a b.o. hypo as early as last June, when not even triple-features, giveaways, bingo and banks could stem skidding grosses; newspapers editorialized on the boon to the theatre in general if vaudeville showed a marked revival. And the circuits at that time appeared to lend a willing ear to all the clamor, but later, in the face of future events, they raised a barrier against a stage revival which nothing could pierce.

Fear of Unions

One major factor worked against vaude with the circuits, and that was their fear of further union entanglements and opposition. In contrast to past seasons all of the major booking offices discounted a possible shortage of talent; they felt there was a sufficient supply of acts and enough bands around with radio buildups to fill the need of headliners. They were also prepared to spend some coin in exploiting stage shows as they hadn't been for years, but then the first union trouble exploded in their kissers and all enthusiasm died down in the home offices.

It's hard to say now just how far vaudeville would have gone had not the American Federation of Actors created a situation the opening week of the New York Strand's stage-band policy late last August, but its negative effect was unfortunate. It was a threat to all the circuits, as well as Warners, and in consequence the ice began to form thick upon any plans to resume vaude in several Metropolitan New York houses and key cities elsewhere. The AFA's strike call at the Strand was straightened out (a specialty act booked with Ben Bernie's orch being involved), but the damage had been done even though there was no interruption of the policy.

What the circuits feared most was possible monetary losses if strikes followed heavy exploitation of stage shows. Strand's initial difficulties and possibly worse, could just as well be their own, they figured. And hardly encouraging at about the same time were the demands of motion picture operators for higher salaries, plus the refusal of musicians' union locals in most spots to grant trial concessions to theatres wishing to supplement the screen with the stage.

Trial Periods Mixed

In several spots theatre operators approached the union with the idea of an eight to 10-week trial period of stage shows below the usual scale for the musicians. Plan extended to the union meant that the profits, if any, during the test period would determine the future scale for the tooters. This idea, however, was nixed everywhere, with the musicians granting concessions only in Baltimore, where Loew's instituted a strictly pit-orch policy early in the fall at the Century. Musicals were limited to 20 minutes each show, with the house employing 40 musicians at \$35 per man. It didn't mean much to the Century's grosses. When that contract expired, house signed another with the Union calling for upped pay for 30-minute show.

It's significant that Warners, for one, had tentative plans to put a name-band policy into the Branford, Newark, and Stanley, Jersey City, up until the AFA's strike call at the N. Y. Strand. Then that idea went cold, despite the fact that the Strand's policy proved profitable right from the beginning. When the same circuit, in a pooling deal with the Fabian Brooklyn theatres, broached full-week vaudeville for the Strand, Brooklyn, it found itself enmeshed with the musicians union on the number of pit men to be used. This wasn't straightened out until after a couple of weeks of negotiations. Theatre operators began to feel that the unions were making things a little too tough.

Better Pix Came Along

Circuit feeling towards vaude may have still softened at that time, however, if Hollywood hadn't suddenly awakened and shipped out several b.o. pictures in succession. 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' (20th) was released and started to mop up; then

'Letter of Introduction' (U), 'Love Finds Andy Hardy' (M-G), and later such films as 'Sing, You Sinners' (Par), 'Marie Antoinette' (M-G), 'Boys Town' (M-G), 'Four Daughters' (WB), 'You Can't Take It With You' (Col.), 'Stablemates' (M-G), 'That Certain Age' (U), 'The Sisters' (WB), 'The Citadel' (M-G), 'Suez' (20th), 'Brother Rat' (WB), 'If I Were King' (Par), among others. Theatre operators began to lose that desperate look; that old feeling that it's still the picture that counts returned—and vaudeville was again on the wrong side of the door.

When Oct. 1 arrived, vaudeville, with the exception of the Broadway sector, was in hardly better position than it had been the year before. Broadway found itself with one more stage show house, the Strand, but on the other hand Loew's continued to hold off resuming flesh in its deluxe Capitol despite the rising tide of stage opposition. This circuit's theatre operators, while admitting on one hand that stage shows appeared necessary to buck the Strand, Roxy and Paramount, reiterated that they would hold off as long as possible, probably until the World's Fair opens this spring.

In at least a couple of keys, vaude was in a worse position than it had been in 1937. Boston, for one, was entirely without a stage show house up until late November. Paramount continued its straight picture policy there at the Metropolitan, while RKO's two de luxe houses, Keith's and the Memorial, opened the fall season without vaude in either house for the first time in years. RKO theatre then started trial weekend vaude Xmas day. Strong picture product was the reason here as well as in Cincinnati, where RKO's Shubert also continued on all-film program until late November. In Cleveland, RKO's vaude film policy lasted only a few weeks at the start of the season, the circuit switching back to straight pictures because it couldn't get enough b.o. stage attractions. Vaude, however, was resumed in mid-November after four red weeks of all-films.

Like Cleveland, vaudeville held up grosses in every spot where tried, except at the Fox, Philadelphia. Here it never caught on, but the situation in itself was unique and working against the theatre's success with a vaude film policy. In putting stage shows into the Fox, Warners went into direct competition with itself, the circuit also operating the policy-established Earle in the same town. WB found it was in the position of bidding against itself on acts and bands, as well as the competitive advertising and exploitation, while the Philly-ites, from long custom, continued to patronize the Earle. Another factor was the switch of WB's A product to the Earle, while the Fox was given the B pictures, with the result proving again that it's the picture that counts most. So out went vaude, with the Earle again getting the B's to supplement the stage, while the Fox went straight pictures with the A product.

Helped in Some Spots

But in Minneapolis (at the Orpheum), Pittsburgh (Stanley), Detroit (Fox) and Indianapolis (Lyric), stage shows continued to hold up the-grosses to an excellent average. Now and then these houses experienced dull weeks, which was only natural, but over a long period the vaude film policy was found to pay excellent dividends. It counter-balanced weak picture product when it came along, and with sock films vaude sent the boxoffice to record and near-record takes in every situation.

Bands were the biggest thing in vaude the past year. The jitterbug craze plus those radio buildups made most of the pop music purveyors potent b.o. factors. They were boons to theatres in requiring little production and, in many instances, provided the entire show. At an average of \$7,500 weekly per band, they've been comparatively cheap headliners for theatres, which ordinarily have to pay from \$3,500 to \$7,500 for a name act and then have to book four or five acts besides, with the attendant billing headaches usually not experienced with bands.

No. 1 example of the clicko potentialities of a consistent name-band policy is still the New York Paramount, where this type of entertainment hasn't yet failed to hold the b. o. to a profitable level no matter what the film fare. Its grosses

have held up despite the competition of the Strand up the street, which put its band policy into effect in August, and Loew's State, also on Broadway, and also going in heavily for bands, though not as consistently as either the Strand or Paramount.

Paramount's Formula

Although the Paramount, because of its Times Square location, is nominally a transient, or drop-in, type of theatre, the house is drawing weekly regulars, much like the steady vaude patronage at the Palace when the latter was two-a-day. In the Par's case, the weekly regulars are the young jitterbugs, who come to root their swingsters home at the daytime shows. Repeat-customers aren't as noticeable among the night, adult crowds, but it is presumed that many among the latter also have gotten the habit of attending the Broadway deluxer regularly because of the consistent quality of the orchestras.

Broadway Strand's name-band policy, similar to the Par's, though the show is set on the apron, while the latter's is in the pit, also proved successful right from the beginning, evidencing that there's still plenty of patronage in New York for stage shows. It refutes the theatre operators' old alibi that nobody wants to see vaudeville any more. Consistent biz at the Roxy, and usually profitable b.o. of the vaudfilm State, also highlights the fact that vaude can still get plenty of trade.

Billy Rose's Casa

Billy Rose's Casa Manana, which must be rated as the country's No. 1 vaudeville house, even though it's a theatre-cabaret, is another strong piece of evidence in vaude's favor. De luxe dining-wining-entertainment spot, now booked by Charles J. Freeman, former head of the RKO booking office, has been piling up high grosses week after week—and the tariff here isn't chicken feed. Shows are built much along the lines of the old Palace layouts and here also

repeat trade, plus swell newspaper comment, has been consistent. But here again a labor (waiters' union) situation almost forced it into a switch in policy, since settled.

All this ordinarily would have clinched the case with the theatre operators (who were already convinced last summer) that vaude can be a plenty potent b.o. factor, but the spectre of union trouble splashed 'em with too much ice water. In show business this was looked upon as regrettable. Vaudeville not only could help theatres, but also every phase of the amusement industry, showmen feel. A marked revival would have partially solved the new-faces problem for Hollywood, legit and radio, on one hand, while also proving profitable in many spots which are now crying the blues with giveaways and duals.

No Unit Production

Fact that there is a plenitude of bands was one of the factors in keeping down unit production this past year to a hardly discernible minimum. Only shows put out were the cheaper productions for the \$150-a-day time, none of the managers evidencing any willingness to gamble with the higher-priced productions.

For the first time in several years, there wasn't a single condensed version of a former Broadway musical for the pop-priced houses; nor was there a nitery show released for theatres, such as the former French Casino troupes, which drew high guarantees from the major circuits a couple of years back.

Heavy losses incurred by unit producers in the preceding two years was another factor in holding down production. Most of them took the financial beating because the theatres refused to play the shows on anything but a percentage arrangement and afforded no minimum guarantees. Units, nearly all of them without names, were often

coupled with poor films and the results were brutal for the bankrollers, who frequently had to put up plenty of coin to get the troupes back to New York, or other originating points.

Last fall nearly all the producers had set their minds on not putting together any shows unless the major houses offered minimum guarantees. These weren't forthcoming and the showmen, already suffering from bankroll anemia, couldn't afford to gamble. Result was no units.

Only sizeable American show was the 'Hollywood Hotel Revue,' produced by Harry Howard. This, however, had exhausted pretty nearly all the playable dates by early last summer, so Howard augmented the cast with Willie and Eugene Howard and took the show to Australia as a legit musical. It mopped up and still is cleaning up in the Never-Never land.

Agents Suffer

Like the producers, the vaude agents also found the sledding plenty tough this past year. Field is still as over-crowded as ever and, except for those salesmen who concentrate on the nitery field to some extent, incomes are lower.

Several agencies, in fact, incurred unnecessary losses last fall by expanding their offices in expectancy of a vaude comeback. Some of 'em took on more associates and larger office space to accommodate the staff additions, only to find themselves deeper in a hole when the major circuits iced the revival.

At Loew's, which has but two weeks, State, New York, and Capitol, Washington, and RKO, the agency problem is acute. Franchise system, though overlooked in many instances, is still in force at both these booking offices, but the circuits aren't receptive to the idea of cutting out the dead wood. With vaude as it is, both chains have been figuring for years that the unproductive agencies will sooner or later eliminate themselves.

Houses and towns available to the top-priced shows, with their circuit or indie affiliates, are as follows:

Loew's: State, New York and Capitol, Washington.

RKO: Palace, Chicago; Colonial, Dayton; Palace, Cleveland; Shubert, Cincinnati; Golden Gate, San Francisco; RKO, Boston.

Paramount: Paramount, New York; Chicago, Chicago; Orpheum, Minneapolis; Oriental, Chicago.

Warners: Strand, New York; Strand, Brooklyn; Earle, Philadelphia; Earle, Washington; Stanley, Pittsburgh.

Fanchon & Marco: Roxy, New York.

Indie: Hipp, Baltimore; Lyric, Indianapolis; Fox, Detroit; Tower, Kansas City; Riverside, Milwaukee; Orpheum, Memphis; State-Lake, Chicago; Denver, Denver; Kurt Robitschek's Majestic, New York.

Nite Club Dancers Talk Customers Into Daytime Brush-Up on the Rhumba

Dance tutoring on the side by members of floor shows appearing in class hotel rooms and niteries around the U. S. A. is growing in importance as an income source for the individuals involved. Management sees the side-movement as lessening the overhead by spreading the salary. Talent favors any new legit method of getting coin. Getting chummy with patrons the professionals ease into a spiel about how easy the rhumba, tango and so on is. These routines are usually beyond the daring of the average adult. Hence the need for lessons which are given in off hours. Nite life thus becomes a sales corridor for daytime pupil trade.

Miller Suit Jan. 9

Jack Miller's suit against Gaston Witman, operator of Monte Carlo Casino, New York, has been set for Jan. 9. Miller, a skater, asks \$150 for breach of contract.

Decision was won by Miller on default when Gaston failed to show in court at first hearing. Judge granted permission to reopen case after new hearing Wednesday (21).

THE HAVEN AT SARANAC

By Happy Benway

Saranac Lake, N. Y., Jan. 1.

Trials and tribulations, changes and new executives, have never changed the benevolence, humanity, kindness and tenderness of the Will Rogers Memorial Hospital. The fear and dread of coming to Saranac is a past issue. Those of the profession who were and have been in fear of the word Saranac may rest assured that it's a far-fetched fear. The official reports of those sent home, the percentage of real cures proves that.

Since the days of Dr. Edgar Mayer and Dr. George Wilson the percentage of the NVA Sanatorium rated an 86% in cures, which is a record that cannot be duplicated by any other institution of this kind.

In later years when the NVA San became the Will Rogers Memorial Hospital, Dr. Mayer left it for private practice. Alternating from time to time, the reins of this institution were taken over by George Wilson who deserves credit for the now existing conditions at the Will Rogers. After a spell Dr. Karl Fischel was appointed medical director of the Will Rogers, resigning for a short term only to be reinstated again recently into his former position.

The Will Rogers today has one of the most able and capable staffs of any institution in this country, under Dr. Fischel who recently won the Leon Bernard Memorial Prize for Tuberculosis Research. He is ably assisted by Dr. George Wilson, Chief Medical director, Dr. Rudolph Marx, Dr. Ernest Adler, house doctors; Prof. Rudy Plank, X-ray expert; Monroe Coleman, Myra Fox, lab department; Ruth Norman, head-nurse; Michael Kelly, efficiency expert; Marie Soutard, executive sec'y; Olga Lariaio, medical sec'y; Jack Eskins Stewart, and with many different committees to better the welfare of the patient such as Greeting, Welfare, Entertainment, Good-Cheer committees.

Testimonials

A few comments that are of much interest to the institution are from Henry ('Hank') Hearn, Atlanta: 'I am going back to work after a siege of over a year at the hospital.'

Eddie Vogt (Vogt & Hurst): 'Little did I think that this sort of

comeback could be made. Everything and anything is being done for me. I know that I am penciled in to go back home in an O. K. condition.'

Marion Green: 'I am out of the San, and doing extra fine. The NVA (Will Rogers) did this for me.'

Marie Bianchi: 'Twice I had to return to the hospital, but this last time has placed me in such a condition that I am able to work again.'

James Plunkett: 'Couldn't believe that this could be done in such a short time. Well, I am going back home and to work.'

Milton Reich: 'It took them only one year to make a new man out of me. First I was a little afraid, but look at me now, O. K. and a new man.'

John Dempsey (Fenway Theatre, Boston): 'It took four years, but I made it, thanks to Dr. George Wilson and Dr. Edgar Mayer.'

Harry Davies: 'Well I am well and that's that.'

Joseph Parker (Paramount): 'It took a long time, but they did it. Here I am working for a living and thanks to the NVA Sanatorium.'

Major Finley (minstrelman): 'I am an old man, but the Will Rogers made one new man out of me. Sure, I'll go back to minstrelsy.'

Len Grotte (manager): 'I made it, that is with the help of the Drs. Fischel and Wilson. Any one who takes their advice will come out O. K.'

Hubert Carlson: 'I am on my way to Kansas City thanks to the Will Rogers and the doctors there.'

Happiness and contentment of this Actors Colony has been made possible by many fine humanitarians. First honors go to Mrs. William ('Mother') Morris, who daily evidences an absolutely unselfish interest in the profession; Jerry Vogel, who for years has given the Colony gifts that make them happy, we dote, too, on trade papers received weekly to let the patient know news of the outside world.

All in all, the consensus is that the existing conditions at the Will Rogers are what one makes them, as far as the institution is concerned. There is now nothing too good for the ailing artist, nothing more can be done—a haven, a home and a 'cure' if the patient respects the medico's routine.

THE AGENTS—'38 MODEL

By John Hurley

Lone wolf agenting on a strictly 10% basis has gone the way of minstrel shows. Economics has forced percenters to broaden their scope from that of specialist to jack-of-all-phases in order to exist. While the chiselers will always exist, cooperation is new keynote now that few are able to stand alone. Commissions are split, departments added and interests merged so that offices rep each other in respective businesses and locale. The agency field is too crowded to permit exclusiveness in one field. Today, they all book, agent and produce. The smallies lean heavily on the major offices, and the latter depend on the little fellows to scout new talent and often, new business.

Past year has demonstrated this plenty. Period brought an unusual amount of activity in the mechanics of the business and its internal problems, particularly in the east. Organization groups, attempted legislation on agency laws, union franchising, severing of partnerships, new mergers and incursions into other fields for greater coverage were tried. Year will also stand out as a record for changes in office personnel.

On the Coast, the major agencies formed an association, somewhat exclusive, for protection against the studios, the unions, the screen guilds and their own chiseling brethren. It was hit, along with those outside the pale, by the Screen Actors Guild's franchising and regulation. The unanticipated dropoff in film production was another slap for agents. Activity for the newly formed American Federation of Radio Actors meant more headaches for boys. Supposed 'break' with move of sizable chunk of radio program origination to the west meant little to the average agent, because the majority were stellar lineups controlled by few biggies. Profusion of quiz and other audience participation programs helped nobody, anywhere.

Across the country the American Federation of Actors started franchising nitery and vaude agents as well as closed-shopping theatres and cabarets, catching them both ways. So far, only keys have been hit such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and New York. Last has not yet had franchising but niteries are all in line. Theatres and agents come next.

Agents' Organizations

Starting with the licensing drive in New York the agents went to organizing—reorganizing in some cases—and splitting associations. Old Equity Agents Association was forced to a rebirth after being dormant several years because of legislation, licensing and poor take. Subsequently they started clamoring for more commission on engagements (5% is the limit) stating they couldn't maintain offices on meagre pickings. Steady drop in legit production and equal decrease in salary standards made it too tough. Now bound together again they have all become licensed, are ready to cooperate with other groups and also dabble afield. The vaude and nitery agents, also plagued by similar problems and very little business tried organizing. All they have is a name so far. That of Theatrical Agents and Artists Representatives of America.

A Coordinating Council, another step to bind all groups together, went up in smoke after proposal by Howard Wheeler, prez of Entertainment Managers Association. He later had a rebellion on his hands when exiting members formed still another association, the Associated Entertainment Directors of New York. Both are currently feuding, and the acts are in the middle. EMA, parent group, is attempting to form a national EMA association to standardize the club date business. The opposish group, AED, is trying to sign acts to authorization contracts and stifle the EMA bookers.

For most part, larger agencies have avoided any involvement in organizations but have willingly met the licensing and legislative problems on promise of license department to help agencies with favorable legislation. All legit agents are banded in one group though it was first suggested that one all-inclusive group be formed.

Licensing has thus far netted about 300 around New York. That's more than twice as many as ever before. More recently the boys have been applying voluntarily. Couple of pinches during the year, promise of help and elimination of fee fixing clauses in new legislation, plus

promise to wipe out chiselers has them all cooperating. Threat of being outlawed via the N. Y. State Department of Labor takeover of employment aided the banding. License department has further promised a separate bill for theatricals so that would not be wiped out if the agency end of the general business laws is taken over by N. Y. State.

More worries have beset boys in past month with naming of club date bureaus as employers by the State Unemployment Bureau, and Social Security Board. Makes them responsible for collection of taxes and requires a cash outlay for them personally as well. List of 1,000 is being prepared by the authorities, but boys hope to escape that labeling via rush on License Dept. to establish themselves as agents. That category was long avoided, agents using artist representative, employer, manager and any other convenient status to escape licensing, with the attendant supervision and fee fixing. It's a case of taking the lesser evil now, and anyway, it looks like fee-fixing is on the way out, with promised new legislation.

Even the Concert Bureaus

Lecture and concert bureaus, long regarded as distant relatives of the other forms of show biz are also being hit. That fight is to the death with the License Dept. and the American Guild of Musical Artists on one side, and the concert bureaus on the other. They don't want commissions curtailed in any degree and want no part of regulation by the union.

Nearly all agents book direct whenever possible, along same principle as that of band booker-managers such as Music Corp. of America and the William Morris offices. Boys must hit everything from fairs to club dates in order to exist and to hold their clients who demand complete servicing. Agencies with national coverage have no trouble. Method of indies is to align themselves with reps throughout the country in locations they cannot reach themselves. Commissions are split. Clients are sometimes farmed out to larger offices altogether on percentage. More important indies rep each other in respective locations.

Indicative of this trend is the new alignment of the Charles Allen office with Crawford, Winslow & Curtis on the Coast. Herman Bernie joined Myron Selznick in New York for full coverage. Lou Irwin reps Consolidated Radio Artists on the Coast in return for same service here from CRA. Charlie Yates took over CRA's theatre bookings of bands with his Simon office. Music Corp. of America opened new branches, William Morris expanded and added departments. Rockwell-O'Keefe and CRA also added branch offices during the past year.

Further evidence of the new mode is switch of Bill Miller, agent, to booker this year. Though an agent, he took over Folly theatre, Brooklyn, N. Y., where he employed his own acts and those of others. Eddie Sherman, booker, is another of the new school. After booking for years he, too, became a dual operator, signing acts such as Abbott and Costello, Ben Yost, Ed Kaplan, et al, to management contracts. He also has an agreement with the William Morris office to rep the same acts through him.

Some of the agents have been trying to get into the major offices and shutter their own shops. They are unwanted because of set ways. Morris and MCA have turned down plenty with reply that they want people from within their own organizations.

Locally, boys were given a break when New York City officially banned cuff shows for politicians, department heads, cops, firemen, etc. Theatre Authority has also helped decrease number of phoney benefits. It had conducted an education program in that direction, trying to discourage free performances of acts for which it gets 15% of gross at benefits for splitup between its charity affiliates and the unions. It has also tended to knife the chiseling agents and bookers who used to work 'audition' and 'favor' tricks on acts when shows were actually paid for.

Showboats, Burley, Borscht

Agents got little or nothing out of showboats this past summer. Nearly all folded after short run. Similarly reraring of burlesque to 'revue' or 'follies' meant nothing since shows remained the same regardless. The regular burley per-

centers, too, took a beating with slack-off following the 'morals' crackdown. Burley time cut from 14 to six houses and the road felt it, too. So-called borscht circuit upped as an income source, with such hotels beginning to pay for shows as against previous board and lodging accommodations for appearances. Even the larger offices took cognizance of this and booked some. Almost total absence of units this year was another kick to agents and bookers.

South America perked a little and looks like it will improve this year. The Balnearia, Casino da Urca, Rio de Janeiro, largest down there, opened its own offices in New York last month to facilitate booking of Yank acts. Figure for greater demand than ever, aided by cementing of Pan-Americanism, etc.

Niteries took up the vaude slack to some extent for percenters. Although there were a flock of bankruptcies, the activity of openings has been greater this year than previously, all of which helped. World's Fair will undoubtedly give boys some color in their cheeks again and promise of vaude is brighter. Starting with 'Hellzapoppin' and Casa Manana, vaude picture brightened and there is promise of more, particularly in New York.

Record-breaking year of affiliations, changes, etc., that have been forced by the times and conditions are listed below in chart of events which paints full picture of the present situation around the country.

The Shifting Sands

Rockwell-O'Keefe changes included Bill Burton leaving to manage Tommy Dorsey band, Cecil Campbell replacing him. Danny Collins (now on his own), Dick Ingraham, Bert Lown, Jack Wittemore, Ralph Wonders all left R-O'K and were succeeded by Harry Romm, Milton Pickman, Cy Manes, Harry Squires and Frank Cooper. In R-O'K Coast office Ralph Wonders replaced Harmon Nelson. Arthur Weems and Norman Doyle were added to Coast staff. Dick Wheeler opened the Dallas office for R-O'K. Major change in office, however, was splitup of Tommy Rockwell and Cork O'Keefe combo after four years, with O'Keefe opening his own indie shop. Joe Glaser also exited R-O'K setup, taking with him his Negro talent and bands. Opened his own office.

Consolidated Radio Artists had Ed Kirkeby, Frank Burke, Milton Roemer quit. Latter is managing on his own while Kirkeby switched to the Phil Ponce office. Russ Lyons, Paul Kapp, Bill Von Zehle, Milton Shaffer and Johnny Greenhut were added. Charlie Yates agency took over theatre representation for CRA, while Lou Irwin closed his New York office (from where Larry Puck exited to go on his own), and combined his own with CRA in Hollywood. Also in CRA, Phil Brown was transferred from Cleveland to Chicago office, while Pat Lombard, Ed Kreisler, Herbert Mintz, Lucille Ballantine and Dick Stevens were added to Chi office. Stanford Zucker, v-p of CRA, transferred from New York to Chicago during year. Norman Kendall was added to Cleveland staff. CRA also opened Frisco offices with Denny Moore, Allen Powell, Larry Allen, Dick Dorso (former partner in band agency with Tom Coakley) and Kurt Tourney. Cress Courtney was transferred from Chicago to Dallas office of CRA, while Bob Sanders took over Dallas management from Charles Moyer. Sanders was replaced by Lou Irwin in Hollywood. Talk of CRA-Rockwell merger has been squashed.

At Music Corp. of America, Arthur Kenaga, Bill Von Zehle, Milton Pickman and Lathrop Mack exited. Harry Moss replaced latter after varied year of going from Mills Artists to CRA, to Charlie Rapp, to own office to Music Corp. MCA also added Bart McHugh, Irving Lazar, George Walker and Johnny Dugan to staff.

Mills Artists office severed its booking connection with Consolidated Radio Artists. CRA was booking Mills attractions. Mills decided to go back into booking on own again. Norman Campbell was added and later exited. He had his own office after quitting defunct Radio Orchestra Corp., foldee of past year. Hal Sands recently closed his own shop to produce nitery shows for Mills.

Paul Whiteman's Artist Management has, during the past year, added Paul Wimbish, Frank Burke, Norman Campbell, while Irving Strouse exited. Wimbish now has his own agency. He was with Charlie Shribman 'fore that.

Myron Selznick, Ltd., New York, was formed just a year ago, absorb-

ing the Herman Bernie office. Formerly, Leland Hayward office handled Selznick's eastern biz. Bernie is new v-p in east, working with Jack Chaqueneau and Bob Glenzer. Guy Martin left when two merged and joined Kurt Robitschek, agent, who has since turned vaude producer with Shuberts.

In Mark Hanna-Leland Hayward office Fred Bethal was taken on from Columbia Broadcasting. Dorothy Vernon came over to Hanna's agency from Richard Pitman after Dora Maugham exited scene. Hayward was also joined by Maynard Morris from Walter Batcheller office, and Larry White came in from Hayward Coast office to N. Y. office.

Lyons & Lyons saw but three changes, with addition of Bill Stuhler and Don Stauffer, latter from Young & Rubicam agency. Dave Jonas left to join Bill Miller's Artists Syndicate of America.

William Morris office also had several changes during past year, and looks in line for more. Lou Wolfson switched to Music Corp. and then returned. Ed Fishman left Rockwell-O'Keefe Dallas office to handle bands for Morris. Ned Dobson and Harry Friedman joined Coast branch. Wallace Jordan, formerly McKnight & Jordan, radio producers, joined recently to head Chi office's radio department. Maurice Morton is another recent radio addition. Harry Ommerle joined about a year ago in radio. Jimmy Parks and Charles Hogan are no longer with Chicago office. Mark Daniels added to legit division this past year. Donald Hyde, Al Schenckin and Joe Sully either upped or were transferred to different departments throughout organization. Dorothea Lewis succeeded Bob Goodhue in literary division. Al Allen left Morris little over year ago to join Ed Sherman, booker. Office also expanded over past year into much larger quarters.

The Fanchon & Marco office first severed its co-op pact with Consolidated Radio Artists and then condensed its New York offices. Paul Dempsey exited to partner with Edgar Benson, while John Schultz went off to solo on the Coast. Harry Flamm also went with the shrinking, and is on his own. Agency has since combined its booking and agenting activities as so many others have during past couple of years. Have smaller quarters now.

Among the larger indies, Curtis & Allen broke up, with Charles Allen remaining in the east on his own, where he recently added radio department with Fred Norman, latter closing own office. Curtis went to Hollywood to join Winslow, Crawford & Curtis agency. Herbert Hoey and Irving Sherman also dropped out of C. & A. Irwin Simon, brother of late Ferde Simon, died this year, with Charlie Yates and brother Irving Yates taking over reins and also working with CRA on theatres. Phil Coscia became associated with them, as did Jimmy Picchiani, former acrobat, now handling fair dates. Murray Gordon came in for cafes. Ben Shainen went from Simon to own business. Johnny Dugan went from Simon to Music Corp. Phil Offin, who exited Simon, is now on his own. Old Leddy & Smith office severed this year, Mark Leddy remaining east while Ed Smith went Coastward. He came back fast, and hopes to try again here. Bill Miller took over the Artists Syndicate of America when former partners, Matty Rosen and Lester Lee, exited. Rosen is now road agent with Ramona orchestra.

