

The brightest star in show biz

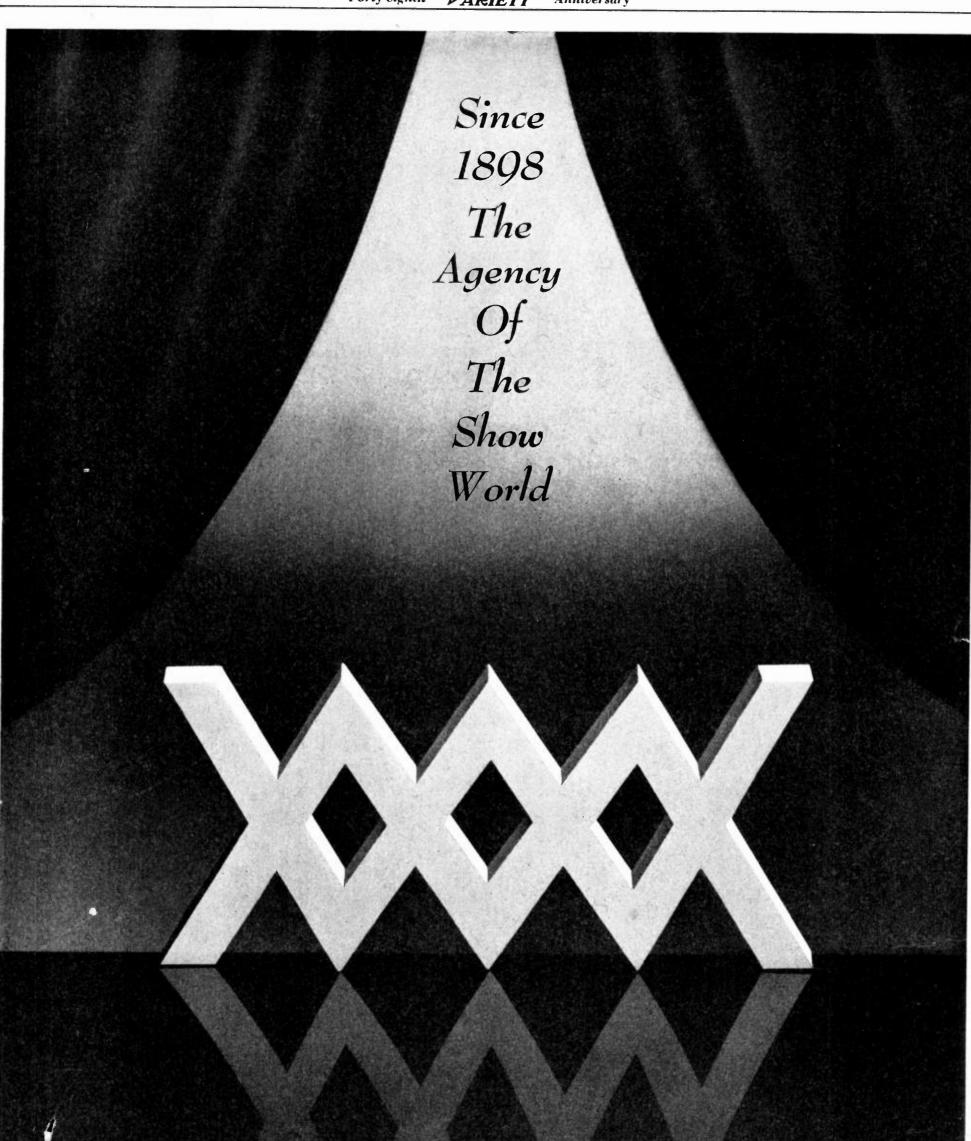
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### WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY, INC. NEW YORK · CHICAGO · BEVERLY HILLS · LONDON · PARIS



SHOW BIZ 1953-WOTTA YEAR

# Come to Britain in '54; No Festival, No CHANGING MOODS, Never Mind the Star; Playwright Coronation, Not Even English Spoken MODES AND MEANS

#### By RICHARD MEALAND London.

In England, women do not chatter. They natter, or have a natter.

The English do not normally like a n y th in g over-publicized. This makes it difficult for advertising agencies, sponsored television, motion picture publicists, rising politicians, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., salesmen, debutantes, film stars, Palladium headliners. Cinema-remain for 10 days and convalesce Scope, Riviera party-givers, Communism, American necktie manu-facturers, and Great Lovers. There are a few exceptions, but only a

Schweppes. They applaud understatement. This endears them to Bing Crosby and Jack Benny, the throwaway joke, anybody who stammers, the dirty old raincoat, small cars, backroom scientists, Rose Murphy, deafmutes, Manx cats, shy murder-ers, gentlemen burglars and stiffupper-lips.

They never say: pip-pip, by Jove, what-ho, toodle-oo, cheerie-bye, and all that sort of rot, don'tcha know. They say: get cracking, okay. cheero, righto, good show, bloody. ruddy. sticky. ducky and I couldn't care less. When they wish to sound slightly whimsical, which is often they use "me" instead of is often, they use "me" instead of

They still use rhyming slang. A (Continued on page 87)

### **Uncut Features Aired Freely Into Homes But Censored** for Screens

Washington. Fact that television is not subject to any official bluepencilling is rammed across in a document filed with the U.S. Supreme Court by the Motion Picture Assn. of America and Independent Theatre Own-ers of Ohio. Point is made that

### **Red Barber's Surgery On Ear After Gridcasts**

CBS sports counselor Red Barber will be operated on Jan. 14 to restore partial loss of hearing in his left ear. He'll enter the New at his Scarborough (N. Y.) home all of February.

Barber is now in Florida where few. The Royal Family, the Comet jet, Mt. Everest, Sir Win-ston Churchill, Guinness and will go to Mobile for the web's radio coverage of the Senior Bowl game on Saturday (9). His final pre-hospital activity will be at noon Jan. 13 when he'll give a talk at 1 inity Church. In March he'll go to St. Petersburg, Fla., to ready himself for his new baseball assignment as telecaster of the N. Y. Yankee games.

Black & White '54,

Sez RCA's Folsom

Although the nation's economy

has reverted from a sellers' to a

buyers' market, and d pite intro-

duction of color television, black

and white set sales will "continue

in the millions" in 1954, RCA

president Frank M. Folsom said in

### **By ABEL GREEN**

In 1953, show business shifted faster than a Moscow delegate to the United Nations.

More than any season of recent memory, 1953 lived up to the show biz adage that there's nothing more permanent than change.

It was a year of great risks and shifts and innovations. It was also a year with humor, for the business there is no business like always delights to laugh at itself. And, in so doing, show biz helps set a national laugh pattern. This was the year of Jelke and Jorgensen jokes, of God-frey's "humility," of Italian hair-cuts, scrabble and parakeets.

More seriously, 1953 saw revolutions in the technology of enter-tainment and that Greatest Show on Earth-the British Coronation.

Best of all, as regards the producers and exhibitors of motion pictures, a reawakened and re-vitalized industry met the chal-lenge of television and theatre closings head on. There was a happy improvement from the preceding year's lethargy when too often one heard the supercilious crack. "Oh, I haven't seen a movie for six months."

Lighter values of 1953 embraced such items as Marilyn Monroe as the continuing No. 1 space-grabber (Zsa Zsa isn't a bad runner-up!) and Dr. Kinsey and Polly Adler among (Continued on page 58)

### SILENT POLICE WATCH 'FRENCH LINE' UNREEL

St. Louis. "The RKO's French Line' pened here last week without a a year-end statement this week. Production Code seal and with police officers in the audience but Folsom added that RCA will acno action was immediately taken to celerate its promotional activities condemn the film as "obscene" or to achieve high black and white to seize the print. Rumors of such drastic action circulated through

### Who Made Him Needs a Boost Up By LAWRENCE LANGNER **Cantor May Expertize**

For 'Faded' Paper-Mate Eddie Cantor is talking a radio-V consultation post with Paper-TV consultation post with Paper-

Mate, the ballpoint pen people, separate and apart from his own radio and video activities. That \$1,000 check award to Cpl. Robert Weston on Cantor's past Sunday show for Colgate, which caused NBC executive producer Sam Ful-ler to "fade" Cantor's cuffo plug for Paper-Mate, was the result of the company volunteering the company check award.

Cantor wanted to know why NBC and Colgate weren't consistent about alleged cuffo commercials, citing the Sylvania award he presented on the same program to Donald O'Connor, since Sylvania has been getting into many programs via the device of a plaque or a clock.

# **Brutal Hoods** Worse'n Sex, Thinks Flick

Hollywood's production code needs no changes but could stand a broader and more generous in-terpretation, says Dr. Hugh M. Flick, the New York censor. Flick opined last week that the

code could stand both tightening code could stand both tightening up and liberalizing. "They should start cutting some of the bru-tality out of gangster pictures and westerns." he thought. "To us that's a far more worrisome thing than the moral issue. This is where films really contribute to invente delineuency."

juvenile delinquency." Trouble with the code handling as it's practiced now is that intergiven on the basis

(Co-Director, The Theatre Guild)

In my opinion, the most im-



the theatre of the future, and by the naof our ture welcome to them may well be determined the question of whether we will have any theatre in the future at all. The past of

Lawrence Langner

our theatre is undoubtedly important. It is the origin of the traditions and standards which have been passed on from generation to generation. Be-hind our past stands Shakespeare to set a standard of poetry and beauty which has never been eclipsed. In the future are the plays, written and unwritten, with which oncoming generations will enrich the theatre. The present is merely that place where the future and the past intermingle and produce the theatrical harvest of to-day. Whether that harvest be rich or poor, worthy or unworthy, depends on us.

When we welcome the new author with production costs of be-tween \$60,000 and \$70.000 per play, for example, we are welcoming him with a shower of brickbats; for we expect him to meet an economic competition with which, either be-(Continued on page 87)

### It's Sir George Robey; Now 85, Music Hall Star **Never Played States**

London.

George Robey, veteran favorite of the British music halls, is a sur-

inconsistencies, expense and al-leged lack of logic of censorship boards in six states

Argument was made in the form of an amici curiae brief which calls on the high court to reverse the banning of the Columbia film, "M," in Ohio. A favorable ruling. it's hoped, would put an end to all forms of local and state government censorship of pix. Presentation of the brief represents the first time that an exhib group has teamed with the producer-dis-tributors in a court fight against the censors.

It's argued that from 1948 to 1952 there were 1,836 films shown over TV i: hio. Of these, 546 had never bee submitted to censors; 484 had leen submitted (prior to original theatrical showings) and cut, but were shown in unexpurgated version in the home via TV; five films totally rejected by the Ohio Board of Censors for theatre presentation were televised.

while TV is unencumbered and un-restrained, films are subject to the because of the "orderly introduc- film starring Jane Russell was read cause of the compatibility features of the new tint system. Reporting on other color developments, he said RCA had received by Dec. 31 orders for color telecasting equip-(for network-transmitted ment shows) from one or more stations in 58 cities. Equipment for color film projection is also being developed, with one of three systems already in commercial production and the other two still in the de-

velopment stage.

sales next year.

Discussing the business pros-pects for 1954, Folsom emphasized old sellers' market is gone," the coming year "can be good for business." He said RCA is preparing to reshape its productive capacity to "increase efficiency" in order to enhance the values of its products to the consumer, is streamlining its operations and selling organizations and is concentrating on building stronger sales staffs.

from every Roman Catholic pulpit this preponderantly (65%) in Catholic community. Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter warned Catholics it would be a "mortal sin" to see the pic.

Police officers departed quietly after the first screening stating only that they would file a written report to police chief Jeremiah O'Connell, who had given their assignment, since them St. Louis has no official censor.

With all the publicity, "French Line" opened to SRO the first day.

### **Early Deadline**

This edition of VARIETY went to press ahead of the normal Tuesday deadline.

Production detail, binding, etc., and the size of this 48th Anniversary Number made it necessary to omit certain necessary to omit standard departments.

of "past performance" rather than on a picture-by-picture basis, Flick declared. "That's a mistake. Each picture should be judged on its own merit. We run into this problem all the time."

He said he was disturbed over the "French Line" incident since it appeared as an attempt to capitalize on the code issue.

### **Higher Education Quick** To Exploit Sexsation

Minneapolis. That the University of Minnesota Film Society follows the news of show biz has been demonstrated before now. Newest example, fo'lowing Marlene Dietrich's sexsational nightclub costume at Las Vegas, sans la bra, is this:

Society is presenting an on campus revival of three old Die-trich films, "Blue Angel," "Seven Sinners' and "Destry Rides Again."

prise designation for knighthood on Queen Elizabeth's New Year honors list. The new Sir George was born Sept. 20, 1869 and made his debut in 1891. His war work won him, in 1919, the rank of Commander of the British Empire and in 1937 he was appointed to the General Advisory Council of the British Broadcasting Co. (Robey is also a painter of oils and has exhibited at the Royal Academy.)

Although a headliner in British and colonial show biz for well over 50 years, Robey never played in the United States. In his prime he was literally "booked solid" four and five years ahead and that fact, plus some diffidence on his part, precluded American bookings. Many showwise folk thought Robey would have clicked in the States, as did many another London musical figure.

A Companion of Honor was bestowed on John Christie, founder of the Glyndebourne Opera House.

### No Tunes Like Show Tunes -By GEORGE FRAZIER=

You may not think so, but the the lovers of old and obscure show decor of a powder room can sometimes impose intellectual standards. If I sound outrageously authorita-

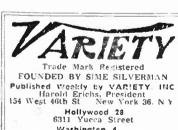


one of the bathrooms in worthy citizen's drummed out of my particular

George Frazier

The walls of this bathroom, you see, were decorated not with any conventional papering, but with sheet music covers of old and ob-scure show tunes—tunes capable of summoning up the vanished years in all their splendor; tunes that would suddenly flood the heart with remembrance of things past. So that for a little whileand merely looking at them, mind you—you would be unmindful of the present and all its tomorrows. with their bills to be paid and love affairs resolved and ulcers cured. For a little while you knew ou sont les neiges d'antan, and I do not mean d'antan Walker either.

Somebody would stroll inno-cently into that room and all of a sudden staring him in the face would be lingering beguilements ike "Mountain Greenery" and 'Experiment" and "Sam and Deand And if he were any kind of lilah. man, how could he be but stabbed a little by a montage so redolent of the silvery years. And often it would be strange to observe the expression of utter helplessness on his face as he came back into the den, for it was strictly a don't-tell-me-I'll-think-of-it-in-a-minutemyself expression. But finally, unable to endure it any longer, the poor wretch wou'd break down and confess that he just couldn't seem to remember the lyric of "By Strauss." Or maybe it would be of "As Though You Were There" or "Blah Blah Blah." In any case, this sort of memory lapse did not automatically cashier him out of our company. More often than not. indeed, we gave him the lyric, both verse and chorus. It was only when someone emerged to admit he didn't know there were such songs that we immediately took a dim view of him and his staggering ignorance. And let someone do that sort of thing often enough and it was off with his chevrons, and never again would he intrude his shady character into our chowder & marching society. One night a seemingly bright young man from the music department at Time announced that he never knew Gershwin had written a ture called "I Got The You-Don't-Know-the-Half-of-It-Dearie Blucs." That was going just a bit too far, what with its having been a Fred & Adele Astaire item. After that, seeing this churl on the street, we would nod curtly and let it go at that. We



being regiment.

seen and heard about some glam-orous powder rooms, like the ones it is only be-instance, but mine yielded to none in the matter of nostalgia. There of a decade, were people who remained so long recapturing the past that we pondered sending them supplies was the cause they would appear, their eyes of many an radiant, yet brimming with unshed otherwise tears too, and say a little lessly, "God, what tunes The Boys from Syracuse' had!" And they would hum snatches—not of "Fall-ing in Love with Love" or "This Can't Be Love," which everybody knows, for God's sake!-but of such recondite enchantments as "The Shortest Day in the Year" The and "You Have Cast Your Shadow on the Sea." Nobody messed around with us. boy!

tunes, are a clubby lot.