The Indies

Among strictly indie agents changes have been very many. Jack Fauer closed his own office to work with Arthur Fisher; Irving Tishman, last with Yates, now on his own; Al Roth, conductor working out of Rudy Vallee office, opened his own booking office recently; Alex Hanlon went to Australia as agent with 'Hollywood Hotel' unit and left Sam Shepard in charge; Chester Stratton, former chief booker for RKO and last with NBC Artist Service, has quit the business altogether, and is now working with a national distilling house. Louis Loomis and Jack Allen have closed their office and are roading with Ludwig Satz's Jewish Repertory; Edgar Allen has gone to the Coast; Ed Millen, former Pantages booker who turned advance agent, has returned to agenting field. Added are Harold Ward, who quit Al Grossman to go for himself; Jack Hart now WPA after working with Billy Jackson; Harry Ward, former RKO agent, is another gone west; Aaron Kessler, former RKO agent, is WPA show manager now; Dan Friendly, former RKO booker, is agenting, and Al Rickard, actor, quit the Ed Sherman office and returned to ventriloquism. Sam Robbins also left de-

funct Radio Orch. Co. to Sam Stiefel office. Foster, sister of Ed Fis.

Morris office's band de-

Add to list of newcom

Mendonca, booker rer

neria Casino da Urca, J

who opened offices

Frederick Bros., band-n

fit of Cleveland, which

York branch. Miles Inga

Davies have also opened an office

together. Ingalls originally left Cur

tis & Allen to work for the French

Casino Corp.'s International Booking

Office. Another larger scale item

was switch of Charles Freeman,

Paramount and Interstate booker, to

offices of Billy Rose's Casa Manana,

where he books the shows and Inter

state time.

FISCHER OUT OF LOND. CASINO; SHOW TOURS

London, Jan. 1.

Clifford C. Fischer's show closed at the London Casino Dec. 31, and goes on a vaudeville tour.

With Fischer out of the Casino, house goes temporarily dark. Several nibbles are reported from opposition concerns. But the only ones likely to acquire an interest in the Casino are Charles Clore and Alfred Asdaile, operators of the continuous revue at the Prince of Wales theatre.

Understood to be taking over any day now and will continue nitery policy, doubling talent from Prince of Wales. Also reported seeking a name comedian from America.

Adelphi shuttered Dec. 31.

A review of Fischer's revised revue at the International Casino, N. Y., is in the current issue.

Hollywood Rink Does Fast Fed'd; 12G Loss

Hollywood, Jan. 1.

Tropical ice gardens in suburban Westwood reorganizing after taking \$12,000 loss on show.

Replica of St. Moritz cost \$180,000. Operators are reported trying to raise another \$40,000 to pay off construction indebtedness.

Assemblyman Predicts Passage of Agency Bill

Albany, Jan. 1.

In announcing he would reintroduce his bill to place all private employment agencies under state control, Assemblyman Harold C. Oster-tag, Wyoming County Republican, predicted passage because 'the governor is for it, organized labor is for it, the Republicans control both houses of the legislature and we have overcome the objections offered by New York City.'

The measure, which would also affect theatrical agencies, has been the pet project of Oster-tag since he entered the Assembly in 1932.

Nitery Notes

Marcel La Maze cafe opened in Hollywood Dec. 23.

Medrano and Donna into Waldorf's Sert Room Jan. 5.

Gloria LaMarr warbling at Stage One Cafe, L. A.

Betty Bryant singing at the Marcus Daily, Los Angeles.

Joe Frisco into Babe Hensley's Club 17, Los Angeles.

Florentine Gardens, Hollywood, opened with two flesh shows nightly and Emil Baffa's dance band.

Texas Rockets, dance ensemble, currently at Saks Club, Detroit, for a four-week engagement.

Trocadero reopens in L. A. Dec. 29 with Ted Fio Rito's orchestra.

Strouds Play N. Y.

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Stroud Twins, current at Jack Lynch's Walton Roof here, close Wednesday (4) after a two-week run.

Play Loew's State, New York, for a week and then head for Europe unless tentatively set dates on Rudy Vallee's air show come through.

HOGAN TURNS INDIE

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Charlie Hogan, vaude agent and booker, has left the William Morris office to open his own headquarters.

Hogan will continue to book Warner, Saxe and Standard theatres throughout this territory.

BRITISH VARIETY THRU THE YEARS

By George Foster

London, Dec. 20.

You've been in show business as long as I have, it's easy as you might think to cast back precisely a third-of-century and compare, say, 1905 with 1938. As you try to project your memory backwards, it throws up an endless panorama of names and incidents associated with a whole lifetime, so that at best you pick up highlights from here and there which you use as keystones in deciding the trend from yesterday to today.

My own life of well over 50 years in show business has been so full of people, so full of events, that it is impossible to recall at will anything like a complete history of the times. But I can try and recall some of the high spots—sufficient to show at least some pattern of your third-of-a-century—and indicate as far as I can the changes that have taken place within my experience.

When I came into the variety business away back in the 80's it was lusty and alive, broad and bawdy. For many years it continued to flourish under the compelling influence of a long line of dominating personalities reaching the highest pinnacle in the early years of the present century—just about the period when VARIETY was born. Among them were George Leybourne, The Lion Comic; the Great Vance, the Great MacDermott, Pat Fenney, Little Tich, T. W. Barrett, the Nobleman's Son, who sang for a hobby just to see a little life; Jenny Hill, the vital spark; Bessie Bonehill; Chirgwin, the white-eyed Kaffir, etc. Then it sank into a gradual decline, until in the years immediately preceding the Great War it was in a moribund state, faced with almost certain extinction.

So that, after those four grim years, those who were interested in bringing the body back to life had to struggle feverishly to save it from succumbing completely to the challenge of healthy rivals like the cinema and, later, radio. By drastic methods the miracle was accomplished, and today variety is nearly as virile as ever it was in its heyday of the past. But it has changed.

As I claim to have been directly associated with the revival, I'm better placed than most other individuals to discuss what it was that put the music hall back on its feet. It was the same thing that has saved the lives of many flagging invalids—fresh blood!

For years, variety in Great Britain had been relying on the same old faces, with the same old songs and same old gags, until patrons got so tired of the monotony that they began to stay away in increasingly large numbers. Just about this time, moving pictures were beginning to get into their stride, and because they offered something new, something with greater diversity and more actual variety than the music halls, the latter soon began to feel the pinch. It was new blood, new ideas, new acts that they urgently needed—and it was a visit to the United States that did more to open my eyes to this fact than anything else.

What happened as far as I was concerned is now a matter of vaudeville history. I saw that, by introducing some of the vigorous and diversified talent that was glorifying the boards of the American stage, the British music hall might be given a fillip, and audiences might be attracted by something that was absolutely fresh and undeniably stimulating. When I put the idea into effect, I was vilified and condemned, accused of 'Americanizing' the British stage and of putting foreigners into jobs that ought to be reserved for British performers.

Foreign Invasion Proved Beneficial

Time has shown, I think I can honestly claim, that I was exactly right. The foreign talent, with its different ideas, virile technique and constantly improving routines, set a new standard of entertainment that not only stirred audiences but also inspired local performers to emulation. British variety talent learned to move with the times, and out of that sprang the flourishing business that exists today. A generation of stars has come along that deservedly now occupies the niche formerly allotted to the great ones whose memory will never die, and the top liners of the contemporary theatre will be remembered with them.

But, as I emphasized above, the variety stage has changed. It had to. The taste of the public has changed completely inside the present century; so many factors have played on it—the War, which threw values into a different focus, the spreading popularity of pictures, and then radio—while, apart from these, there was the realization that became painfully apparent before 1914 that the music hall had sunk into a rut. It was hash yesterday, hash today and hash tomorrow.

The trouble was, I think, probably that the lions of a previous decade had been too successful, and their short repertoires, which had sufficed for their own outstanding personalities, became the model for a succession of acts that never came up to the same level. Performances by the great stars like Dan Leno, Albert Chevalier, Arthur Roberts, Marie Lloyd, Eugene Stratton, Vesta Tilley, to name but a few, were their own passport to music hall bliss, but it became a different matter when every other artiste copied their material and wore it threadbare.

There was not, as I say, the diversity of entertainment a third-of-a-century ago that is expected today, and I remember being struck during that period with the fact that singing turns were the backbone of every variety program throughout the United Kingdom. From the earliest time in by recollection—which means going well back into the last century—the principal items had been contributed by singing comedians or comedienues, and these stars were booked solid for year after year on the strength of a repertoire of three or four familiar numbers. And audiences loved to join in the choruses.

What a difference today! There is often more diversity in a single item, the modern dance band for instance, than in the whole of one of the old-time programs. The stage is laden not only with singers of every category—straight, ballad, crooning, comedy, etc.—but also offers an endless procession of instrumentalists, dancing soloists and teams, impressionists (as distinct from the great impersonators like Vesta Tilley), 'crazy comics', and a whole range of versatile and endlessly rehearsed performers who are, as you might say, almost a show in themselves. Naturally, raconteurs, cross-talk acts, trapezists and character actors are no new phenomenon, but by and large there was never any attempt in the old days to pack so much contrast into an average bill.

Changes in Prices—And Atmosphere

Mind you, it is not only the character of the show that has changed, it is also the atmosphere—and the prices. Where now would you find a music hall in London with admissions of twopence (4c) in the pit and gallery and sixpence (12c) in the stalls like the old Seabright in the Hackney Road, or the Hoxton Theatre of Varieties, where the proprietor, George Harwood, used to take the twopence of the customers as they passed in and throw them into a bookmaker's satchel slung round his neck! What is more, for these modest admissions, patrons would be regaled with some of the biggest names in show business.

And the atmosphere? It has always been a feature of the music hall to include 'spice' as part of its stock-in-trade, and I can't say there's any great harm in that. It does most of us good to loosen up occasionally, and the minority who are offended by the least deviation aren't obliged to patronize the variety theatre. But broadly speaking there is little at which to take offense, especially in these days, when music hall programs are freely picked up by the B. B. C. and broadcast direct into people's homes.

It wasn't always like that, though! If an artiste were to walk onto any stage today and try to put over the stuff that the comedienues of the 80's and 90's got away with, not only would the manager ring down the curtain, but he or she would also probably be given several months in gaol in which to cool off!

Long before the palmy days of Marie Lloyd there were artistes of the calibre of Bessie Bellwood, Bonnie Kate Harvey and Jenny Hill who could bring down the house with their gestures and asides. Bessie began life as a rabbit-skinner in a South London back alley, which is perhaps a clue to her approach to her job, but in spite of her frankly vulgar methods she was acknowledged a great artiste, and when she died her funeral was almost a public event. The same, of course, was true of dear Marie Lloyd, the most great-hearted person who ever trod the boards, and who left millions to weep for her at her death.

I do not mean to suggest that audiences of today do not appreciate acts that have 'savour', because you can hear them any night, not only in the West End but in remoter parts of London and other cities, roaring their heads off when a comedian draws near the danger line. But, on the whole, it is a more subtle type of spice, suggesting more but saying less, and in many instances involving far more than what old-time patrons would tolerate.

Managers, Too, Had to Be Tough—and Resourceful

But if the chairmen were a race of red-blooded individuals, so were the managers of third-of-a-century ago. It is no disparagement to present-day managers to say so, because the latter have to meet entirely different circumstances—and do so with extreme success. The best known managers of those bygone times were, by any standards, loud and vulgar, often uncouth, but they had an even closer contact with their patrons than the East End manager of today, and time and again it was proved their hearts were in the right place.

Certainly they had to be tough. There was, for instance, George English, who ran the Seabright, which I have already mentioned, who himself would often throw out obstreperous patrons neck and crop and stand no nonsense from anybody. English, incidentally, was the first London manager to start the twice-nightly system, so you see there was another side to his makeup.

Another forthright manager was Johnnie Hart, who owned the Star, Bermondsey, and he had a drastic way with audiences when they became too unruly. A tremendous hubbub arose in the theatre one night, and Hart walked from the bar to the stage to ask the chairman what it was all about. The latter explained the audience wanted more of a certain performer, who had already left the theatre for an engagement in another hall. Thereupon the manager jumped on the stage, but the audience would listen to no explanations, giving a hearing to nobody else and demanding more of their favorite. In desperation, Hart shook his fist at the audience yelling, 'I'll show you who is boss here!', then leaned down and ordered the orchestra to play the National Anthem, which traditionally is played always at the end of a theatrical performance in the U. K.! The program had been in progress for less than half an hour, but this trick beat them, and they all trooped out! A ginger-beer bottle was thrown from the gallery and missed him by inches.

I believe it is not unknown, even in this more refined age, for the chuckers-out to go into action at music halls in rowdier districts, but the nature of the shows on the whole has very much changed for the better in this respect, so that houses like the Palladium, Holborn Empire and more recently the Coliseum maintain as much dignity and renown as the best class of legitimate theatre in the West End.

The old stagers decry the modern music hall and shake their heads over its future, forgetting that the past always seems more glorious than the present, and that the public's favorites of today enjoy as great a popularity as did ever the glants of a former generation. In years to come Gracie Fields will probably be remembered with as much reverence as is Marie Lloyd today, and it may be that the music hall has never produced a greater artist. There are many others, also, who have built up for themselves substantial reputations which owe nothing to America, among them Will Fyffe, that master of characterization, whose knowing wink and chuckle are so rich in implication; Max Miller, most engaging of raconteurs, reaching confidentially over the footlights to take a delighted audience into his airy confidence while pointedly excluding the eavesdropping manager in the wings; G. S. Melvin, as a hiker or Salvation Army lassie; Douglas Byng, presenting the coy and buxom personnel of the pantomime; and Elsie and Doris Waters, as 'Gert and Daisy', that loquacious and immensely popular cockney pair. All these understand the mood of the music hall and the traditions from which its entertainment springs.

There is no need to compare such artists with the great ones of the past; the times and the public taste have greatly altered, and it is sufficient to know that in so many of the popular favorites today the spirit of the old music hall is still alive. The cinema cannot rival this spirit, nor ever really capture it in celluloid, for it is above all a thing of flesh and blood; the theatre does not seek to rival it for the theatre and the music hall have different functions. As for the alien influences which today are invading the music hall, they need not all be deplored. The music hall has the power to mould

them to its own particular pattern, and thus much of its individuality will always be preserved.

As a reasoned summing up of the position, I don't think it could be expressed better, except that I would go slightly further than the writer of the article as regards his comments on alien influences. It has been my constant contention that the music hall in this country badly needed talent from outside and is better for the invasion, in just the same way that noble families are invigorated by grafting healthy new bloodstreams into their family tree.

There was a vigor and vitality in the work of the Americans I saw when I first realized how British show business was placed which was sadly lacking in many of the self-satisfied acts that held top-billing here. As I found these 'aliens', they were a class who took their work very seriously, who constantly strove after new effects, and who would rehearse all day and every day until they had got a new routine or a new effect to perfection. They appreciated they were offering their wares in a highly competitive market, and it was when they began to imbue British talent with a similar outlook that variety staged its overdue revival.

I wouldn't like it to be thought my gentle strictures applied to all the stars who have kept variety's flag flying through the dog days of its career. Today we still have with us a number of old-timers who have always managed to keep abreast of times and present their material freshly and with gusto. The only fault was that there were too few of them, because the music hall stage was badly in need of a few more Harry Lauders, George Robeys, Harry Tates and others of that happy family.

Booked Harry Lauder Without Seeing His Act

What names they are to conjure with, too, and how they stir memories! I could write a whole book, I dare say, about Sir Harry Lauder—the only artist I ever booked without first seeing his act. Lauder was first discovered, I believe, by the doughty Mrs. Baylis, who ran the Scotia, in Glasgow, but when he burst into my office one day with the irresistible assurance of a veteran of the halls I had never even heard of him. I didn't, in fact, know how to spell his name!

Well, I signed Lauder in desperation to stop up a hole in Tom Tinsley's program at Gatti's-in-the-Road, and the moment he appeared for the first time on a London stage he seized his chance with both hands and was made overnight. The very next day I got his signature to contracts representing 300 weeks bookings at \$50 a week, a princely sum then for an unknown comic. I wonder what he thinks now of those days, after building up a world-wide reputation which was eventually to put him into the \$5,000 a week class?

I well remember, too, Lauder's first visit to the United States, which came about quite accidentally because Mrs. Marc Klaw, whose husband was the first half of the Klaw & Erlanger agency, while on a visit in London saw his act at the old Tivoli and went for it in a big way. When later they got an independent report on this great little Scots comedian it was equally enthusiastic, the upshot being a cabled offer of four weeks in New York at \$1,250 a week.

The report of Klaw & Erlanger's representative who met the party at the boat—I was accompanying Lauder—is, in view of his instantaneous success with audiences of the New World, worth putting in the record. 'You've been stung, Boss!' declared this worthy on returning to the office. 'There ain't nobody looking like a comedian in the Lauder outfit, bar a small fat man with a moustache, and he calls himself Foster!'

It is a matter of history to recall Lauder's subsequent triumphs in America, during the whole of which he was managed by Bill Morris who, at the time of his first visit, was a comparatively unknown booking agent. The comedian made a fortune for the agent, but aside from that there was a lasting and deep friendship between the two men which was unbroken until the death of Bill Morris, one of the greatest men the vaudeville world has known on either side of the Atlantic.

When Chaplin Was In The '8 Lancashires' Act

Another great figure who looms through the mists of memory is one that has since passed out of the orbit of the music hall into realms of wider fame through the cinema, a figure which I first knew as a humble member of a juvenile troupe called The Eight Lancashire Lads. His name was Charles Chaplin, and he was the son of a music hall singer of the same name, whose particular line was heavily mournful ballads of the tear-jerking order. Young Charlie, of course, was later associated with Fred Karno's 'Mumming Birds', and it was through their instrumentality he reached the United States—never to return.

One prophetic thing Chaplin once said to me in his earliest days I shall never forget. Quite solemnly he assured me it was his ambition to be a great actor—not a 'flash' actor—but one who could make the people laugh one minute and cry the next! Though I don't suppose even he could visualize at the time how manifoldly successful that brave prophecy was to become.

Once pictures had claimed him, Chaplin never came back to the music hall, though I verily believe the footlights and the glamour of the backstage still stir chords within him to this day. When he paid a celebrated visit to the Old Country several years back, I met him with an open contract from Sir Oswald Stoll in my pocket, which would have earned him up to \$25,000 for a two weeks' booking. I pleaded in vain with him, but all I got for an answer was: 'George, old man, I would like fine to face the lights on a London stage and hear the roar of a London audience. But I simply could not go through with it—my nerves wouldn't let me!'

So we turn from one facet of the kaleidoscope to another, each memory emphasizing how variety is always changing, but is always the same. 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose', is the French way of putting it, and how true it is of the music hall, holding its mirror up to life—even maybe a distorting mirror—and reflecting the humor of the nation for which it stands.

I have tried to set down a few scenes in the history of one man who has lived over a half a century with it—a man whose first agent's fee was the princely sum of one dime. Just to prove the healthy state to which British variety has returned, today the Foster Agency has more artists on its books than ever, but they are modern artists, of the stamp who are not content to borrow songs from the pictures and sing them to death, but who strive unceasingly to keep pace with time and come up fresh each day.

MAJESTIC, N. Y.

Al Trahan-Sandra Lynde, Molly Picon, Eddie Garr, Fats Waller, Myra Johnson, Wiere Bros., Cinda Glenn, Mark Plant, Bernice Stone, Don and Bud Gilbert, June Hani, Gloria Rich, Mei Toy, June Hani, White & Manning, Earl McDonald, Marianne Mosner, Vera Nargo, Herma and Frederico Norello (Casastrellis), Five Jansleys, Julian Fuhs and house orchestra (10).

With an intermission lobby crowd that looked like old Sunday nights at the NVA, three-a-day vaudeville returned to Broadway Friday night (30) under aegis of Kurt Robitschek, former London and Paris vaude producer, and the Shuberts. With some tightening, better spotting of acts and a little 'dressing' to live up to label of 'produced vaude,' revival looks to be more than just another death rattle, even though quartered in a side street (45th). Not quite the old Palace yet, nor as zippy as Billy Rose's Casa Manana frolics, but well worth the \$1 tops.

It's No. 2 for the Shuberts who also have the 'Hellzapoppin' (Winter Garden) quasi-vaudeur and who will be going for a third shortly at the Cort with Frank Fay in charge. Robitschek's show was first planned for the B. S. Moss Broadway (Cine Roma). Its present side street presentation cuts down the nut, but the location is a barrier. At admish of from 50c to \$1.50 top on weekends, it's figured the 1,717-seat house can make a profit on a capacity nut of \$14,000 weekly, half going for talent. Shows go on at 2:30, 6:30 and 9:00 p.m. daily, which will necessitate considerable pruning. Show was directed by Robitschek and Georges Banyai for their Vaudeville Artists, Inc., also booking.

On production end, first thought is that more coin could have been spent in framing show. Scrim curtains and condensed proscenium looked too cheap. Backdrops are not much better. Built-in frame for stage looks unfinished. Spotting of house band on stage for sessions also lessens the impression, since 10 pieces look lost and drab behind plainly lettered music stands. Orch is not the type to be staged in first place. That, however, is the only fault. It plays the show very well, except for a brassiness that was particularly noticeable while on rostrum.

Besides needing some severe cutting of long winded routines (producer had already dropped line of girls), show could also have used a little dancing. Went overboard on novelty, acrobatics and comedy, but neglected to spot a good terper or team. Singing also was light, resting mostly on Molly Picon and Mark Plant, latter too much on the heroic baritone plane. Presence of three femme m.c.'s, Cinda Glenn, Vera Nargo and Marianne Mosner, doesn't help. Former earns her way with some gagging and later with her own contortion specialty and by working in bits. Other two, delegated to deliver (in rhyme) intros of acts, slow up the proceedings. Nothing special in looks and absolutely blah on personality, they detract.

Under corny title of 'Vaudeville Marches On,' show, with a number of 'repeats' who have played locally recently, gets under way via overture of 'You Got Me,' Mark Plant's voice booms the title song by Frank Galen. Abe Burrows and Robert Katscher, while surrounded by animate acts. Different acts fade in and out for theme picture. Gilbert Bros., last on, remain with their plenty snappy horizontal bar work muscling. Got swell returns for their opening trick.

Initial bit finds Miss Glenn working with Miss Mosner, Plant and Earl McDonald (latter strictly legit) in comedy bit, 'Love Tragedy in Paris.' Biz of hubby finding lover in apartment and feeding sentence-ending words for Miss Glenn to weld into advertising copy while running on and off stage. Only cute.

Band takes to the stage for youth parade, dropping back to pit at finale. Robie's idea is to spot some unknowns in every show. He does that. Just spots 'em. He should be more discriminating instead of permitting full acts to sneak by the cutting room.

The 'Give Them a Chance' lineup comprises June Hart, pert accordionist who dances a little while playing (band almost blew her off apron); Gloria Rich, blond toe tapper; Mei Toy, Chinese swing singer who first warbles a native ditty then 'Tiskit'; June Boyd, xylophonist who dances while playing; Bernice Stone, moderate acro-contort dancer, best in violent split and twist; and White and Manning, comedy dancers and knockabout mixed team. Last mentioned are standard and first in merit. Work some nifty comedy into speedily and cleverly routinized act. Do takeoff on Spanish and adagio terping, girl being tossed several feet through air before a split.

McDonald and Miss Glenn return again in double entendre blackout done in two parts. 'Sprained Ankle' bit is done straight at first with lights on during ostensible normal conversation while girl is helped to a chair. With glimmers out sounds like old 'Stop, Johnny!' parody song,

It also sounds out of place, to say the least.

Wiere Bros., Molly Picon and Al Trahan, in order named, comprise rest of first act, preceding 10-minute intermission. The imported Wieres took the house by storm with their dance lunacies and crackpot unison work. Turn is perfectly timed and exceptionally funny. Best of all it's fresh. Boys work in tux, doing violin playing and head balancing, acrobatics, comedy dancing. Had to do bridged-back twists clear across stage to beg off. Miss Picon's piquant presence is ideally spotted, following Wieres, but like some who follow her she is around just a little too long. Very arresting with her 'Hands' song number and 'Old Shawl' and could bow out before 'Working Girl,' though latter is as well done as other two. Abe Ellenstein conducted for her.

Trahan's session, unlike his stand at Casa Manana, was permitted to stagnate. Ran full gamut, bluer bits adding to negative effect. Still a sock act, but should know by now when to stop mugging and reaching.

Following intermission, Novellos (Casastrellis in circus field) went through ladder balancing. A girl, a man and a dog form cast. Unsupported ladder climb by man, followed by balancing and dog climbing up alone for balancing on man's head, is the repertoire. Miss Glenn's solo session of arm contortions follows. Also in need of pruning. Five Jansley's, another muscle turn of risley workers (recently at Loew's State), are sandwiched in between Eddie Garr and Fats Waller-Myra Johnson combo. All male quintet work with supporting shoulder chairs throughout. They display better-than-average tossing of lighter members from feet of two sitters, foot spinning, etc. Trahan, Picon and Glenn come in for comedy relief. All good.

Garr's mild opening of singer-mimicry is overcome via his other impersonations and gagging. It's not new, but vet has appeal. Waller's turn, more than overdone, saw them start walking. Gives too much time to himself before bringing on Miss Johnson for socko 'Small Fry' rendition. Then the usual stage grouping for finale.

MUSIC HALL, N. Y.

Jeanne Devereaux, Jane Sproule, Whitey's Jitterbugs, Les Juvelys, Rockettes, Ballet Corps, Glee Club, Symphony Orch under direction of Erno Rapee; 'Topper Takes a Trip' (UA), reviewed in this issue of VARIETY.

A fast and fairly entertaining stage show for New Year's supplants the Christmasy two-part production that was carried past Yule on a two-weeks stay, although picture was changed for the holdover week. With 'Topper Takes a Trip' (UA) on the screen, a fine laugh comedy, there can be no complaints. Leon Leonidoff, who staged the New Year show, is showing off the Hall's mechanical equipment for the out-of-towners, and also telling them subtly, but surely, that there's going to be a world's fair in these parts shortly.

He labels his show 'Dawn of a New Day,' slogan for the forthcoming ('39) exposition, and bends the current production down to a flag-waving finish after having infused various touches that represent double-truck ads for Grover Whalen's big blow off on Long Island. It is a fitting tribute that the Hall pays the fair, in keeping with similar plugging this New Year's from other sources, including theatres, night clubs, hotels, etc.

On the opening with the symphony orchestra on the stage, a large trademark of the fair in neon is used as background while an arrangement of Jerome Kern numbers is played, including selections from 'Show Boat' and 'Roberta.' As this finishes, the neon sign goes up and the orchestra moves upstage against a drop symbolizing the fair (perisphere and trylon), comes into place.

Showing them, including plenty of out-of-towners, what they can do with that Hall stage equipment, up from the pit comes the glee club singing the official song of the N. Y. fair, plus 'I'm a Jitterbug.' This platform piece moves upstage as the orchestra group rises into the air to appear over them, and from the pit comes another loud, this time the ballet troupe. Terracing the platforms, the orchestra moves higher and the glee club rises a way, while the ballet corps does a very clever and somewhat unorthodox number with drums.

While Whitey's Jitterbugs, four couples of Negro shagsters work with the glee club, for the ballet number the topper is Jeanne Devereaux. She does a toe specialty of acceptable value when the tenor of the number turns to toytime, accompanied by fitting music. Ballet girls dance on the drums, laid in a circle, as a novelty touch. The ballet number is a bit long.

Following is Les Juvelys, one of the cleverest acts ever seen on any stage. The routine includes some opening acrobatics, balancing on a board that is placed under a cylinder and some head-to-head balancing with rubber balls between as cushions that expresses even if

it doesn't look so hard. The act was formerly at the International Casino.

For the Rockettes, doing a tap routine of fair caliber, but far from the hit of the show as they usually are (Juvelys are the stuff on this show), a fourth platform comes up from the pit and remains stationary with the stage as space on which the line girls work. Flags with the world's fair trademark fall in from the sides for the finale.

Orpheum, Vancouver

Vancouver, B. C., Dec. 30.
Jan Rubini, Sammu White, Peggy Taylor Trio, Galli Sisters (3), Edward Sisters (2), Rahn Ormond (m.c.); 'Thanks for Everything' (20th).

Nicely spotted to grab the holiday cream, this unit, billed as 'Hi Ho Hollywood Review,' builds to good audience reaction. Customers, who expected slap-dash affair of artists picking up Xmas gravy, were surprised to see a show that really clicks on good-old-time-vaude formula throughout.

Spotted against a paint job of Grauman's Chinese theatre, five acts are capably emceed by Rahn Ormond, who, however, insists upon dubbing in amateur magic and one suit of Ben Bernie patter in verse. Ormond just finished a stint in a western pic. And has nice appearance on stage in tails.

Edwards Sisters open with clever hoofing. The colored pair do nothing spectacular, but give freely to get show off to easy start. Heavy build-up by m.c. on the Eddie Cantor discovery angle sets stage for clever vocals by three Galli Sisters. Kids swing out with plenty of animation and grab the audience from the start. Two older girls play to youngster, who stands on a box in the center; latter really sells the act with exceptional personality. First-rate arrangements and excellent pipes combine to make trio a real click.

Sammy White is hoke artist from away back. Opened a little slow, but caught on fast to smash finish with eccentric terping. White delivers a sentimental speech about the return of vaude. Audience was so well sold that they ate up the talking, although wanting more dancing.

Number four spot has Jan Rubini doing fiddle solo. Even more hoke here, with audience crying in their beer over old faves. House dusted off organ as support for encore, with lighting effects taking star part here.

Peggy Taylor Trio climaxes show with sophisticated terping and then completely fools audience by breaking into a knockabout routine.

Biz good. Hike.

STATE, N. Y.

Paul Whiteman Orch. Les Lieber, Clark Dennis, Joan Edwards, Four Modernaires; 'Young in Heart' (UA).

Paul Whiteman at the State is a snug fit, for the patrons here like performers with experience, not fads. On that score, of course, Whiteman delivers solidly. His unit has genial pace, good pop music and balance. What's more, it evokes nostalgia—a category in which Whiteman certainly has an edge over his contemporaries. He could sell plenty on that angle alone, but he doesn't overwork it. There are new faces and new tricks in adequate doses.

Program runs only 48 minutes, together with a newsreel whose innards were left in the cutting room, and 'Young in Heart.' Due to the holiday b.o., the State is turning this bill over plenty fast to get the customers. By the same token, Whiteman is really robbed of five minutes given over to the winners of a Loew jitterbug contest.

These wild-eyed kids have absolutely no place on the bill. This foolishness represents a letdown to the Whiteman show, the crazy antics of the kids clashing violently with the smoothness of the orchestra. Twenty-seven piece combo (Whiteman fronting in maroon garb) opens snappily with 'I've Got Rhythm,' then swings into one of those Whiteman medleys that milks every remnant of sentimental memory from the patrons, especially when the veteran Mike Pingitore winds it up brilliantly.

Les Lieber has a novelty turn at this point with some tooting on 10c piccolos, the turn serving more to bring on the specialties than anything else. Joan Edwards (New Acts) follows and gets across a healthy wallop on appearance, vocalizing and prior radio buildup. Whiteman tries to sell her as a genuine New York girl, which is unnecessary since she can stand well enough on her own, and who in New York gives a hoot anyhow.

At this point Al Gallodoro, from the sax section, spins out a triple-tongue version of 'Nola' that impresses. The turn is smart for Whiteman has a sax-clarinist section of nine men whose work certainly should be highlighted with a well-placed showoff turn.

Clark Dennis (New Acts), tenor, is introduced as a newcomer from Chicago. Wherever he's from, he's learned how to get the most out of

NEW ACTS

JOAN EDWARDS

Singer

7 Mins.

State, N. Y.

This miss is new to the records as a solo performer, though not new to the stage. She once toured as a Gus Edwards act, a fact that's distinctly overshadowed by her radio work. She's niece of Edwards. She's been mainly with Paul Whiteman, however, with whose unit she was caught at the State. She makes a nice appearance right from the start, is gracefully gowned in white and has poise.

As for her singing, it leans toward swing. Voice is polished, though her gestures are pretty stylized and aren't necessary. Business with the hands is okay in operetta or novelty, but it has no significance in most pops.

Sang three numbers when caught. 'You Go to My Head' (her only ballad), 'Small Fry' and 'Where Has My Little Dog Gone.' This represents good progression, and to fine results. Gal can hold her own in any niche requiring an accomplished pop singer.

Edga.

CLARK DENNIS

Tenor

10 Mins.

State, N. Y.

Paul Whiteman, with whose unit Dennis is currently vocalizing, introduces the tenor as a newcomer from Chicago. No record of him here before, but there's a good chance that there'll be one. Lad has one of those voices that runs off the top end of the keyboard, and he knows how to sell it. Also, his coaching has been fine. That boyish pep comes from study, not nature.

Opening with 'Reverie' is a safe bet anywhere, and Dennis doesn't miss it. 'Begin to Begin' and 'Lone Prairie,' also two very safe selections, for the range is good, and this is the kind of stuff Whiteman can back up so brilliantly that it would be pretty hard to flop.

Personality is adequate. But the criticism applicable to another member of the Whiteman unit, Joan Edwards, anent use of hands goes here, too. It's almost as bad to wave 'em around as to stick 'em in the pockets. This is somewhat minor, however.

Edga.

KIM LOO SIS (4)

Singing, Dancing

8 Mins.

Stanley, Pittsburgh

Unusual at any time to find a Chinese sister quartet, even if they aren't sisters, on the stage. Even lack of hoke, a tribute to it, for un-

the patrons. It's a strong spot on the bill.

Very peppy version of 'Hallelujah' by the orchestra—giving room for individual work—greases the way for the Four Modernaires, who clown through a medley and 'Ferdinand.' They merit this spot and hold it down all right, but some kind of switch on the bill to get the comedy further up front and the vocals in the last niche might be better, especially since Goldie, the comic trumpeter, briefly follows them. Their 'Ferdinand' business has punch.

Jitterbugs—of whose tweeds, sweaters and red silk panties, the less said the better—wind up incongruously.

Biz socko at last afternoon show Thursday (29).

Edga.

ORIENTAL, CHICAGO

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Son and Sonny, Boice and Ladd, Bester West and Lucille Page, Bea Kalmus, Kamia, Borrah Minevitch Harmonica Rascals; 'Tarnished Lady' (RKO).

On the whole there's a good show here this week, with eight showgirls added for flash.

Son and Sonny, standard colored hoofers, are solid, as always, and Boice and Ladd are a good 'hokey, crossfire act with femme getting over some lowdown comedy. Gaggling sometimes is a bit too fast for the aud, however; the punchlines should be emphasized a little more.

Bester West and Lucille Page, always a click with their respective comedy and dancing, still go over here and show themselves to be suitable for niteries and vaude anywhere. Bea Kalmus, after five months at the Royale Frolics, niterly here, moved here for the singer assignment and smashes over with her pops. Her 'Cavalcade of Stars' particularly is dynamite.

Kamia does a 'Dance of the Seven Sins,' in which she shifts from one 'sin' costume to another. Borrah Minevitch's Harmonica Rascals offer a reprieve. Their act isn't as good without their leader, who has been in Hollywood mostly, but it gets by nevertheless. House orchestra is steadily deteriorating, playing miserably at last show Friday (30).

Gold.

doubtedly it's right out

basket from top to bot. Mystics start off by bi more so to find they're an ordinarily attractive and with of s.a. With that much novelty as you a starting point they should aize more on their advantage. When turn's a combination of bad, needs to be ti speeded up a bit and new idea or two.

As it is, act's prett save for a socko that's turned in by Loos near the finish. them make an api getaway, neatly gov pajamas, doing a wea lude at the mike for semi-shag they event into. It's good hoofing ar it wouldn't hurt. They co the vocals.

Fourth follows them on a couple of songs that are just fair and an impression of Ella Fitzgerald tisket-tasketing that's only slightly better. Then comes the acrobatic flash and all four of them are on again at finish whirling around with rag-doll partners. It's a weak curtain. Too familiar for one thing and flatly done for another. Gals should brush up, stick more to the terp end and, with their looks and easy manner, could be a cinch. Not under the present setup, however. Cohen.

IATSE SIGNS CONTRACT WITH PHILLY THEATRES

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.

Two-year agreement covering all stagehands and electricians employed in Warner and indie houses here was inked last week by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. Principal outcome of more than six weeks of embattled negotiating was restoration of half the pay cut imposed on the grips in 1933. Other half was given them two years ago.

Contract is for a 48-hour work week, but under a verbal agreement men work only 40 hours each in order to spread out employment. Similar two-year term covering IATSE men in legit houses was signed in September.

SHUBERT, NEWARK

Newark, Jan. 1.

Lou Holtz, Helen Morgan, Abbott and Costello, Betty Hutton, Ann Miller, 6 Antalaks, Leo Freudberg's pit orch.

Eddie Sherman and Sam Stiefel have brought first-class vaudeville back to Newark at the Shubert. Opening last week with Ben Bernie and six acts, plus newsreels and shorts for intermission, house did capacity with four shows daily, admission price being 25c to 75c. Sherman claims he has a five-year lease from the Prudential Life Insurance Co. on house. If he can continue the grade of acts he is starting with, he should strike gold here. That will be his problem.

Harry Richman is booked in for the near future. Sherman has other houses, two in Philadelphia, one in Atlantic City and other spots. He can guarantee time to acts, which should help his booking problems.

His present bill at the Shubert is Billy Rose's Casa Manana show, with Lou Holtz and Helen Morgan starred. Newark hasn't seen such a star-studded bill in years, the nearest approach being the vaude programs Mart Darcy is putting on at the Paramount-Newark. Lou Holtz, as the m.c., sets the tempo of the show and does a grand job. Helen Morgan, minus the piano, sobs her way into the hearts of the patrons with 'My Bill' and peps them up again with 'You Go to My Head.' Her gowns are the last word in gorgeousness.

Abbott and Costello, the former a recruit from burlesk, put on a zanie act that equals Holtz's crazy talkfest. It's a new team and a good one. They are going places.

Betty Hutton, billed as Jitterbug No. 1, lives up to her title in every way. Ann Miller, remembered for her work in the pic 'You Can't Take It With You,' shows she can really dance. True to form, the layout ends with the familiar acrobatic act, and this time it is the Six Antalaks who give a couple of chills and thrills in their dizzy balancing act. Leo Freudberg, of WOR, is the pit orch leader and does a good job. Wisely, the management only puts on newsreels and shorts. No third-rate film is marring the bill.

Sherman has got something that Newark wants, provided he can keep up the quality of the shows. Dalz.

New York's Night Life In 1938

By Abel Green

New York looks back on a flock of 77Bs in 1938 brought about by a record-low tourist season this past spring and summer (class hotels were offering air-conditioned rooms at \$5 a day, without takers), but optimistically eyes the 1939 World's Fair.

Despite the axiom that the mass capacity cafes, cabarets, theatre-restaurants and niteries, classify them as you will, offer the best per dollar value to night-loafers, than in any other world's capital, the sheep-herd quality, which has always been standard in New York, obtained even more vividly this year among the metropolitan N. Y. night spots. They'd rather be jam-packed and charged heavily in the high spots than spread a little of the lucre among the less popular joints.

There are just so many regulars who are habitual goer-outers. And if their loyalties are distracted by this and that new opening some other spot must suffer. Eventually it gets back to the concentration of wealth in the fave cafes, say the Stork, 21. Morocco, Iridium, Persian and kindred rooms, but in the interim it's thinly spread around.

In the mass joints it's even truer. That takes in the Paradise, Hollywood, International and French Casino (now Billy Rose's Casa Manana), all of which parleyed themselves into 77B. Perhaps the heaviest financial setback was visited on the International, considering its basic investment, which runs upward of \$500,000. Newest tack is a 'popular' type floor show at reduced scale for mass appeal.

La Conga, which last season was a highlight success and which touched off a cycle of Latin niteries, this year, through a combination of circumstances and new auspices, likewise played the 77b route. For a time the growth of the Conga dance craze loomed as a major cafe industry.

Vaude's Major Market

On the talent end, the gravitation of vaudeville into the drink-and-dance phase remains the most salient evolution of flesh entertainment. The cafes are the most concentrated markets for vaudeville. In line with that the summer resorts even went more bullishly for acts.

Both talent and the borscht belt bistros thought it would be 'more dignified' if the Russian-soup billing were buried. However, so long as the Catskill impresarios were book-

ing waiters with gigolo avocations—hoof with the lonesome mamas, in between the chopped-liver and sour cream service—the pat billing clings.

Park avenue circuit saw much breaking down of previous taboos. Swank St. Regis' Maisonnée Russe booked a colored band, and Benny Goodman killer-dillered 'em at the Waldorf. As a compromise with aestheticism and juvenile culture, the Waldorf installed a milk bar for the jitterbug trade. Also booked socialite Cobina Wright, Jr., and, later, Alice Marble, the tennisist, into its snootier Sert Room. With Adelaide Moffatt, these, incidentally, remained the high marks of the blue-book, blues-singing cycle. Sally Clark, a Roosevelt in-law, was non-sensational in Boston and at New York's Plaza hotel, and then decided to get married. Lois Elliman is still around, but modestly does vocals with bands. Eleanor French, also of Park Avenue background, dittoed with Dick Gasparre at the Ambassador hotel; a socialite amateur contest got Anne Francine a regular job at Le Coq Rouge, but the b. o. tops of 'em. Mrs. Eve Symington, who drew up to \$1,000 a week, decided to remain inactive this season. Miss Moffatt, at Harry Richman's Road to Mandalay, thus becomes the No. 1 money-getter. She's making show business her career.

Cafe society settled back to its accustomed route among the spots bonifaced by Messrs. Sherman Billingsley, Jack Kriendler-Charlie Berns and John Perona, with occasional deviations into the St. Regis, Rainbow Room and Plaza hotels.

Russian Lambeth

At the St. Regis, Prince Serge Obolensky introduced the Lambeth Walk early in the summer atop its roof, and touched off that English importation into a moderate vogue. An ice show in the downstairs Iridium Room this fall was another innovation, as was the grill (Maisonnée Russe) room's adventure with Billy Hicks and his Sizzling Six, which the toney hotel chose to classify as 'Nubian Swingsters'—attired in Russian togas no less, and vocalizing occasional French chansons.

How-to-Keep-Them-Out Headache

Cafe society thing remains the same problem for the smart spots—how to keep 'em out. Whether it offends some or not becomes a tactical question, and, it is admitted, there are sometimes grave errors committed when an injudicious

headwaiter says, 'Sorry, but all our tables are reserved,' and the room is palpably half empty. However, that's an intra-trade headache that becomes a matter for individual operation, and is not without its points in favor of the management.

Graver problem will be how to cope with the midwest tycoons, attracted by the Fair, along with other important hinterlanders who, not known at face value by the major domos at the door, are bound to create resentment. The smart spot joints realize that, and the idea still exists of building up No. 2 joints, where to shunt the overflow. The 52d Street spots themselves want to preserve amenities further by a vigilante committee to cope with any clip-joint tactics, as and when the crowds become an embarrassment of riches.

Late wine-dine thing gave rise to the idea of deferring theatre curtains until past 9 p.m., but with a flock of legit hits in town, the customers just ate and ran, if they wanted to make the theatres on time.

Florida was blah last winter; looks better this season.

New Dances

Following the conga came the Lambeth Walk; then the Palais Glide (never did get started), another English importation. Now the smart hoofers are messin' around with the 'samba' or 'zamba' from Brazil, a hark-back to the old maxixe which Irene and Vernon Castle first introduced 20 years or so ago. In between have been the shag (holdover from last year) and big apple (for a time the b.a. even forced fashionable east side bistros to call themselves La Grande Pomme), and latterly the 'little peach.' All vogues of the fleeting moment.

More hark-backs to yesteryear—a switch on the Coney Island beer-stubs with free silent films—cropped up in the Coast's classy cocktaileries, with feature-lengths. In the east, some of the bars now project fight films while you're quaffing. Jack Dempsey's new Broadway Bar was among the first to essay that, naturally featuring the Manassa Mauler in his past fisticuffs.

Among the new ventures, Harry Richman's Road to Mandalay (Delmonico hotel) is the latest. Dave Apollon unsuccessfully essayed a nitery venture with his Casanova. Clifford C. Fischer's Frenchy revues, which set a vogue in America for three seasons and which folded when the French Casino encountered trouble, came back into the Inter-

national this fall. Biz started off strong, then there was a police rap for alleged nudity, and the spot skidded. A new pop-priced show now in.

Nils T. Granlund (NTG) opened the Rising Sun, a Swedish smorgasbord spot, and he too was a victim of the authorities' anti-'mixing' edict. Here, too, biz had started off big, but latterly Granlund had to file a reorganization petition, offering 45% settlement on bills, dating from Feb. 1.

'Mixing'

In the summer, as biz dipped, more 'mixing' was generally encouraged all over, the dame angle being the usual aftermath. But the new regime in New York frowns upon the practice, which is another thing that looms as a bit of a headache for the nitery managements. Argument is that if the Fair visitors are to be amused, the technical straight-lacedness should be eased; that the visiting firemen are here to make whoopee. However, the ABC (liquor license) regulations in New York are quite strict, and the penalty of forfeit of license is an omnipotent bugaboo to those who would dare to cut loose.

Frisco Fair is already spreading the word of 'liberality' and the gambling shops which have been plying off Los Angeles waters look to a boom when the Golden Gate Expo opens.

Meantime, as part of the civic drive for virtue License Commissioner Paul Moss has been harassing the agents, particularly the office-in-hat cafe bookers but if you'll look into the 1905-06 file of VARIETY, during its very first year, that same routine was reported then, and in almost every subsequent year.

More New Ones

Among other new nitery manifestations there cropped up Cabaret TAC (Theatre Arts Committee), a politico nitery, patterned after the Kabaret der Komiker (Berlin, b. H.—before Hitler) and Paris' Theatre Dix Heures (10 o'clock theatre), with its sketches emphasizing political cross-sections.

Another new tangent, offshoot of the vaudeville vogue, was the \$1.10 admission charge, for shows only, inaugurated by Billy Rose at his Casa Manana, basically as an idea to fill up the top shelf. Vaude fans sat at tables, saw the show, had the privilege of enjoying the dance music and were supposedly not obligated to buy even a drink. Of course they get a mild hustle from the waiters but, by and large, those that came to get in under the wire of the

minimum tariffs also went for at least a drink, so the charge checks upped to \$1.20 or so. Besides it got population in the balcony which was otherwise void. However, despite the click of the cabaret-vaudeville idea, Rose resented workers' union demands and after threatening to shut down, later reached an agreement. His newest nitery is called the Diamond Horseshoe.

Leon & Eddie's, with a weekly nut that has ranged from \$8,000 to \$10,000 a week, also inaugurated a \$1.10 admish, just for the show, sans any solicitation for drinks, etc. L & E's further trimmed its sails and set about to keep attracting the middle-class public by cutting the \$2.25 table d'hotes to \$2 and now \$1.50, counting on the drink average to offset matters. It has worked out all right.

International Casino, with its costly spiral bar; its name dansapation in Larry Clinton, its newly done over Streets of Paris room, and with the major spectacle within the Casino, has yet to go over the top, although still trying.

During the summer it was noted that the air-coolies did better than the rooferies, the sky-high dining rooms, with name dance music, not being enough, if not properly air-conditioned.

Rockefellers

Major exception to this are the Rockefeller skyscraper cabarets, Rainbow Room and Rainbow Grill which, incidentally, gross \$80,000 and \$100,000 a month between them, giving the Rockefellers a \$1,000,000 gross from the Radio City eateries alone. It was figured out that, with addition of the Music Hall's \$5,000,000 annual gross, plus another \$1,000,000 from the Rockefeller Center tours, skating rink, etc., the oil family's show biz income is \$7,000,000 per annum.

These were the highlights of the past year's nitery trend, plus such curiosa as the jitterbug trade which, as in the preceding year's shagging vogue, tended to discourage the more matured type patronage; said maturer customer, naturally, being of ampler spending proportions.

The guest night thing became a bit of a vogue—almost an evil—with a staggered schedule of 'special' nights for this or that maestro, radio fave or songsmith. Being a cuff, somebody had to pay—usually the music publisher reps. Acts, too, found themselves playing a benefit circuit, for free, but since it was also something in the nature of an audition opportunity, it has compensations.

Whalen, bring on the visiting firemen!

London Cafes: Their Policies, Budgets

London, Dec. 20.

London's West-End night spots are spending close on \$2,000,000 in entertaining the locals and the transients. But it has been a bad year for most of these promoters. This is chiefly attributed to the unsettled European situation and bad stock market; while the Jewish element, conceded to be the best spenders among nightlifers, have tightened their purses, preferring to appropriate this money to helping their less fortunate brethren in middle Europe.

Majority of places are down from 15 to 30%, and, owing to the licensing restrictions, meaning no drinks permitted after 12:30, excepting on one extension night per week, it's practically impossible for niteries spending real dough on entertainment to make money.

Many hotels maintain their entertainment policies at a loss, writing off losses against advertising, and also to keep their staff, whose main source of income is from tips, together.

There is a feeling among many hoteliers that if they dropped all entertainment and dancing, their food reputation would still draw. Experience belies this. Any important hotel which has tried it for a while has invariably found itself going down hill, as gourmets will patronize certain restaurants with food reputations, but not hotels. There they seem to expect dancing and entertainment on top of the food.

Biggest entertainment purveyors in the West-End are Martinus Poulsen and Fausto Stocco, who control the Cafe de Paris. Cafe Anglais, '400' Club (partly, with Abe Aarohson the biggest shareholder), Embassy Club and London Casino. In the latter, a big interest is held by Cliff Fischer and E. A. Stone.

London Casino, which set a new

fashion in London niteries, has been a consistent money spinner till the Entertainment Tax people came along and nicked it for a hunk of money, claiming it was taxable. Since then things have not been too bright. Spot has specialized in elaborate shows, big scenes and massive tableaux, interspersed with known American and Continental talent. Some of the artists who appeared there during this season include Cinda Glenn, Herman Hyde and Sally Burrill, Four Cradocks, Bendova, Maxellos, Christian and Duroy, 3 Sophisticated Ladies, Andre Randal, Lucienne and Ashour, The Robenis, Grace and Nikko, Giovanni, Harald and Lola, Marion Daniels, Gregory and Raymond, Renita Kramer. Overhead has been as high as \$7,500 per week, which includes a bunch of international femme beauts, plus cost of production around \$40,000. Weekly intake has often exceeded \$35,000, but at times has fallen as low as \$20,000. Spot is now depression bound, but will pick up, so it is hoped, when reconstruction comes along.

Cafe de Paris no longer has a name band of the type of Bert Ambrose, but still spends around \$3,000 for entertainment, including band. Plays best talent only, with acts including Beatrice Lillie, Yacht Club Boys, Lucienne Boyer, Pills and Tabet, Ethel Shutta, Paul Draper, Douglas Byng. Business has been erratic, sometimes very good and sometimes fair.

Cafe Anglais pays very little for entertainment, with band and solo act rarely exceeding \$600. Occasionally management breaks out with some big name, as instance the Duncan Sisters, who were in on percentage, and did not accumulate a

fortune. Kept alive by its luncheon trade.

Embassy Club caters for members, and recently acquired by the Poulsen interests. Its entertainment nut, including band, is around \$750, and from all reports is not doing too well. But is hoping.

'400' Club is the spot bottle club in town, and hangout of millionaires and men about town. Doing hefty trade, and still best spot in town of its kind.

Dorchester's \$5 Couvert

Dorchester hotel only spot in town having nerve to charge a \$5 couvert and getting away with it. Henry Sherek supplies the relaxation for the tired business man, and has been doing well for the last three years he has been in charge with contract just extended to 1940. Specializes in leg shows, in 'book' revue, invariably written by Sherek, with music mostly by Eddie Horan. Acts that have appeared there include The Hartmans, Shiela Barrett, Calgary Brothers, Nauntun Wayne (Compere), Nick Long, Junior, Bobby May, Maurice and Cordoba, Lydia and Joresca, Russell Swann, John Hoysradt, Wences, That Certain Trio, Holland and Hart, Cyril Richard and Hermione Baddeley, Richard Haydn, Chesterfields, Oliver Wakefield, Gaston Palmer, Freddy Dosh, Robinson and Martin, Vera Haal, Merriel Abbott Girls, Percy Athos Follies and Chester Hale Girls, now practically a permanent feature there. Overhead, \$3,500.

Two spots exclusively booked by Eric Wollheim, who books with all agents, not muscling in on the 10%, just receiving a booking fee, are the Savoy hotel and Berkeley hotel.

Savoy hotel relies on comedy, particularly sight comedy, and dancing. Two bands that have been there for several seasons, Carroll Gibbons and

Geraldo, are as popular with the visitors as any of the attractions played there. These include Lyda Sue, Maxcellos, Harris, Claire and Shannon, Bob Bromley, Diamond Brothers, Mary Holles, Three Swifts, Josie and Patricia, Arnaut Brothers, Berry Brothers, George Dormonde, Wiere Brothers, Richard and Adrian Dancers, Frakson, Estelle and Leroy, Linder, Olgo, Maurice and Marey, Capella and Beatrice, Calgary Brothers, Joe Jackson, Bob Dupont, Hermanos Williams, Dave and Dorothy Fitzgibbon, Bob Ripa and Robinson and Martin. Overhead with bands invariably around \$3,250, and business consistently good.

Berkeley hotel, mainly talking and singing acts, with overhead around \$1,750, including band. Acts have included Ross and Stone, Walsh and Barker, Richard Haydn, Neila Goodell, Gillie Potter, Music Hall Boys, Olgo, That Certain Trio, Hildegarde, Graziella Paraga, Marrette and Rudy D'Aix, Charlie Wright, Phyllis Stanley, Oliver Wakefield, Bob Bromley, Robinson and Martin, Gipsy Nina, Elizabeth Welch.

Grosvenor House, Entertainment operated by London office of MCA, with Earl Bailey in charge. Entertainment overhead, including bunch of lookers, around \$3,250, with some of the names including Al Trahan, Three Music Hall Boys, Ross, Wyse, Junior, Edwin Styles, George Emmsy, Hacker and Sidell, Gaston Palmer, Dare and Yates, Carlton Emmy and dogs, Georgie Hales and Paul Oscar gals. Cover charge \$3.50, which is about same as in most first-class spots.

At the Troc

Two entertainment spots in the Trocadero restaurant are the Grill Room and the 'Troc.' Former has annual leg show, which Charles Cochran has been producing there for 14 years. Besides the gals, has three specialties. Always well attended, and a permanent institution. 'Troc' is solely booked by Charles L. Tucker with no chiseling, all agents

getting their full 10%. Acts played there invariably number five to six, all big names, and mostly headliners. There is a minimum cover charge of \$2, which includes dinner, and is always doing near capacity business. Some of the acts are Buster Shaver, with Olive and George, Ross and Stone, Gaston Palmer, Russell Swann, Bob Bromley, Stone and Lee, Larry Adler, Max Miller, Max Wall, Billy Bennett, Vic Oliver, Nauntun Wayne, Hutt, Eddie Peabody, Arthur Prince, Ac Astor, Renee Houston and Donald Stewart, Elizabeth Welch, Oliver Wakefield, Three Music Hall Boys, Western Brothers, Molly Picon, George Robey, Niela Goodell, Gali-Gali, Olive White, Forsythe, Seamon and Farrell, Gipsy Nina, Wences. Practically an all-star show.

Local agent, Michael Mitchell has four spots which he books exclusively. Cuts in on the agents' commissions, instead of getting booking fee. These are Piccadilly hotel, Romano's restaurant, Quaglin's and Chez Henri.

Piccadilly hotel, once the ace spot, in the days when it was booked in conjunction with the defunct Kit-Cat, is now a grind spot. Acts play four times nightly, twice in the grill room and ditto in the restaurant. Entire overhead, including three bands, does not top \$2,000. Acts are mostly continental, from Paris, who are glad to escape the falling franc, and locals. Just struggling along. No cover charge.

Quaglin's is very ultra, and business very good. Food has big reputation. Entertainment consists of band and one act, and never exceeds \$1,000.

Gabber Runs Air Contests

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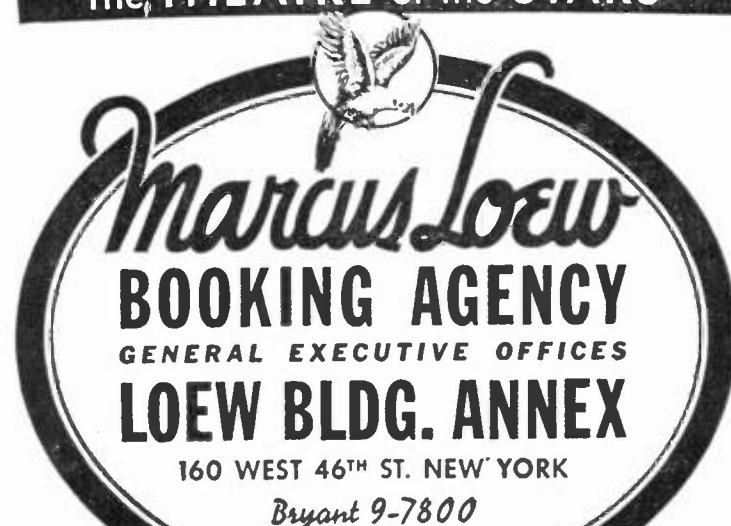
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Chicago Nite Life Altered In '38

By Dan Goldberg

Chicago, Jan. 1.