I, in my mitucrative time, have

Some Esoteric Samples people happened to know show-type tunes as well as merely show tunes, why, that was dandy too. because show-type tunes are, if anything, even more esoteric, being for example, along the lines of the muted rapture of Bart Howard's "If You Leave Paris" or Alec Wilder's lovely "Sneden's Landing" or Bud Redding's classic "The End of a Love Afiair." The sort of gems. in other words, that are done so superlatively by Addison Bailey in the posh Drake Room at the hour when dusk washes down over the city, or by Jimmy Daniels in the Left Bankish Bon Soir at midnight or by Mabel Mercer at four in the morning in the loft called the Byline Room, all in Manhattan, of course-where else!

We, the lovers of show and showtype tunes as well as of those who interpret them affectionately, are possessed of a willful and persistent nostalgia. All of us-and among us are such disparate personalities as Marcus Blechman, the nortrait photographer: Peter Arno, Morton Gottlieb, the theatrical pro-cucer: Al Simon of WQXR, Bob Bach, the radio and TV producer; Dorothy Kilgallen, who remembers the lyrics to, of all things, "The S'eam Is on the Beam"; Bos Measer, the newspaper publisher-

(Continued on page 56)

Joey

Mel



### HORACE HEIDT

Opening January 1, 1954, at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago. Then to New York . . Opening February 1, 1954, at Hotel Statler.

Under Personal Management WALTER PLANT Statler Hotel, New York City, N. Y

## **Fear Shuberts Can Resume Tough Tactics**

Toughening of the legit booking situation, both in New York and out of town, is seen as a possible result of last week's dismissal of the Government's antitrust suit against the Shuberts. Legit trade doesn't expect immediate developments in that direction, however, particularly in view of the uncertain situation within the Shubert organization following Lee Shubert's death. (See separate story on Lee Shubert's will.

Although there's some difference of opinion in managerial circles, certain producers and mana-gers figure that the Shubert organization may take the court decision as a green light to continue and even expand tactics that have aroused objection in the past. are touched, and deeply so, by the same lingering magic, whether the However, that may depend on who (Continued on page 56)

### **NO GLOOM AHEAD**

If 1953 goes into the annals as the year when third-dimension worked the salvation of the picture business, 1954 should be as potent via color TV in the lore of broadcasting. Paradoxically, and running true to the pattern of all progress through the ages, what at first looms like a bane frequently becomes the boon of an industry. This was true with black-and-white TV in relation to the picture business when Hollywood finally met the challenge with a technological evolution all its own. Just which process will be the ultimately definitive realization-widescreen, or any of the Scopes-is beside the point, for the moment any way. Fact is that the excitement attendant upon the development of new cinematic techniques created the desired end-result: the public once again became film-minded.

The show biz adage that there is nothing more permanent than change has certainly been dramatized by current tangents. Through the electronic evolution, vast new horizons of vaster audience appreciation for any and all of the seven Lively Arts are in the offing.

The picture business, unquestionably the greatest form of mass entertainment this side of boy-meets-girl and certainly the cheapest, hence the most popular form of family entertainment will see itself fortified by new values and new plus divertissements the like of which the celluloid pioneers never envisioned. As with ballet and legit, vaudeville and concert, which already have been brought into the home via the image orthicon, theoretically "for free," the comeback of "live" shows, in electronic patterns, as a plus value for picture theatres, is inevitable. That may take the shape of an important sports event, a Broadway premiere, a Metropolitan Opera production, a super-vaudeo entertainment. It may be piped direct into the homes via tollvision, or into auditoriums as supplementary fare, in some form of closed-circuit theatre.

There is no question but that year after year the magic of the electric impulse is making Fallen Arches, Ark., as privy to top entertainment as any deluxer on Broadway or Hollywood Blvd. More than ever "everybody has his own business-and show business.'

With 3-D a reality in '53, and 1954-C (color TV) inevitable in fruition this year, there is no room for any pessimistic 4-F's in the present scheme of show biz. It's a far cry from a half-century ago when Tony Pastor put the "family" into family vaudeville, and the picture business, with its vast skein of screens. networked the country-and then the world-with a new brand of mass entertainment.

As vaude and legit found new horizons in television, the advent of the spectrum values enhanced that medium, just as a new technological process took Hollywood out of its doldrums. It was a challenge for the picture business but when, in its nadir, a picture like "The Robe" (and a new technique) can emerge as perhaps the ultimately top film grosser of all time, that best tells the story of an industry which has the faculty of besting all hazards. Especially when these "threats" were, at first, regarded as insurmountable. Abel.

### HISTORY IS MADE AT NIGHI

### By HARRY HERSHFIELD

Antoinette squandered but wouldn't spend a dime on a Marie the wealth of France on herself, good gag-writer. She had a good head on her

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shoulders until she de-cided to utter her own material - her opening and closing line heing. "Let being, them eat cake," the when mob claimed it had no bread. Shakespeare

Harry Hershfield

knew his politics when he had one of his characters cry: "Invest me in my motley, give me leave to speak my mind." The jester speaks speak my mind." The jester speaks the truth. And none know it better than the smart politicians of today. As did the Chinese, when they said: "One picture is worth 100,000 words." And today's can-didate knows that an apropos gag which is but an illustration) will put his point over better than all the spellbinding of a whole campaign.

Abraham Lincoln, though not the first to employ that formula, was the most active in clinching an argument with an exemplifica-I think it was some later tion. President who started his stuff with, "A funny thing happened to me on my way to the White House" -though funnier things happened after they got in there. Some of our leading political figures have their personal pressagents, many call on leading comedians, as well as gag writers, to supply "boffo" wisecracks to alleviate a situation. The smart ones, however, know that the best nifty means nothing unless tied up to subject matter that makes headlines. Adlai Stevenson is presently the quoted boy. Harry Truman knows when to spring a punchline. Second to none, is an experienced youngster named Winston Churchill. How many of the space-getting "ad libs" are rehearsed is a moot question. It is claimed that some have arranged for world-shaking events

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Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

**PICTURES** 

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135 BLOCKBUSTERS: \$311,950,000 Exhib's First Question, 'Who's in It?' AS AGAINST 119 N Changing Standards Instead of Co-oping on 'New Faces'

### By EDMUND GRAINGER

Hollywood. I think it was Rabelais who said "It is wise to get knowledge from every source—from a sot, a pot, a fool, a winter-mitten, or an old slipper."



Eddie Grainger

in all creative fields as well as in the acting ranks. I believe the industry is suf-fering some of the effects of this oversight right now.

In the development of "new faces," however, the exhibitor faces," however, the exhibitor must share some of the responsi-bility with the producer. Every film salesman knows that an ex-hibitor's first question is "Who's in it?" The picture might have half a dozen of the most promising new players in Hollywood heading the cast, but an exhibitor favors a film with one long established star name (perhaps too long estab-lished), even if the no-star film is much the better of the two.

Showmen are just as capable as producers in spotting new talent and potential stars. So when the producer gambles time and money on the development of new per-sonalities, it should not be asking too much to expect the exhibitor to back him up with intelligent sonalities in his local situation.

There are considerably less than a dozen stars big enough to carry a picture to boxoffice success today. It stands to reason that even one of these stars can't be in *every* picture. The star system will always be with us, but today the public is demanding more than just a star name. It has tired of many promotion of interesting new perof the old favorites and it has be-come highly critical. A good star (Continued on page 48)



### By ARTHUR B. KRIM (President, United Artists Corp.)

There is, of course, a complex of factors underlying United Artists' ability to grow, to alter, and to prosper through 35 years, both lush and lean. One key to the company's hardihood certainly lies in the special virtues of indepen-dent films-benefits which extend to producer, distributor, exhibitor and public alike. The unique advantages of inde-

### **Col to Finance, Release** Hollywood.

Warwick Productions which re-I don't know cently completed three Alan Ladd into just which starrers abroad, closed a deal to make three more features to be of those categories a profinanced and released by Columbia. Starter will be "Cockleshell Heroes," based on a yarn by George Kent and slated for filmducer fits. However, I have always felt that ing in England and France. Next will be "Prize of Gold," a novel by Max Catto, with lensing in Eng-Hollywood has treated too lightly the de-velopment of land and Germany. Third will be announced later. new talent ----

# **Foreign Films Catering More** To U. S. Taste

#### **By FRED HIFT**

Combination of audience resistance, television and lack of outstanding productions has made 1953 an unexciting year for the indies handling foreign language films. A few of them, like "Seven Deadly Sins." "Rome 11 O'Clock" and "Forbidden Games," did well in spots but certainly didn't pull this branch of the industry out of the mit it's hear in for the post the rut it's been in for the past couple of years.

Indie distribs are taking this dull performance in their stride. At the same time, they're more than intrigued by the potential expan-sion of their market via dubbing which has provided a distinct boost for a couple of Italo imports such as Italian Films Export's "Anna."

What's worrying them more than the obvious difficulty of get-ting their "intellectual" audience backbone to come back to the thea-tres is the lack of suitable product emanating from the European studios which are going full-blast. Italo producers, they maintain, now have their eye on the American mass market and what they conceive to be its tastes. This is resulting in a rash of "big" pictures that also lend themselves to dubbing and in a lesser number of the more sensitive films which were a postwar specialty from Rome and which delighted artie

"They're now trying to emulate the American ways of exploiting their imports," i.e. sex 'em up, says Noel Meadow, vet importer-distrib. He called '53 the worst year for foreign films in the U.S. since the late forties and said television was part of the reason for the slump.

Arthur Davis, who specializes in French films and whose "Seven ity can frequently do very well, Deadly Sins" has been a limited even without the impetus of a star pendent production are evident in hit (it's on the Legion of Decency's the first creative phase of a pic-

'52: \$253,510,000 **By GENE ARNEEL** 

The big pix of 1953 came really 3 More Warwick Pix kingsize; it was a year of boxoffice blockbusters.

Blue chip productions — those grossing \$1.000,000 or over in U. S. and Canadian rentals-numbered 135 and they're ringing up a com-bined estimated total of \$311,950,-000. In 1952, 119 films in the \$1,-000.000-and-above category were listed at \$253,510,000.

Money in the till gain for '53: \$58,440,000.

Major studios pounced on bigness in production as though it were just invented. At 20th-Fox, it was, and with unprecedented payoff. First in 20th's Cinema-Scope process, "The Robe," fits head and shoulders above any new picture entry down through the years in terms of income. "Robe" is the colossal smash of

1953, with a potential gross of \$20,-30,000,000. There's no "look to the past to predict the future' basis upon which a more precise estimate can be made. That the film will reach \$20,000,000 appears a certainty. Some execs at 20th (and a few at rival distribution organizations) seem confident that the pic will reach \$30,000,000. \$12,500,000 for Col's

Flattie, 'Eternity' Sharply contrasted in production technique is No. 2 in the pa-rade of clicks: Columbia's "From Here to Elernity." Without any anamorphic squeezeplay in the lensing, and framed conventionally

(Continued on page 66)

## INDIE PROD. ON **STARS VERSUS OFFBEAT PIX**

#### By HAL B. WALLIS

Hollywood. As long as there is a picture in-dustry, "stars" will be important. Unfortunately, stars no longer aumatically insure the success of a

picture, but in combination with a proper story and pro-duction, a star or group of stars greatly enhanced the earning potential.

On the oth-er hand, pic-tures with an offbeat and different qual-

name. A case in point is our "Cease Fire," produced in Korea in 3-D without a single recogniz-

# **Always Pix Biz Hypo By SPYROS P. SKOURAS**

### **Peck-Parrish Indie Buys** Lea's 'Wonderful Country'

Hollywood. New indie film producing company has been organized by Gregory Peck and Robert Parrish to start operations in Mexico early in 1955. First production will be "The Wonderful Country," based 1955.

on a novel by Tom Lea. Before he goes into production, Peck has commitments to star in "The Purple Plain" in Ceylon, "Moby Dick" in England and the first of a five-picture deal with 20th-Fox in Hollywood.

**Radio-TV Fluffs Get Saltier And More Harrowing** 

### By JO RANSON

This was an infinitely more harrowing year for the radio and television cacoepists.

performers because Largely opened their big mouths and struck out metathetically, a leering pub-lic most impure in spirit and mind, gave them a jumbo horse laugh.

This year's tongue slips, boners, booboos, fluffs and snafus were rated bigger and better, saltier and saucier. Up and down AM and TV trails many a pear-shaped vowel-performer tripped on his scrotal tongue and quickly landed on the fuff hit parade. A hole in the head, in some instances, would have been the lesser of two evils. Fluffers do not subscribe to the Latin dictum, Vox audita perit lit-tera scripta manet (the spoken word dies, the written letter re-mains). For them this old Latin saw has a hollow ring. The unlucky ones who transpose

letters or syllables or who mala-prop their way on the airlanes know durn well that the spoken word is never forgotten and they know that on the morrow their colleagues also can be the victims of this tongue-tripping torture. No one, it seems, is immune. It hap-pens to the star in Radio City, New York, and it happens to the lowly announcer in Split Infinitive, Iowa,

In communications history 1953 will go down as the year in which a goodly number of earthy, fourletter, Anglo-Saxon words bounced off the tongues of those facing live, and sometimes supposedly dead, microphones. The grand prize for the fall and winter semester must naturally go to the alto-gether uninhibited radio announcer on the Washington station who, during one of Fulton Lewis Jr.'s broadcasts over the Mutual Broadcasting System, rudely uttered a iaught exclamation that

Through the years the motion picture industry has been distinc-tive among American businesses for its ability to recognize and most constant. meet constant-

ly changing standards in the public de-mand for its

product. In my own opinion, the record of the motion picture industry has proven over and over



again its capacity for Spyros Skouras sensing and responding to higher requirements of popular taste in both artistic and technical ways.

Each time there has been a major shift in public taste, such as when sound was introduced, the adjustments necessary have been in some degree painful but our industry has been able to take a long-range view and accept the im-mediate burdens imposed for the sake of the general welfare and advancement.

In the period just ahead, I believe that not only the production branch of our industry but the exhibition branch will face a challenge such as they have never had before in providing screen enter-tainment that will have unquestioned merit and will be equal to the task of overcoming all com-petition for the entertainment dollar, especially that of television in the home.

While it is understandable that some theatre owners are hesitant about making new investments in equipment just as some producers have wavered about entering new types of production, I cannot em-(Continued on page 65)

### **U.S. Films Pace Scot Boxoffice**

#### Glasgow.

1/6

U. S. films remain top favorites at cinemas here. First place at the Odeon, downtown ace house here, was gained by "Call Me Madam" (20th) with top gross. Next in popu-larity with the patrons were "Snows of Kilimanjaro" (20th) and "The Red Beret".

"House of Wax" (WB) held lead-ing position at the Associated British Cinemas key house, the Regal, followed by "April in Paris" (M-G) and "Julius Caesar" (M-G). 'Road to Bali" (Par) gained second spot at the Gaumont, beaten by the Coronation pic "A Queen Is Crowned." "Shane" (Par) was third.

Other favorites boxoffice-wise at key theatres were "Military Police-man" (Par), "War of Worlds" might (Par), "Because You're Mine"



Hal Wallis

rein in his choice of material. He is never saddled with a prefabri-Hayes-Healy's CBS Pact, cated project that may or may not be right up his alley. He selects and develops a story with which he is intimately concerned and which he is ideally equipped to handle. have been signed by CBS for a longterm radio-TV pact understood to be minimum five years and call-

When the independent producer has chosen his project, he mounts it without constraint or hindrance. There are no studio taboos or ices of Hayes. Male part of the Mr. preferences to be juggled, no in-hibiting conflict with the judgment of studio heads. The picture is his and his creative capacities are untrammeled.

The profit motive is naturally as a flock of shows on the web and ex-important to the independent as tricated himself from the subbing to the studio producer. But operating within the same necessity of of his pact in motion by stepping at 36. making a paying picture, the in- in for Godfrey at the tailend of Said dependent is free to improvise and explore. In the absence of a fixed his troupe were appearing at studio policy, he can develop new ideas. And in the absence of suitable ideas, he is not goaded into

(Continued on page 48)

(Continued on page 48)

He to Pinchhit Godfrey

Peter Lind Hayes & Mary Healy

ing also for the individual serv-

when Robert Q. Lewis got himself

chore. Hayes already put this part

in for Godfrey at the tailend of last week when the headman and

Hayes & Healy will be formatted

Thule Air Base in Greenland.

able face (as a matter of fact, every player in the picture was an actual GI).

However, exhibitors do not do enough to promote "new faces." Clamor as they do for new fresh tal-

(Continued on page 48)

### Award to Elmer Davis

U. S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, winner of the award last year, did the honors for the Authors Guild last week in handing the Lauterbach Award for 1953 to Elmer Davis. This is named for late Richard Lauterbach, war correspondent who died of polio

Said Douglas of Davis: "He risked the hysteria and passion of the day by speaking on the unpopular side of important issues" Hayes & Healy will be formatted in a nighttime stanza early this year. . . . in a dark day of intolerance he spoke for the bright conscience of America."

(MG) (Continued on page 66) and "Quo Vadis" (M-G).

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A WRITER'S WRITERS STORY (Or Blankety-Blank the Critics) =By WILLIAM SAROYAN

The way writers get their work done has always been fascinating.

Take myself, for instance.

"There is a fine story in the way a writer gets his work done," I say to the wall when

I get up in the morning. This seems a reasonable thought. Writers are such interesting fel-

humorous and yet seriouslows, minded, and often interested in humanity. Also, they travel farther than other

professional men, excepting profes-sional men who travel to Arabia. Women make a fuss over them, and generally speaking they are a jaunty

**Bill Saroyan** 

lot. Why shouldn't a story about the way one of them gets his work done

be just the thing for the Woman's Home Companion? Unfortunately, however, this early morning thinking has been going on by itself, and I have been a little suspicious

of it. No. What I want is not a story about a writer but a story about somebody else, a man of 88, for instance. "Look over there," he says. "There's that woman again,

sweeping off her porch. She doesn't know how to hold a broom. She might have been hitched to a cart in the old days. Still, 20 or 30 years ago I might have stopped at her gate and tipped my hat, hoping something might come of it."

But the old man won't do, either, for I can't think of a good name for him, or whether he traveled.

I wonder, then, if the story oughtn't to be about a new life instead of an old one. An infant, three hours old, for instance.

What I want to say about him is that he is quite sound and will live 51 years. How do I know?

I don't, but a writer is permitted to say such things. It's something nobody complains about. If I were to say he is to live four days nobody would complain about that, either, but it happens that I feel he ought to live 51 years. That is no longer a great number of years for any man to live, so I do not feel I am exaggerating things.

And, of course, the infant will receive the usual honors of a faithful employee: that is to say, a letter from the assistant manager which says in an apparently sincere manner that he, the assistant manager, would not have been a real executive had he not noticed over the 30 years of Arthur's employment that apart from the fact that Arthur had never behaved mischieviously insofar as company interests were concerned, Arthur had also worked hard and cheerfully.

#### **On Another Tack**

I thought Arthur would be a rather impressive name for the infant.

But the thing I really wanted to do was to see if I could convey a sense of life through the infant, for almost anybody can say something about a delivery clerk.

In short, I thought that if I could make the aliveness of a new man real, the critics would have to think twice about me.

That is the plague of a writer's life.

Critics will not think twice about him. They will think once and hurry back to the writers of a hundred years ago who knew what they were doing. They will say things that do not do a writer's dignity very much good. If they would think twice about the man, they would know that he is not such a bad sort, after all.

But just thinking about the critics annoys me, and instead of trying to make Arthur immortal, I let him perish.

In the meantime, my thinking has moved quickly, and I have imagined what I would write about Arthur, and how hopeful I would be that it would make the critics think twice, and then, no, they have not done so, they have thought only once again, and their opinion is that Arthur is boring.

One of them (a well-bred man with a college back ground, both as a student and as a teacher of English) quotes from the book without comment, and somehow this pains me more than anything else.

The quotation falls flat, as the critic meant it to, and the words I thought were so meaningful when I wrote them seem preposterous and silly. What the devil did I mean?

I must confess the critics scare me, and haunt my sleep. would do better, I know, if they would only think twice

If they would think three times I might write something astonishing. (But the mere thought of the critic who has always written so coldly about my writing has finished

other weapon with which to defend South Africa, he holds in his hand a stone weighing one pound, two ounces. What he means to do is to smite Joseph (Swigley) on the head.

Joseph strides fearlessly forward, for he disdains horses. (Actually he is afraid of them and has developed a whole philosophy based on the superiority of conquest on foot.) The fanatical South African is ready for him, and at

the proper moment leaps up and casts the stone. Fortunately, it misses the mark, does not catch Joseph

in the mouth, but pushes into the pit of his stomach.

Now, how was Joseph to have known there would be a South African fanatic behind that bush?

It was an accident, pure and simple. But the damage The blow has hurt Joseph, and he has sat down is done. in front of his troops and is crying.

Well, there it is. A man never knows what sort of accident is likely to humiliate him if he thinks of being a conqueror, and so Joseph, at 30, gave it up.

But he did feel that he should have gone ahead with his ambition to be a pianist, and so he is unhappy, and having the appropriate clothing doesn't comfort him.

Well, there was certainly a little something to this idea, too, but I couldn't quite take to it, for to be perfectly honest I didn't like the man-him and his thoughts of playing the piano both.

All of this thinking, this preparing to get to work, has taken the time it takes to smoke a cigaret, and yet I have already begun to feel that the day is lost, for I cannot decide who to tell my story about.

I might have written something quite good about the 88-year-old man, and come to think of it why couldn't I have called him Stephen Alcott? That's quite a good name.

I might also have hit upon some clever thoughts about how he had managed to stay alive so long. There might even have been a word or two about patriotism, for he wore a small flag in his lapel. A Belgian flag to be sure, although he was not a Belgian, but he always remarked to those who noticed that the flag was a Belgian one, "Don't let the flag fool you, sonny, I love this country.

If I had had any luck at all I might even have got in a few good licks about life insurance, pointing out that in most cases it is not necessary, or on the other hand that it is generally a blessing, for had not Mr. Alcott taken out the proper policy when he was 20 he could not in his old age receive in the mail on the first of each and every month his check for \$55, rain or shine.

In short, had I not been so eager to make a better impression on the critics and gone ahead with the story of the old man, I might have done all right.

And if the worst came to the worst I might have written a good story about Arthur the infant, too.

In other words, the critics. What good are they? Don't they spoil things? Don't they stop a man in his tracks? Don't they scare him half to death with their clever way of putting things to make a fellow feel small?

And yet where is the critic who, in a showdown, could give us the pleasure the writing fellows give us? Where is the critic who could get down off his high-horse and tell a little story that could make an unhappy man smile and say to himself, "Well, now. living's not so bad, after all. There's these writing fellows to cheer a man up once in a while."

How about that?

### A Thorn By Any Other Name

### = By ARTHUR (OOPS!) KOBER

It isn't exactly a gripe, and I wouldn't be too disturbed about what I'm going to say, if I were you. I mean, it's something that bothers me from time to time. I mean, I don't lose any sleep over it, see, and I can think of many other things if I would just set my mind to thinking of many other things. That's my trouble, though. My mind insists on clinging to this one thought. Well, I might as well stop acting like someone writing at space rates and come directly to the point, which is this: who the hell is the guy in Hollywood (I'm sure he works for Universal Pictures since that studio is the chief offender) who is naming our movie heroes these days, and what in heaven's name is the reason for his intense preoccupation with verbs?

Now in my time our movie heroes had simple first There was a pleasant, monosyllabic name like names. John-Barrymore and Gilbert; a name like Richard-Barthelmess and Dix; like William-Farnum and S. Hart; Tim-Moore and Mix. Occasionally we'd have a film star with an exotic first handle-Rudolph, Adolphe, Ramonbut these were appelations which went hand-in-hand with the well-upholstered costumes and uniforms they wore. (A name, incidentally, which seemed most felicitous for the evil roles he played was that of Gustave von Seyffertitz, my favorite screen villain.)

### Westward-Or Is It Eastward-Ho? **By KEN ENGLUND**

Let's begin with a story you might have heard that is probably apocryphal: Two writers-one driving from New York to Hollywood, the other bound in the opposite direction—pass each other in the desert and both simulta-neously yell: "Go back!" Which gets me neatly into the

theme of this monograph-namely the problems writers face in straddling both coasts—even people like Bob Sherwood, no matter how long his legs Take any show business nomad, any

writing Arab who must fold up his tert and move from one market place to the other to sell his wares-(Men! Send for my free booklet entitled "How I, a writing weakling, learned to coin colorful metaphors overnight

Ken Englund

Ken Englund and increased my word power ten-fold." Mailed to you in a plain wrapper)... take me for example. Because I'm the handiest—Right now I am the sole support of two warehouses—Bekins Storage in Los Angeles and Hollanders in New York. I have visitation rights to some 40 packing cases on both coasts, bulging with duplicate complete sets of Zane Grey, four copies of "Why Not Try God?" by Mary Pickford lying unused in Bekins, and two identical mint copies here in Hollanders, with equal and exasperating duplication all down the line, Edith Sitwell records and Woolworth China accumulating at a frightening rate each time I shuttle across the country and set up a temporary hot plate kind of housekeeping.

And so the tides of fortune have filled my crates to overflowing with identical flotsam and jetsam. On that great come-and-get-it day, I will be able to furnish a 28-room house with coffeepots alone—six Silexes to a room.

But this is the least of a wandering minstrel's problem. The hearth and fireside can be dismantled and packed away, not so the family. Just when The Little Woman is making a wonderful adjustment, with the help of a Westwood phychiatrist, to the rules of conduct in her Hollywood milieu-women at one side of the room, men at the other at parties, purple slacks with mink jacket at the Farmer's Market-she is cruelly uprooted and tossed into a New York cocktail party where the men talk to the women, and finds herself having lunch with females who wear hats, skirts, stockings and leather shoes. She to her mortification the only one with straw wedgies. Naturally, the blows to the ego lay her low—this time on the couch of a Park Avenue Freud.

#### Then There Are the Kids

But it is the children who really suffer. The Ford convertible with the twin pipes must be sold along with the entire wardrobe of T-shirts and corduroys, all traded for a baffling world of subways, shirts and neckties. And the straight-A student at Hollywood High winds up one cruel morning to find a demoralizing series of C's on the Eastern report card.

Is all this suffering necessary? At a recent writers' seminar organized to look into the problem, it was agreed that it was not. All heartily endorsed a suggestion for a practical workable plan that would eliminate the uprooting of wives and kids if it works a hardship. The plan, in principal, is to be a simple matter of temporarily trad-ing roofs, wives and children-the Eastern playwright bound for a short stint at Paramount, moving neatly and without fuss into the Bel Air nest of the film writer bound for Eastern TV, who would even-Steven settle in the apartment and family circle of his opposite number. The trading post to be the Author's League Journal and the Personal Column.

The ads would perhaps read:

AUTHOR LEAVING HOLLYWOOD TEMPO-RARILY FOR N. Y. TV, Will swap 6-acre estate, "Snug Haven," complete with championship size pool and young, lovely wife. She is my third and must really be seen to be appreciated, measuring 36-22-36. Good cook too Quit children Citl (6) helpful Good cook, too. Quiet children. Girl (6) helpful, having been trained to use electric pencil sharpener. Boy (9) will wash Cadillac on Saturday for weekly \$12 allowance—answer to Dusty and Rory. What am I offered?—East 60s or Park Avenue preferred. Like Eastern temporary wife to be good mixer but plain type who will encourage me in my work, or

SACRIFICE: The heartbreaking kind. Forced to nove West due to untimely sale of novel. "Burning move West due to untimely sale of novel, "Burning Lips and Napoleon Brandy," to MGM, with screen-play assignment making it necessary for me to give up but try to realize something of the investment I have made in promising young dancer in "Kismet." Already in for \$1,823.67 in preliminary entertainment at 21, Sardi's. the Copa, including gifts. Just try to improve on this one, a real beauty and like newneeds home with someone who appreciates fine pieces. I'd rather keen myself and move her West than let someone have her who wouldn't be good to her. Who has Culver City starlet for quick trade? And later turnover.



Arthur for me, and for the world.)

Fortunately, there are other people to think about, and I find that I am thinking about a man who is wretchedly unhappy because, although he is gainfully employed and has appropriate clothing for all ordinary occasions, feel that he should have stuck to his boyhood ambition to be a pianist.

He had had other ambitions as well, but they had been wild, and he had had intelligence enough, after he was 30, to recognize them as such. It was quite unlikely, he began to feel at 30, for in-

stance, that he would ever lead the men who would conquer South Africa, for if the truth were known he did not know where the men were and was not sure that he might not meet with some sort of accidental embarrassment at the time of the leading.

For instance, a man has worked hard for 39 years to achieve something extraordinary and impressive, like the conquering of South Africa, and finally he is leading his men to the moment of glory, charging ahead.

Behind a very small bush, however, lurks an African. The bush is so low as to seem incapable of concealing

a human being, but alas the lurking man is small.

And he is concealed, look at it any way you like.

He is watching Joseph with small ugly eyes, for he loves South Africa, and altogether on his own, not even assigned to the awful task by the proper authorities, he has taken his place behind the small bush; and having no The tendency toward action in given names was first detected by me in the early '30s when I was a writer in Hollywood (and you were a Christian slave!) I recall, when "The Thin Man" was first produced, that the executive in charge of the picture was Hunt Stromberg, a name that fairly screamed for an exclamation point, a monicker that would most certainly have increased the circulation of any tabloid printing it across its front page! This film, by the way, was based upon a book written by a writer whose first name, properly shortened, sounds like a terribly tempered preacher uttering a mild expletive: "Dash Hammett!"