Most important occurrence in Chicago's night life during 1938 was the withdrawal of the hotels from the radio, and likely the most important happening in 1939 may be their return. Two of the biggest hotels went through 1938 with their major nite rooms folded most of the time. The Morrison hotel's Terrace room opened only spasmodically and then primarily for parties and special occasions; likewise, the Congress hotel's Casino, Empire room of the Palmer House and Gold Coast room of the Drake were erratic, while the College Inn of the Hotel Sherman got by almost solely on the convention biz that the hostelry lined up throughout the year.

At the LaSalle hotel, the Blue Fountain room was primarily a luncheon gathering place and a Friday-Saturday night hang-out for the high school and young college crowd. Towards the close of 1938 the Elcawater Beach hotel, which was the last to go off the air, broke away from the other hotels and radioed to a place on the air over Columbia-WBBM.

Amazing thing about that radio situation: On one day the hotel men were meeting and bragging to each other about the great spots they had on the air and how many network shots they had each week; the next day, figuratively, they were off the air in a general resistance against paying the \$100 weekly service charge to stations. There are at present several evidences of unrest among the hotels.

Hotels stated that they had no objection to the C-note tariff, but feared that if they capitulated to the first request on the part of the stations, that next year the transmitters would be seeking \$200.

Ed Lawless, chief of the Palmer House, appears to be the guiding hand in the general resistance to the stations' demands. The squawk is that the hotels feel that they have been paying coin to build up names for bands which will come back next

year and ask for increased salaries. The fact that the orchestra will drag in extra shekels because of its newly-acquired name seems to be ignored.

How It Hurts

However, there is no doubt that being off the air has hurt the hotels' niteriy biz. They still get the visiting and convention crowd, and they get solid portion of local trade; but the margin of profit that used to come from the surrounding towns has been cut down.

There is a discernible building up of trade for the honky-tonks on one hand and the high-tariff, ritzy joints on the other. Invading the town with small and intimate spots for the formal mob and the easier spenders have been three new spots. First and most important is the newly reopened Colony Club as operated by Nick—big pardon—Nicholas Dean and Sonny Goldstone. Formerly operators of the Yacht club, they took over this near-northside spot when it was given up by Dolly Weisberg. They have gone strictly social and ultra with it, and it has been a genuine click in Chi's nite life. There is no entertainment in the typical nite club sense of the word, the niteriy using only a single star for its entire show. It's a Dwight Fiske, a Hildegarde, Nan Blackstone, Maxine Sullivan. The rest is music by the rhumba Jose Manzanera and the Hugo dePaul orchestra.

Swank hotels, Ambassador, East and the Blackstone, broke into the nite life picture, the Ambassador with its really smart Pump Room that is very, very social, and the Blackstone with its copper-floored Ballroom Room. Both of these spots are havens for the society-page photos of town. No floor show in either spot, with the exception of a singing star such as Corinna Mura at the Pump Room at present and Betty Borden in the Balinese.

For an all-around nite club the Chez Paree still rates as the tops, getting the complete cross-section of the business, amusement and social worlds. It presents the town's most expensive and most complete show. Operator Mike Fritzel and Joey Jacobson are a click team.

Sans Casino

Though its casino remained closed throughout the year, the Chez Paree still made money, grossing steadily around the \$20,000 mark, which is above anything else in town at present. And its shows often cost above \$3,500 weekly with such headliners as Jimmy Durante, Milton Berle, Harry Richman, Ted Lewis, Abe Lyman, Ella Logan, Sophie Tucker, Jimmy Savo.

Hi-Hat developed into a strong intimate niteriy during 1938, with its near-northside location getting a strong play. Enlarged its space during the year and is still pretty cramped at times. Rose Bowl, formerly primarily a cocktailery, blossomed out next door to the Hi-Hat as a legit niteriy under the hosting of Frankie Howard. Brought in Willie Shore, who today rates as the town's own niteriy fav and who has a great personal following in Chi, to take over the floor, and he, practically single-handed, has established the Rose Bowl as an important factor in the Chi niteriy scene.

Colosimo's, under Mike Potson,

and the Royale Frolics, with Denis Cooney, enjoyed profitable seasons as late night spots with plenty of acts and vaudeville talent on both of floor shows.

Blackhawk's Gay Stuff

Blackhawk remained on the air and today is still an important item in the town's niteriy field, especially due to its great following of suburbanites and the young shag-artists. Going in strictly for gag stuff since the great click of the Kay Kyser College of Musical Knowledge here, with all bands in the joint hurrying to hit the ether with special musical-type quiz ideas.

But perhaps the greatest advance during 1938 was made by the niteries which are little higher than saloons, the so-called taverns. They established themselves not only for the low-salaried customers, but for the guys and gals who want to let their hair down and kick over a table or two.

Unquestionably the top in this line is the 606 Club on South Wabash avenue. Starting as a small hole in the wall, it has expanded until it is now quite a large hole in the wall. But it is giving the people the longest show on record. It is commonplace to see 15 to 20 acts on a single bill, running as long as two hours. Mostly singles, but okay stuff with a large assortment of strippers. It is a gathering place for show people who pop in there at 4 a.m. after they've finished their jobs around the nite clubs of the town.

Others which are important in town are such spots as the clowning but shrewd El Dumbo, the Gay 90's, the Barrel of Fun, Blondie's, Harry's New York Cabaret, Liberty Inn, Dutch's.

And finally, there are the colored-entertainment spots which get mixed patronage. The best-rating of the lot goes to the Grand Terrace, where Ed Fox plays the best in the colored line; Fletcher Henderson, Louis Armstrong, Earl Hines orchestras and a solid aggregation of floor entertainers.

In the loop the Three Deuces is a swingeroo spot, and in the early days of swing was the gathering place of musicians getting a load of Art Tatum, Cleo Brown and Roy Eldridge breaking it down. On the southside, in the Harlem belt, the Club De Lisa figures as the haven for the slummers and the strictly sepiaseekers. Also through the same belt are a number of boys-will-be-girls spots, and indicates that the real Barbary Coast of the town is moving away from the near northside, where things are getting more legitimate, to the colored section, where the supervision isn't so restraining.

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Greetings to VARIETY and My Friends in Show Business From Baltimore's OASIS CABARET - - -

Mine is the worst nite club in America, featuring the lousiest shows in the world, but we're having an anniversary, too. . . . We're celebrating our THIRTEENTH YEAR IN THE SAME SPOT, and that's a mark for some of those swanky supper clubs, distinctive dine and dance rendezvous, sophisticated boites, bistros and what nois . . . to shoot at. . . . Our M. C. (yes, we have one, too) was left down here for a bad check twelve years ago . . . and we still have him, telling the same gags . . . but who cares . . . nobody pays any attention to the sucker! . . . Our showgirls (what an assortment!) . . . range from twenty to too late for Social Security . . . We're down in a cellar . . . BUT STRICTLY ON THE LEVEL . . . You have to walk down one flight to save nothing. . . . WOTTA JOINT! . . . But it's a living . . . and I'm proud of the distinction of being one nite club that has a Dun and Bradstreet rating. . . . I value as much the friendship of the great and not so great from the show world who have come here and shared a laugh or two. . . .

"SHERIFF" MAX A. COHEN.

WHAT A SEASON
WHAT A GREETING
WHAT A SPOT FOR A
SEASON GREETING
ZOL STU ZEINMIT GUCK EN MAEL
VELVALAH



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SHORE**

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606 CLUB—2,193 (x 50*) performances
COCOANUT GROVE—652 (x 50*) performances
HI-HAT CLUB—12,847 (x 50*) performances
COLOSIMO'S—4,756 (x 50*) performances

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ROSE BOWL, CHICAGO

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SEASON'S GREETINGS
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GREETINGS, VARIETY

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MUSICAL DIRECTOR
PALACE THEATRE, CHICAGO

Greetings

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

**FRANK
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"Impersonator of Stars"

Now Playing
JEFFERSON HOTEL, ST. LOUIS

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BOYS**

"Musical Caricatures"

Week Dec. 31, MAJESTIC, DALLAS

BILL BAIRD

"It's In the Cards"

Playing
FOREMOST HOTELS AND CAFES

**THE THREE
ROSEBUDS**

"Juvenile Acro-Sensations"

**HOWARD
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SEASON 1939—PUMP ROOM
AMBASSADOR EAST HOTEL

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**TYLER,
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1939

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Best Wishes of the Season

SON and SONNY

"TWINKLING TOES"

Currently Oriental Theatre, Doubling Grand
Terrace Cafe, Completing Second Year

Thanks to ED FOX

Variety Bills

NEXT WEEK (Jan. 9)

THIS WEEK (Jan. 2)

Numerals in connection with bills below indicate opening day of show, whether full or split week

Loew

NEW YORK CITY
State (5)
Benny Davis Co
Dick Foran
BALTIMORE
Century (5)
8 Men of Manhatt'n
Rex Roper & M

WASHINGTON
Capitol (6)
Chester Hale Co
Debonairs
Dawn Taze
Bert Walton
Sara Ann McCabe

Paramount

NEW YORK CITY
Paramount (4)
Penny Goodman Or
Sara & Raymond
Gloria Day
CHICAGO
Chicago (6)

WASHINGTON
Kidoodlers
Lewis & Van
State Lake (6)
Gil Lamb
Joe Hesser
Eleanor Whitney
Al Gordon Co

The Chicago Debut of

MATT FOSTER

and

JANE ADAMS

"Daffy Dills of Dance"

AT THE ORIENTAL THEATRE

WEEK JAN. 6TH

Personal Mgt. Billy Jackson

RKO

BOSTON
Boston (6-8)
Blackstone
CHICAGO
Palace (6)
Fibber McGee Co
(30)

WASHINGTON
Pritchard & Lord
Lorraine & Tegan
Cleveland
Palace (6)
Hal Kemp Or
(30)

4 Ortons
Eddie White
Sylvia Borden Co
Davis & Willis
West & McGinty
CINCINNATI
Shubert (6)
Henry Basse Or
Shirley Lloyd

WASHINGTON
Ted Lewis Or
COLUMBUS
Proctor's (30)
Hal Kemp Or
PROVIDENCE
Albee (31)
Blackstone
SCHENECTADY
Proctor's (5-7)
Duke Ellington Or

Warner

NEW YORK CITY
Strand (6)
Louis Armstrong Or
Bill Robinson
Nicomedes
Gordon & Rogers
Dandridge Sis
(30)

WASHINGTON
Sara Ann McCabe
Michon Bros
Gene Austin Co
Seas Powell
PITTSBURGH
Stanley (30)
Bob Crosby Or
Emmett Oldfield
Stan Kavanagh
Bellini & Eng Bros

BROOKLYN
Strand (6)
Ozzie Nelson Or
Harriet Hilliard
(30)
Midgie Fellows
Lydia Sue
Harris & Howell
Paul Gordon
16 Dobs
George Jessel

WASHINGTON
Joe Marsala Or
H'wood Restaurant
Lee Shelley Or
Seger Ellis Or
Barnes
Rob Russell
Pepper January
H & Honey Abbott
Baby Alice
Collegiate 6

PHILADELPHIA
Earle (6)
Bob Crosby Or
(30)
Eleanor Whitney
Lionel Stander
Ken Murray Co

WASHINGTON
Joe Marsala Or
H'wood Restaurant
Lee Shelley Or
Seger Ellis Or
Barnes
Rob Russell
Pepper January
H & Honey Abbott
Baby Alice
Collegiate 6

Provincial

Week of January 2

ABERDEEN
Tivoli
Bower & Rutherford
Velvet
Attwood
Lectura Richmond
Louis Barber Co
Marjorie Stevens
Joe Ritchie
Poster & Clarke
Jack Marks
Leda Hamilton

DUNDEE
Palace
Eddie Peabody
Billy Guest
Billy Rolfs & D
4 Brownie Boys
Eric Randolph
Nesbitt Bros

Cabaret Bills

NEW YORK CITY

Armando's
Buddy Clarke Or
Sigrid Laussen
Bandbox
Charles Barber Or
Gus Martel Or
Roscoe Ails
Betty Lewis
Una Wyle
Barney Gullant's
Angela Velez
Carter & Bowie
Nellie Paley
Terrace Boys

Casa Cubana
Oscar Calvert Or
Elio Ozacar Or
Duanos
Gloria Belmonte
Galvan
Lita Lines
Cesar & Dolores
Ramiro Gomez
Casa Manana
Vincent Lopez Or
Jay Freeman Or
Luce Velez
Doc Rockwell
Peggy Fears
Paul Haakon
Shaw & Lee
Elder Blooms
Benny Baker
Carol Bruce
12 Aristocrats
Yola Galli
Kay Parsons

Bill Bertolotti's
Angelo's Rhumba Bd
Iris Dion
Eleanor Etheridge
Veline Hague
Helen Bell
Robert Kent
Bill's Gay 90's
Jim Miller 3
Sally LaGrande
Rudy Madison
Mary Roberts
Harold Willard
Arthur Behan
Harry Donnelly
Splice Harrison
Bernie Grauer

Hotel Belmont-Plaza
Joe Venuti Or
Mary Jane Walsh
Paul Rosini
Hotel Biltmore
Horace Heidt Or
Larry Cotton
Bob McCoy
Art Carney
Red Ferrington
Agnes & George
Bernie Mattinson
Emily Stephenson
Jean Farney
Hotel Commodore
Sammy Kaye Or
Hotel Edison
Les Brown Or
Miriam Shaw
Johnny Johnson
Hotel Essex House
Nat Brandwyne Or
Claire Martin
Hotel Lincoln
Gray Gordon Or
Hotel McAlpin
J. Messner Or
Jeanne D'Arcy
Sis & Tom Dowling
Hotel New Yorker
Tommy Dorsey Or
Peter Kent Or
Estelle & LeRoy
Edythe Wright
Jack Leonard
2 Esquires
Helen Myers
Ross MacLean
Skeets Herfurt
Dorothy Wilkens
Joan Merrill
Paul Rosini
Hotel Park Central
Lee Myles Or
Peter Higgins
Nina Olivette
DeRonda & Barry
Garland & Marla
Hotel Pennsylvania
Kay Kyser Or
Hotel Pierre
Harold Nagel Or
Hotel Plaza
Eddy Duchin Or
Bobby Parks Or
Morton Downey
Maurice & Cordoba
Club 18
Jack White

Pepper Pot
Joe D'Andrea Or
Bill Scully
O'Hanlon & Del R
Bob Matzi Or
Iris Raye
Barbara Lane
Queen Mary
Joe Ellis Or
Gwen Williams
Peggy Ware
Leda Lombard
Katherine Tate
Corlies & Palmer
Rainbow Grill
McFarlands Or
Judy Abbott
Marlynn & Michael
Rainbow Room
Al Donahue Or
Eddie LeBaron Or
Paula Kelly
Ruth Nigey
Alec Templeton
Harris & Shore
Road to Mandalay
Joe Rines Or
Adelaide Moffett
Raye & Naldi
Show Bar
(Forest Hills)
Graham Prince Or
Stardusters (4)
May McKim
Ed Rickard
Castaine & Barrie

Stork Club
Sonny Kendis Or
Jose Lopez Or
Swing Rendezvous
Bob Warren Or
Jack Laurie
Vivian Vaughn
Ronnie King
Naomi Simons
Jerry Roberts
Marjorie Radway
Versailles
M. Bergere Or
Panchito Or
Sophie Tucker
D'Avalos Dancers
Village Barn
Larry Funk Or
Charles Carter
Zeb Carver Co
Vera Fern
Loper & Barrett
Wivel
Charley Bowman Or
Bob Lee
Peggy LeBaron
Al Small
Ted Lester
Eleanor Ethridge
Shirley Gay
Alice St John
Bernice Stevens
Ebbie Goldenkrone
Yacht Club
Fats Waller Or
Fred Yankee Or

Colosmos
Inga Borg
Tullah & Miy
Yvette Rugel
Gerhart 3
Kurtis Marionettes
Lane, Allen & E
Bobby Dandera
Lyle Foster
Bob Hyatt
Pronaph Gls
Hollywood 6
Henri Gendron Or
Club Delisa
Rhythm Willie
Lilyan Christian
Connie Morrow
Homa Lee
Chips Hill
Sam & Kennedy
3 Jokers
Sam Theard
Charles Isom
Partello Gls
Red Saunders Or
Drake Hotel
(Gold Coast Room)
Wayne King Or
Edna Sedgwick
Murtah Sis
Alene & Evans
Dutch's
Ralph Cook Rev
Rittman Dancers
Roberta
Peggy Moore
Helen Dove
Mort Lund Or
Edgewater Beach
Hotel
(Marine Room)
Herbie Holmes Or
4 Nitehawks
Long Fin Soo
Ted & Mary Taft
Rhythm Rebels
Nancy Hutson
Billy Reeves
Harriet Smith Gls
885 Club
Johnny Howard
Virginia Gibson
Suzanne Cantu
Johnny Honnert
Meta Carlyle
Nino Rinaldo Or
El Dumpo
Jimmy Ames
Eleanor Leonard
Claire Bogush
Estelle Bikow
Florine Manners
Phyllis Brooks
Mildred Travis
Dot Keith Gls
Eddy Makins
V Canova Or
Famous Door
Esther Whittington
Bryan Wolf
Jerry Paige
Terry O'Toole
Castellanos Or
4th Club
Homer Roberts
Ruth Barton
Estelle Ellis
Joanne
Shirley Lucky
Shorty Ball Or
Frankie's Casino
Dave Tannen
Pam Adair
Thelma Gracen
Marshall Sis
Jean Moore
Belle Stone
Casino Gls
Tonya
Dick Hardin
Buddy Kirby
Rocke Ellsworth
Bob Tinsley Or
Guy 90s
Joan Rogers
Joan Joyce
Marion Peters
Vee Ames Gls
Geo Anderson Or
Low King
Colleen
B Danders Jr Or
Grand Terrace
Sonny & Sonny
Dusty Fletcher
Howell & Coles
Sallie Gooding
Dottie Saunders
Streamline Sue
Connie Harris
Leonard Reed Gls
Earl Hines Or
Greenmore Hotel
(Glass House Rm)
Rudy Baie
Joe Vera Or
Bob Edwards
Ruth Arden
Harry's N Y Cab'ret
Dorothy Wahl
Tiny Pearson
Kay LaSalle
Vibra
Little Audrey
Dude Kinball
Diane Raye
Chas Engels Or
Art Buckley
Al Wagner
Billie Myers
Lee Berling
Dorothy Johnson
Rankin Gls
Hickory Inn
Dictators Or
Fred Casey
Terry O'Toole
Hi Hat
Nat Cherney
Joe E. Lewis
Jean Mona
Lee Bartel
Andre & Michel
Kretlow Gls
Sid Lang Or
Hippodrome
Paulette LaPierre
Bobby Dunart
Janet & Loretta
Billie Banks
Jerry Girard
Grover Wilkins
Ted Pearlman Gls
Joe Hahn Or
Club Al
Larry Ross
Sylvia Tucker
Sharon McMan
Dolores Lee
Amelia
Leo Franz Or
Club Alabam
Jacqueline Allen
Tom Murray
Red Barger
Country Hunt
Sadie Moore
Jack Irving
Mildred Jordan
Alene Cole
Emile Burton
Bernie Adler
Dave Unells Or
Chalk Robinson Or
Eddie Roth Or
Club Spanish
Fowler & Walsh
Eddie Mack
Pinky Tracy
Bob Davis Or
Loretta DeBoer
Colony Club
Maxine Sullivan
Jose Manzanares Or
Keith Beecher Or

McGraws
George DeCosta
Jack Tilson
Chick Williams
Jane Innes
Dooley
Marion Miller
Phil Chinnard
Chuck Andrews
McLaughlins
Charlene
Patty Ruth
Tonita
Marita Ryan
Mickey Dunn
Sammy Bari
Jules Novit Or
Melody Mill
Tiny Hill Or
Miami Club
Belya White
Earl Rickard
Spencer & Folston
Alice Tannen
Bob-O-Lyn Gls
Johnny Parkers Or
Millstone
Ann Millstone
Ann Howard
Irene Fortez
Roy Swift Or
Minuet Club
Betty Jerome
Del Estes
Cookie Sidel
Johnny Elliot
Dorothy DeHoughton
Art Fisher Or
Rita DeVore
Morrison Hotel
(Boston Oyster
House)
Manfred Gutheif
Nameless Cafe
3 Loose Serews
Oma Mayo
Ed Leon
Evelyn Waters
RaMund's Or
Helen Samms
Old Heidelberg
Old Heidelberg Co
Octet
Lois Tschappat
Herr Louie & W
Herbie Or
Paddock Club
Flo Whitman Rev
Nyla Lou
Muriel Joseph
Sissie Robbins
Genevieve Val
Sharone
Patsy DuBree
Frances Kay
Rex Griffiths
Jerry Frost
Clint Wright Or
Palmer House
(Empire Room)
Orrin Tucker Or
Bonnie Baker
Bailey Sis
Sextette
Gower & Jeanne
Titan 3
Beverly Allen
Abbott Dancers
Phil Dooley Or
Parody Club
Freddie Abbott
Marita Ryan
Honey Lee
Freddie Janis Or
Pow Wow
Bert Nolan
Marvin & Helene
Howards
Gladys Zimmerman
4 Vagabonds
Steve Stutland Or
Rose Bowl
Willie Shore
Martha Tait
Maxine Clayton
Shelby
Ruth Brent
Sol Wagner Or
Yvonne Monoff
Pol-Mar Gls
Royale Frolics
Dolly Kay
Sid Tomack
Reis Bros
Reed & Mela
Birdie Dean
Al Turk Or
Jack Hillard
Frolics Ens
Mark Fisher Or
Sherman Hotel
(College Inn)
Happy Felton Or
Prof Lambert
Pat Rooney
Gibson Gls
Glee Club
Eddie Platt
Billy Galbraith
Louise Dunn
Litta Kadonova
Deloid McKay
Victor Hugo Or
Cadillac Tavern
Henrique
Leon Edwards
Mimi Stewart
Ada Reynolds
Joanne Van
Henrique & Adr'ne
Dick Thomas
Chas Arthur
Darlene Jones
Marcella Marchand
Dolores Lakro
Lillian Stewart
Mary Clark
Lee Vaughn
H Reynolds Or
Jack Newlon
Club 15
Johnny Young's Or
Peggy Shields
Beverly Fisher
Freedy & Lorenza
Jenny Mayce
Amy Organ
Eddie Thomas
Club Morocco
4 Bombshells
Cosmo & Lolita
Sis McCall
Mildred Gilson
Jawell Ella
Mike Jafrey
Patia
Eddie Schwartz
Charlie Gaines Or
Cafe Moroney
Sorey Gavin
John Niles
Lorraine Wiley
La Yonne
Abby Cubler
Joe Familant Or
Club Parakeet
Leonard Cook
Toby Lee
Emma Stouch
Marina Leonard
Betty Fernon
Al Wilson
Bill Thornton Or
El Chico
Lella Rose
Sky Rocket
Marjorie Whitney

Dictators
Mathews & Shaw
Kings
B Tanks Socialites
Stevens Hotel
(Continental Room)
Carlos Molina Or
Rex Griffiths
Houston & Hardin
Novello Bros
Marguerite Meyers
Stockade Inn
Charles Chaney
Subway
Ray King
Val du Val
Opal Adair
Kitty Swanson
Adele
Debs
Ozzie Jackson Or
Susi-Q
Dick Buckley
Deane Page
Nita LaTour
Verne Wilson Or
Swingland
H Henderson Or
Viola Jefferson
Thompson's 16 Club
Ray Reynolds
Mollie Mannor
Joy Kales
R & B Buckley
Marion Vinay
Jill Abbott

Towe
Helen DuWayne
Inez Gonen
Mary Grant
Jane LaVonne
Hal Barber
Tower Gls
George Arnold
Frank Davis Or
Trocadero
Gloria Romano
Adelle St Clair
Terry Circle
Roy Rankin Or
Villa Moderne
Tony Cabot Or
Winona Gardens
Stan Carter
Gigi Rene
Dolores Lee
Diane Lane
Suzanne Kessler
Lucille Johnson
Frankie Rullos Or
Zig Zag
Sunny Bouche
Laura Marman
Sunny Mack
Larry Lux Or

CLEVELAND

Alpine Village
Otto Thurn Or
Rita & Rubin
Alpenettes
Margaret Aemmer
Herman Pirchner
Avalon
Hy Barron Or
Jack Russell
Jess Abarbanell
Bob Marchand
Cedar Gardens
Madeline Jackson
Sussie Brown
Monette Moore
Snakes-Hips Pet's'n
Duke Melvin Or
Chateau
Pete Garret Or
Jay Jason
Al Gayle
Gayle Gaylord
Peltz & James
Eight O'Clock Club
Bill Miller Or
Sammy Lipman
Freddie's Cafe
Tony Emma Or
Cliff Winehill
Dagmar
Lillian Barnes
Golden Glow
Paul Simonetti Or
Te-Taylor
Patrona Ranello
Gourmet Club
Lous Chua Or
Billy Bughe
Bill Loehman
Hutton's Club
Phil Heikel
Sherry Martin
Rose-Marie
Hanna Grill
Gypsy Lee
Hotel Clevelander
Manny Landers Or
Walt Bergen Or
Jules DeVerson
Jack Webb
Hotel Fenway Hall
Willard Potts Or
Billie Allen
Hotel Sterling
Marty Lake Or
Hotel Hollenden
Sammy Watkins Or
Terry Lawlor
Billy Rayes
Pamcho & Dolores
Romany 3
Hotel Statler
Geo Hamilton Or
Pollard & Costello
Lindsay's Sky-Club
Bonnie LaVonne
Marion Rowen
Art Cutlit
Pearl De Luca
Lyndhurst Club
Lee Allen Or
Monaco's Cafe
Jacques Pollack Or
Ted & Mary Taft
Orpha Towl
Nancy Day
Burns & King
Mounds Club
Orville Rand Or
Southern Tavern
Paul Burton Or
Don Kaye
Nick Bontemps
Ubangi Club
Troy Singer Or
Poison Gardner
Bessie Brown
Sunny Carr

PHILADELPHIA

Anchorage
Bill Honey Or
Arcadia Int'l
Chen Williams Or
Mario Villani
Knight Sis
Dorothy Blaine
McDonald & Ross
James Craig
Joe Pietro 3
K-Mar
Bellevue-Stratford
(Main Dining Rm)
Meyer Davis Or
(Burgundy Room)
Frank Juele Or
Coff Hall
Murray Dancers
Edmund DeLuca
Adolph Lanza
Ben Franklin Hotel
Reggie Childs Or
Jimmy DePalma
Ruth Harper
Benny the Bum's
2 Mystics
Ethelind Terry
Frieda Bernard
Alma & Rowland
Litta Kadonova
Deloid McKay
Victor Hugo Or
Cadillac Tavern
Henrique
Leon Edwards
Mimi Stewart
Ada Reynolds
Joanne Van
Henrique & Adr'ne
Dick Thomas
Chas Arthur
Darlene Jones
Marcella Marchand
Dolores Lakro
Lillian Stewart
Mary Clark
Lee Vaughn
H Reynolds Or
Jack Newlon
Club 15
Johnny Young's Or
Peggy Shields
Beverly Fisher
Freedy & Lorenza
Jenny Mayce
Amy Organ
Eddie Thomas
Club Morocco
4 Bombshells
Cosmo & Lolita
Sis McCall
Mildred Gilson
Jawell Ella
Mike Jafrey
Patia
Eddie Schwartz
Charlie Gaines Or
Cafe Moroney
Sorey Gavin
John Niles
Lorraine Wiley
La Yonne
Abby Cubler
Joe Familant Or
Club Parakeet
Leonard Cook
Toby Lee
Emma Stouch
Marina Leonard
Betty Fernon
Al Wilson
Bill Thornton Or
El Chico
Lella Rose
Sky Rocket
Marjorie Whitney
Elaine Martin
Angelo
El Chico Or
Lewis Sis
Melita Moore
Douglas Show Boat
Daglas Or
Emory Evans
Line (8)
Embassy
Francesca
Chita
Joanna Witney
Bill Maples
Al Moore Or
Mitzi O'Neill
John Paris
Pedro Blanco Or
George Clifford
Evergreen Casino
Beth Chellis
Joe Millkopf Or
1523 Club
Swing King Or
Bubbles Shelby
Frances Williams
Miss Andre
South & Lane
Frankie Palumbo's
Gates & Claire
Joe Smythe
Selma Hollman
Pastine & Marilyn
Frank Hall
Yvonettes (6)
Bobby Morrow Or
Harris Tavern
Bobby Lyons
Greta LaMarr
Hildebrand's
Charlie Neid
Ame Joyce
Danny Montgomery
Barnes Sis
Dae & Lamour
Lillian Barnes
Lane (6)
Richard Bach
Bobby Lee Or
Hotel Adelphi
(Cafe Margery)
Howard Woods Or
Lou Valero
Freda Sullivan
Ed Ricard
Noll & Nolan
Duval
Lucille Johnson
Bill Steele
Hotel Philadelphia
C Wolf Gls (6)
Jackie Beekman
Kathleen May
Walton & Joanne
Tony Harris
Girard Ream
Joe Frassetto Or
Girard & Carol
Jack's Grille
Johnnie Cahill
Jacqueline Herman
Margie Bartel
Chiquita
Mary Seville
Margo Lane
Geo Altmiller
Jack Lynch's
Jeno Donath Or
Vincent Rizzo Or
Barney Zeeman
Mona Reed
Mitzi Green
Stroud 2

(Continued on page 200)

LEGIT IN 1938

By Jack Pulaski

it to much ne past year, reached on its tried ideas sub- touring were mental. Showmen type of subscri- necessary if shows ate in stands other than Managers' forecast of that increasing costs re shows from the road accurate, not merely a com- plaint.

Hollywood and its affiliates were beseeched to open up houses for occasional legit bookings but the picture industry was more engrossed in its own problems. Film magnates were also asked to organize stock companies for their own use as talent sources, and for exploitation of screen names but there was no individual or concerted compliance.

More important perhaps is that Hollywood end its feud with Broadway so that legit would be properly financed. There was talk in authorship circles that huddles to achieve that were in the offing. However, nothing seemed to come off in that direction.

There was no doubt that the stage had too few shows; Broadway's menu early in December fell to a new low. Thus, it was evident, there would not be enough material for touring, even if the road were made more feasible. Only practical solution is considered to be road-showing duplicate companies.

The sticks complained they had not been getting the genuine attractions, but, properly cast and presented, such shows should serve. Budgeting for the road is regarded as mandatory but if some of the proposed plans go through there should be more road shows next season than in recent years.

Broadway looks forward to the New York World's Fair. Ballyhoo for the expo has already been started on the stem. Show business looks for material sustenance from the Fair's visitors, but whether such business will support all plays through next summer is problematical.

Musicals Lead Pack

Unless the winter production crop develops new successes, a goodly part of stage fare during the Fair will be musicals. Trend towards that type of production was indicated early in the 1938-39 season when several musical clicks almost overshadowed the field. At the Fair will be a theatre or music hall, which is, curiously, not expected to compete with Broadway. What type of attraction is to be presented there has not been definitely decided.

Broadway is better equipped to house summer shows because a majority of legits have air cooling systems, which the showmen prepared a year in advance.

The ticket situation drew the attention of show business more than ever before. The theory was that reasonable prices would entice larger audiences to shows and therefore encourage more production. The League of New York Theatres consequently drew up a code of fair practices, which is now in operation. The effectiveness is disputed, though it's claimed that the majority of sales by agencies are made at the regulated limit of 75c premium.

Equity backed the League in the code in a deal between the two. The purpose of ticket control is still to be achieved. The meagre number of clicks, too, militates against the efficiency of the code.

One of the code features is the rule against ticket buys. Brokers have an edge in their argument that buys would have saved, or at least kept going, a number of shows that proved costly flops. So far as the agencies are concerned they are burned up over the fact that they are required to pay 3½c per ticket to the League so that the latter can enforce the code which they oppose.

The wave of unionization spread further in 1938. The front of the house is now a factor in theatre operation. Theatrical Managers, Agents and Treasurers union enlivened the winter by suddenly coming to life and taking in all boxoffice staffs, house and company managers and publicity people. Press agents had gotten together as a non-union only to submit to TMAT, forming a chapter with the right to have

their own rules. Similar idea was followed by other groups.

TMAT Gets Manager Pact

TMAT demanded and eventually obtained a basic agreement with the managers. The union was aided by the teamsters union which threatened a strike, and after some picketing, the managers conceded the contract. Result was better salaries for the front of the house. In fact, the scales are believed to be the highest of any union in the country. Agreement covered the final three months of last season and extended until the end of the current season.

The union, however, had expanded so rapidly it ran into financial difficulties, with changes in the personnel and cut in expenditures being required.

Equity's Ranks, Too, Were Ruffled

Burgess Meredith was temporary head of the union until the end of the last season, having replaced Frank Gillmore when the latter resigned to become head of the Associated Actors and Artists of America. During this period there was a riotous session of independent promotion during which it was charged a subversive group was running Equity.

The conservatives thereupon turned out in force at a meeting and named their own nominating committee, with none of the so-called radical group even figuring. It was the best attended Equity meeting in years. Arthur Byron was nominated for the presidency and accepted. The job is non-salaried.

Upon taking office Byron began settling the affairs of the association. One of the changes made in actor contracts was the elimination of junior rating so far as salaries are concerned. All players must receive at least \$40 weekly and the same rehearsal pay, \$20 weekly. That had been one of the changes sought by the younger group and which doubtlessly impelled the managers to seek a basic agreement. For months there have been little disturbance within Equity excepting on WPA theatre matters.

Dissenters within the relief theatre outfit have hammered Equity for action, with much of the time at meetings devoted to the relievers. Transfers to other divisions of WPA and dismissals provoked many complaints. Pink slips handed out at New Year's promise many fresh complaints.

During the late fall an order to reduce the complement in the theatre project was rescinded and then reissued. This started another campaign to forestall such action. WPA has developed into Equity's major problem, replacing the group opposition. At least, those on the relief payrolls are managing to eke a living and with the newly ordered let-outs Equity is certainly in for more travail.

Strawhats' Poor Results

The summer stock and tryout season saw little change from the past several seasons. Talent and material scouts only emphasized the results of the past several summers; the actual result was out of proportion to the effort. There were 140 new plays tried out and 12 were regarded as Broadway possibilities. None have scored to date.

Another phase of the summer season was the outdoor musical revivals, especially at Jones Beach, L. I., and Randall's Island, N. Y. Activities of both stopped abruptly after rain forced cancellation of six consecutive evening performances. Complaint was made by managers that it was Equity's fault the troupes folded. It was pointed out that if Sunday shows were permitted without extra pay, the revivals would have attracted enough business to keep the actors working. Equity was suspicious of a squeeze play, with the Shuberts the main complainants. It was decided that concessions be made for next summer.

The season up to the end of May was the lightest for buys on film rights since that factor entered the show field. Only one play had been sold up to March 1. There was some idea that Hollywood was retaliating because of the quarrel with the Dramatists Guild on minimum basic agreement, but that proved to be somewhat fallacious. The quality of the plays was at fault, so-called intellectual shows which got across on Broadway not being considered proper picture material. In light of how some of those plays have been fraign out of town substantiates Hollywood's viewpoint.

There were two suprise success-

ful theatre ventures, both in N. Y., notably the Mercury Theatre and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Latter took over the empty Princess theatre and established it as Labor Stage with the Revue, 'Pins and Needles.' An amateur cast started the show as a weekend affair then performed it regularly and it's still going. Mercury Theatre leased the Comedy, another almost forgotten house, and the critics raved over 'Julius Caesar' and 'Shoemaker's Holiday.' Mercury particularly was hailed as an uplifting force in the theatre but got off on the wrong foot this season. It was suddenly stopped, but may resume when its finances are straightened out.

Critics

The critics, as always, attracted their share of attention. John Mason Brown of the N. Y. Post, won VARIETY's boxscore for the fifth time with a percentage of .935. John Anderson of the N. Y. Journal-American, was next with .918, with Brooks Atkinson, of the Times, third with .903 and Dick Watts of the Herald Tribune, coming under the wire with .878.

More pertinent was the low production mark, 78 new shows being produced during the 1937-38 period, as against 90 for the previous season, which showed a decline in managerial activity for the third straight year. Seventeen shows were in the money, of which 11 were big hits and six moderate successes.

The N. Y. Critics Circle gave its annual prize to 'Mice and Men,' which was about to fold when named. It then rallied and played four weeks longer, 'Our Town' copped the Pulitzer award and is now doing well on the road. George M. Cohan's starrer, 'I'd Rather Be Right,' is currently the road's biggest grosser.

Italy's Type of WPA Shows

Rome, Dec. 20.

Performances al fresco have become a vogue in Italy and are among the chief inducements held out by Italian authorities to bring the poor closer to the theatre. In all major Italian cities, outdoor shows on a big scale are organized during the summer months. In Rome and Milan these shows are able to accommodate 20,000 spectators. Ancient Roman amphitheatres or arches of majestic Roman ruins make spectacular backdrops for the outdoor stages. Costume and stage designs are first class, and during part of the summer season Italy's best operatic singers tour the various cities where summer opera is being staged. All this the public can enjoy for the top price of \$1; lowest price 10c.

During the spring there are several outdoor performances, too—one in Italian Tripoli, one in an old Greek theatre in Sicily; but these are more highbrow events, and are aimed less at the Italian people than at tourist trade. From the early spring performances of Greek drama in Tripoli and Sicily, through staging of classic dances at Paestum, through the outdoor numbers on the Florentine May program, the tourist season is well sprinkled with outdoor dramatic events.

In the small villages the summer months bring the appearance of the 'Thespian carts.' These are road companies organized by the government recreation agencies. They travel in well-equipped trucks and bring along everything from their own stage and lighting effects to seats that can be set up in the village square. One of these companies puts on plays, and one gives light operas.

In winter all theatres in Italy are required to reserve certain Saturday afternoons for performances for workers, peasants and small-salaried employees. Prices at these 'Theatrical Saturdays' are even lower than those at the summer operas.

'St. Louis Woman' For Coast FTP Negro Unit

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

Langston Hughes signed with Federal Theatre Project to rewrite 'St. Louis Woman,' next play for the local Negro unit now doing 'Run Lil' Chillun.' Show is based on 'Arna Bontemps,' novel of the early '90s. James R. Ullman, Southern California director of the FTP, sent out a call for writers, gag men and lyricists to develop a musical revue to be produced shortly.

If I Were A Roosevelt . . .

By SIR OSWALD STOLL

London, Dec. 20.

VARIETY's abstract and brief chronicles of the time constantly reveal a state of anxiety and confusion in every aspect of entertainment—the Stage, the Screen, Radio, Television and Finance. A new spirit will have to be invoked to bring order out of chaos; a creative spirit with the powers of a benevolent despot.

If I were a Roosevelt, with lightning speed I would stop an entertainment duty or tax which discriminates against the stage of the living performer, in favor of actors presented as pieces of celluloid. The cheapness with which prints can be made from negatives would render it obvious to me that a tax may be borne by them without hardship, but not by living artists who cannot be moved about in tin boxes. I would realize that although the running expenses of a theatrical production may be recovered from theatre revenue, despite the tax, it is hopeless to expect to recover the costs of the production also. Somebody must lose that unless it is a sum so slight as to be almost negligible.

It would be clear to me that such a tax is a fine upon the employment of the living actor; a fine upon the public for encouragement of the living stage; a tax on turnover which, if made general, would break the back of national business from the bakehouse to the bank. I would denounce completely that type of tax.

I would know that a destructive tax which destroys the actor, theatrical property, the arts of the theatre and keen public interest in the theatre, destroys real life for the sake of a machine that means nothing in itself, if it is bereft of the vital support of a vigorous living theatre.

My view would be that if the screen is a desirable form of entertainment, the tax on the living stage, because it reacts injuriously on the necessary life of the stage, must injure the screen both artistically and commercially by persistently reducing the number and the quality of artists of every kind, and particularly those that should be available for the studios which supply the living patterns for the celluloid pictures.

Also I should realize that if radio is a desirable form of entertainment, the tax on the living stage injures radio by reducing the number and standard of trained artists available for broadcasting.

I would not allow broadcasting to become nauseating through lack of fitting material and the enforcement of vain repetition.

As to television, I should feel no doubt whatever that if television is a welcome form of scientific expression, the tax upon the living stage is strangling television at its birth, by reducing the number of artists available for the major part of its service.

As a reasonable man I should know that the screen, the radio and television do not require a sufficient number of artists to make a numerous and comprehensive profession, but that such a profession is necessary in order to maintain their limited and temporary needs.

Preserve Life of Artists

They use artists in person once, and these artists are heard or seen by millions of people in no time. The life of these artists by only occasional use, is made so short that if there is no stage to which they can repair, they or many of them vanish into oblivion over night. The limited use of artists made by mechanical devices I would preserve as a sideline of the stage, not as a substitute for it.

The public must be fully and truly entertained, and the art and instruments of entertainment caused not to fall back, but to advance. I would know that nothing but exemption of the stage from a destructive tax could achieve this end and I should wipe out this tax as if it were a plague.

It is not yet realized in the film industry that a prosperous living stage is absolutely essential to the film industry's survival. The absence of the living stage, the absence of great public interest in a living stage, causes an excessive supply of cinemas and consequent reduction in prices of admission to fatal competitive figures. Moreover, its absence reduces the number and increases the cost of films. It amazes me that the film people for their own sakes do not oppose, with might and main, the retention of entertainments duty on the living stage—whatever the needs of government for taxation for armaments with which to protect life and property. Nor is it yet realized that to multiply theatres of the living, whilst the tax on the living remains, merely induces the over-valuation of a few artists and weakens still further the general structure of the entertainment world.

The public appearance of the living artist is the school of personal experience in the application of knowledge of all the arts, crafts and sciences relevant to the stage. Knowledge is one thing, but its adaptation to experience is another and greater thing. This should not be hampered by special taxation any more than education should be so hampered. To tax specifically applied education is to subsidize savagery. The types of artists left to be exploited in pictures sometimes remind one of this truth.

No Subsidy Necessary

Had I the power I should decide that the stage needs no subsidies beyond exemption from this iniquitous tax, except definite recognition by government by means of a Ministry of Arts, Crafts and Sciences which would have a propaganda department designed to interest the public in the stage and all its works. The ministry would, however, provide awards for the various forms of perfection which individual artists might achieve in expression of personality, skill and powers to carry conviction in character, action and atmosphere, in their work.

To the Ministry of Arts, Crafts and Sciences I would give power to confer upon supreme ability in an artist exemption from income tax in any years of supreme achievement. This would follow the principle of exemption from taxation of a great institution like the Bank of England. It would raise the standard of artistry to the highest power and encourage the stars to make a full complement of pictures in a year.

Owners of theatres have suffered from gaps in their normal finances made by excisions entirely due to destructive entertainments duty. To fill these gaps they have been forced to borrow at interest and to endure the effects of compound interest on these and further borrowings.

As compensation for these effects of entertainment duty on theatre buildings during the past 20 years, I should require my ministry to purchase all existing theatres at their full values. In the hands of a letting department of the ministry, the theatres would be let direct to producers and managers at rentals not exceeding 2½% on the purchase price. All efforts to 'corner' theatres would be prohibited and a right of appeal by managers to a proper authority against preferential treatment in the selection of tenants would be established.

A successful window cleaner or plumber ought not to be qualified by such success for the post of Minister of the Arts, Crafts and Sciences, nor should inspectors be merely clock watchers and spies. No officials would be appointed to supervise the stage who have inadequate knowledge and experience of the application of the relevant arts, crafts and sciences. To rouse the public interest in a great performance and cause the public to wish to witness it, requires the knowledge and experience of the kind of work being criticized.

The theatre is the world in little. It must be allowed to become a world of conspicuous human prowess in the cultivation of a superior type of human being, taking pride of place amongst people in general.

All the world's a stage, and we should feel more proud of the stage world than we can feel today. The stage is perhaps the most efficient vehicle for the building of a more admirable world, if it be allowed to cultivate itself by a government keeping the ring for it in its struggle. That ring implies the right to retain its natural sources of revenue in economic conditions in which little or nothing can be done without money.

In brief I should make the British profession of the stage one of the great national and imperial professions—capable of exercising profound influence on our relations with all the peoples of the world.

Plays on Broadway

Everywhere I Roam

Drama in three acts presented at the National Dec. 29, '38, by Marc Connelly and Bela Blau; written by Arnold Sundgaard and Connelly; staged by latter; choral arrangements and staging by Johnson Engel; dances by Fellela Sorel; songs by Fred Stewart. \$3.30 top.

Schoolmistress..... Vera Deane
Johnny..... Kaye Blackburn
Samuel..... Omond London
Prudence..... May Grimes
Dorothy Littlejohn
Kathleen Slagle
Frank Westbrook
The Man..... Dean Jagger
The Wife..... Katherine Emery
Johnny Appleseed..... Norman Lloyd
Clinton..... Robert Collins
Phil Brown
Barrel Rollers..... William Matons
Charles Clarke
Robert Green
Paul Huber
Lulu..... Joan Wetmore
Gentleman..... Erik Walz
Little Boy..... Royce Blackburn
Sandman..... Frank Maxwell
Jay..... Arthur Barnett
MAYOR..... Earl Weatherford
MURKIN..... Robert Green
Frank Westbrook
James Barrett
Peggy Anne Holmes
Continental Soldier..... Phil Brown
Crew..... Robert Powell
Joseph..... Robert H. Harvey
Pete..... Tony Kraber
Jacob..... Bill Banner
Voice of the Steel Roller..... Fred Stewart
Maggie..... Kathleen Slagle
Swedish Girl..... Kallie Humphrey
Swedish Boy..... Hans Stark
Norwegian Girl..... Hannah Lee Childs
Norwegian Boy..... Julian Best Childs
Danish Girl..... Camilla Hull
Danish Boy..... John DeCens
Train Anne..... Meredith Johnston
Train Guards..... Charles S. Clarke
Jim..... Jay Owen, Jr.
Jay Jr..... Fred Lawrence
John..... John A. Kennedy
Travel Agent..... Earl Weatherford
Assistant..... Robert Collins
Camilla Hull
Judson Best Hall
William Howell
Process Server..... Frank Maxwell

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'Everywhere I Roam' is the most ambitious of Broadway's holiday card, a dramatic pastoral generously peopled, but of indicated limited appeal.

Marc Connelly and Bela Blau team in the showing. They have a record of going in for the unusual, especially the former, whose dramatization of 'The Green Pastures' developed an amazing appeal. But in that novel drama there was much of the humorous, which quality eludes the new play, a symbolic display of the development of lands of the mid-west.

'Roam' may be classed with the cavalcade type of drama, for it covers 100 years. During that span the principal characters remain the same in dress and age as part of the symbolism. Play is one of several done in summer theatres and now migrating to Broadway. 'Roam' comes via an arrangement with the Barter Theatre, Abbingdon, Va.

It has a patriotic theme, and the chorals include 'My Country 'Tis of Thee.' Story sketches the success of people from all lands who come to the land of liberty. Only when the toilers permit avarice to sway them do they suffer and lose all. Finally they again look to the soil for recapture of contentment.

Against a blue-white background most of the action occurs. Use of lights is depended on more than settings, with the general impression of the farm and prairie lands excellently simulated. The coming of the railroad, the reaper, and the modern trends are indicated, since the coverage is too wide for actual scenes.

Young man and wife, as acted by Dean Jagger and Katherine Emery, settle on the virgin land, with advice from Johnny Appleseed, a symbolic character who discounts their rise to affluence. He especially warns them against Jay and Jim, top-hatted capitalists, whose generous dividends are paid the couple, while others are robbed (the moguls in the end are submerged by the market collapse). They leave sons to carry on the system, the author's reminder of the manner in which American millionaires hold their fortunes within the family generation after generation.

There are some direct asides to the audience and some of the comment may have come from Connelly, who worked on the Arnold Sundgaard script and is co-author. Such lines are by way of warnings, and could be inferred as aimed at the present spread of the intolerance fallacy. Essentially, however, 'Roam' is pretty much down to earth.

First act is distinctly the best, and there are stirring moments punctuated by songs and folk dances. Some of the ensemble movements are exceptional, particularly one in which dynamite is supposedly used. The leads, in addition to Jagger and Miss Emery, are played by Norman Lloyd, as Johnny, and Paul Huber and Arthur Barnett as Jim and Jay.

Impressive and impressionistic, the play seems more of a lesson than a diversion.

Ibee.

The Merchant of Yonkers

Farce in four acts by Thornton Wilder, based upon comedy by Johann Nestroy, stars Jane Cowl; features June Walker, Percy Waram, Nydia Westman; production by Max Reinhardt, assisted by Maria Solberg; settings by Boris Aronson; musical arrangements by Alexander Hous; presented by Herman Shumlin at Guild theatre, N. Y., Dec. 28, '38. \$3.30 top. (\$1.40 opening).

Horace Vandergelder..... Percy Waram
Ambrose Kemper..... Bartlett Robinson
Joe Scanlon..... Philip Coolidge
Gertrude..... Carrie Weller
Cornelius Hackl..... Tom Ewell
Brennecre..... Frances Harrison
Melchior Stacks..... Joseph Sweeney
Mrs. Levi..... Jane Cowl
Bernice Tucker..... John Call
Mrs. Molloy..... June Walker
Minnie Fay..... Nydia Westman
Cabanian..... Edward F. Nannary
Rudolph..... Max Wilcox
August..... Peter Stracal
Chick..... Maria Reule
Miss Van Hagen..... Minna Phillips

Having copied last season's Pulitzer Prize with his masterfully weepy 'Our Town,' Thornton Wilder now brings this outright prank based on an old Viennese comedy. Here he is kicking up his heels in a farce of sheer make-believe, of frankly unrealistic charade. In Max Reinhardt's imaginative and impish production it provides an evening of beguiling theatrical magic or of baffling kittenishness—depending on a playgoer's taste or humor.

Certainly Wilder will enjoy no such success, either artistically or commercially, with 'The Merchant of Yonkers' as he did with 'Our Town.' It may be doubted that he ever expected or particularly cared to. This time he's obviously out for a romp and is turning the playhouse topsyturvy with fanciful skylarking.

Play will hardly have a mass draw, but may appeal to the class trade. Jane Cowl's name should hypo the boxoffice, while the fact that 'Merchant' is on the Theatre Guild subscription list should give it a good chance to become established. In short, it may catch on, but a moderate run seems more likely.

Ingenuous little fable of the early '80s tells about a substantial merchant of Yonkers who goes to New York to find a wife, while his tearful niece, two bumptious employees, and widow adviser follow to carry out their own various romantic adventures. After they've all tumbled over each other in Manhattan and entangled their affairs and identities, the antic subsides on a droll note of story-book happiness. Reinhardt, who has been noted in America for his lavish and occasionally ponderous spectacles, has given Wilder's yarn an intimate and inventive production. Amusingly stylized staging, with its frisky playing and its confidential asides by the actors, enhances the flavor of Wilder's script.

Most of the players catch the spirit of the farce, but one or two seem unable to scamper through it with the necessary agility. AL-

though she is a gifted actress and a dynamic personality, Jane Cowl is unsuited to the part of the scheming widow who maneuvers the merchant to the altar. Or rather her style is unsuited to the play. She not only has trouble remembering her lines, but she plays too forcefully and with a too determined gaiety. Then, apparently realizing she isn't right, she strives all the more strenuously—and that is fatal. Only briefly in the last act does she achieve her normal effective simplicity. It's extraordinary to see a topnotcher of Miss Cowl's talents and experience appear so disadvantageously.

In contrast, nearly all the others seem imbued with the piquant humor of the piece. June Walker, in particular, is bewitching as the frolicsome little milliner, while Nydia Westman is just right as her perplexed but willing assistant. Percy Waram is dryly gruff as the sorely-beset merchant, and Minna Phillips is an admirably flighty aunt. Tom Ewell has an ingratiating casualness as the merchant's romantic chief clerk, and John Call overplays the wide-eyed apprentice. Joseph Sweeney is a hilariously philosophical and meddlesome old sinner whose explanations of his vices enliven the whole third act. Carrie Heller gives an appropriately satirical portrayal of the weepy ingenue, while Bartlett Robinson is satisfactorily fierce as her swain.

Boris Aronson's chromo settings and the comic-valentine costumes heighten the atmospheric quality of the production.

Hobe.

BRIGHT REBEL

Drama in three acts presented at the Lyceum Dec. 27, '38, by William Kiboulton, written by Stanley Young; staged by the producer. \$3.30 top.

Harrington..... Francis Swann
Peachey..... Mary McCormack
Fletcher..... Robert Vivian
Mrs. Byron..... Jeanne Caselle
Tom Moore..... James MacGuire
John Can Holhouse..... Maurice Manson
Scrope Davies..... Michael Willis
Lord Byron..... John Cromwell
Annabella Milbanke..... Francesa Brunning
Lady Caroline Lamb..... Janice Hanford
Lord Melbourne..... Lewis L. Russell
Lady Melbourne..... Beatrice Terry
Lord Eldon..... Charles Atkins
Lady Oxford..... Helena Glenn
Lady Jersey..... Dana Dale
Jarvis..... Richard Ahern
Nicholas Kondylis..... Daniel Kresno
Augusta Leigh..... Ann Loring
Mrs. Minns..... Marie de Becker
Dr. LeMann..... Henry Vincent
Dr. Millingen..... Francis Swann
Colonel Stanhope..... Richard Ahern

Socialites, such as have figured in the reputed production set-up for 'Bright Rebel,' have fared rather well in the theatre at times, but in this instance the chances are negative.

English poets seem to intrigue authors, and Lord Byron has occupied any number of dramas. Here that genius is the main idea, a hero of sorts, despite his shortcomings. But his doings eventually become tiresome on the stage, in this instance because the character is, among other things, on too long. That he was born with one short leg and

Plays Out of Town

DEAR OCTOPUS

Boston, Dec. 29.

Comedy in three acts (six scenes) by Dodie Smith; presented by John C. Wilson; staged by Glen Byam Shaw; decor supervised by G. E. Calthrop; at the Plymouth theatre, Boston, Dec. 28, '38. \$2.75 top.

Charles Randolph..... Reginald Mason
Dora Randolph..... Lucille Watson
Hilda Randolph..... Phyllis Joyce
Margery Harvey..... Phyllis Povah
Cynthia Randolph..... Rose Hobart
Nicholas Randolph..... Jack Hawkins
Hugh Randolph..... Peter Robinson
Gwen (Flouncey) Harvey..... Shirley Porter
William (Bill) Harvey..... Warren Mills
Kathleen (Seran) Kenton..... Helen Rance
Edna Randolph..... Ivy Troutman
Kenneth Harvey..... Robert Craven
Laurel Randolph..... Naomi Campbell
Belle Schlessinger..... Margaret Dale
Grace Penning (Fenny)..... Lillian Gish
Nanny..... Alice Belmont
Gertrude..... Georgia Harvey

'Dear Octopus' hits a high level for family plays. English in spirit, perhaps, it nevertheless has a general appeal because of a remarkable combination of brilliant playwrighting, directing and acting. Dodie Smith has brought to America neither a run-of-the-mill drawing room talk marathon nor a hoked up, false-front comedy. Instead she has created a large, charming English middle-class family who talk, act and react naturally through a week-end reunion held to celebrate the golden wedding of Dora and Charles Randolph (Lucille Watson and Reginald Mason), heads of the household.

Almost entirely devoid of action, and composed of several minor, fit-

possible club foot is also emphasized too much.

Byron is here made the victim of his political views and defence of the down-trodden. Enemies, meantime, seek to make scandal out of the poet's affection for his half-sister Augusta Leigh, the one woman who was in complete sympathy with him. Militant poet's defense of the underdog may be true of the English, but hardly matches the popular conception.

Period or costume dramas seem often to be a managerial hazard. 'Rebel' is no exception. The garb of the men could be acceptable, but that of the women is unattractive. In fact, the feminine contingent in the play looks below average in general appearance and appeal. The dialog for that end of the cast is hardly a help, either.

Lord and Lady Melbourne are cordial and friendly to Byron, siding with him in conflicts of opinion with Lord Eldon, the Tory leader. But they hardly do the poet a favor by steering him into marriage with their narrow-minded and rather dowdy niece, Annabella Milbanke. In fact, why a man of perception like Byron should sue for the hand

(Continued to page 196)

ful plots, its dialog, and epig- the play, these utterances develop with such those beyond the foot them by the end of know them at the second, and reluctantly bid them go at the finish.

Dora Randolph, the 70-year-old matriarch, is a wise old lady who knows how to soothe her daughter Cynthia (Rose Hobart), who has been a prodigal during the seven years she has lived with a married man in Paris. In her off moments Dora is a 'job-finder'—thinking up all sorts of odd chores for her family to perform around the house. Her devoted husband, Charles, has, in fact, given up his business many years ago just to putter around at the beck and call of Dora.

Fenny (Lillian Gish) has been Dora's companion for 10 years, during which time she has become seriously in love with Nicholas Randolph, a bright bachelor in his 30's. At the weekend's windup Nicholas recognizes Fenny's secret adoration and pops a marriage proposal, readily accepted.

Hilda, an unmarried daughter, has a complex about shutting up flies in books; Margery, a married daughter, is a buxom, happy-go-lucky specimen; and Edna, a daughter-in-law, meddles in the Nicholas-Fenny affair.

Then there is Belle Schlessinger (Margaret Dale), a peppy old gal of uncertain age, who comes to the anniversary celebration to renew flirtations with old Charles, her perennial flame. In addition there are charming grandchildren—'Flouncey,' 'Scrap' and 'Bill'—around 12 years old, who exchange notes in a nursery scene on the new bad words they have heard. Hugh and Laurel, a young married couple, do not impede the play's motivation, but they are superfluous.

Alice Belmont Cliffe and Georgia Harvey, as governess and cook, respectively, also bring their characters to life without resorting to over-acting or scene-stealing. Kenneth, a son-in-law, has a little flirting with Fenny, and is, in general, charmingly innocuous.