Today, however, there is action the moment the movie hero's name is flashed upon the screen. Who, among the sedentary customers in a picture house, isn't tempted to get on his mark, get ready, and fairly fly out of the theatre at the sight of the name, Race Gentry? And who among us is so hard-hearted as to resist the temptation to reach out, and chant a soft lullaby to Rock Hudson? (Rock Hudson, a chip off old Boulder Hudson!)

Oh, the mystique in the name of Touch Connors. How often I've wanted to seek him out and to comply with the request his name makes by touching Mr. Connors with the baseball bat which, in my fantasy, I have firmly gripped in my hands!

I, my friends, am a timid soul. queasy at the simple act of opening a blister. And yet, I am courage itself

Let me hear what my readers think. If you only knew how much your letters mean to me.

In summing up, which I suppose I must do-actually I'd rather just lie down now because I have a slight headache-but in looking the problem square in the face. I'd say the old advice still holds true, only now it works both ways—and that is—"Don't take anyone to either coast you can't put on the Chief."

about yielding to the appeal implicit in the name of Lance Fuller, something to the appear implicit in the name of Lance Fuller, something I would most gladly do, preferably with a well-honed spear! And one other thing: if I had the lungs of a lion, what fun it would be for me to roar into Rory Calhoun's ears! Oh, that delicious and wonderful sound of eardrums bursting in air!

As a final note, I intend to give up my London living quarters, located in Kidding-on-the-Square, and perch my house right on top of Universal's new leading man, Craig Hill! (I don't think I'll bother repairing the plumbing.)

As I said before, this isn't exactly a gripe. I call it more of a question: who the heck is the guy in Hollywood who is naming these new movie heroes? Chuck Cupp?

# **Exhibitor Consensus Is For A Stepped-Up Flow Of Product: Want Quality But Also Quantity**

Unmistakable Cross-Section of Theatre Owners' Thinking Is That Technological Progress Is All Right, And 'Quality' Should Always Be The Keynote, But That Going-To-The-Movies Is A Mass Habit And It's Economic Suicide For the Industry To Curb That Habit

40-60% Terms No Incentive To Exhib Showmanship

> **By BENJAMIN BERGER** (Pres. North Central Allied)

> > A Mass, Not A Class Business

The motion picture business is

still a great business and is mass entertainment. The present sales

policy is diverting the business into

class entertainment which will ul-timately be the destruction of our

business. Theatre-going is a habit,

and the way to keep the public in

the habit is to show every big pic-

ture in every theatre in the land and for the exhibitors to shout

from the housetops. Under the present sales policy, some of the top pictures do not show in thou-

sands of theatres. In many com-munities where the pictures do show, they are not properly adver-

tised, due to the straightjacket in

which the exhibitor is placed. Pic-tures such as "The Greatest Show on Earth" should show in every

community and in every suburban

theatre with the greatest of adver-

tising campaigns, not only for the

good of that picture but also to

that picture and similar attractions. Distributor leaders must re-ex-

amine this business, instead of

looking for miracles and they must get back to the original philoso-phy which made this business great, and give the exhibitor an

Boxoffice receipts should be

climbing due to the better pictures

which are being produced, pros-perous times, and the population

increase. If every good picture was shown in every theatre in the country, with an incentive plan, our business would skyrocket—

Several thousand theatres have

gone on the rocks in the last few

years. Several thousand more are

on the verge. Some smalltown the-

These communities will not stand

television or no television.

showing

sands of theatres from

incentive.

smart go-getting showmanship, so Minneapolis.

Ing stock of our business. The mo- out by some of those overly smart ous body against the walls of indetion picture business started some mathematicians. 50 years ago at the very, very bottom with the nickelodeon. A short while later stores were being converted into theatres. Still later natural evolution brought the motion picture theatre palaces into be-At the beginning the exhibitor was ashamed to mention that he was a theatreowner, but— he later became very proud of the business. and it was accepted as a dignified and very important in-dustry. The public has come to regard exhibitors and people associated with the motion picture business as a very fine outstanding, respected group of people—and much envied!

All of this has come about because theatres made money and the reason they made money during this entire period was an incentive sales policy under which the exhibitors purchased pictures at a flat price. That made it pos-sible to put showmanship behind keep the people in the motion pic-ture habit. The present "must" 50% sales policy has stopped thouthe pictures with resulting bulging coffers. At the time when the exhibitors were making money, everybody connected with the industry was very prosperous.

The drop-off in theatre receipts has not been entirely due to television. It was due to some genius in the industry getting the idea of selling pictures on percentage. It began in the late '30s. When the distributors' representatives began insisting on selling pictures on percentage, or on a guarantee against percentage, the salesman and his manager were possibly not aware of the premeditated plan which some of these "geniuses" in New York had devised. The plan was for the sales force to sell pictures with a guarantee against percent-age. The exhibitor was advised that New York insisted on the guarantee — that the guarantee was all they wanted and "nobody is going to check anyhow."

But in a few years the distribu-tors hired a Sargoy & Stein agency to check the exhibitors' records and collect the difference, and then some. The exhibitors did not learn to until the early '40s. When the exhibitors got wise, they imme-diately clamped down on advertisfor being gouged and they will appeal to the state and Federal government for help. This will definitely lead to making the mo-tion picture industry subject to public utility regulation. The peoing top motion pictures. That was the beginning of the downfall of our business. The theatre business then went along pretty well for several years thereafter due to the war and an unusual prosperity. war and an unusual prosperity. When that leveled off, the pinch began and the whole blame was placed on television. While TV is a competitor, television is not the 100% bugaboo. The blame must be placed on the present philosophy of selling pictures to theatre owners without an incentive. The smart distributors are aware that the theatres are not anxious to spend extra advertising money to do a large business on pictures where they must pay the distributor 40, 50 or 60%, thereby establishing a new yardstick for future pictures. The distributors know that many theatres showing a percentage picture advertise a flat "coming" picture on the canprice opy. Many theatres turn off their canopy lights at 9 o'clock when playing a percentage picture. Small and suburban theatres can't possibly pay 40 or 50% for pictures with the present high cost of op-eration. This sales policy is cre-and dignified business in which the ating a creeping paralysis in this exhibitor had a stake and an inbusiness. All the romance and centive.



of Oklahoma)

Oklahoma City. Once again our great industry I wish to take this means of tak- vital in this business, was knocked is floundering, lashing its pondercision. New techniques, their value still too new to be determined. with their prohibitive costs and varied claims to public appeal combined with an economic de-cline, particularly effecting small-or theatre owners — really have us at the crossroads.

For the class houses the prob-les is less one of finance than of supply. Still, to date, nothing has been offered that affords definite promise that the elusive something that will really bring the public back to the boxoffices has been discovered.

Oldtimers recall the passing of the legitimate stage and the subsequent demise of vaudeville. Then came silent pictures and their complete capitulation to the voice of Al Jolson and his contemporaries-down to the marvelous spec-tacles and color productions of our

day. The advent of sound provided the same indecisions as exist now. The expense was prohibitive to a great segment of theatre owners but time and science worked out the problems so that business again cospered. pı

Until recently, despite an unrea-sonable and exorbitant Federal admission tax, things held together quite well-but during this time there occurred other changes, such as price increases, over-emphasis on "class" production, with the consequent loss of popular mass appeal. Television, once feared and now being tested by us to cushion its own impact, can well become an ally instead of a destructive thing. It has many problems of its (Continued on page 63)

### **Gimmicks Not Enough; Also Give Branch Mgrs. More Say**

(Theatre Circuit and TV Operator)

Miami.

tion)

, they can be afforded; other thea-

"Steady flow of product" puts reverse English on the business of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. If the goose (produc-not cease to be the "p The motion picture better had not cease to be the "poor man's doesn't entertainment." I've got a hunch coming that the public is beginning to up with a sufthink a roadshow engagement is so named because it was arranged by highwaymen. To maintain a sufficient quantity of theatregoers (fans) we've got to keep the public pretty confident that if they've got two bucks in their pockets it's safe to ask the girl friend to a show and a box of popcorn. If he has to phone the theatre and ask every time we'll soon find him turning a TV channel selector instead of

When all the bugs are out of the process I imagine that most every picture would be enhanced by CinemaScope but good old 2-D cannot be ignored for a long time to come—we want the little exhibitor in Hahira, Ga., and his public to continue to help pay some of the production costs.

The industry is always at a stage where definite standards are desirable, but at this point the industry has progressed to a stage where one definite standard is economically impossible. For a time, until mass production brings Cinema-Scope-like equipment down to a price the small exhibitors can pay, we'll have to have conventional motion pictures while the more favored theatres experiment with the new dimensions and effects until the better new process is found and standardized.

Third dimension will boost the boxoffice take of certain pictures adapted to the use of 3-D from time to time, provided the quality of the picture is good in the first place. The boxoffice of the few good 3-D pictures so far has suffered because the early pictures in 3-D had only that novelty and little elsc. But while the public might go for 3-D once in a while I do not believe that there will be the state believe that they will put up with wearing glasses for every show. Let's face it—the future of 3-D depends on public acceptance and for intermissions, the public doesn't care if it takes four pro-jectors. Some good pictures will benefit from 3-D, preferably in a single-projector system mostly for the convenience and entire for the the convenience and saving for the exhibitor.

Quality should always be shot for, but we've got to have suffi-cient new pictures to keep those who have the movie habit coming to the theatres new for a month we might create a lot of new baseball fans.



will have to be other producers or a major percentage of theatres will be forced to close. And, if it be-When all the bugs a comes necessary for some exhibitors to engage in some sort of production, I think ways will be found to make it legal with Uncle Sam.

Fewer but bigger pictures can't keep theatres going. Under the system by which we must do business today there are not enough pictures even now to serve the theatres well. We all like to have a real whopping show once in a while but there should also be a constant flow of good pictures to keep the movie fan happy and the theatres going

We're not the public's only form of convenient entertainment any more and most of the theatres that have no thought of putting stereo sound and large screens still need improved standard equipment and properties to woo the public eye. We've got competition and we've got to compete, and be the best. Fancy sound and all-purpose screens should be installed where

### **NOT TELLING - JUST ASKING** By R. B. WILBY

Atlanta.

Are we now bent on becoming a highly specialized, class businessatres are being taken over by the community, as they do not wish to roadshow business? What is there see their Main Street darkened. If in the record of roadshows (sosomething is not done very quickly called legit) that leads one to point along the path traveled by them and to say: "There is industry sal-vation." to keep the exhibitors in business. there will be many more theatres taken over by the communities.

Even if that is the only means by which one can make \$2-\$4,000,-000 pictures or pay actors a quar-ter of a million for eight weeks' work, but doesn't that mean ignoring a good part of a 55,000.000 regulation. The peo-lalltowns resent not to the theatres, including the philosophy that the philosophy the philosophy that the philosophy the philosophy the philosophy that the philosophy the phi

And some 3-D. And some advanced admission spectacles. But should these not be built upon the foundation of a popular amusement? Would it seem necessary to go so whole hog for them that the driveins with their family appeal and the small town theatres with their need of three or more programs a week should be murdered in the process?

Might it be that the success of those things is due to the fact that they are exceptional—like a World Series or a Bowl game? But which one is exceptional when you get a

Mitch Wolfson a steady flow of product then there

tion pictures. price, they don't have to buy the picture" must be altered. Advanced admission prices in suburban theatres and small towns, with a rare exception, tend to take picture entertainment away from the masses, divert it to the classes and destroy the whole fabric of our business.

It is not too late for the distributors to take stock of themselves and of the business and see to it that the small towns and suburban theatres get all the top pictures on a decent price policy with an in-centive. Unless this is done very quickly, and if there would be any slide in general business, I am sorry to say that we will see theatres dying like flies.

Let's go back to the original policy of selling pictures which

some of the distributors have that "if the exhibitors cannot pay the wood? Or in distribution? wood? Or in distribution?

> and to get ever-increasing prices for its product? Hasn't the path of financial success usually been quite along the other line? Everybody knows this business is different, but if we make it different enough will we not get like grand opera, if we can get a tax free position and a subsidy?

Of course some big pictures at advanced admission prices do fantastically well. But do they do fantastically well because they are getting all of the advantages of a going and popular business? Is there any more logic in the industry going exclusively that way than there would be in the old gag about a diet solely of caviar?

mission prices if we can only prowood? Or in distribution? Can one think of any other in-dustry in America which has undertaken to contract its market duce \$2,000,000 attractions, and if hundred thousand or more for eight weeks' work. But hasn't Universal pretty well proven that there are profits also along a different line—profits which will cease to exist if that market is starved out by too little product for its maintenance?

Of course one can say that the pendulum will swing back, and surely it will. But can it make the return swing if, in the meanwhile, so much of the present plant and present market is destroyed? Would that plant be rebuilt and the market be easily reestablished? Are better than a billion dollars worth of plant and a market of 55,000.000 or so customers a week to be thrown away idly?

Are we maybe going to lose it to It would seem that some Cinema-Scope is good. Cineramas, too, where the market will support it. wouldn't that be damn cowardly? But

Any saving that the producersdistributors can effect and pass on to exhibitors would be a welcome move if the reduction in releases gets too sharp there will be a reduction in the number of theatres for the exchanges to ship to. We are competing with infinite variety so we'd better dish out some ourselves.

If they can get product many theatres will stay open and continue to serve the public. This will necessarily be a theatre-by-theatre decision with many factors involved: economic conditions; population shifts; obsolescence; and product, product, product.

I don't favor a smaller industry but it is very apt to shrink for a while at least. Lifting a punitive excise legislation will alleviate it

## Showman Sees Tomorrow's Cinemas **Including Sports, Legit and Opera Via Closed-Circuit Theatre TV**

### By S. H. FABIAN

What's ahead for exhibition? for stage and stadium, and as a Can we count on a real future for focus for special audience attracthe theatre end of our industry.

of new media and new equipment to a million-instead of confining are trying to forecast the theatre of tomorrow in order to risk a considerable investment today.

future, an exciting future, a future with new theatre policies, new entertainment on our screens-with a wider service to more kinds of audiences than we have ever had in the past.

The basic elements of exhibition remain the same; the camera, the projection, the screen, sound, and a comfortable theatre seat.

Even Cinerama, which is not merely a modification of existing process out an entirely new method of shooting and showing motion pctures-a whole series of integrated inventions-is based upon the same funadmentals as the original flickers.

Whether we use film or tape what we all know needs to be repeated-that no entertainment can survive on the strength of mechanical ingenuity alone, no matter how wide the screen or how stereophonic the sound or how dimensional the picture.

Entertainment is a medium of human communications: what it says is more important than how it says it. Having made this point, I think all can agree that the current "technical revolution" is more than shot in the arm, that entertainment has been enhanced by 3-D and Cinemascope, that Cinera-ma has added a plus factor never experienced-the before feeling of audience participation.

It's now up to the creative minds, who hold the fate of the industry in their hands, to use these new media and process to the best advantage in each method. Then we can be certain that this technical inoculation is not a temporary pick-me-up, but an added vitamin, which will keep the industry in good health for a long time.

These developments add variety to screen programs. The speed with which exhibitors are equipping their theatres indicates that there is wide agreement about the boxoffice values of big screens. stereopticon pictures and stereo-phonic sound. Thousands of theatres are being revamped to use every variety of lens and aspect ratio and bookers are learning to juggle 2-D. 3-D and Cinemascope.

#### **Vaster Audience Potential**

This new repertoire needs a few of the older specialities; specifically, vaudeville and stage attractions to give us complete variety and combine yesterday with tomorrow. That's coming too. Some of us have already sampled the new comthrow hinations not live hut television eye, and it will bring to decorate their marquees and so audiences into our theatres, for do the producers. But high salaries entertairments never before avail- can be strong obstacles. One way able or practical in motion picture theatres.

(Pres., Stanley Warner Corp.)

tions. A closed circuit can play to hun-Exhibitors, debating the merits dreds of thousands-and some day

the audience to the number of seats at the place of origin. To our regular screen features derable investment today. I believe exhibition has a great thure an exciting future, a future in entertainment will be shown in motion picture theatres. This is the exhibition policy of tomorrow.



Hollywood. doesn't sell Wishful thinking tickets at the boxoffice. What is put on the screen is the determining factor that attracts the ticketbuying public. Pa., You don't was



tlemen who are very easy William Goetz to please, pro-

vided of course, you send them stellar screen attractions. Since they wait with open arms for the big ones, naturally the producer's desire is to accommodate his customers.

But every picture can't be a big one or an important one, which gives an edge to the independent producer who can wait until the property he considers ideal for the big grosser comes along.

When I was in charge of production at Universal-International we initiated a program to develop new talent. At that time there was considerable discussion about the star system fading into oblivion, but that was not the reason we went ahead with the 'new faces' plan. It was a desire to build our own play-ers and also to avoid the high salaries of the topflight actors and actresses, so we could expend more money on actual production.

An independent producer doesn't have the responsibility of bringing new players up the ladder, and with the emphasis on important pictures he must resort to the marquee names because names do

help make good pictures important. I don't think the star system in Hollywood is on the downward trail. Perhaps the business has undergone a change where the star is not the No. 1 factor. It's been said before and will be said again, subject matter must carry the ball; then the weight of the boxoffice name or names will enhance the gross receipts.

**Participations** to skirt these obstacles is through the participation deal. Giving a star the opportunity to share in the profits is helpful, affording the producer the opportunity of investing his cash to get the maximum on the screen. This is another helpful factor in making important pictures. If it takes a big budget to put together the big one, the extra \$200.000 ordinarily spent for the star can go into production. If the actor can do business for you and is willing to gamble he's entitled to all he can get. The question has been raised, must every picture be an epic? This. of course, must be ruled out quickly. There will be small pictures because there still is a market for them, perhaps not as big as it once was, yet still a market. But colorful outdoor action drama as the bigger and more important from James Warner Bellah's Sat-(Continued on page 49)

### Metro Party in From Cairo

Metro contingent in Cairo for the filming of "Valley of the Giants," returned to New York

yesterday (Tues.) and left immedi-ately for the Coast. Group included players Robert Taylor, Eleanor Parker, Carlos Thompson and Kurt Kasznar, di-rector Robert Pirosh, cameraman Babat Eventee, public unit Robert Surtees, publicity unit man Morgan Hudgins, studio staffers John Schmidts and Helen Parrish, and make-up man Keeter Sweeney.

# WB's 16 in '54 Will **Cost as Much As** 42 Previous Pix the sale

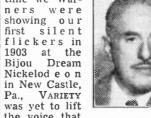
#### By JACK L. WARNER Burbank.

Countless thousands of miles of film have run through the motion picture projectors since VARIETY began calling the turns at the

theatre box-office. At the time we War-

1903 at

Bijou



the voice that J. L. Warner was to be

heard around the world of show business.

We've seen tremendous changes vast growth, great improvements, We've weathered innumerable crises, and emerged from them bigger, stronger and better than before.

In all those 50 years never has there been one which has brought more sweeping changes, such technical advances and so many alarums in screen entertainment as the one just ended. Except for the period in the mid-1920s when we at Warner Bros. spearheaded the revolution which brought talking pictures, the year 1953 must go down unchallenged as the era of the great change, all for the good of our industry.

In such a period of transition it is hazardous to gaze into the crys-tal ball, or don the prophet's robe, and come up with predictions of what the future will bring. I never have appointed myself as a spokesman for the motion picture industry and I find it more satisfying to make screen entertainment than to speculate upon the trends it will take.

The public writes its own verdicts in black or red ink at the boxoffice. To try to out-guess, or outsmart audiences is disastrous. To use the best judgment experi-ence and years of training can give in trying to please the public is the course we at Warner Bros. choose to follow.

As production head of our stu-dios it is my responsibility to chart that course. I have no occult powers to guide me but I do have a magnificent organization, top creative and technical talent and the resources of a great company of many long years of standing.

### Fewer But Bigger

We are going to make fewer pictures in 1954 than we have in pre-vious years. They will be bigger pictures and better pictures because we will put into some 16 attractions the same budget that formerly went into 42 pictures. Every dollar of those expanded individual budgets will go into great stories, the top talent of the production quality. We believe in CinemaScope and have announced that most of our pictures will be made in that medium. Our confidence in Cinema-Scope is based upon what we are seeing on our own studio projec-tion room screens from currently filming and completed productions in this medium. The first CinemaScope production from Burbank to reach the screen will be "The Command," which is presently being scored by Dimitri Tiomkin and pointed to a January release. Starring Guy Madison. Joan Weldon and James (Continued on page 49)

### **Pre-Selling and Savvy Campaigns** At Point of B.O. Need Hypoing By LEONARD H. GOLDENSON

(Pres., American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres)

address that the selling of a picture divides into two separate operations. First, the pre-selling while the pic-



L. H. Goldenson circuits, and he gave a very clear and learned dissertation on the importance of the theatre manager in this phase of picture selling.

There is no question but that the theatre manager plays an extremely vital part in the sale of his attraction. He is the one who knows his patrons and must scheme out the methods with which to reach them. He is the one who determines what kind of ballyhoo to use and he is the one who arranges the promotional tieins. In short, he must be a showman who keeps resorting to a bag of tricks which may be old but which he improves, alters and pumps new life into.

But there are many cases where a manager with all the showman-ship in the world just cannot sell even a good picture. These are

### **C'Scope's Value** As K.O. to Duals By DARRYL F. ZANUCK

Hollywood. Among the many reasons why the new methods such as Cinema-Scope are a blessing in disguise to the film industry is the fresh op-

portunity it has provided for eliminating the small pictures which

sustain the evils of the double features. By enlarging the vision and perspective of screen drama as well as the

proportions of the camera field, the new method

encourages the producer to make pictures that will be bigger in scope and longer in duration. Pictures of this type need only a small supplement to round out the longer evening's entertain-ment which many ticket buyers feel is desirable.

This supplement can be provided by short subjects. The short subjects which result from CinemaScope photography will, I be-lieve, be fully satisfying to the public. They are not to be com-pared in quality, scope or enter-tainment value to the kind of shorts which were possible under the limitations of the routine film camera.

But the film industry as a whole must make a conscientious effort to eliminate the double feature if ticular attention should be given it is to regain full health and prosperity. This necessity must tising in an attempt to find out not be ignored for the sake of quick or easy profit, because in the long run double features beget mediocrity, and mediocrity will set the industry back into the doldrums. Another thing the industry must make is a conscientious effort to standardize on a unified photographic system. It is our contention that, since CinemaScope has become a trademark and has received the unquestionable endorsement of the public, it offers the possibility of standardization. In the United States 870 theatres are already equipped for it, with another 60 abroad, and installations are mounting as fast as equipment is at hand. Bigger pictures mean longer runs and therefore fewer pictures need be made. Pictures like "The Robe" and "How to Marry A Mil-(Continued on page 48)

Si Fabian recently stated in an cases in which the picture has not been properly pre-sold.

I feel, as Fabian does, and that is that pre-selling generally from Hollywood has fallen off substantially and that it is obvious that decline may have an important bearing upon the lack of public response to pretty good pic-tures and may account for the failure of fine productions to make a profit not only for the distributor, but for the exhibitor. For many years, I have advocated a system of pre-selling which. I believe, would be of invaluable aid in the ultimate sale of motion pictures. I feel that, as soon as an idea a motion picture is confor ceived and it is decided that such a motion picture will be made, a member of the producer's adver-tising and exploitation staff should be assigned to the picture. There-after, having familiarized himself with the story content and cast, that man should follow that pic-ture right through its embryonic, production and release stages. During that time he should seize everyopportunity that presents itself to bring this picture to the public's attention and, if necessary, he should make such opportunities. With the personalities available in Hollywood who are in demand in the newspapers, radio and televi-sion, this should be a comparative-ly easy task. This constant pub-licity should be had not only when the picture is in its embryonic and production stages, but also during any period when it is deemed advisable to keep the finished produet on the shelf. I am confident that this type of publicity, fol-lowed by the proper advertising and exploitation campaign when the picture is released, must re-sult in a terrific plus for the picture.

I feel the time is now ripe to again urge this upon our industry. We are now entering a new era with our new techniques in projection and sound, and the release of the first CinemaScope pictures have proven to us that the public is intensely interested. Let us make certain that this interest does not wane.

### Case of 'Roman Holiday'

I would like to dwell for a moment on a problem which sorely needs a solution. I am referring to some of the sophisticated comedies and dramas and the sweet type of story or comedy like "Roman Holiday" which are very good pictures, but which never seem to get off the ground. Some of these pictures, because of astute campaigning, have had some measure of success in metropolitan areas, but most of them fail all over the country. It is indeed ex-tremely vexing to watch a good picture get very little or nothing at the boxoffice, and it is difficult to believe that there is not a sufwhom these types of picture ap-peal enough to make of them fi-nancial successes. It can only mean that the people interested in these types of pictures are not being reached and, if this is the reason, the advertising and ex-ploitation approach to these types of pictures cannot be correct.

I do not propose to hold myself out as an expert, because I do not have any solution Perhaps tising in an attempt to find out why one particular medium can sell one type of picture and not another. For example, we have had so much success in selling the shock-type of picture on television that the poor results obtained through that medium in selling a sweet type of picture are almost unbelievable. If a way could be devised to sell this latter type on TV and obtain the same success as with shock pictures. what a wonderful return we could get for our advertising and exploitation dollar. Fabian who touched on this problem briefly in his address, had a very good idea in urging that our industry be geared to testing advertising campaigns for these types of pictures. In any event, this problem is deserving of intense study by everyone in our industry, since the benefits of a proper solution would be invaluable.



Darryl F. Zanuck

In the earlier days of exhibition we spliced a picture show to stage presentations, or five acts of vaudeville, or name bands; then all these attractions died and pictures went it alone.

Pictures were pretty successful and complacent. until televis cn turned .ut to be a lusty wench. attractive to audiences, and terrific competition to the thertre screen. We can't high-hat her. We'll have to marry the dame. Some of you may feel you are standing up for a shotgun wedding but I see it as a legitimate court ship.

Through closed circuit television we can show a greater variety of programs than was ever thought possible for picture houses. Our screens are successful substitutes,



Hollywood.

Wally Spengler, the most famous, the most highly paid television comic in the world, looked darkly at the ashtray and its mangled mound of cigaret butts. Mechanically, he started to empty it. Then, almost as mechanically, he

stopped. "No," he thought, "let the bandits see how many cigarets I smoke. Let 'em see it there for themselves in that ashtray—the sleeplessness, the sweat of getting a show on each Saturday

or getting a show on each Saturday night. The pills, the seconals, the as-pirin, the benzedrine. . . ." Wally put a torch to another ciga-ret, his fifth in three minutes. Weari-ly, he lifted his body from the couch what with avance thread thread shot with expensive metallic thread. He lurched towards the wall mirror and took a long look. The eyes, deep-

Phil Silvers set and blook a long how. The eyes, deep pressure. God darn it, he growled, the sleep, that's the secret. I know many other people can't sleep either, but they don't face 30,000,000 viewers once a week—30,000,000 pairs of eyes waiting to be lit up with laughter, 30,000,000 bellies waiting to be nudged into convulsion.

He surrendered to the couch again and reflected on the previous day and night which had melted into this morn-ing. No sleep in between, none at all. He thought back to yesterday's rehearsal in that badly-ventilated, poorlylit hotel suite.

"How in the devil do I take it?" he thought. "Why don't I just collapse? I must have the strength of a bull. The next time a guy tells me his troubles, I'll ask him one question: 'Do you sleep?' If he says yes, I'll spit clean in his eye."

He remembered what a playwright at Sardi's had told im a month ago. "You need distractions, releases. Art galleries. perhaps. You need distractions, releases. Art What about analysis?"

His face twisted into an ironic grin. How many gags could he lift from Picasso? And he swiftly created the dialog with the analyst:

"How did you spend your childhood, Mr. Spengler?"

"Fighting with the drummer!"

What I really need is a girl, one girl who will be pretty and patient and understanding. But where do you find her? Do you take a VARIETY ad which says: "Wantedsomebody who can stand being alone most of the time. must put up with moodiness, temperament, bathe in reflected glory, ask no questions, just be there at the right words. Or no words at all—just silent understanding."

He thought of the singers. Bing and Perry and the rest. Sure, they can be relaxed and casual. Right now, at this very second. 500 songwriters all over the world are sitting writing songs for them to do. And if none of them are worth a quarter, there's always the backlog of Kern and Gershwin and Berlin.

#### **Take Me Away From This**

Right now, at this moment, I got three lousy, overpaid writers who will write me into oblivion in one season if I watch them like a hawk. A Broadway show, that's what I should do-same thing every night instead of these blankety-blank TV deadlines. But do Rodgers & Hammerstein send for me? Does Josh Logan? Not a chance. I ad lib too much, they insist. I'm too zany. Do they ever see the drivel I get to say? Just give me civilized material and I'll stick to the script, pal. Stick to it six nights a week and two matinees.

Another cigaret, and the muse twisted. Who needs Broadway? I reach more people in a half hour than a Broadway hit comic in two years. And by myself, too. Oh, I get help here and there. Rocky Marciano has seconds, too. But who does the belting when the gong sounds?

Wally looked at the big clock, a gift from the grateful sponsors.

"Those so-and-so writers are 10 minutes late now. If they tell me they overslept, I'll spit right in their faces. Got a better idea. I think I'll give them a real stunner. It will go like this: 'Fellers, sit down, I got a brief announce-ment. I am retiring, quitting, getting out. Going to Rome for a year. Then to Maine for another. Take all these jokes, don't slam the door, see you in two years, don't

Anniversary Forty-eighth VARIETY

And Must Remain That Way as Its 40%

### Revenue Spells the Profit or Loss Margin

By NATHAN D. GOLDEN (Director Scientific, Motion Picture & Photographic Products Division Business and Defense Services Administration U. S. Department of Commerce)

#### Washington.

Indications are that 1953 set a record for remittances of film earnings from showings of United States films in the international market. Estimates of dollar remit-



the international market. Estimates of dollar remit-tances from abroad during 1953 have ranged as high as \$170,000,000. The outlook for the future is not without its problems, however, and the belief is growing that it will be difficult to maintain the best of the state of the level of 1953 remittances and gross b.o. business in the foreign markets. Principal factors leading to the be-lief that the future of U. S. films abroad may be more difficult are the rising competition from foreign-produced films, especially Italian and German productions, the gradually diminishing pool of frozen U. S. earnings, and the trend for foreign

Nate Golden

producers to want guaranteed earnings of their films in the American market. Barring unforeseen serious difficulties, however, foreign business for American films should continue at a very high level.