Fundamentally, this is a play for the naive and sophisticated alike. Perhaps the naive will assume from the title that it's an underseas meller, but that assumption should easily be dispelled. 'Octopus,' of course, refers to the unescapable tentacles of a big family, such as the Randolphs.

To Director Shaw goes credit for assembling a great cast and drawing from them the keen interpretations which playwright Smith's lines demand. The three sets are of the same quality as the other factors in this production—and the lighting is very good.

Fox.

Angela Is Twenty-two

Columbus, Dec. 31.

Play in three acts written by Sinclair Lewis in collaboration with Fay Wray; presented by John J. Wildberg; staged by Harry Wagstaff Gribble; settings by Frederick Fox; stars the author; at Hartman, Columbus, Dec. 30, '38.

Dr. Ellis Plum..... Barry Sullivan
Ross Cromer..... Richard Kendrick
Nina Cromer..... Mary Howes
Angela Quayle..... Flora Campbell
Dr. Sago..... Joaquin Souther
Dr. Hilary Jarrett..... Sinclair Lewis
Prize Dixon..... Royal Beal
Miss Starr..... Barbara Thatcher
Martha..... Ann Garrett

Sinclair Lewis, star and co-author (with film actress Fay Wray) of 'Angela,' unveiled that opus here as his first stop in a personal tour through the midwest. Personal touring is what 'Angela' is best suited to, anyhow. It's not Broadway, and neither is Lewis much of a histrionic heavy-weight. When the performance was over, Lewis got his plaudits as author of 'Main Street' and not as the Dr. Hilary Jarrett lead in 'Angela.'

Play otherwise was commendable for Flora Campbell's role as Angela, tasteful settings by Frederick Fox, and nice gowning.

Lewis made a curtain speech expressing his belief that the American theatre is due for a renaissance, and said 'Angela' was 'my contribution to that movement, whatever that contribution may be.'

Bliss.

Morosco Claims 'Letty'

Name; Sues Greenwood

Los Angeles, Jan. 1.

Oliver Morosco has filed suit against Charlotte Greenwood for ownership of the name 'Letty' in stage productions. He charges Miss Greenwood, star of 'Leaning on Letty,' with pirating the title from his 'So Long Letty,' produced in 1915.

Morosco asked the court to restrain the use of the word 'Letty,' and to order an accounting of the profits of the play.



SEASON'S GREETINGS
ALFRED LUNT and LYNN FONTANNE

The Playwrights

By Hobe Morrison

In the field of dramatic authorship 1938 was a year of significant trend and development. It was notable for the vitality of its plays and for the increasing importance of the playwrights.

Outstanding trend was the preponderance of plays of American subject matter, treatment and theme. Virtually all of the year's noteworthy plays dealt with American life. The year also was exceptional for the range and vigor of the playwrighting.

However, if the character of dramatic authorship was changing, so was the position of the dramatist himself. Most noteworthy development of the latter was the formation of the Playwrights Co. Although there was nothing new in the idea of dramatists forming their own producing organization, in this instance it was unique and significant because of the high standing of its members, who are Robert E. Sherwood, Maxwell Anderson, Sidney Howard, Elmer Rice and S. N. Behrman. Formation of their company had various immediate, intangible effects and it was expected to have much wider and more material results in the future.

There were numerous other more or less notable changes and events concerning the dramatic writing craft during 1938. For instance, it became evident as the year waned that the first few months of 1939 might see a return of picture financing to Broadway production. Film industry had originally withdrawn backing due to row with Dramatists Guild over minimum basic agreement. Year also saw the rapid growth of the Dramatists Play Service, the emergence of a new problem in the U. S. immigration of a number of refugee playwrights, awarding of fellowships to several young authors, the projected formation of a so-called Junior Playwrights Co., the end of the Dramatists Guild-Bureau of New Plays squabble and the flare-up and settlement of the breach between the Guild and Gilbert Miller.

American Plays Up

The extraordinary increase in plays of typically American flavor is considered a natural and healthy sign of the times. With the U. S. democratic tradition threatened, it's inevitable and proper that the playwrights should concern themselves with the situation. But as more and better plays were being written about America and its ideals, it was likewise noted that such plays had a wider and more enthusiastic acceptance than ever.

As an example, Sherwood's inspiring 'Abe Lincoln in Illinois' is a completely American play and, while it is laid in the past, its implications all point vitally toward the present and the future. It's admitted that 'Lincoln' would have been successful two years ago and, to a lesser degree, five years ago, but it would never have aroused the tremendously eager response it did last fall. In a totally different way, Thornton Wilder's wistful 'Our Town' might have been merely tolerated several years ago instead of receiving the rapturous praise it drew last spring.

Other notable plays of distinctly American character during the year included 'Of Mice and Men,' 'One Third of a Nation,' 'Golden Boy,' 'Rocket to the Moon,' 'Here Come the Clowns,' 'Wine of Choice,' 'Kiss the Boys Goodbye,' 'American Landscape,' 'How to Get Tough About It' and such musicals as 'I'd Rather Be Right,' 'Pins and Needles,' 'Knickerbocker Holiday' and 'Cradle Will Rock.' Although not all of these plays were commercially successful, nearly all were worthy of serious critical consideration. Certainly they overshadowed such foreign or non-topical works as 'Shadow and Substance,' 'On Borrowed Time' and 'Bachelor Born.' There was also an unprecedented number of anti-fascist plays during 1938. However, none was either an artistic or commercial success. One of the ambitious productions for the early part of 1939 is the Kaufman-Hart play, 'The American Way,' which also espouses the U. S. theme.

Doubtful if any single development in recent years has had such far-reaching implications as the formation of the Playwrights Co. It at once raised the question of whether there is any longer any need in the theatre for the purely commercial producer since the five-member playwrights were able to raise their own financing easily and quickly. Playwrights also directed their own plays or hired outside di-

rectors. Only point not immediately clear was whether commercial producer would be needed for a detached viewpoint on scripts and script revisions.

Immediate success of 'Lincoln' left that question unanswered. But when Anderson's 'Knickerbocker' was nursed into a success by the playwrights themselves, after being brushed off by the critics and given little chance to succeed, the ability of the dramatists to evaluate their own work seemed to be settled. Soon afterward, however, Rice's 'American Landscape' opened and received a generally unfavorable critical response. According to the reviews, that was one instance in which the playwrights had failed to put a script into commercially acceptable shape. Rice, weary after writing his play as well as staging it and 'Lincoln,' did little to correct its flaws after the opening and it appeared to have a doubtful chance of getting back its production cost.

Developments Promised

Nevertheless, the success of the Playwrights' venture as a whole continues to cast a large and ominous shadow over commercial management and to promise extensive dramatist developments. Theatre Guild, many of whose successful shows had been written by Playwrights' members, is far behind its normal production schedule and has been having more difficulty than ever before in obtaining worthwhile scripts. But if removal of five leading playwrights from the market was tough on commercial producers, it promised to have happy results for the host of lesser authors. Managers, with no Sherwood, Howard, Anderson, Rice or Behrman scripts on the horizon, were forced to look for other dramatists.

The possibility that other dramatists might at any time form their own producing firms and eliminate the commercial managers also seems likely to better the position of all playwrights in their dealings with producers. In recent years, the dramatist has grown, in stature and influence, in the theatrical setup.

Hollywood Financing

Although the return of Hollywood financing to Broadway production has seemed more likely in recent months, it is by no means sure. Dramatists Guild has steadfastly refused to consider revision of its minimum basic agreement and consequently the studios have remained aloof from legit bankrolling. But during the last summer a plan to supplement the basic agreement was broached and has been studied ever since. It involves a standard scale of determining the purchase price of the film rights to plays, with the ultimate amount based on the length of run and total gross of the Broadway production. Certain details remain to be worked out and tentatively agreed upon by the film companies before the plan will be submitted to the Guild council and membership. However, it's believed to have a good chance of acceptance. Some definite word may be expected within a few weeks.

Although it was not a new trend or development, the continued efforts of the Dramatists Guild in behalf of aspiring playwrights is worthy of mention. By providing fellowships for promising authors, by obtaining jobs for others, by getting them passes for current plays and having them present at rehearsals, as well as giving constant advice and encouragement, the Guild is more than ever trying to find and develop playwrighting talent.

Characteristic of this whole idea were the concluding words of Sherwood's annual report as president of the Guild. He said, 'It is unnecessary to state the importance of these cultural activities, for it is obvious that the survival of the Dramatists Guild, and of the theatre we serve, depends upon the renewal of vitality which can come only from new writers who, despite all the hostile circumstances in these times of economic and spiritual uncertainty, are still determined to write good plays.'

Honor Helen Hayes

Clinton, N. Y., Jan. 1.

Helen Hayes receives honorary degree of doctor of human letters from Hamilton College Sunday (5). Ceremony attending the conferring of the degree will be part of a special midwinter college convocation.

Equity Gets \$1,000 Surprise Bequest From Late Member

Equity received a surprise holiday gift of \$1,000, which has been placed into its emergency fund. Money was a bequest from a legacy, about which there was some question.

Recently Equity received a letter from Spiro and Co., London solicitors, to the effect that by the will of one Abraham Rodriguez, the association would receive \$1,000. Equity officers were suspicious because the lawyers stated a remittance would be made after a receipt was given them.

British Equity was queried about the matter and mailed the receipt, to be used at its discretion. It was discovered that such provision was actually made in the will of Rodriguez, dated 1925. The receipt was thereupon tendered and the lawyers turned over a check for 210 pounds, six shillings sterling.

It was explained that Rodriguez, professionally known as Harry Rogers, upon going to England gave Equity as his mailing address. There were four players by the name of Harry Rogers, who at various times joined the association. The benefactor is believed to have been one who applied in 1916 and who became a life member in 1922.

Philly TMAT Elects

Philadelphia, Jan. 3.

New officers of the Theatrical Managers, Agents and Treasurers union were elected here last week.

Biz agent and chairman is Dan Doran, who succeeds Lex Carlin, Sr., vice chairman is Ed Suggs.

Ticket Code and the Agencies

By Jack Pulaski

The Government collected 45% less coin from Broadway ticket agencies last September than for the same month of the year previous. That may indicate the ticket code, drawn up by the League of New York Theatres which limits the resale price to 75c over the boxoffice price, held down agency prices. If the code is as effective as claimed, it may well be regarded as a minor miracle.

There seems to be little doubt that there are undesirables in the ticket business and that the agencies exceed the number of shows on Broadway this season. Disinclination of the agencies to centralize the business has put many into a shaky financial condition. They complained they could not stay in business if held to a 75c premium. However, they are still at it, because that limitation does not apply to tickets for attractions outside legit.

Some brokers are figuring the code will be discontinued and are carrying on despite the clipping of incomes. Whether the code has really been tested remains to be seen but during the fall the number of shows dropped so much that chances of disagreement among managers over the control system was lessened. The main squawk from the brokers is that they cannot get enough tickets; therefore, they are unable to fill all the orders of customers. The burn-up among agencies which apparently comply with the new rules is the knowledge that such patrons buy from unaccredited ticket men who somehow secure 'merchandise' and charge what they can get.

A temporary injunction restraining the code operation was granted Saturday (31) and was argued Tuesday (3).

Number of brokers did very well with football tickets and other sports events, but that's not enough to carry them through the season. The crisis will probably come shortly when a better line on the ticket front should be visible. The League has been listening to all kinds of complaints but the main objection appears to be that tickets cannot be bought far enough in advance from the agencies. Those patrons who demand the best locations will not report brokers who charge more than the code stipulates.

Matter of 'Ice'

Managers complained that 'ice' given the boxoffice was part of the trouble with high prices. It's doubtful that such gratuities have figured importantly for some seasons. While some coin of that kind is paid out, boxoffice people currently are satisfied if theatres are kept lighted. With the prohibition of gratuities, a condition in the basic agreement of

Swing to the East by N. Y. Legits Seems Inevitable

By JACK PULASKI

Had the plan of the late Otto H. Kahn to build a new Metropolitan opera house in Radio City gone through, it doubtless would have been the genesis of a fresh locality for the legit stage. Swing to the east of Broadway, however, is apparently delayed a few years, for when and if new legit houses—there have been none built for the past 10 years—are erected, the chances are they will be spotted closer to the hotel and residences of those who patronize the \$3 theatre. Great White Way may never disappear as a show mart but the theatre is more apt to be spread out over the midtown map, as it was a third of a century ago.

In 1906 there were more than a score of '\$2 theatres,' that being the top for any legit, prior to admission taxes and the rise of unionism which carried with it wage and salary lifts. Shows were housed in scattered spots, ranging from the Academy of Music on 14th street to the New York and Lyceum around 45th and Broadway—more than a two-mile spread, as counted along New York's main street—and with Fifth avenue crossed on the way uptown.

Currently with the hub of show business around 45th street, approximately the same number of theatres are operating now as then, when

there were no opposed diversions such as have been developed since—pictures, radio, autos, indoor sports events. There are more legit spots now but they are not being continuously lighted. From the number of hit shows drawing capacity it would indicate again that show biz is still in the running, yet along the lines of 33 years back but hardly comparable to the proportions of a decade ago.

Sixth Avenue Trend

Imposing buildings in Radio City which is something of a show center now, compose the forerunner of developments to come. Sixth avenue elevated line is coming down and so are the antiquated buildings along that thoroughfare. Type of structures which will replace the out-moded blocks are being blue-printed by architects, and the chances are that provisions will be made whereby theatres will become adjuncts and operated at more reasonable costs than before the depression.

Idea that theatres must be located somewhere between the city's railroad terminals and the junction of its subway lines, is starting to fade. Motor transportation, particularly as applied to the theatre-going class, is increasingly more important to attendance. There are drawbacks, however, especially the time required to come crosstown to the west side from the effete Park avenue section, where the swank night clubs are mostly congregated. This time element and the unsolved traffic jams provide another argument in favor of legit theatres nearer.

Ziegfeld Too Soon?

Trend northward along Broadway line appears to have definitely stopped. Push beyond 52d street came to a sudden halt. Perhaps one or two of those theatres, now used for purposes other than legit, will revert to the original reason for their building, but 59th street seems an impossible sector. It may be that when Sixth avenue is beautified the Ziegfeld theatre at 54th street will come back into its own. For a time it commanded a fine draw through the dazzling productions of the late showman, but evidently the house was built at least 10 years too soon. It was part of the improvement that came when the elevated spur north of 53d street was scrapped and apartment hotels replaced the string of dingy brownstone fronts.

Trend uptown from 14th street years back finally reached Herald Square at 34th street. That intersection, however, was never really established as a show center. After the Garrick was built on 35th street, there came the Knickerbocker at 38th street, Casino at 39th street, Empire at 41st and the New Amsterdam ('the house beautiful') on 42d street. Of the houses mentioned only the Empire remains, the New Amsterdam now being in grind pictures. Below Herald Square there were such houses as Wallack's, Princess, Daly's, Bijou, Weber and Fields Music Hall.

Development of 42d street mostly dated a third of a century ago became a marvel of show business. Realty men agreed with managers that the location was ideal because of the then new subways and the railroad stations and the more-than-average street width. Even until more recently show business has clung to the section, but has moved a few blocks upward, forced to vacate by the inroads of low-priced attractions that mushroomed when the legit started to constrict. That sad saga was the theme of 'The Fabulous Invalid,' which play, like the street it lachrymated about, faded from the Broadway scene.

Had the Rockefeller chosen Eighth avenue for their vast improvements, generally called Radio City, it would have been different. When the subway was built there were dreams of vast realty increases, which failed to materialize, and the thoroughfare has not been developed. In contrast, the Sixth avenue zone is due for a realty boom. An express stop at 50th street is being constructed.

Number of legit theatres will never approach that of the 1920's, when the count approached the 70 mark—even more were claimed to be operating, but the highest count during the boom seasons was 68. Less than half

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(Continued on page 199)

B'way Musicals in Stratosphere; 'Hellz,' 'Leave It' \$44,00, 'Boys' 36G, Dramas Big, Neophytes Weak

Although the holiday premiere card was disappointing, the standouts on Broadway harvested during the Christmas-New Year's week. Two musicals bettered \$44,000 and two topped grosses of \$30,000 or better. Three straight plays were gauged at more than \$20,000.

Final count of 'Hellzapoppin' and 'Leave It to Me' indicated that those front running musicals were in a photo finish on takings. Both were clocked at better than 44G's, while the runner-upper, 'The Boys from Syracuse,' also went to a new high mark of \$36,000, if not better. Well up to fore was 'I Married an Angel' with a corking draw that topped \$39,000. Musical set-up proved much higher than any season in years.

Matinee business was sensational, with the metropolis crowded with customers. The straight plays were topped by 'Abe Lincoln,' which, too, a new high level of \$26,000. 'Hamlet' had its best week with a take of \$22,000. 'Kiss the Boys Goodbye' reached its top gross with \$20,000, while 'Oscar Wilde' was a runner-up to that mark.

There were three debuts on one night, but none got the nod. The week saw 'Bright Rebel,' Lyceum; 'Everywhere I Roam,' National; 'The Merchant from Yonkers' (both latter may surprise). Guild; 'Michael Drops In,' Golden, and 'Don't Throw Glass Houses,' Vanderbilt, bowed in. 'Michael' stopped and others may fold abruptly, but more is expected from this week's card, which has 'Mamba's Daughters,' Empire; 'The Primrose Path,' Biltmore, and 'The Gentle People,' Belasco, with the D'Oyly Carte coming to the Beck with Gilbert and Sullivan revivals.

'Sing Out the News,' will stop at the Music Box and 'Bachelor Born' at the Broadhurst, which gets 'Dear Octopus' next week after a highly touted Boston opening. 'The White Steed,' also well rated after a Philadelphia tryout, also slated in. Ditto 'The Importance of Being Earnest,' listed for the Vanderbilt. 'Window Shopping' was yanked from the Longacre, Saturday (31).

Estimates for Last Week

'Abe Lincoln in Illinois,' Plymouth (12th week) (D-1,036; \$3,300). With one extra performance and \$5.50 New Year's eve dramatic leader approximated \$26,000; new high.

'American Landscape,' Cort (5th week) (D-1,059; \$3,300). Looks like the chances would be indicated after last week which did not see improvement; around \$5,000.

'Bachelor Born,' Broadhurst (49th week) (C-1,107; \$3,300). Final week unless comedy is moved again; slated for Chicago; gross estimated over \$7,000 with aid of a \$4.40 New Year's eve scale.

'Blackbirds,' Failed to open; another house claimed for colored musical for possible debut this week.

'Bright Rebel,' Lyceum (2d week) (D-1,019; \$3,300). Drew mixed notices with chances indicated as doubtful; around \$5,000.

'Boys from Syracuse,' Alvin (7th week) (M-1,255; \$4,400). Well up with the musical favorites; one extra matinee for new high of around \$36,000; \$6.60 on New Year's eve.

'Don't Throw Glass Houses,' Vanderbilt (2d week) (C-800; \$3,300). One of holiday card that also got doubtful press; went into cut rates; maybe \$5,000.

'Everywhere I Roam,' National (2d week) (D-1,164; \$3,300). Opened Thursday (29); drew mixed press and chances not clearly indicated.

'Gentle People,' Belasco (1st week) (CD-1,000; \$3,300). Presented by the Group Theatre; written by Irwin Shaw; opens Thursday (5).

'Hellzapoppin,' Winter Garden (16th week) (R-1,671; \$3,300). Played matinee daily last week and in 12 performances grossed more than \$44,000; standees for all performances; probable highest revue will reach.

'Here Come the Clowns,' Booth (5th week) (D-704; \$3,300). Claimed to have picked up somewhat, but stay depends on business after this week; rated over \$6,000.

'I Married an Angel,' Shubert (35th week) (M-1,367; \$4,400). Run musical made great comeback, going to \$30,000 or over in nine performances; \$6.60 top on New Year's eve.

'Kiss the Boys Goodbye,' Miller (15th week) (C-944; \$3,300). Another top level reached; played 10 performances and bettered \$20,000; \$5.50 on the holiday eve.

'Knickerbocker Holiday,' Barrymore (12th week) (M-1,096; \$4,400). Came back to best level of engagement thus far; no extra performances, but good \$22,000 take.

'Leave It to Me,' Imperial (9th week) (M-1,468; \$4,400). Top grossing musical with standees at all times last week; grossed more than \$44,000 in nine performances; \$6.60 on New Year's eve.

'Mamba's Daughters,' Empire (1st week) (D-1,099; \$3,300). Presented by Guthrie McClintic; written by Dorothy and Du Bose Heyward; opened Tuesday (3).

'Michael Drops In,' Golden withdrawn Saturday after playing seven performances.

'Oscar Wilde,' Fulton (13th week) (D-913; \$3,300). Virtual capacity through holiday week; with one extra performance and \$5.50 top on the holiday eve, new high mark of \$19,500 estimated.

'Rocket to the Moon,' Windsor (7th week) (D-1,949; \$3,300). Moved here from Belasco; doing moderate business; rated around \$8,500.

'Sing Out the News,' Music Box (13th week) (R-1,019; \$4,400). Final week; some improvement during holiday period, but not enough for musical; around \$18,000; house gets 'Set to Music' Jan. 16.

'Spring Meeting,' Morosco (5th week) (CD-991; \$3,300). English comedy doing rather well; played eight times with no scale change to around \$12,000.

'The Merchant of Yonkers,' Guild (2d week) (C-914; \$3,300). Opened last Wednesday (28); drew mixed press but business was encouraging for balance of week.

'The Primrose Path,' Biltmore (1st week) (CD-991; \$3,300). Presented by George Abbott; dramatized from novel 'February Hill' by Robert Buckner and Walter Hart; opens today (Wednesday).

'Tobacco Road,' Forrest (265th week) (D-1,107; \$2,650). Played usual eight performances, but had slightly tilted holiday price for satisfactory takings, over \$7,500.

'What a Life,' Mansfield (38th week) (C-1,050; \$3,300). Played matinee every afternoon last week and in 10 times quite profitable at \$10,000; moves to Mansfield; 'The Primrose Path' comes here.

'Window Shopping,' Longacre dropped out Saturday after week and half.

Revivals

'Blossom Time,' 46th St. (2d week) (M-1,375; \$3,300). May go out after this week; revival using cut rates of varied sorts; around possible \$10,000.

'Hamlet,' St. James (12th week) (D-1,520; \$3,300). Best week during holidays with around \$22,000; would have done more if more performances were possible.

'Outward Bound,' Playhouse (3d week) (D-878; \$3,300). Looks in for rather goodly stay; good press figured toward better than \$10,000.

D'Oyly Carte Opera Co., Beck

(1st week) (M-1,189; \$3,300). Starts nine and one-half week engagement Thursday (5) night.

Added

'Pins and Needles,' Labor Stage (58th week) (R-500; \$2,750). In second year; labor union revue has fared well in New York and on road; has averaged \$6,000 at Labor Stage and much better last week.

'The Girl from Wyoming,' American Music Hall (11th week). Something for night show novelties; okay with beer, booze and so forth.

'Ruth Draper,' Little.

'Policy King's,' Bayes. Colored musical opened Friday (30) and panned plenty.

WPA

'The Big Blow,' Elliot.

'Androcles and the Lion,' Lafayette.

'Pinocchio,' Ritz.

'Set to Music,' new Noel Coward revue, starring Beatrice Lillie, is a smash hit here. Has completed only one stanza of a two-week tryout here, but that week was practically a solid sell-out.

'Dear Octopus,' English play by Dodie Smith, has built up to hit proportions in the six performances here last week of its American debut.

'Victoria Regina' and Helen Hayes bow in for a single week Monday (9). Dwight Deere Wiman's new musical, 'Stars in Your Eyes,' comes in Jan. 17, after its preem in New Haven. 'Mice and Men' opens Jan. 23 for at least two weeks. Federal Theatre presents a streamlined 'Macbeth' Jan. 31.

Other entries on the local slate include 'The Little Foxes,' by Lillian Hellman, starring Tullulah Bankhead, Jan. 23; 'Susan and God,' with Gertrude Lawrence, Feb. 13, following which she starts rehearsals for 'Skylark' to be premiered here March 13; George M. Cohan returns Feb. 20 for one week of 'Rather Be Right.'

Estimates for Last Week
'Set to Music,' Shubert (1st week) (1,590; \$3,300). Opened to capacity Dec. 26 and has drawn solid biz during entire initial week. Beatrice Lillie received better press than the author. First frame smash \$30,000.

'Dear Octopus,' Plymouth (1,480; \$2,750). Accorded almost unanimous rave press. Advance sale was tepid on this one and the cut-rate 'First Night Club' was drawn in to bolster it. Word-of-mouth, however, is boosting window trade to important daily tallies. Figured to be a sure-fire hit for Broadway. First six performances garnered nice \$10,500.

Estimates for Last Week
'Our Town' (Nixon; 2,100; \$2,750). Pulitzer prize play, with ATS backing and added holiday trade, managed to come through nicely at \$16,000. Would have gone considerably above that with any sort of break in weather.

Windup of 'Susan' Great \$22, Chi; Lunts 21G, 'Shadow' \$14,000

'LETTY' BACK IN L. A. FOR \$6,000 WEEK

Hollywood, Jan. 1.
El Capitan, long dark, relighted for yule season with Matt Allen sponsoring two-week engagement of Charlotte Greenwood in her three-year vehicle, 'Leaning on Letty.' Comedy opened Christmas Day and will wind up (7), then going on tour. Federal Theatre Project productions, 'Two-a-Day,' and 'Run, Little Chillun,' still playing to capacity.

Estimate for Last Week
'Leaning on Letty,' El Capitan (C-1,250; \$1,650). Mild interest in this revival, most of Hollywood having seen it on previous run here. About \$6,000 on first week, with New Year's Eve and two-day holiday expected to help second-final week's gross.

WPA
'Two-a-Day,' Hollywood Playhouse.
'Run, Little Chillun,' Mayan.

'OUR TOWN' BIG 16G IN PITT

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.
Pulitzer tag and most glowing set of notices from the local press this season, combined with ATS backing and Xmas week impetus, over-rode sub-zero weather last week to send 'Our Town' into the hit column at \$16,000. Reviewers went overboard with superlatives and let their hair down as seldom before to out-gaga even Broadway brethren in extolling the Wilder drama.

Deluge of holiday social events kept the pews pretty empty of the usual legit-going mob, but consistently strong call for cheaper seats accounted for neat daily grosses and sent 'Town' to near capacity at the finish. Temperature figured to have cost it at least another \$2,000. Nixon is currently dark and doesn't relight until Jan. 16, when 'Susan and God' comes in. House has played only 11 weeks thus far and is missing out on the usually big New Year's week. Season looks like one of the slimmest in years.

Estimate for Last Week
'Our Town' (Nixon; 2,100; \$2,750). Pulitzer prize play, with ATS backing and added holiday trade, managed to come through nicely at \$16,000. Would have gone considerably above that with any sort of break in weather.

Chicago, Jan. 1.
Legit shows in town went to \$4.40 for the New Year's eve show, and the local playgoers paid without blinking. On the basis of these special performances the loop finished a strong week all around.

'Susan and God' blew town after its New Year's eve show, and is set for a tour of five weeks in as many towns. And at the conclusion of that short tour the show will close down, and Gertrude Lawrence will journey to Boston to open new show for John Golden, written by Samson Raphaelson.

Miss Lawrence was the big drama leader of the season thus far, scrambling after 11 powerful weeks. Didn't have to leave, either, on account of grosses, since on pace show could have continued for two or three more months.

'Golden Boy' crept into town with its new cast for a repeat showing at \$2.20 top, and got away pretty slowly, considering the wallop of the earlier visit. Only the two New Year's eve performances aided this one to get respectable figures.

Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt sold out the Erlanger last week, relighting after a week's layoff. 'Shadow and Substance' got nifty notices, but a mixed audience response regular legitgoers.

Ian Keith's performance in Federal Theatre Project's 'Copperhead' drew rave reviews and show it getting a big play at the Blackstone.

Estimates for Last Week
'Amphitryon 38,' Erlanger (4th and final week) (1,400; \$2,750). Final week of 'Amphitryon,' with 'The Sea Gull' to follow immediately. Wound up with walloping \$21,000.

'Golden Boy,' Grand (2d week) (1,300; \$2,200). Opened inauspiciously on its repeat visit. Helped by holidays to fair \$10,000.

'Shadow and Substance,' Selwyn (2d week) (1,000; \$2,750). Holiday spurt giving this show plenty of support and on notices will garner \$14,000.

'Susan and God,' Harris (1,000; \$2,750). Finished on Dec. 31 (Saturday) after 11 smash weeks. Continues for five weeks on tour eastward before folding. Finished to mighty \$22,000.

WPA
'The Copperhead,' Blackstone. Acclaim from press for Ian Keith putting this show over.

'The Mikado,' Great Northern. Has been the big money corner of the WPA shows here, running around \$4,500 weekly.

'WHITE STEED' \$10,000, PHILLY

Philadelphia, Jan. 1.
Christmas Week business has been generally very good in Philly although grosses have fallen a little under advance expectations.