One of the reasons w:.y foreign remittances were so high in 1953 was an increase in the transfer of blocked funds from countries which had previously allowed only limited or no remittances. This was particularly true with regard to blocked film earnings in Brazil, France, Sweden, and Japan.



One of the bright spots of the past year was the renewal of the British film agreement in September after only a few days' negotiations. The new agreement, cov-ering the year beginning Oct. 1, 1953, again provides for the transfer of \$17,000,000 annually to the U. S. and also contains provisions permitting convertibility of certain amounts of U. S. production investments in Britain.

Hollywood was not so successful, however, in negotiating a new film pact with France. The French agreement expired on June 30, 1953, and although a four-months extension to Nov. 1, 1953, was arranged, no real progress toward a new agreement had been made at that date. Reports from abroad indicate that the French are firm in wanting a reduction in the number of U. S. film import licenses (under the old agreement 121 dubbed feature films were to be imported annually) and also an insistence for some monetary assistance in the distribution of French films in the Yank market.

In April, 1953, the Italian-American motion picture agreement was extended until Aug. 31, 1954. Although the statistical breakdown as to the disposition of U. S. film earnings in Italy remained unchanged, important changes were written into the extended agreement. This agreement provides that 50% of the film earnings in Italy go into blocked accounts,  $37\frac{1}{2}\%$  is available for remittance (an attempt is being made to raise this to 40%) with the remainder going to Italian Film Export, an organization to promote the exports of Italian films. However, none of the funds going to Italian Film Export were to be expended for the acquisition of distribution rights to Italian films for the U.S. market or for the conduct of distribution activities in the U.S. The new agreement also provided for the broadening of usages which American film companies might make of funds from their 50% blocked accounts.

Problems relating to importation of U. S. films and transfer of foreign exchange have been encountered in Spain and the Netherlands. In Spain, American producers are refusing to purchase import licenses for their films at the price asked by the Spanish Government. After having apparently solved difficulties in connection with Spanish import licenses by an agreement whereby the Spanish Government, instead of Spanish producers, would control the sale of such licenses, new stumbling blocks have been encountered, among them the alloca-

tion of permits to individual companies. In the Netherlands, the U. S. industry protested against the low rental ceiling of 32½% for their films. The situation there reached the point where Hollywood threatened to withdraw from the Bioscoop Bond, the Netherlands film association. In effect this would have meant withdrawal from the market, as membership in the Bond is necessary to distribute films in the Nether-lands. However, in November a new agreement was reached which reportedly increased film rental per-centages and provided for special treatment for new projection methods such as 3-D, panoramic, and other films with an illusion of three dimension. American pix encountered considerable difficulty during the past several years in the Brazilian market. These problems have included playing time quotas for Brazilian films, regulations requiring copies of imported films to be printed in Brazil, and difficulties in obtaining import licenses and transferring film earnings. However, the situation in Brazil in recent months has steadily im-In July, 1953, an agreement was reached proved. whereby remittance of the full amount of about \$16,000,-000 of blocked film earnings was to be accomplished. By Nov. 1 it was reported that some \$4,500,000 had been remitted from this market. Import license problems are being reduced and it is believed that normal trade re-lations between U. S. film companies and Brazil (one of our major film markets) will soon materialize.



PICTURES

Hollywood.

9

Hollywood. When Shakespeare opened his comedy, "Taming of the Shrew," in London, it played to half-filled house. After the performance, he was heard roaring. "Well what do you expect? Everybody was out watching those new-fangled cock fights they're putting on all over town." Now I wasn't there to hear this possenably. I was just a



to hear this personally. I was just a babe in arms at the time, but it was told to me by a pretty good author-ity. Shakespeare, who started a lot of new gimmicks in the theatrical pro-fession, has gone down in history as first showman who alibied for the bad business. Ever since then, every playwright, actor and motion picture producer has developed some lulus to

Jack Benny Comics have become a booming profession. When we comics go out on the road on one-night stands or one-week engage-ments, we all expect to break records. And every once in awhile, we lay an egg. And, I think we've developed better explanations for a flop than any other branch of show business. To be a truly outstanding alibi artist, one must have at his command the most extensive set of logi-cal waveness for the simple fact that people just didd't cal reasons for the simple fact that people just didn't want to see him in that town at that particular time.

It was beautiful weather? Well, you can't expect people to come to a stuffy theatre when they could be out in the fresh air. It was raining? Well, you can't blame anyone for not leaving the house in the rain. It was hot? Well, everyone went to the beach. No, it was cold! Who's crazy enough to go out in this freezing weather and stagger downtown to see a show!

Why, look at the business the department stores did that day. Terrible! Oh, they did good business? There's your answer-everyone was out shopping. How can you buck all these big sales!

And those agents ought to watch their timing when they set up these tours. Why didn't they book you any place during the good holiday business?

And if they book you during the holidays, naturally, you're dead! Nobody's got any money before Christmas, except for Christmas shopping, and after Christmas they're broke. Easter week we know is murder; Decoration Day weekend is the first chance people have to get out of town after a tough winter; on the 4th of July, everyone is shooting off firecrackers; on Labor Day, they're either at a parade or a political speech. In November, nobody does business because it's just before election. On Election business because it's just before election. On Election Day, everyone is out voting. And after election, all the excitement goes out of a city. Before Thanksgiving, everyexcitement goes out of a city. Before Thanksgiving, every-bedy's spending their money on buying turkeys and all the rest of the stuff for Thanksgiving dinner. On Thanks-giving Day, any dope knows that you stay home and have dinner with your family. After Thanksgiving, you've got the horrible prospect of all the Christmas shopping you've got to do, so who's got money to go to a theatre? In the spring, everybody gets baseball fever, so you're dead. In the summer, everyone is out of town on vacation:

dead. In the summer, everyone is out of town on vacation; in the fall, everyone is going to football games, and how can you buck basketball in the winter?

If you've got a lot of tough opposition, you've got to split the money with the other shows so you can't do good business. If you are the only attraction in town, there isn't enough excitement to bring people downtown.

And that strike. All those poor guys hanging around. They haven't had a paycheck in two months. Where do you expect them to get money for entertainment? Labor relations good? Everybody working? Sure, then they put in so much overtime they haven't got time for shows. Just look at the ad campaign! You mean to stand there and tell me that with one lousy ad they expected to let people know that you're in town? Oh, they took a lot of full page ads? Ehh—who looks at newspapers today? Everybody's looking at television. Oh, they had a lot of television trailers on? Well, when you give them all that free entertainment at home, how do you expect them to come downtown and pay \$4.80 for a seat—and how about a buck for parking the car—and then a couple of bucks for a bite after the show. After all, there are very few millionaires these days.

And there was no publicity! Oh, there were nineteen news breaks, plus arrival pictures on every front page, and five big interviews. Yeah, but on the same day, they exploded the H-Bomb and scared everyone half to death. Thinking of that, how can anyone get in the mood for entertainment. And those interviews . . . they gave away the whole show. The readers know your routine better than you do. Why should they pay to hear it?

write me, I'll write you!'

As he deliciously constructed his goodbyes, the doorbells chimed and the parade shuffled by him into the living room. In order, Lou Cahn, Al Rose, Milt Balzer, the writers, augmented by Bart Samuels, Wally's personal manager, and Lester Span, the producer of the show.

This is going to be purely wonderful, thought Wally. camera. I should have a camera to record their stupid faces when I tell 'em.

As he opened his mouth to begin, Bart Samuels ex-ploded: "Hold the phone, King. I got a flash that won't keep. The network research department called 10 minutes I should give it to you slow and tantalizing. But I ago. know your sense of pacing, so here it is quick and to the lovely point. The latest Trendex is in and you now stand at 74.4, the highest in the history of television broadcasting, a jump of 14 points. When the sponsors hear, they will flip, flip, I tell you."

Wally stared at the group for close to 30 seconds. Then his eyes opened wide, he bit his lips savagely, pounded the fist of his right hand into the open palm of his other, and screamed:

"Trendex, smendrex, I got a flash for all of you. We're in this together, one big ball club. We gotta push harder, think harder, work harder. We gotta come up with new twists, new gimmicks. Heck, this is no time to relax and go to sleep!"

There has been but little improvement in the Argentine market with regard to importation and distribution of U. S. films during the past year.

In April, 1953, the Japanese Government announced that an agreement had been reached with the U.S. covering the importation of films and transfer of earnings during the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1953. This agreement provides for the importation of 146 U.S. fea-

And let's face it, nobody could get a babysitter while you were in town. It was just an unfortunate break that every old lady in town had tickets to see Liberace who was playing in Indian Creek, 20 miles away.

ture films and for the remittance of 30% of the current film rentals of U.S. film companies with the other 70% going into blocked accounts. The Japanese Govern-ment also agreed to allocate foreign exchange for the remittance during the current fiscal year of \$2,500,000, which represents about one-third of the total value of accumulated yen earnings held in Japan by U. S. distributors as of March 31, 1953.

It is believed that every attempt will be made by the U. S. to expand our market in India and Pakistan. One of the chief problems encountered in India is the small number of theatres to accommodate their large population.

The distribution of Yank pix in the world market is of major importance to the motion picture industry. While estimates vary as to just how important the foreign market S. companies, there is general agreement that is to U. revenue from abroad is playing an increasingly important role in the general economic stability of the industry. It has been estimated that foreign revenues account for about 40% of the total income of the U.S. film industry, and this foreign revenue spells the difference between profit and loss for the American industry.

### FOREIGNERS LED 1953 'NEW FACES'; SANTA AND SHOW BIZ **TOUGHER THAN EVER TO CRASH FILMS** - By ARTHUR L. MAYER -During the recent holiday sea- | nal brawls and incessant feuding By WHITNEY WILLIAMS

Hollywood. Bleakest period for fresh faces

in the annals of the screen was the year just ended. There has been a singular lack of opportunity for new talent. And 1954 looms equally gloomy.

It's economic. Studios have cut their contract rosters to the very bone. Production has been drasti-cally curtailed. These two facts alone diminish the chances of the unknown to show his wares. Add a third factor: the decline of 'B' productions which provided the training ground for newcomers in the past. Today the struggling young player must seek other avenues to be discovered.

Unpromising as the general situation is, there still have been a few individual bright lights. Au-drey Hepburn blossomed into arey Report Diosoned into stardom in her first American pic-ture, "Roman Holiday," and fol-lowed that with "Sabrina Fair," both at Paramount.

Marilyn Monroe, although on her way up for several years, zoomed into spectacular prominence.

**Foreigners Got Breaks** 

Some "unknown" foreign players were imported for star roles in Hollywood pictures, thus giving them an edge. Mai Zetterling was brought from Sweden by Dena Productions to costar with Danny Kaye in "Knock on Wood"; Para-mount picked Parisienne Nicol

mount picked Parisienne Nicol Maurey to be Bing Crosby's femme lead in "Little Boy Lost." Bella Darvi, Poland-born, was discovered by Darryl Zanuck in Paris and flown here for top role in "Hell and High Water," and now is in "The Egyptian." Lau-ronce Harvey London actor makes rence Harvey, London actor. makes his American screen bow in War-ners' "The Talisman," and Ludfrom Paris by UI for femme star in "Sign of the Pagan."

Of these, only Mlle. Maurey has thus far been glimpsed by the pub-lic, the other films being either still in the editing or production stage. Carlos Thompson belongs to the foreign contingent, too, an import from Brazil, who made his Hollywood film debut in "Fort Al-giers." then was cast opposite Lana Turner in "Flame and the Flesh" and now is one of the tops in studio's "Valley of the Kings."

Paramount leads with the number of promising newcomers, starting with Miss Hepburn. List starting with Miss Hepburn. List also includes Rosemary Clooney, who screened-bowed in "The Stars Are Singing," then, "Here Come the Girls," "Red Garters" and "White Christmas"; Pat Crowley, "Forever Female," "Garters," "Money from Home"; Audrey Dal-ton, "Girls of Pleasure Island," "Casanova's Big Night," toppers here. here

Others are Mary Murphy, loaned out for "Main Street to Broadout for "Main Street to Broad-way" and on loanout ever since; Joan Taylor, "The Savage," first, then loaned to Schenck-Koch for "War Paint"; Mlle, Maurey; Guy Mitchell, "Those Redheads from Seattle"; Brian Keith, "Alaska Seas'; Joanne Gilbert, Kathryn Grandstaff and Marla English. III has a fairly sizable lineup but

UI has a fairly sizable lineup but nothing compared to former years, nothing compared to former years, nor as outstanding. Lori Nelson came through in "All-American" and "Tumbleweed"; Kathleen Hughes. "It Came from Outer Space." "The Glass Web"; Abbe Lane, "Wings of the Hawk," "Ride Clear of Diablo." Mamie Van Doren III's own Mamie Van Doren, UI's own Marilyn Monroe, "All-American," loaned to RKO for "Susan Slept Here;" Marcia Henderson starred Here;" Marcia Henderson statted in "Back to God's Country," "Web," to Metro for "All I De-ina." Barbara Rush, "Outer" sire;" Barbara Rush. "Outer Space," "Taža, Son of Chochise;" Suzan Ball, "East of Sumatra," "City Beneath the Sea;" Gregg Palmer, "All-American;" Buddy Hackett, "Walking My Baby Back Home." "Fireman Save My Child." Julia Adams, Wings of the Hawk," "The Creature from the Black Lagoon.' 20th-Fox: Apart from Marilyn, Maggie McNamara, loaned for "The Mon Is Blue," attracted at-tention, followed with "We Be-lieve in Love;" Röbert Wagner. around for several years, finally is

spot for 1953, did title role in "Prince Valiant."

Jay Robinson also rose during 1953, as Caligula in "The Robe" and "Demetrius and the Gladia-tors;" Casey Adams, "Destination Gobi," "Night People."

Metro: Customarily offers a sizable lineup of fresh upcomers but missed out in 1953. Here are Vittorio Gassman, "Cry of the Hunt-ed," "Sombrero," "Rhapsody;" Elaine Stewart, after being spotlighted in "The Bad and the Beauingited in The Bad and the Bead tiful," snagged femme lead in "Take the High Ground!" now is doing "Brigadoon;" Nanette Fa-bray, "The Band Wagon;" Jeff Richards, "The Big Leaguer," "Crest of the Waye." Edmund Purdom was brought from N.Y. stage for "Julius Caesar" and "The Stu-dent Prince."

do, "The Big Heat," Diane Foster, "Bad for Each Other."