'Victoria Regina' has had lower floor weakness except at matinees but grabs \$29,000 for its single week at the Forrest, which is about five grand lower than anticipated, but plenty good.

'The White Steed,' Eddie Dowling's try-out production of Paul Vincent Carroll's new Irish drama, was given generally good press after its opening at the Chestnut Street Opera House and continued at a steady if not sensational gait.

'What a Life' opened very mildly at its Monday (26) matinee performance at the Locust, but the notices were good and the word-of-mouth friendly. Author, Clifford Goldsmith, a Philadelphian, has plenty of local friends and theatre parties were the rule all week. Inexpensive production gave this one a real chance for an extended stay.

Fourth opening was 'Yes, My Darling Daughter,' another return engagement.

Estimates for Last Week
'Victoria Regina,' Forrest (2,000; \$3,420). Some downstairs weakness at mid-week performances, but terrific matinees, week-end, and balcony trade. Over \$29,000, eight performances only. 'The Women' due this week.

'What a Life,' Locust (1st week) (1,400; \$2). Nine shows. Comedy opened mildly Christmas afternoon, but got good notices and picked up nicely, with \$8,000 for week's total. Chance for a run.

'The White Steed,' Chestnut (1st week) (1,800; \$2). Press generally favorable for this Eddie Dowling production, and show held steady pace all week; \$10,000 or a trifle over, eight performances. 'Mice and Men' in next week (9th).

'Yes, My Darling Daughter,' Erlanger (1st week) (1,800; \$2). Fine start, then a slip, but matinee very strong; \$7,000 in nine performances. May hold over two weeks' limit originally announced.



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Plays on B'd

(Continued from page 188)

of that maiden, is not quite understandable.

A short time suffices for the union, and Annabelle goes back to her parents. There are indications of an inherited mental disorder in the Byron clan and others within this social circle, all of which does not make for audience diversion during the long performance. Byron goes to the Continent, as did other men of English letters, dying in Greece where he contracted fever while fighting the Turks.

There will probably be a difference of opinion over the acting of John Cromwell, one of the Park Avenueites who go in for the theatre as an avocation. He is a tall, good-looking chap, and quite earnest in his endeavors. His current appearance is his first major assignment. (He is not, incidentally, same player-director formerly with William A. Brady). Young Cromwell is generally regarded as giving a creditable performance of many sides, but not a really thankful part.

Most attractive on the distasteful side is Mary McCormack, who has a small part in the first scene. As for the others in both contingents, sharper direction might have made them impress more favorably, although Jeanne Caselle, as the poet's psychopathic mother, and Beatrice Terry, as Lady Melbourne, register.

Ibee.

LE FAISEUR

(The Swindler)
(IN FRENCH)

Comedy in three acts by Honore de Balzac; presented by the French Theatre of New York; adapted by Simone Jullivet; setting, Herbert Barr Lutz; costumes, de Touchagues; at Barlizon-Plaza hotel, N.Y., Dec. 26, '38, for two weeks.

Fredif.....Maurice Jacquemont
Justin.....Andre Schlesser
Mercadet.....Jean Daste
Virginie.....Mme. Van Der Linden
Therese.....Denise Berley
Mme. Mercadet.....Madeleine Geoffrey
Goulard.....Maurice Merie
Pierquin.....Andre Barsacq
Julie.....Svetlana Pitoeff
Violette.....Michel Vitold
Verdelin.....Andre Frere
Minard.....Andre Roussin
Meripourt.....Andre Barsacq
De la Brive.....Maurice Jacquemont
Berhut.....Andre Frere

Honore de Balzac never knew how topically pertinent his 'Le Faiseur' would be in the fading days of 1938. In 'Le Faiseur' the French dramatist conceived one of the grandest stage hoaxes who ever hoodwinked a creditor. Mercadet's austerity of manner and glibness is truly convincing as a character, and full credit is due his rascality, no matter how perceptible.

Jean Daste is Mercadet, and as French as French could be. He carries practically the whole play, which throughout includes the typical Balzac humor.

Casting is excellent, with major roles portrayed particularly well by Svetlana Pitoeff as Julie, Mercadet's daughter, whom he wishes to marry off to a wealthy suitor; Madeleine Geoffrey as Mme. Mercadet; Andre Roussin as Minard, and Maurice Jacquemont as De la Brive.

Single setting by Herbert Barr Lutz is tastefully designed, and costuming by De Touchagues properly reflects the early 18th century French atmosphere.

Don't Throw Glass Houses

Comedy in three acts (four scenes) by Boris Frankel; presented by Contemporary Stage; setting by Louis Kennel; at Vanderbilt theatre, N. Y., Dec. 27, '38, 8:30 p.m.

Chet Smith.....John Ruby
Nita Marx.....Margaret Randall
Burke Morgan.....Jack Yule
Merrill Mann.....Louis John Latzer
Murray Tarkenton.....Don McHenry
Jean Wilson.....Jean MacCarthy
Mrs. Wilson Pratt Hontela.....Rosalind Ivan

An ineffectual presentation of social conflict between American communistic writers and the proverbial dizzy capitalists, 'Don't Throw Glass Houses' is as confusing as its title.

Players have a hard time with amateurish script, evidently quite bewildered by what the author is driving at. On that single point the actors and the audience were in agreement.

Single set by Louis Kennel is the interior of a farm house somewhere near Poughkeepsie.

Actors were given nothing intelligent to do, and carried out their assignments.

Contemporary Stage is a group headed by Philip W. Barber, Walter Hart and Malcolm Atterbury. Flin.

Piscator in U. S.

Erwin Piscator, German director, arrived Sunday (11) in New York to confer with Gilbert Miller regarding a Broadway production of his dramatization of Tolstoi's 'War and Peace' this spring.

He also expects to visit Mexico City to study Mex methods of staging.

Third

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O'Brien

Arther F.
Driscoll

DWIGHT DEERE WINSTON

ETHEL MERMAN

JIMMY DURAN

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"THE PRIMROSE PATH"
"BIRDS OF A FEATHER"
"WHAT A LIFE"

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Balc. \$1.10.

Ticket Code

(Continued from page 189)

many shows have been 'saved' by them through the buy system.

Court proceedings against brokers for evading, or disobeying, the ticket-selling rules have evoked comment from the bench that if the law is inequitable, Washington is the place for correction. That did not prevent sizable penalties, including two jail sentences. Ticket people claim they are not as bad as pictured and have a definite position in show business for the service they offer.

Agencies regard their functions to be those of distributors. Problem that faced the code-framers was to obtain a wider distribution. Because there are more agencies than plays is held to be no argument favoring that objective because it's more difficult to locate tickets when needed. Whether an effective solution would come with the centralizing of tickets has long been mulled, but there are devious and many ways for tickets to seep into the hands of gyps and held for a price.

There are three leading agencies, including their hotel branches, which could dispose of the bulk of resale allotments, but it's doubtful that the trio will ever get together. The reason is that neither trusts the other, all figuring on guarding their interests. The personal equation often enters into ticket allotments and manipulations, something the code's sponsors hope to modify.

Operate Despite Code

The small ticket-brokers seem to operate despite the code. They may not respect the managers' system of control, but following a number of misdemeanor admissions and convictions, they are adhering to the government rules in stamping the amount received from customers and paying the required tax. Federal men do not care how much is charged over the boxoffice price as long as the government gets its share.

Sponsors of the code claim it's working better than expected and that the control plan was never figured to be 100% effective anyway. They declare that more people are able to get tickets at comparatively reasonable rates than ever before, which should react favorably to the theatre ultimately, if not now, despite complaints from would-be ticket buyers.

Code may be backed up by New York's city administration. It's been proposed to limit resale price of tickets to 75c. for all places of admission. Such an ordinance would face a legal test, according to the brokers. Understood, however, that some managers are still ogling extra coin that could be collected from the agencies. Congress may be asked to change that part of the law which stipulates that a manager must pay the government half of his excess charges while the brokers continue paying the straight 10%. Admission levies are considered nuisance taxes, which, if discontinued, would eliminate much controversy. Theatres and agencies would welcome such a change, but the answer to such suggestions to date is that the government needs the money.

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Directed by ANTOINETTE PERRY

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Grosses Topping "Personal Appearance," Which Mr. Pemberton Presented
502 Times at Henry Miller's

CHICAGO COMPANY OPENING JAN. 15, HARRIS THEATRE

Swing to East

Continued from page 189)

that total are available at present, some having changed policy unalterably, have been torn down or just impossible of modern stage usage. Half of the current legiters are in the hands of banks, awaiting a realty

upswing, when they will be unloaded. It has always been contended that audiences will find the hits wherever located, but producers cannot deliver successes successively, and it is only natural that they prefer to be spotted where there is every natural chance to lure the patron. Even now stand-outs attract business north of the 50th street line. Radio City seems to have set the northward limit, so far as the west side is concerned. Noticed that around 52d street, where two modern theatres are located, the main stem is comparatively deserted unless there

are exceptional attractions present. On the upper east side, however, may be built theatres of the future.

'Crossroads of the world,' 42d street and Broadway, is rarely mentioned these days. There on the Seventh avenue side was Hammerstein's Victoria, originally built for legit shows with the backing of the wealthy tobaccoist, Lichenstein. Spot was formerly Tattersall's stable, in which the major prize fights of the day were staged, if not on barges in the river. Liberty, which housed many musical hits, followed the New Amsterdam, which cost about \$1,500,000, and they saved on the Liberty's construction to even things up.

After the turn of the century legit booking activity done by managers with offices in their hats on 14th street started uptown and landed in a building next to the St. James, at Broadway and 26th street, latter building being vaudeville headquarters at the time. The 'syndicate' was established at 1440 Broadway and was formed by Al Hayman, with C. B. Jefferson, Rich & Harris, of Boston; Klaw & Erlanger and Nixon and Zimmerman, latter controlling the Philadelphia end. But the first syndicate was formed by Joseph Brooks and Nixon, operating out of Cincinnati. Former was later essentially a producer on Broadway.

Third of a century spanned the rise and demise of the syndicate, some time after Klaw & Erlanger gained undisputed control. It was believed for many years that the booking combination which supplied upward of 1,400 theatres for many seasons was impregnable, but along came the Shuberts, from Syracuse, but starting theatre operation in Rochester, N. Y. They had an in on several houses below 34th street line, but really started to become a factor upon acquiring the Herald Square theatre, which they secured, lost and won back again. Klaw & Erlanger interests waned with the Shuberts increasing their activities in New York and on the road, and they eventually achieved what the older showmen thought was impossible.

They built many uncomfortable moderate sized theatres, some of which are still operating. While still pretty much in the show picture, they came a cropper when expanding too much and incorporating, with the stock sold to the public, latter ending up holding the bag, as disclosed by the receivership.

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Burlesk by Any Other Name Ain't, but '38 Saw Some Spurt

By Bernie Woods

After passing through a period during which it nearly became just a memory, burlesque looks to be doing a fabulous invalid act. The past few months saw the clearing away of many obstacles to rehabilitation, from an organizational standpoint. However, one stumbling block remains: the absence of official recognition of New York city officials. In the big town burlesque, by name, is still outlawed.

Latter part of the past month saw the first concrete indication of harmony between city and burlesque officials, something which has been entirely lacking since the gong (which nearly turned out to be a death knell) was sounded in May, 1937. At that time John Masterson, head of the Mayor's censorship committee, was named as labor negotiator for the burley operators and it resulted in the first step toward reorganization.

At the same time the name of the Burlesque Artists' Association was changed to the Brother Artists Association, because the title was deemed incongruous in view of the city's ban on the word. No particular significance is attached to the substitution of the word Brother for Burlesque, other than it conforms with the previous initials. First thing Masterson did after accepting the post of go-between was to eliminate contract difficulties between the operators and the BAA. All signed with the latter after previous overtures by the BAA. sans Masterson, had dallied along due to ops' objections to minor clause in the contracts.

Organizational snags, other than those of the operators, repeatedly have plagued the attempts to restore burlesque to a plane approaching what it had been prior to its troubles. The decision handed down by the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, returning jurisdiction to the BAA didn't abruptly clear the horizon of trouble for the BAA. The Four A's decision was rendered in December, 1937, when inroads of the American Federation of Actors, following the revocation of the burley tag and its classification as vaudeville, threatened to usurp BAA domination of the field.

This inter-union squabble was followed by one of intra-union nature. Charges were preferred against BAA officials by two members of the org. claiming incomplete organization and mishandling of finances. When that was dropped another tangle with the AFA reared its head. This was over the monies collected from BAA members by the AFA during the aforementioned AFA unionizing drive. All this deferred concentrated attempts at rehabilitation until this fall, as by the time everything was cleared up, the summer and folding houses were at hand.

Never Will Sanction

There was, however, an attempt made during the hot spell to secure restoration of the burlesque title by Tom Phillips, prez of the BAA. He gathered data purporting to prove to city officials the inadvisability of forcing the theatres to operate sans the burley label. This was filed with the Censorship Committee set up last year by Mayor LaGuardia and License Commissioner Paul Moss to keep burley under control. After several delays, word was forthcoming from the commissioner denying the application with an added statement that the label would never be returned and under no circumstances would any further pleas be entertained. Operators of the Eltinge and Republic theatres in New York are supposed to have thrown their weight against its return, reasoning that removal of the ban would reopen dark theatres and cut in on their biz. They were the only two houses open in N. Y. at the time.

Three Months' License

Though the contract disputes with BAA are out of the way, and

everything looks to be smooth from here on on that point, there are other things bothering the operators. One of them is the method of licensing the houses which was materially changed with the reopening in September, 1937. Instead of the yearly permits which set operators back \$500, the current arrangement calls for three-month permits which carry the same weight, that is they can't be revoked without going to court on an obscenity charge. It's the same setup except for two colored gentlemen in the woodpile. One of them is that those three-month permits cost \$250 which brings the yearly tap to \$750—twice the former figure. It is that which tends toward keeping ops in line. It's a shorter wait for city officials who want to punish an operator with a permit refusal.

In view of the fact that burley was for a long time a lucrative biz for those operators, one would think that they would cooperate with the censors and officials in trying to keep in line and eliminate the chance of a recurrence of their past troubles. But that is not the case. It's admitted that numerous complaints have been lodged against the shows, and burley has been in a precarious position with N. Y. City officials the past couple of months due to that, and the many union battles. It's not always the fault of the managers, performers are liable to their share of the blame. Soon after the Gaity, N. Y., reopened as a burley stand Aug. 26 last, Margie Hart, a strong b.o. peeler, was yanked from the show by the censor committee and put under ban in N. Y. until she promised to behave. The ban didn't last long in her case, however. She promised.

The Peel

This section of burley is, of course, the subject of the strongest objections to it. Despite the fact that the peel was the section which demanded the closest scrutiny and censorship, it remains still the strongest draw at the b.o. Without the peel contingent, burley houses, with the 'comedy' in the state it is, couldn't survive. Peelers are still under wraps in N. Y. to an extent, but not so much as they were a year ago after the houses reopened. There still are some things to which they adhere. The ban against curtain encores is still observed, as is doffing a little more than necessary.

Argument that the shuckers can still serve their purpose without going overboard is illustrated by Gypsy Rose Lee. She's given credit for being one of the best burley ever turned out along those lines. And she got away with showing far less than some of the supposedly experienced gals working at it today.

Gypsy Rose left the biz to go into pictures, but is currently on a vaude tour with a unit booked by the Wm. Morris agency. Whether or not she will return to burley is problematical, but the stint she's doing in vaude is essentially the same. Ann Corio returned to the biz this year after sojourning in Europe during the summer with her husband, Emmett Callahan. She's currently circulating through the Izzy Hirst time. Though, as mentioned before, stripping got a bad scare at being the main source of irritation about burlesque, it never actually went out.

Less said about burley comedy the better. There hasn't been an outstanding piece of new comedy written in years. Or so it seems anyway. Weekly attendants at houses have often been heard spilling punch lines to skits before they were reached by the actors. That's an indictment that's inexcusable. Laugh-getters were once burley itself; currently they have degenerated to little more than a stage wait for the girls. What the current version of burlesque needs more than anything else is not new styles of removing a brassiere, but ace book producers.

Performers Graduating

Burley this year has managed to reassert itself tentatively as a springboard to higher things for performers within its ranks. Many burley entertainers have gone on this year to radio, legit musicals, nightclubs, pictures, and there was one shipped to England. Numbered among these is peanuts Bohn, who's with Charles Cochran; Abbott and Costello with Kate Smith, and doubling into niteries and vaude; Joey Faye, currently in 'Sing Out the News' on Broadway; Sid Stone who was in 'Fabulous Invalid'; Howard

Kent in 'Pins and Needles'; Rags Ragland, who did a stint on the Rudy Vallee hour, and with Phil Silvers, another burley comedian, will soon do a comedy skit on WOR-Mutual radio net; Sydney Kent, who's on writing staff of Eddie Cantor. Joe Uhle is set with Metro, which stars his son, Mickey Rooney.

There's Gordon Clark, in a road-show of 'I'd Rather Be Right'; Joe Devlin, also in pictures; Bobby Morris and Sam Briscoe, in vaude in Australia; Ed Kaplan, in vaude; Shorty McAllister, of the team of McAllister and Fields who went to the Coast last summer for pictures, but is now back on Broadway; and several others such as Al Golden, Jr., Connie Fauslau, and Jimmy Coughlin.

Playing Time

All these performers sprang from burley when it was at its lowest ebb. From a total, early in 1938, of about 40 weeks in New York and on the road, available time dropped to 12 weeks during summer. Those 12 stanzas represented only two weeks in N. Y. and 10 stocks spread through the east, midwest and Coast. The new season, underway only three months or so, already offers approximately 32 and a half weeks, seven in New York, including two Izzy Hirst wheel houses which will soon go stock, eight and a half more of the latter's time on the road, and 15 weeks of stock.

As far as houses in operation are concerned, the New York picture didn't change much. Prior to the summer months there were six spots doing biz. The Eltinge, Republic, Irving Place, People's, Star, and the Triboro, the latter being the old Gotham where all of burley's troubles with the current administration started. Of those, the Irving Place folded suddenly after a fire which ruined dressing rooms and orchestra pews, and stayed shuttered; the People's was forced to close because of salary troubles which had Tony Miccio, who operated that spot and the Irving Place, up before Commissioner Moss repeatedly; and the Triboro and Star in Brooklyn closed as a matter of summer policy.

Currently there are seven in operation. The Eltinge and Republic, both of which managed to survive the summer without the burlesque tag, were joined Aug. 26 by the Gaity, a former burley stand, but grinding films as part of the Brandt theatre chain since the crackdown of May, 1937. The People's reopened under Miccio's son. And the Star unshuttered still later and drew another Brooklyn house. Werba's, an old burley stand, as opposition. Werba's had been lighted sporadically past few years as a stopover for traveling legit, but was taken this year as a spoke in the Izzy Hirst wheel. The Triboro in Harlem also resumed playing Izzy Hirst shows. Both houses are operated by Harry Palmer, under arrangement with Hirst. Both went stock last month, due to the censorship committee's aversion to Hirst shows in New York.

Mention of Miccio as past operator of the Irving Place and People's brings to mind a venture tried by him this past summer. How he tried running an offshore burlesquery with the S. S. Yankee, a Hudson River showboat which replaced the S. S. Mandalay which was sunk in New York Harbor after a collision. Miccio's idea didn't get far—didn't get away from the dock in fact, when cops squashed his venture at the start. It was the first actual try at steamboat stripping after many rumors summer after summer. Cops killed it on a technicality of docking.

PITT PEELERY

B. O. 35% UP

Pittsburgh, Jan. 1.

Although legit and film biz are both under last year's figures, burlesque here this season is showing a decided boom, with takings at Casino, the local peel wheel stand, up around 35%. Generally attributed to drop in price, with 40c top at night, for which customer gets hour of screen shorts as well as a 90-minute flesh presentations, bringin' 'em in.

Trade, in fact, so good George Jaffe, Casino's operator, already figuring on installing stock burley when wheel attractions run out. In past, house has closed for several months each season, but may decide to stick it out all year around in '39.

Bills Next Week

(Continued from page 186)

Raul & Eva Reyes
Chilton & Thomas
Ann Kirwin
Helene Heath
Chas Smith
Jimmy Blake
J. Lynch Gls (17)

Latimer Club
(Blue Room)
Ann Rush
Virginia Howard
Barbara Bradley
Jeri Foster
Rhumba Ore

Little Kathskeller
Jack Griffin Ore
Zorita
Bob Carney
Johnny & George
Burnett & Barclay
Cleo Barr
Julia Gerrity

Open Door
Burton 2
Mellard & Millard
Bob Ridley
Viola Klais Ore

Parrish Cafe
Flo Gross
Marion Aiken
Johnny Holmes Ore
Vernon Guy
Ann Fisher
Kitty Murray
Bebe Fitzgerald
Janet Waters
Janet Waters

Rendezvous
Adorables (6)
George Scott
Chet Fennis Ore

Stamp's Cafe
Al Rickard
Ethel Grey
Vic Earlson
Jack Hutchinson
Nanette
Patsy Shaw
Irving Blaw Ore

Silver Lake Inn
(Clementon)
Mickey Pamblant Or
Allice Lucey
Burns & Swanson
George Reed

Sky Top Club
Murray Parker
Norma Mitchell

Yacht Club
Kitty Helming Ore
Jimmy Bailey
Burtie Saven
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Paul Rich
Margie Smith
J & Adele Martin
Doc Dougherty Ore

Dutkin's Kathskeller
Mayos
Croft Sis
Louise Keller
Casper & Roth
Frances Carroll
Jay Jerome Ore
Frank Ponti

20th Century
Martini, R & Lee
Frances Diva
Marjorie Valez
Biddie Donn
Rhythm Brown
Tommy Cullen Ore

Viking Cafe
Cliff Conrad
Watson Sis
Barbara Brent
Grace O'Hara
Jerry Delmar Ore

Village Barn
Dolores O'Neill
C & Joy
Edna Thompson
Edna Lang
Marty Bohn
Vernon Guy
Teddy Oliver Ore

Weber's Hof Brau
(Camden)
Karl & Gretchen
Bavarians
Ise Hart
Rudy Bruder
Ray Miller
Jules Placco Ore
Herbert Dexter
Irene St. Clair
Hicks from Sticks 3
Prince & P's Co
Rose Graham
Su-Foo
Golden Co
Jackie Moss
J & T Shellenh'mer

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Roberta Ramsey

Dotty Norman
Kathleen Kaye
Claudia Ferris

Open Door
Tinney Liveng'd Or
Larry Powell

Packard Ballroom
Al Cavalier Ore
Paradise Gardens
Anthony Doria Ore

Paris
Gordon Bogle Ore
Norman Ebron
Rendezvous

Katherine Kaye
Ruth Gary
Eleanor Sutherland
Helen James
Vera Robsel

Reno
Rudy Sager Ore
Harry Rayburn
Betty Nae
Peg Manning
Jean Alyn

Sealer's
Tony Bauer Ore
Marie Keely
Jessie & Viola
Dorothy Hamilton
Bing Burdick
Roma Costello

CHATTER

Broadway

Joe Vogel's wife broke leg Thursday (29).
Walter Reade to California for a few weeks.

Alice Brady in for the holidays; ditto James Stewart.
Sam Harris, on holiday cruise to Havana, due back this week.

Betty Shay, actress, now private secretary for Sidney Kingsley.

Anna Erskine, actress, has joined the Dwight Deere Wiman office staff. Patsy Kelly back to Hollywood and shortly starts in another for Hal Roach.

Adele Leblang, youngest daughter of late ticket broker, will wed next month.

Danielle Darrieux due back from France soon to start in her second film for U.

George D. Lottman taking flying lessons from his erstwhile charge, Roger Wolfe Kahn.

Don Baker, organist at the Paramount, N. Y., entering his fourth year at the theatre.

Don Budge has contracted with Prentice-Hall for a new book on tennis. For May publication.

Fredric March's billing carries an 'in person' sub-line at the Center, heralding 'American Way.'

Milton H. Bren, producer for Hal Roach, leaves on a West Indies cruise Jan. 6 before returning to studio.

Edwin Knopf, Metro scenario editor, in from Coast Thursday (29) for conferences with home office execs.

New Year's eve turned out to be better than anticipated, because of the 3 a.m. curfew restrictions.

S. Edwin Graham now talent scouting for Meglin-Fanchon & Marco in their campaign for new film faces.

Radio announcer Fred Uttal hobbling around between broadcasts on crutches; tore the tendons on his right foot.

Tyree Dillard, Jr., of Loew-Metro legal staff, returns this week from Greensboro, S. C., where he spent the holidays.

New animated Bromo-Seltzer sign on Broadway and 46th by Douglas Leigh provided a mental cure to New Year's Eve celebrants' hangovers.

Several local agents were dumfounded when they received gift bottles of liquor from a theatre operator. Man bites dog routine was stunt of A. A. Adams, owner of the Paramount, Newark.

Just when everyone figured the chain-letter gag had died, one has been started that will be restricted solely to film theatres and exchanges. It's a 25-center. The billing is 'Act quickly and get your Christmas bills paid.'

Following were screen-tested last week by Al Altman at Metro: Don Costello, William Foran, Muriel Hutchinson, Walter Gilbert, Clare Woodbury, Joan Tetzel, Florence Dunlap, John Irwin, Harry Bellaver and Harold Johnsrud.

Chicago

Lee Florsheim in town for the winter.

Roy Topper recouping from auto bump-around.

Ralph Atlas and son to Texas for visit with relatives.

Leo Spitz in town and expected to be here for several weeks.

Lou Wolfson and Joe Sully making midwest survey for William Morris agency.

Fritz Blocki and Fern Head tossed a house-warming soon as they got back from their honeymoon.

Moe Wells elected prexy of Chicago Amus Publicists Association, with Sidney Stern as v.p.; Jack Rubens, treasurer; Dave Kirtchover, secretary, and Mort Green, sergeant-at-arms.

London

The Irving Ashers expect addition to the family. Already have one child.

The Tim Whelans off to Chemnitz, the French Alps, for winter sports.

Mark Ostrer's London home robbed of \$15,000 in jewels.

Diana Churchill to star in new play which Basil Deal will produce in the West End next month.

'Bobby Get Your Gun' folds at the Adelphi Jan. 31, then tours the sticks for 10 weeks, including three in Edinburgh.

Gilbert Miller is latest to have interest in Max Gordon's 'Women,' with Jack Buchanan, for London production.

Thornton Freeland recalled from Biarritz after three-day holiday with wife, June Clyde, to direct 'The Gang's All Here,' which Jack Buchanan is producing with Associated British Picture Corp.

Eddie Horan is writing score for musicalized version of old farce, 'It Pays to Advertise,' which Cliff Whit-

ley intends to produce in the West End, with Bobby Howes as star.

Lee Tracy was to have taken the lead in Max Catto's play, 'The Bowery Touch,' which Maurice Browne is producing, but quit, refusing to be on the road for more than two weeks. Hartley Powers replaced.

Society of West End Theatre Managers has withdrawn most of the legitimate theatre advertisements from the Daily Express because the newspaper is asking an increased rate.

Payne-Jennings & Killick have given up the lease of the Savoy theatre, with H. M. Tennent, Ltd., becoming the new tenant. First show to go in is 'Robert's Wife,' which transfers from the Globe in March.

Louise McNamara, former pianist to Robinson and Martin, who was film-tested by Gaumont - British some time ago without landing in pictures, now conducting her own English band at the Casino, Monte Carlo.

Guy Bolton called in to help reconstruct 'Paprika,' now on the road as the 'Magyar Melody.' Show destined for His Majesty's theatre Jan. 19, but may stay out longer, as Metro is considering putting in another picture there after 'The Great Waltz.'

Sydney

By Eric Gorrick

'Hollywood Hotel' revue okay in Brisbane.

Greater Union Theatres renovating several ace theatres.

Sir Ben Fuller importing an ice show early next year.

Biz continues brightly in New Zealand for all managements.

Reported RKO will distribute Cinesound's 'Broken Melody' in England.

Emile Boreo, after a good run over Tivoli chain, opens in London early in the year.

Top Yuletide attractions here are Uni's 'That Certain Age' and Par's 'Men with Wings.'

Johnny Glass, Hoyts, recovering from operation. Glass is Charles Munro's righthand man.

Adriana Caselotti, voice of 'Snow White,' opened okay in Melbourne for Tivoli. Will do a chain run-around later.

Tries being made by Charles Munro, Hoyts, to induce Gracie Fields to appear in Australia. Dickers also on with George Fromby.

Chang, magician, will be spotted in the nabes by Sir Ben Fuller. Originally came here for ANZT. Nicola is doing well in Auckland for the night.

Various newspapers taking slaps at the U. S. distribs. State that the distribs should be forced to help the home producers in establishing the industry here.

Critics severe on 'I Married an Angel' in Melbourne premiere for Australian-New Zealand Theatres. Ernest Rolls, producer, is working overtime to whip the show into better shape.

George Dean, Snider-Dean, back from an overseas tour, stated that Lily Pons would appear here next year. Dean, besides being a co-partner in S-D, is also director of ANZT, in association with Stanley Crick and Frank Tait.