Warners: Dolores Dorn did femme lead opposite Randy Scott in "The Bounty Hunter" for first role, followed with "Phantom of the Rue Morgue;" Merv Griffin, "So This Is Love." Republic has Ben Cooper,

brought from Broadway legit for "Thunderbirds," Allied Artists boasts Keith Larsen, co-starred in "Arrow in the Dust." In indie field, "Arrow in the Dust." In indie held, Wayne-Fellows cast Broadway's Geraldine Page opposite John Wayne in "Hondo," and again set Mickey Spillane, the author, for co-star role in "Ring of Fear." The year 1954 will see reduced shooting slates. Metro with 20 to 22 down from around 35: 20th Fox

"Crest of the Wave." Edmund Pur-dom was brought from N.Y. stage for "Julius Caesar" and "The Stu-dent Prince." Columbia: Jack Lemmon co-starred in "A Name for Herself," his first picture, co-stars again in "My Sister Eileen;" Jocelyn Bran-

in my power, to present to my best friend, the mo-

> are a few that I think would come in handy in 1954:

More pictures, for unless our thea-tres on Main Street are maintained by

son, I spent some time dreaming of the gifts I should like, if it were in my power, to present to my best ambitions of bureaucrats and polition picture ticians, totally unacquainted with industry. Here the needs and nature of our business.

> Continuous research into new techniques and processes, similar to that maintained by every other major industry, for without con-stant inquiry and scientific experiment we cannot hope to retain our present preeminent slice of the public's entertainment dollar.

Rededication to the COMPO campaign for the elimination of admission taxes for in addition to their basic injustice, they furnish an ever-decreasing return to the national revenue, and an ever in-creasing burden on our harassed boxoffices.

New faces and new talents in our pictures for, much as we cherish the stars of yesterday, the new generation on whose favor our future rests, craves the reflection of its own youth and high spirits in its screen lovers and heroes.

The abolition of Government film censorship, for the freedom of speech and expression is the tra-dition which distinguishes our free world from totalitarian slavery, and no true art can ever attain its full stature hampered by legalistic re-strictions and prudish prohibitions.

The standardization of new techniques so that the outstanding product of all companies can be made available to all theatres, without subjecting them to financial burdens greater than they can bear.

A wide expansion of theatre tele-vision together with the granting the Federal Communications by Commission of theatre TV channels and licenses for subscription television, from which special events will either be permanently channeled into American theatres or into American homes.

A single exhibitor organization, so that theatre owners, now more than ever before confronted by similar problems, can overcome these problems by acting and speaking as a unit on every fighting front from Film Row to Connecticut Avenue.

Increased support by the indus-try of the Variety Club Will Rogers Memorial Hospital—for what avails our wealth and our power if we fail to use them generously in behalf of those in our own ranks who stand in dire need of help and loving care.

#### ANOTHER WARNING

#### Eye Infection Danger In Theatres **Re-Using 3-D Specs**

#### Philadelphia.

Re-use of 3-D glasses was strongly condemned last week by Dr. Nathan Torrens, of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

Dr. Torrens, who acts as consultant for the association's Pre-vention of Blindness Department, assailed the practice of "some the-atre owners and managers," who re-use the 3-D glasses. "Too many communicable eye diseases such as conjunctivitis or pink eye can be transmitted in this manner," Dr. Torrens declared.

Dr. Torrens emphasized that he was not against the use of the hat eliminate is the placing of a re-ceptacle at the theatre exit so that patrons can leave their glasses in these catchalls for later use of other customers."

a steady flow A. L. Mayer of first class product the prosperity and pres-tige of Hollywood will also soon wither on Vine Street. Better public relations, for with-out the confidence and the understanding of the people it serves no

media of information or entertainment can function successfully in Arbitration, for if we fail, within our own family, to settle our inter-

# Scopes Or 3-D, One Thing's Sure; They'll Still Buy Quality Pix

### **By FRED HIFT**

Future film historians will have it a lot easier than the present generation of pix executives in trying to size up the true meaning and import of the

developments that rocked the business during 1953. They may call it "the year of the great experi-ment," adding regretfully that it just didn't pan out. Or they may put it down in their books in bold letters as a significant turning point, when Hollywood recognized the folly of technical stagnation and, roused by crisis, discovered new and exciting horizons in the presentation of its pix.

Whatever the final verdict, there is no question that 1953 will stand out as one of the landmarks in the fortunes of the industry, a year when 3-D proved how fickle the public really is, and CinemaScope became a household word of progress even before anyone had witnessed a demonstration of the ana-

morphic widescreen process. If Hollywood failed to go all out for CinemaScope -even though exhibs should have 65 CinemaScopers coming their way during 1954—it did nevertheless switch to wider aspect ratios. A lively controversy developed over the comparative merits of stereophonic sound, and with Cinerama still looming big on the scene, something new and simpler-Magna Theatre Corp.'s Todd-AO widescreen system-excited the trade with a promise of great new attraction via the filmization of the Rodgers & Hammer-stein musical, "Oklahoma!"

The "revolution" in Hollywood, representing the first extensive change in the production-distributionexhibition pattern since the advent of sound, affected every corner of the business. It brought about feverish activity and a combination of uneasiness and triumph. Not since the late '20s had there been such a hubbub of speculation, pronunciamentos and predictions. And not for many years was the indus-try as united in the fervent belief that, come what may, something new, stronger and better would emerge.

#### **Twas Ever Thus**

Perhaps the most worried man in 1953 was the exhibitor. Where the studios took risks, he not only shared them, but was faced with considerable investment to implement the changes which, as he was told, would save his theatre and insure the future for the entire business in the face of rising compe-tition from television and other factors.

Theatre ops, traditionally on the cautious side were enthusiastic over strong grosses rolled up by 20th-Fox's CinemaScope initialler, "The Robe," 20th-Fox's CinemaScope initialler, "The Robe," which the company treated with a merchandising reverence ordinarily accorded a piece of fine art. But exhibs didn't care for the strings that 20th attached to their prize-baby—CinemaScope. They were divided over the value of stereo sound. And they shouted in protest as Hollywood, reacting to the economics of a new medium, began to drastically cut production skeds. Most worried and concerned of all were the small theatres which felt that not only were they being asked to shoulder an unreasonably high equipment bill via screens, sound and lenses, but also that some of the majors were implementing a long-feared streamlining policy, i.e., a policy of basing their ex-pectations primarily on the limited number of topgrossing situations around the country.

over what lenses to buy since only Bausch & Lomb made them and channeled them through the equipment houses.

Story was different, however, on screens and sound. According to 20th, which insisted it was anxious to safeguard the quality of CinemaScope pro-jection, none of its films could be booked by a house that didn't have one of the two approved screens (Miracle Mirror or Astrolite). Furthermore, exhibs either had to equip for multi-channel sound or go without 20th's product since the company refused to make available its pix with single-track optical sound.

#### **Exhibs' Pressure Wins**

By year's end, prodded by the combined pressure of exhibs and screen manufacturers, 20th gave way. Declaring that it had 1,800 of the country's large theatres already equipped with its widescreens, the distrib said it would waive screen restrictions for "small or narrow" houses. This, in effect, amounted to a capitulation since it was thought unlikely that many additional situations would take the special 20th corecare which are more currently 20th screens which are more expensive.

As for sound, 20th agreed to a series of tests on that issue. The company said that, once it had had a chance to evaluate the results, it would reexamine its position re directional sound. Exhibs maintain that it's too costly an item, particularly in the smaller situations, and that the effects do not justify the outlay. To which 20th replies that it is in-sisting on sound for the benefit of the theatres rather than its own since four-track sound materially adds to the enjoyment of widescreen productions.

Aspect ratios, which changed with confusing ra-pidity earlier in the year, settled down gradually, with studios leaving projection choice up to exhibs Universal, for instance, declared it would make all of its pix available at a ratio of 2-to-1, with theatres able to take their pick from that ratio down. In the early stages of the widescreen "revolution," many theatres would widescreen features made in the conventional ratio. The results were superficially impressive, providing one didn't mind seeing per-formers with half their heads cut off. The rediscovery of the widescreen—the industry

has been playing around with it almost from its inception and has known about Prof. Henri Chretien's CinemaScope anamorphic lens for almost a quarter of a century-has brought about profound changes not so much in the actual presentation of films as in the thinking of the entire business. The air is pervaded by an exciting sense of change and improvement. No one wants to agree on actual standards since no one wants to freeze progress. Inventors are still popping out of the woodwork and, hardpressed as it is for something new to catch the public's fancy, the industry is happy to lend them an ear with costs a secondard consideration.



### Skeuras' Dynamic Job

Kingpin of all widescreen developments during the year just past was 20th and its president, Spyros P. Skouras. Dynamic, imaginative and perhaps a little ruthless in his determination to hypo the b.o., Skouras pioneered CinemaScope with a singlemindedness that roused the rest of the industry into various degrees of admiration and concern.

The company sunk millions into international commitments for the manufacture of lenses, screens and sound. In return, it laid down a strict policy relatgetting his breaks and copped Photoplay mag's No. 1 popularity could be shown. Exhibs didn't have much choice

#### **Gimmicks Not Enough**

And yet, the realists are ready with a word of warning. Gadgets, they say, are not enough. They cite 3-D as an example. Stereopix came on big at the start of the year, with "Bwana Devil," fol-lowed by the top-grossing "House of Wax" from Warners. Then the public seemed to tire of the in-consequential 3-D efforts rushed out by Hollywood. Thousands of theatres that had equipped themselves for depth pix, bemoaned the fact that their lifespan seemed to be so short. Viewer sales, which had skyrocketed, dropped.

As 1953 came to an end, 3-D seemed to get a new lease on life with a new crop of depthies, made with more technical and artistic care.

In any case, the industry made up its mind to one thing: The public wants and welcomes anything new in motion pictures. Basically, however, it de-mands quality of content. And that is a truth which Hollywood has had to face from the first day it cranked a camera and went into the business of providing entertainment for the masses.

### **TOA Directors Meet**

Mid-winter meeting of the executive committee and the board of directors of Theatre Owners of America will be held in Washington, Jan. 31 to Feb. 2.

Scheduled for airing are the most recent developments in arbitration, the 16m antitrust suit, subscription TV, the question of the compulsory use of stereophonic sound for CinemaScope pix, film rentals, and the Federal 20% admissions tax.

A. Julian Brylawski, TOA v.p., is chairman of the host committee. Alfred Starr, exec committee and board of directors topper, will preside at the sessions.

# **Real Frontier Feudin'** In Effete Nevada

### **By LUCIUS BEEBE**

Virginia City, Nev. The long tradition of feuds, bad feeling, lawsuits, fistfighting, gunfire, resignations from public office, defalcations and geneological exchanges between long established neighbors which has been part of life in the West's least



inhibited ghost town since the days of the silver kings maintained its status this past summer throughout the ex-ploitation of the most thumping bonanza of tourists at any time in Ne-

vada history. It is notable that Senator William M. Stewart, a Yale man with the finest beard west of the Missouri, in the '60s became the town's first millionaire, not from the riches of the Comstock Lode, but from the practice of law defending and prosecuting the suits which arose among the prospecting miners. From that time to this civic

Lucius Beebe

Lucius Beebe bad feeling has been a constanct fac-tor in the intra-mural relationships of this bouncing shrine of Western individualism.

Largely innocent of the riptides of sometimes hysterical hatred which seethed beneath the surface of C Street, Virginia's main drag, the greatest influx of tourists in the annals of northern Nevada overflowed its saloons, gaming parlors, hotels, restaurants and historical shrines. Melodeons dating from the days of Adolph Sutro wheezed and roared and snarled far into the Navada night. Whisky salesmen conducted campaigns reminiscent of the technique of Broadway's champagne salesmen of the Manny Chappelle era for the favors of local taverners. The Territorial Enterprise flung itself into editorial sarabands and partisan skirmishes with banshee screeches reminiscent of the time when Mark Twain was the enfant terrible of its city staff and Joe Goodman was blasting the daylights out of rival publishers with a Colt's Navy revolver.

The season of arrests and charges got off to a flying start when Florence Edwards, proprietor of the Silver Dollar Hotel and a local institution of heroic proportions, caused the jailing of the lady proprietor of a rival hostel just across the street where a type of syncopated music de-scribed by Mrs. Edwards as "bo-peep" was played by energetic enthusiasts into what the formal complaint described as "the wee hours." From a cell boasting cut flowers and curtains in the window in Storey County jail, Mrs. Estelle d'Anna countered that her orchestra never heard of bopeep but were practitioners of esthetic measures beyond Mrs. Edwards' comprehension known as "de-boop." After a restful weekend in the 'gow, away from her more or less embattled patrons, some of whom were in the habit of riding motorcycles into the bar, Mrs. d'Anna returned to her place of business and no more was heard of the charges.

### **Hopalong Colony Cuisine**

Shortly thereafter the chef of the Comstock House, Virginia City's resort of luxury and fashion where lamb-chops are listed on the menu at \$4.50 and a Colony decorum usually obtains, filed charges against the Sheriff of Storey County demanding his ouster instanter on the grounds that he had refused a petition to halt traffic in a section of town while a motorcade of sports car enthusiasts visited the restaurant. The charges died of legal malnutrition but touched off a chain reaction of screaming and dementia when the conservative and influential Oakland Tribune sent staff reporter Bill Fiset up to do a series on conditions in the Comstock.

The Tribune is owned by the grand old man of California Republicanism, Joseph Knowland, whose son Wil-liam F. Knowland is majority leader on the floor of the Senate in Washington. Several staffers and executives of The Tribune are graduates of The Territorial Enterprise or otherwise Virginia City fans, but notwithstanding the veneration in which the paper is held throughout Western Nevada, an element arose in Virginia City crying "unfavorable publicity" and demanding that The Tribune be banned on local newstands. Needless to say, sales boomed, especially after the most hysterical custodian of the Comstock's moral tone attempted physical measures against the paper's salesmen and representatives.

During the height of the musical comedy excursions the chef who had attempted the removal of the Sheriff fled town in a snowstorm of debts and bad cheques and Sheriff Jacobsen was confronted with the agreeable duty of posting him as wanted by justice.

VARIETY Anniversary Forty-eighth

got rid of the girls?" asked the chief, and the matter was promptly dropped.

Other commentary on the Virginia City way was furnished one week recently when Charles Clegg, fearless editor of The Territorial Enterprise, ran a blazing editorial against toleration of hot rodders in town upon any occasion at all. Three days later he bought himself an all-cream 1953 super-sports Jaguar with a speedometer calibrated up to 110 m.p.h. "It shows an open mind," he explained. "Also it adds a dimension to my conversation. I am told that Jaguars are, in the vernacular, 'ecstatically george'."

In common with the affairs of the community it reports, The Enterprise itself is enjoying a bonanza of eye-popping proportions. Finding the job printer who for years had produced its slender editions unequal to a new prosperity, its proprietors this summer built themselves a costly new printing plant behind the historic Enterprise Building in C Street with its memories of Mark Twain and Dan De Quille and is running weekly print orders of 6,000 papers, just 20 times the entire population of the community in which it is published. Its columns bulging prosperously with na-tional advertising, its editorial columns widely reprinted throughout the West, the paper is enjoying a prestige comparable to that in which it was held in the Comstock's great days when it was the most influential and richest newspaper property between Chicago and the Coast.

Quite obviously Northern Nevada isn't achieving the spotlight which its extravagant pressagentry, shrewd showmanship and gaudy spending has centered on Las Vegas, but Reno isn't complaining. Things are really good there and there is an undercurrent of confidence in Reno's more conservative foundations and background which isn't altogether impressed with the permanence of Las Vegas and its flamboyant nightlife.