St. Louis

By Sam X. Hurst

Elmer Meyer, Uptown theatre stage boss, vacationing in Florida.

Little theatre's first laboratory play, 'He,' attracted banner audiences.

John Nick, prez of Local 53, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, on shelf due to arthritis.

'Blind Alley' will be presented by Little theatre group before students at Rolla (Mo.) School of Mines Saturday (7).

Anthony J. (Tony) Ortell, 53, brother of Frank Ortell prez of New York Turf Writers Assn., died after four weeks illness.

During brief vacation of Vladimir Golschmann, Scipione Guidi, concertmaster and assistant conductor, directed St. Louis Symp.

Joe Sarfaty, Universal salesman, convalescing in a Decatur, Ill., hospital from injuries suffered when his auto was struck by a freight train near Decatur.

Joseph Moseley, 49, assistant business agent for Local 1, International Board of Electrical Workers, was killed last week when auto in which he was a passenger ran off the road.

Donald Novis abandoned temporarily Bobby Breen all-star revue at Municipal Auditorium Monday (27) to keep weekly date on Fibber McGee program in Chicago. Returned the following day.

Board of Directors of Fox-St. Louis Properties, Inc., voted a dividend of 50c. per share on preferred stock. This is first divvy since reorganization three years ago. There are 44,000 shares of preferred stock outstanding.

Hollywood

Dick Mayberry to hospital.
Anthony Rivers laid up with flu.
Bob Baker to Texas for personals.
Howard Dietz here on studio call.
Jack Otterson back from Manhattan.

Gene Fowler back from Fiji Islands.

Bryan Foy vacationing at Sun Valley.

Gracie Fields sunning at Palm Springs.

Jane Withers to Pittsburgh for personal.

Tom Huntington recovering from auto crash.

Leo Thiele in hospital with a broken leg.

Sol Polito observed 22d wedding anniversary.

Dorothea Kent to hospital for appendectomy.

Max Terhune back from month's eastern tour.

William Powell to hospital for minor operation.

Harry M. Warner golfing for the first time since recent illness.

Brian Donlevy and Marjorie Lane celebrated second wedding anniversary.

Irene Castle McLaughlin spent the holidays in Hollywood with her son, William, in spite of a court order from Chicago. Doctor's orders for the boy.

Minneapolis

By Les Rees

Fred Finnegan, Universal office manager, laid up by flu.

Twin City Variety club served New Year's morning breakfasts.

Earle Perkins, Warner Bros. Omaha branch manager, in town.

St. Paul newspapers boosting amusement display advertising rate.

Joe Podoloff, 20th-Fox branch manager, in Chicago for sales' meeting.

Leonard Gruenberg, formerly with RKO here, and now in St. Louis, a visitor.

Harold Field, independent circuit operator, and family vacationing in California.

Henry Huber, formerly with Paramount at Sioux Falls, S. D., new assistant RKO booker, succeeding Kenny Adams, promoted to head booker.

Miami Beach

By Arthur Thomson

Irving Caesar in.

Leonard Lyons a visitor.

Jan Pearce at Helene hotel.

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., due in.

Jai Alai games opened for the season.

Gambling whereabouts still under wraps.

Joe Lewis comes into Continentale Jan. 25.

Meyer Davis unit at Hollywood Beach Hotel.

Southland Rhythm Girls booked for Mother Kelly's.

Nat Harris opened the Strand Prime Rib Friday (30).

Lola King girl band into the Esquire. Also Allen Murray.

Gypsy Rose Lee featured at Royal Palm Club New Year's eve.

Mary Kirk Brown wed to Bob Kelly, son of 'Mother' Kelly.

Southern Sisters, tumbling act, added to Royal Palm Club cast.

Tony Sharraba replaced Bob Nolan as m.c. at Royal Palm Club.

Ted Husing in charge of Dempsey's first Sunday celeb cocktail party.

Miami Biltmore opened formally New Year's Eve with Cy Delman orchestra.

Hazel Franklin, 14-year-old English skater, made two appearances at Ice Palace.

Cross and Dunn, Al Donahue orchestra and Hildegard slated to open Palm Island Club.

Rita De Land, Marion Costner, Helene and Raoul and Henriett Moore opened at the Hanger with Joe Fisher's orchestra.

Rome

Lillian Harvey and Vittorio De Sica will star in 'Castles in the Air,' to be made here.

Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night,' in Italian, held over at the Eliseo for three extra performances.

D. Coletti writing script for an Italian film about Caruso's life. M. Calandri to be production director.

Troupe of American chorus girls sent over by Music Corp. of America, led by Grace Stewart, is tops card at Teatro della Mostra.

Despite the fact that 'Snow White' (RKO) has not yet been released in Italy, many shop windows are tied up in advance exploitation of the picture with displays of Snow White and the dwarfs.

'Theatrical Saturdays,' cheap Saturday afternoon performances for peasants and small-salaried workers, started third season in all major theatres in Italy.

Pupils of the Takarazuka school of music, dance and drama have come from Japan on a good-will tour. This tour forms part of program of 'cultural exchanges' among Japan, Germany and Italy.

Literati

See Deal on Philly Dailies

Reports are current in Philadelphia that stock of the Philadelphia Record in sufficient quantities to achieve an important voting block, or even control, are being sought by the same interests that are understood to have the Philadelphia Evening Ledger under option.

Both the Record, a.m., and the Ledger, p.m., are second papers in their respective fields and admittedly under great financial pressure at the moment. Entirely possible, therefore, to offer in Philly that should the papers be brought under single financial control, they could both operate profitably by consolidating in one plant. The Record is New Deal and the Ledger Republican.

Holding the option on the Ledger, financial circles say, is the Brush-Moore syndicate, of Ohio. Pending its expiration on Jan. 16, Ohio banks are said to be eyeing the property with a view to financing the sale. Publisher of the Ledger is John C. Martin, son-in-law of the late Cyrus H. K. Curtis, who founded it.

Reynolds' Anti-Nazi Yarns

The Collier's mag bunch states that after Quentin Reynolds' stuff appears shortly on the Nazi persecutions he'll never be able to return to Germany. The weekly sent Reynolds abroad a month ago to get first-hand information since he's thoroughly familiar with the country from his past career as a foreign correspondent.

Reynolds got back in New York just in time for Jack & Charlie's annual free feed Xmas eve, an annual ritual to the literati-social-theatrical bunch that constitutes the backbone of the 21 Club's patronage, and somehow the Collier's writer tangled with a Park avenue advertising man who was expressing himself indelicately on the Jewish situation. Reynolds is quite heated on the Nazi question and since Jack & Charlie were hosting the occasion, he had to depart the place prematurely to avoid a fight. Anybody knowing Reynolds' six-three or four appreciates that such retreat isn't born of the physical.

Malloy Aide to Connolly

John A. Malloy, managing editor of the Boston American, Daily Record and Sunday Advertiser (Hearst), has been appointed editorial assistant to Joseph V. Connolly, general manager of the Hearst papers, effective today (1). Walter Howie, on leave from the Chicago Her-Ex, steps into the Malloy job here.

Malloy has been with Hearst since 1920, and in Boston eight years. In 1933 he was made m. e. of the Advertiser; two years later he took over as m. e. on the American and last April became m. e. of all three Hearst sheets.

John W. Kenney, circulation manager of the three Boston Hearst papers, goes to Detroit to take over job of Jack Stenbuck, circulation manager of the Times. Stenbuck takes over Kenney's department in Boston today (1).

Gotham Resumes New Books

After marking time for past two years, Gotham House is resuming publication of new books. Firm, which had gotten out limited list, had concentrated on previously published volumes, feeling conditions too unsettled for selective publishing company to venture into new books.

Gotham House plans call for a continued limited list of fiction and non-fiction, with latter for the most part in limited editions. Firm's head is Coley Taylor.

What's In a Name?

Race among a number of proposed radio digest mags to be the first on the stands may be further enlivened by a title dispute. Ownership of the title, Radio Digest, said to be the tag planned by the Annenbergs for their forthcoming periodical in that group, is claimed by Anne Lazar. First issue of her Radio Digest is imminent.

Radio Digest as a mag title goes back some years when it was utilized by Bill Bros., publishers of business papers, as the tag for a radio trade publication. When the mag folded, rights to Radio Digest title allegedly passed to Earl C. Raynor. Miss Lazar is reported to have acquired title rights from Raynor and claims to possess legal papers to prove it.

Besides the Lazar and Annenberg radio digests, third group is preparing similar mag to be called Listeners' Digest.

Joel Edits Dial Press

After serving a number of book-publishing houses in various capacities, George W. Joel becomes editor of Dial Press, as well as a director of the firm. Upped from publicity berth upon resignation of Grenville Vernon.

Prior to joining Dial upon the company's recent resumption of activities, Joel was for some time with Covici, Friede. Besides publicity, Joel was also a literary aide in most of the book firms with which he has been affiliated.

LITERATI OBITS THIS WEEK

Stuart N. Wolfenden, 49, fiction writer, killed himself in El Centro, Cal., Dec. 27, leaving a note complaining of failing health. Surviving is his widow.

George J. Hawke, 51, Sunday editor of Los Angeles Times, died in Los Angeles Dec. 28. He had been with the Times 16 years, having previously worked on the Muncie Morning Star and the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

CHATTER

Vera Caspary to Mexico.

Rene Fulop-Miller to the Coast.

Rafael Sabatini in Switzerland for skiing.

Richard H. Hippelheuser is new addition to editorial staff of Fortune.

Mary Kibbe, of the Appleton-Century editorial Department, to wed.

Jack McDonald, the newspaperman has sold a story to the Satevepost.

Henry Goddard Leach, ed of Forum Magazine, back from a trip to Scandinavia.

Gail Borden has replaced Louis Ruppel as managing editor of the Chicago Daily Times.

Lewis Rosenquest dined by staff of Harper's, the book publishers, on his 50th year with the firm.

Harlan Keiner forced to quit his farm hideout by the cold. Has taken an apartment in Chicago.

Donald Henderson Clarke's new novel will be a sequel to his 'Millie.' To be called 'Millie's Daughter.'

Winthrop Brubaker and Morris Weeks have joined Young America as managing ed and assoc. news ed, respectively.

Eugene Healy, sales manager for Holt, the book publisher, has an occasional whodunit published in book form himself.

Short stories of Ira Wolfert got him three offers for novels. Accepted Little, Brown's, and is now at work on the book.

Edna Lee Booker has completed her book, 'News Is My Job,' subtitled 'A Reporter in War-Torn China.' Macmillan will publish.

Lewis Gannett, book crick for the N. Y. Herald Tribune, in the hosp after being knocked down by a hit-run driver near his home.

International Literary Bureau at work with other interested parties in effort to get Felix Salten out of Vienna and beyond reach of Nazis.

Margaret Hertzler Brown has penned her first novel. Father Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler authored the best-selling 'Horse and Buggy Doctor.'

Arthur H. Thornhill, N. Y. manager for Little, Brown, elected a director, succeeding Herbert F. Jenkins, who resigned after 25 years on the board.

Robert Leland Crowell, of the publishing company bearing his name, off to South America on his wedding trip with his bride, the former Ruth Shurtleff.

Roxane Page Ruhl, of the Life editorial staff, and niece of the late Arthur Ruhl, drama ed of the N. Y. Herald Tribune, the bride of Charles Herbert Simmons, Jr.

Edward Specter, manager of Pittsburgh Symphony, named 'Man of the Year' by editors of 'Bulletin-Index,' class mag weekly in that city. Runerup was Frank J. Harris, head of Harris Amusement Co.

Hendrik Willem van Loon, Margaret Ayer Barnes and William Beebe among the scribblers who will speak at the next Book and Author luncheon at the Hotel Astor, New York, Jan. 10.

Jacques Chambrun has arranged with Cooperation, Inc., of Paris, to handle the U. S. publication rights to the works of Anthony Eden, Winston Churchill, Alfred Duff Cooper and other British statesmen.

Howard Browning, political writer for Hearst Sun-Telegraph and prexy of Newspaper Guild chapter in that city, resigned to become private secretary to newly-elected Congressman Joseph McArdle of Pittsburgh district.

THE CIRCUS ON WAY OUT?

By Epes W. Sargent

In happier years circus men closed the show and put it into winter quarters. This year too many of them have been closing the show and putting it into bankruptcy. Then they sit home and chorus with Hamlet, "To be, or not to be. That is the question!" And it is a question that cannot well be answered until six weeks of the '39 season have elapsed.

Nothing can be deduced from the season just closed. It was abnormal in every way. It would be equally useless to seek an answer in the '37 season, when most tent shows did pretty well by themselves. It is a question that must wait until the labor factors have been put to the test, but the question of labor is only one of the moot points. There are many other detrimental factors to be considered, the chief of which, perhaps, is radio. Others are the motion picture, the county fair, widespread use of the automobile by families in the lower income brackets, bank notes and, to some extent, a lack of novelty.

Unionization of showfolk presents a new and still undemonstrated problem. In the past season probably the Ringling show was the only one to be closed as the direct result of the interference of the unions. In other sections it was a minor factor, and with some shows it cut no ice at all, since it was so manifestly impossible to pay salaries in full that no demand was made. The show at least was feeding its people; it provided sleeping quarters, and that was something at a time when 7,000,000 persons were vainly seeking jobs.

Most shows got off on the wrong foot with a new recession making itself felt, and a weather condition that would have caused even old man Noah to pull on his rubber boots. Day after day the show came on a new lot just as soggy as the old, if it were not actually raining, as it did about 80% of the time the first few weeks. Most shows regarded it as good fortune if they took in sufficient coin to meet current expenses. Salaries were something else again. Roustabouts were content with a little money for smokes and an occasional drink. The new union rates did not mean a thing. No test of the effect of the higher union rates could be made.

Both John Ringling North and Ralph Whitehead have positively announced a satisfactory understanding for next season. Neither has stated the terms. The past season North added most of the Ringling star acts to the Al G. Barnes, Sells-Floto show, starting at Redfield, S. D., July 11. There was some tendency to picket the show, particularly in the middle-western territory, and in some towns dates were shifted. Apparently business was not greatly affected, and since the show got into southern territory it has been mopping up, not going into winter quarters at Sarasota until Nov. 27. Whether the Barnes name will be used on next season's Ringling-Barnum show is not known, but the general belief is that the Barnes trick will return to its former status. If the Ringling show can get along without labor jams, it may work out all right, since it will be adjusted to meet the new payroll. It must be schemed to meet the new dispensation. It is unlikely that there will be much interference from the AFA, since Whitehead knows a lot more about circus business than he did when he attempted to mace the Norths into line. The labor problem may, very probably will, take care of itself.

How Radio Affected

But nothing has been done, nor can be done, to offset the effects of radio. To understand how radio can affect the tent situation it is necessary to go back into the past. Time was when the circus represented about the only form of entertainment the residents of the hinterland enjoyed other than the modest local affairs of school and church. It was the one time of the year when the denizens of the backwoods could revel in the spectacular and the amazing. It was practically the only catering to the inherent desire for something to take the farmer and the small-town man out of his drab life and permit him to steep his soul in glamorous entertainment.

Most sections were reached by the mud shows, the humble one-ring outfits, traveling from town to town by horse-drawn vehicles. The very nature of this transportation assured one or more circuses within easy driving distance, but these small

for the gorgeous spectacle of the Barnum & Bailey, the Forepaugh or the Ringling shows. Traveling by train, these outfits made longer jumps, hitting only the high spots, but the show was advertised for 50 miles or more, and circus day saw the arrival in town of a curious cavalcade of ramshackle farm-wagons containing entire families, out for their one day of fairyland. Along the railroads special excursions were run, which reduced the hardship of the trip, but no effort was too great to be made by the average American family. The circus was an absolute must. They went 'downtown' for the grand street parade, back to the lot for the free show which invariably preceded the opening of the side-show; perhaps a peep at the wonders so colorfully presented on the banner line. Then the afternoon show, and back home, to wait another year for a similar thrill. The circus was the farmer's all-in-all.

The First Distraction—Films

About 30 years ago came the first distraction. The motion pictures came to the smaller communities. But motion pictures did not completely satisfy the demand for glamorous entertainment. It was all very wonderful to see photographs of men and women actually moving about, but the surroundings were inadequate. Sitting in a darkened store room, watching streaky, unsteady films was vastly different from the glory of the tent show. There were no beautiful ladies with pink tights and pink cheeks, no gorgeous trappings, no daring gymnasts or daredevil wire walkers. Merely some second-rate actors and many not even of that grade, going through their motions in thin and insipid one-reel stories. The motion picture was then no competent substitute for the circus.

It was not until some 10 years ago that radio, emerging from the ear-tube stage, became available to the most remote dweller in the farm-lands. Set prices were coming down. Radio reception and radio production made rapid pace. Here was something the farm family could enjoy merely by switching a dial, right in the living room, and at a cost no greater than the small expense for the renewal of dry batteries. No longer did the farm families have to hitch up for the long drive to town. Father, in his carpet slippers; mother in her warm if shabby wrapper, and the kiddies in various stages of undress could gather around the magic box to be entertained by the finest name bands in the country, by the highest priced comedians. The man who lived on the edge of nowhere could get the same entertainment offered the city slicker, and get it every afternoon and evening. Night after night they get the best the stage has to offer. They no longer feel the keen need for the brief excursion into wonderland that used to be represented by the big shows. They still care for the circus, and with better roads and the almost universal second-hand cars, it is a simple matter to rattle into town for the Greatest on Earth—if it is convenient. But the circus is no longer essential. The farmer and the small town man no longer feel that if anything prevents them from attending they have lost their chance to peep into Paradise for another year. The pictures, grown better, are more often visited, and the radio is always at hand. The circus had ceased to be a bucolic necessity.

No Thrills Left

Moreover, the circus was changing. The thrill acts which gave a punch dropped out. These were mostly planned by French military engineers and some 20 years ago French military men were far too busy to design loop-the-loops, and various stunts in which autos defied the laws of gravity. In recent years about the only thriller has been the cannon act, which Zazelle, Lulu and others popularized a half-century ago. New to the present generation, but arguing a poverty of invention. Even the gorgeous spectacles which now open most shows, date back to about the same period when Adam Forepaugh staged 'Lala Rookh,' with Louise Montague, his much advertised '\$10,000 Beauty.' There is little new to the circus. It is the same old show offered to a new generation whose tastes have been expanded by the \$1,000,000 productions of Hollywood. Probably it would be difficult to change the circus program. The circus is standing still, or thereabouts. The audience is forging ahead to new demands, fresh appreciations. Acrobatic acts more daring than they used to be. Wire acts are accomplishing tricks that the

funambulists in the heyday of the circus never dreamed of, but they are still acrobats, still wire walkers. Even banknote is a contender for circus business. Astute managers whose banknotes fall on a circus day manage to run up the jackpot until the average man, imbued with the gambling spirit of the day will pass up the circus to hang around some theatre lobby in the hope that his name may be called.

State and county fairs also form stiff competition. Twenty-five years ago only a few fairs, such as the Trenton, N. J., and Brockton, Mass., fairs offered elaborate programs of acts to supplement the trotting races and the fat pigs and pumpkins. Today scores of events offer an elaborate show with girl lines, star performers and all the trimmings. The farmer figures if he misses the circus he can catch the county fair.

The circus no longer stands alone in its class. It is suffering from too much competition, without making much of an effort to meet the opposition. The circus may not be on its way out. Probably not, for a time, at any rate. But it is too inflexible to make the radical changes to bring it up to date if, indeed, anyone can suggest a new departure for tent shows. The Wild West has passed. So has the old fireworks show on the lines of 'The Last Days of Pompeii.' The futile efforts of Col. Tim McCoy to revive the cowboy show are still fresh in memory. He gave practically the same program that Buffalo Bill presented. And any Hollywood mesa meller can give you a 10 times better show for 10c.

The circus is moving more slowly, but its general trend is in the direction of the gateway marked 'Exit.'

106 RODEOS SET FOR '39 SEASON

Salt Lake City, Jan. 1.

Rangeland epics, staged under auspices of Rodeo Association of America, will number 106 during 1939. Of these, 86 rodeos already have announced a total guarantee of \$184,835 in prizes.

September will be the busiest month for the corral classics, 27 being scheduled with July next, 25. California, with 33 rodeos, leads the nation, and Canada for the largest state bookings, with Rocky Mountain and Coast states bunched closely for follow-up honors. Madison Square Garden, New York, has guaranteed nearly \$44,000 in purses during 24 days.

Charlotte Fair Offers To Sell Out to Opposition

Charlotte, N. C., Jan. 1.

As a result of the decision of Dr. J. S. Dorton and his associates to build an amusement park and fair grounds here, the Charlotte Agricultural Fair Association will offer to sell its equipment and goodwill.

This decision was reached at a meeting called to decide whether a fair should be staged next fall in opposition to the new outfit.

BIRTHS

Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Newton, a son, in San Mateo, Cal., Dec. 21. Father is conductor of children's programs at KYA, San Francisco.

Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Abel, daughter, in Hollywood, Dec. 28. Father with Republic Picts.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth Fredricks, son, in Hollywood, Dec. 28. Father is Metro cameraman.

Mr. and Mrs. Dan Seymour, daughter, in New York, Dec. 28. Father is radio m.c. and announcer.

Mr. and Mrs. Epes W. Sargent, Jr., son, in Bound Brook, N. J., Dec. 24. Father is son of the late Chicot (VARIETY). Will be named Epes III.

MARRIAGES

Claire Conerty to Pat Kelly, Dec. 22, in Oakland, Cal. Groom is slack at KFRC, San Francisco.

Mildred Kenyon to Eugene W. Castle, in Wilmington, Del. Groom is head of Castle Films, industrials.

Lorraine Susan Vincent to Arthur Edward Grounds, in Beverly Hills, Dec. 27. Bride is daughter of Frank Vincent, Hollywood agent.

Kay Morrison to Theodore Strauss secretly three weeks ago in New York. Bride is former costume designer; he is night club editor of N. Y. Times.

Mrs. Ann Lee Brown to Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord at Rapidan, Va., Dec. 31. Groom is board chairman of Radio Corp. of America.

OBITUARIES

ZONA GALE

Zona Gale, 68, novelist, poet and dramatist, died Dec. 27 in a Chicago hospital from pneumonia. She had been under an oxygen tent for seven days. Her husband, William Llewellyn Breese, of Portage, Wis., was with her at the time.

Prior to 1905 Miss Gale was a reporter on the old N. Y. Evening World. She had worked on Milwaukee papers previous to that time. For the past 23 years she had devoted herself entirely to writing.

Her first play to reach Broadway was 'Miss Lulu Bett,' produced by Brock Pemberton at the Belmont in 1920. Others which followed were 'Mister Pitt,' 'The Neighbors,' 'Uncle Jimmy,' 'Evening Clothes' and 'The Clouds.'

FLORENCE LAWRENCE

Florence Lawrence, 52, star of silent films, took poison in her Beverly Hills home Dec. 28 and died shortly afterwards in a hospital. For the past three years she had been a bit player at Metro.

Miss Lawrence, billed as the 'Biograph Girl' and the 'Imp Girl' in the early days of silents, had once played with Maurice Costello, Mary Pickford and Clara Kimball Young.

She was married to Charles B. Woodring, cosmetic manufacturer, in 1921 and divorced him in 1931. In 1933, she was married to Henry Bolton, but they were divorced five months later.

GERTRUDE MAITLAND

Gertrude Maitland, 58, who began her stage career in stock companies in 1916, and ended it in 'Few Are Chosen' in 1935, died Dec. 28 in New York of a heart ailment.

Miss Maitland, born in Boston, first appeared with Jere McAuliffe's Repertory in Lynn, Mass. Her first Broadway appearance was in 'The Brat.' She also played in 'A Royal Divorce,' 'She's a Good Fellow,' 'Little Jesse James,' 'The Kingdom of God' and 'Living Dangerously.'

Jefferson Hall, her widower, an actor; two sisters, and a brother, Charles Horrigan, survive.

MRS. SOPHIE HUBER FARRELL

Mrs. Sophie Huber Farrell, member of the Leland Sisters song and dance team more than 50 years ago, died at Patchogue, L. I., Dec. 28. She was the widow of Tony Farrell, also a vaudeville player, who died in 1928. Mrs. Farrell appeared with her husband on the legit stage for Tony Pastor and Klaw & Erlanger.

For 18 years the Farrells operated the Shore Inn at St. James, L. I.

POP FRANK

(Irving Frankenburg)

Irving Frankenburg (Pop Frank), father of the Four Franks, died in London Dec. 21, at 51. About 25 years ago Frankenburg toured vaudeville with his partner under the name of Leonard and Clark.

The Franks were scheduled to sail Dec. 24 for America, but postponed their trip.

JOHN J. MALLOY

John J. Malloy, 65, veteran stage manager, died Dec. 26 in Buffalo after a year's illness. For many years he was associated with the late Mike Shea in operation of the Garden and Court St., vaudeville houses.

A few hours before Malloy's death his sister, Teresa Dale, opened in 'The Primrose Path' at Baltimore.

ALBERT HENDERSON

Albert Henderson, 71, stage actor, died in Hollywood Dec. 28 after a rehearsal for his part in 'Sejanus' at the Biltmore theatre. He had emerged from a retirement of several years only a few days before. He was at one time associated with Robert Mantell and played in many Shakespearean productions.

McLAIN GATES

McLain Gates, 60, former lead player in legit with Jane Cowl and others, and lately in radio as casting director for the Radio Division of the Federal Theatre, died Dec. 29. He had been with the FTRD for the last seven or eight months.

O. J. ASTRY

O. J. Astry, 71, who owned and operated two of the first film theatres in Salem, O., 20 years ago, died there recently from a heart ailment.

His widow, two sons and a daughter survive.

LESTER E. HECKAMAN

Lester E. Heckaman, 39, musician, died Dec. 23 at his home in Canton, O., after several weeks' illness. He had played for many years with pit bands at the Palace and Lyceum theatres and was a member of the Norwood and Wild orchestras and other musical units.

He was vice-president of Canton local, A. F. of M., at the time of his death. His widow and four children survive.

SHERIDAN S. MAIER

Sheridan S. Maier, 70, at one time a singing clown with a circus operated by Albert Wetter died at Massillon, O., Dec. 21, after a long illness.

He had been circulation manager of the Massillon Independent for 27 years. His widow, four sons and two daughters survive.

JOSEPH E. HATFIELD

Joseph E. Hatfield, 80, brother of Al C. Field and former advance agent and assistant manager of the Field Minstrel show, which for a quarter of a century had headquarters in Columbus, O., died there Dec. 27 after a lingering illness. The show dissolved in 1929.

HOWARD R. (TED) YOUNG

Howard R. (Ted) Young, 41, night club operator, died suddenly in Wellsville, O., Dec. 25. For several years he operated Lighthouse Tavern in Steubenville, O.

Besides his parents, two sisters and three brothers survive.

ERNEST BRINKMAN

Ernest Brinkman, 66, character actor on stage and screen, died Dec. 28 in Hollywood. For years he toured vaudeville circuits in an act billed as Brinkman and the Steele Sisters.

Surviving is his widow, the former Mary Steele.

JEFFREY WILLIAMS

Jeffrey Williams, 78, stage and screen actor, died Dec. 27 in Los Angeles. He had completed his 2,001st performance in 'The Drunkard' the night before. Williams had been on the stage since 1908 and appeared in several pictures.

JOHN VAUGHN MORRIS

John Vaughn Morris, 78, veteran vaudeville player, died Dec. 25 in Salem, O., a few hours after he had been run down by an automobile. He was on the stage more than 50 years.

He retired only a year ago. A brother survives.

LEO BEERS

Leo Beers, 53, monologist, died Dec. 28 in a Brentwood, L. I., hospital. He had been ill five months. Last winter he played an engagement at the Rainbow Room, New York.

He had been a bachelor.

LAWRENCE EDWARD PARRISH

Lawrence Edward Parrish, 60, old time vaudeville performer, died Dec. 15 in Coshocton, O., after a lingering illness. His mother, three sisters, and two brothers survive.

LESTER TIETJEN

Lester Tietjen, head of Warners' playdate department, died Dec. 25 in New York after a long illness.

Survived by his widow, Mrs. Gertrude Tietjen.

Joseph Dorf, father of Fanny Ward, died Dec. 27 in Great Neck, L. I. Survived by his widow and two other daughters, Selma Rosenbloom and Phyllis Friedlander.

Hanefeld to Direct

Ohio's N. Y. Exhibit

Columbus, Jan. 1.

Ohio's part in the 1939 N. Y. World's fair will be directed by Earl H. Hanefeld of Ottawa by appointment of Gov. Martin L. Davey. Hanefeld, who will retire as state director of agriculture Jan. 9, will take over direction of the state's New York exhibit the following day.

The state commission to handle the Ohio exhibit has appointed a committee of three to act between meetings of the commission. The committeemen are John P. Schooley, state architect; Senator Keith Lawrence, Cleveland, and Arthur Hamilton, Lebanon. An appropriation of \$50,000 has been made by the legislature.

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