And whatever business Reno gets overflows into its historic suburb on the side of Sun Mountain. Virginia City this summer has been crawling with names that make Locals who were once impressed with the presence news. of celebrities now don't bat an eyelash to find themselves standing in The Delta beside Cole Porter or stumbling over Street's ancient board sidewalks with Ellen Mackay Berlin. Nationally known writers such as Ward More-house and Stanton Delaplane make a point of visiting Vir-ginia City not once but several times a year and at least three documentary films detailing its historic background are in process of manufacture. A Hollywood corporation called Bonanza Productions, under the guidance of Sam S. Taylor, is planning a series of commercial films aimed at TV framed in the economy of The Territorial Enterprise and drawing story material from its old files.

Never a dull moment in Virginia City.

### Post Mortems Of 1953

**By ALBERT STILLMAN** Rhymes Out of the B'way Nursery For VARIETY'S 48th Anniversary **For** 

No truer words was ever said Than Charlie Dressen's: "The Giants is dead." Mexico, where the climate's dryer, Has coffee, sugar and O'Dwyer. In no way was the trotting scandal Harmful to the trotting handle.

Who cheers 'em up when they're sad and lonely? Joe E. Lewis, the One and Only, Who said: "In Las Vegas they'll soon contrive "A schoolhouse called P. S. 6 to 5."

A proverbial song called: "Rags to Riches" Had me in the proverbial stitches; And of "Doggie in the Window," which did all right, I'd say its bark was worse than its bite. LaRosa, a singer of great ability, Is trying to find his Lost Humility. "Dial M for Murder" was a natch; "The Seven Year Itch" made lots of scratch; "The Frogs of Spring," it seems, evoked Few critics' plaudits, so it croaked. But R. and H.'s "Me and Juliet" Was also panned, so there's no rule yet. As for "The S. G. Cadillac," Of Gilt-edged wit, it had a lack. And-put this down as quite an oddity-Tea was the theatre's top commodity.

The N. J. voters O. K.'d Bingo. I love the Works of Colonel Stingo. Sources close to Senator Joe Say Little Red Riding Hood's bound to go. The Songsmiths' Cause seems most deserving-So where's your contribution, Irving?

I liked her singing and I liked his squibs-Referring to Georgia and Wolcott Gibbs. Things at the Music Hall were so sunny,

THE LECTURE ROUTINE The Man Who Speaks for His Dinner Suffers Many Inconveniences—But There Are Compensations, Too!

### By BENNETT CERF

The lecture circuit is a pleasant, ego-salving, and lucrative routine for people who like to talk in publicand those who don't soon fall by the wayside-but it's far from the gold mine some would-be spielers picture it to be.

Sure, a successful lecturer drags down what sounds like a very impressive fee—especially to the group that is paying it—for a single hour on the podium, but the net, unfortunately, isn't even close to the figure quoted.

In the first place, lecture bureaus extract an unholy commission—up to 50% when they pay all the traveling and living expenses, a third when the lecturer pays them himself. One ob-noxious highbinder, prominent—or should I say notorious—in the racket asks even more than that when he feels he can get away with it. feels he can get away with it. Unless

Bennett Cerf

several dates have been set up within a short distance of one another, and on consecutive days, it can be readily seen that if you're footing your own bills, a large part of the take is dribbled away in fares, hotel bills, and food and drink.

In the second place, lectures in any but the biggest cities involve inferior accommodations, arrivals and de-partures at unbelievably inconvenient hours, and travel over bad roadbeds in rattly, obsolete equipment. Ever ridden the Pennsy from St. Louis to Columbus? Or the Soo Line from Chicago to Duluth? If not, don't tempt fate!

In the third place, a lecturer's work does not begin when he strides out before his audience, but the very minute he hits town. He may have looked forward to a whole day in Squeedunk as just the place to hole up in his hotel, safe from interruptions, and finish that manuscript he's been carting around in his valise for the past week. Perish the thought! A committee of welcome pounces upon him as he descends from the plane or Pullman, and whisks him off, in turn, to be interviewed over the radio by the local Mary Margaret McBride, photographed for the high school monthly, guided through all four floors of the state's largest hairpin factory, and exposed to a pageant depicting the landing of the Pilgrims by students of the seventh grade performed for the business men's luncheon club.

Then, of course, there's the dinner preceding the lecture and the reception that follows. I'm convinced the same little group follows me from town to town. The rich hostess, who makes up the forum's deficit each year and therefore gets the privilege of entertaining all visiting lions—surely this is the selfsame Mrs. Fluegelheimer to whom I thought I had waved a fond farewell at the pre-ceding stop? No, she's telling me again how she herself has written a jolly little juvenile that simply convulsed her own grandchildren. "Why don't you submit it to us?" I ask with a fine show of enthusiasm, and she answers— as always, "I did—but you nasty people sent it right back!"

And there's the wispy local poet again-the one who's so eager to know what Truman Capote is *really* like. And the book reviewer of the Weekly Sentinel whose requests for a free copy of a \$30 art folio were so rudely ignored by our publicity department. And the com-munity tycoon who hasn't read a book in 30 years and doesn't care who knows it. ("It was all those literary fellers in the New Deal who got this country into its present fix.")

#### The Whyfore of It All

Why, then, do knowing folks like John Mason Brown, Quentin Reynolds, Eleanor Roosevelt, Emily Kimbrough, Norman Cousins, et al., resolutely hit the lecture trail every season? Because the compensations far outweigh the drawbacks I have enumerated. There's the oppor-tunity for seeing the real America—and the wonderful people who inhabit it. Even the Mrs. Fluegelheimers warm up as the day progresses, and turn out to be sympathetic, friendly souls. eager to imbibe a little innocent "culture," and proud of their local communities. The lengths to which they will go to make a stranger comfortable are often fantastic.

There's the vanity angle. too-the speaker's satisfaction in knowing that this is strictly a one-man show, and that everybody in the audience is there just to hear him. The lecturer who denies that this gives him a basic kick is lying in his teeth. Finally, there's the never dimming satisfac-tion of speaking to the occasional college audiences anywhere from 2-12,000 students (attending voluntarily and on their own time), who are right on the ball every minute of the way, ready to laugh at your better sallies, witn something provocative and startling in that question period. Anybody who hasn't yet experi-enced the thrill of earning a solid, heart-warming burst of laughter from a tough, highly critical college audience has something mighty exciting to look forward to!



**PICTURES** 

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Needless to detail, these tumults and alarms received a resounding press in Reno, San Francisco, Sacramento and adjacent communities and the crush of tourist trade in such venerable Virginia City landmarks as The Delta, the Crystal, Old Washoe Club, Sazarac and Old Capitol be-came almost impenetrable on weekends. From Piper's Opera, now a museum, Mrs. Emmie Penz, its custodian, reported almost as many customers as in the days when Nellie Melba and Joe Jefferson trod the hallowed boards of its raked stage. St. Mary's-in-the-Mountains, the town's famed Catholic shrine, received its first coat of paint in 75 years, and Buffalo Bill Shelter, proprietor of the Big Bonanza, a sort of supermarket of tourist knick-knacks, ore specimens and Indian goods, was forced to recruit over-time salesgirls in half dozen lots from Reno.

A classic example of Virginia City's free-wheeling way of life turned up when Chief of Police John Byrne, on night duty outside the Sazarac Saloon, emptied his gun after several carloads of hot rod juveniles from Reno who were hurrahing the town in the early hours. One of the slugs appeared next morning in the doorjamb of Greer's Tearoom and another smashed a window in Olive Lane's Virginia Club just as the proprietor poked her head out to see, quite literally, what all the shooting was about.

Called before the next meeting of Storey County's board of commissioners to explain his marksmanship, Chief Byrne was asked if by any chance he ever took a drink when on night duty. "What else is there to do, since we

They paid my sal'ry and still made money The moppets mopped up with a coupla clicks. It snowed all day on November 6. "From Here to Eternity" made a pile; "The Robe" kept the Roxy warm quite a while.

The TV "Lear" was a royal bore. Frankie and Ava ain't lovers no more. Better for headaches than a bromo, The dulcet tones of Perry Como. Fred Allen, who used to poke such fun At giveaway shows, is running one. As airy as Central and Prospect Parks: Milton Berle and Groucho Marx. I always stop and I always go For the "Invitation to Learning" show.

Of cracks-on-wax, my special pet Was "St. George and the Dragonet." That banks may soon pay 3% Should interest the provident.

Robert Wagner will run the town. The Center Theatre is coming down. My feet are cold, my hands are clammy, I wish that I were in Miami Instead of opening the door Of foolish, freezing '54!

WRH

Experienced lecturers shy instinctively from having wives or intimate friends attend their lectures. There's nothing like a beady-eyed wife to take the starch out of a "funny-thing-happened-to-me-this-evening-on-the-way-to-the-auditorium" story when you know she's heard you tell it at least 50 times before.

One lecturer was so adamant about excluding his wife from his lecture series that she secretly visited his booking agent and signed him up at twice his regular fee (she owns about six knitting mills and could afford to indulge herself). The husband turned up, somewhat mystified, at the address given him and found his wife dressed to the teeth, awaiting him in solitary grandeu with her arms folded. "You've been paid to do your stuff," she commanded. "Give!" The husband, no slouch he, ap-preciated the humor of the situation, spoke eloquently and at length, concluding, "Ladies and gentlemen: unless these tired eyes of mine deceive me, I spy my wife in this dis-tinguished audience. If I'm correct, it's the first time in 12 years she's allowed me to get a word in edgewise. I thank you."

The wife applauded vigorously. As she explained later, "I liked the lecturish look in his eyes!"

### No Story Material?

There's No Substitute For Plenty Curtailing Production and Freezing Out Theatres Is a Goofy Way to **Re-awaken Interest in Moving Pictures** 

### By ABRAM F. MYERS\*

answer: Fewer people are attendthan formerly. ing the theatres

for debate.

provement of

the product is

a prime requi-

site and this,

New and inter-



Abram F. Myers

Abram F. Myers esting methods also are important and, certainly, we have a surfeit of these. But most important of all is a high industry morale and this includes the elements of confidence, courage and a willingness to cooperate wholeheartedly in a great campaign to bring people back into the theatres.

This campaign cannot be successfully carried on by any one element or interest in the industry. It calls for the enthusiastic cooperation, and for the utmost exertions, of every man and woman now engaged in the business. Anyone who thinks that showmanship resides only in New York and Hollywood simply has not associated with exhibitors. But in order to generate the necessary degree of enthusiasm every exhibitor must feel, not merely that he is a part of the motion picture industry, but a welcome and necessary part, and that other elements in the business are truly interested in working with They cannot, for a variety of rea-Lim and are not planning to exclude him from it.

Curtailing the production of films and freezing out the small exhibitors is a goofy way to restimulate theatre attendance. If the trend in that direction continues it will prove as futile a means of "saving the movies" as the pig-killing program was in aiding the farmers. The farmers were spared the consequences of that folly by huge Government subsi-No one in his right mind supdies. poses that Congress now will appropriate money to reward the film companies for pictures they do not make or refuse to sell.

in recent utterances on this sub-ject, I answer that my vehemence was in proportion to the menace to have voluntarily reduced the clearmy clients. When men in high places speak glibly of eliminating 10.000 theatres. I know, whose theatres they mean. But even if my clients were not threatened with imminent destruction by this sudden passion for fewer pictures and fewer theatres, I still would be opposed to the trend because it is essentially unsound and contrary to the American concept of an economy of abundance.

Starving The Theatres

The trend toward contraction and exclusion got under way before CinemaScope or even 3D appeared on the scene. Exhibitors have been complaining of what seemed to be a systematic reduction in the number of releases since World War II. Recent inno-vations in production and exhibi-

"What's wrong with the movies?" | standard cameras as well as by the  $\blacklozenge$ admits of a clear-cut and obvious CinemaScope method, or to refuse to make conventional prints available when the pictures are so pho-What to do tographed, is consistent only with about this is a purpose to freeze out the theaa purpose to freeze out the theatimely subject tres which are not adapted to wider debate. All will sree that im-tions, including driveins. To appreciate the extent of the agree that im-

pinch one must bear in mind that one major film company has announced that hereafter it will produce only CinemaScope pictures. I verily be-lieve, is being a c complished. All but one of the others, I believe, have announced that they will make some pictures by that proc-The announced titles indicate ess. that the major attractions will be in CinemaScope. I merely repeat what everybody knows when I say that without access to the top grossing pictures no theatre can survive.

Give The Public A Break

Let us forget the exhibitor for a moment and turn our attention to his patrons. If the movies are to retain their hold on the American people and build for the future, then no one who can buy a ticket should be denied the privilege of seeing the best pictures. And yet it is now seriously proposed, not only that thousands of theatres shall be frozen out, but that their patrons shall be relegated to television as their only means of entertainment.

It is idle to suppose that the at-tendance potential can be realized by reducing the number of theatres. Millions of moviegoers are dependent on their neighborhood or local theatres, or on driveins, for motion picture entertainment. sons, be attracted to the metropoli-tan key runs. While like their bigcity cousins they, too, have become choosy, they are as loyal a class of customers as the industry has. They awaken interest in the movies and also want to see the best pictures and in any sane view of the matter they should have the opportunity to do so.

There is legal justification for holding back a subsequent-run theatre for a reasonable time in order to protect the prior run. Even then must be shown that the competition between the two theatres is substantial. In recent years the distributors have come to recognize that the competitive factors as hake or refuse to sell. If I have seemed a little shrill ticularly, different classes of theatres has been greatly exaggerated. In seeking a faster playoff they ance in many such situation, there-



NICK LUCAS STAGE—RADIO—TV CAVALIER RECORDS 1300 26th Ave. San Francisco Calif.

by recognizing that the actual competition between the different classes of theatres was not important.

In the cases that have been brought to my attention in the heated controversy of the past few weeks, I have noted very few where the preceding run, which is giving "The Robe" the full CinemaScopic treatment, could have been af-fected seriously, if at all, by per-mitting the subsequent-run or small town theatre to exhibit the picture minus stereophonic sound, or on whatever screen had been installed therein, or, for that matter, from a standard print on a conventional screen.

Neither can I see wherein the distributor would be hurt by permitting the smaller theatres to show CinemaScope pictures in whatever way they can. Most of the mechanical objections that have been offered have already vanished

into thin air. When it comes to exhibition on a standard size screen in a theatre or drivein where large screen in-stallation is impossible, I cannot see wherein that treatment will hurt the picture. Certainly it has not handicapped "From Here to Eternity." During this remarkable run some very notable pictures have bowed in and bowed out of the local scene.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that I am not attempting to dis-(Continued on page 59)

Vet Story Editor Reels Off a Rich Fountainhead As Yet Untapped

### **By JAMES J. GELLER**

Hollywood. There was a period during the lush and plush days of Hollywood when studios displayed a lively interest in the acquisition of story properties.

Every major studio and home office maintained a sharp lookout for scoops over its rivals. Not only were they able to snatch galleyproofs far ahead of actual publication date, but frequently installed a pipeline direct to the author's mind. The studios even made it their business to be acquainted with the works in progress long before the manuscripts went to the publishers. The mere announcement that a stage producer had optioned a new play was a signal for the enterprising story editors to cajole the author's agent into a glimpse at the script. The perspi-cacious editors kept a ceaseless vigil on the progress of the play. They followed it out of town rather than risk competition at the subsequent opening on Broadway.

At this writing, the home office scouts are rarely to be found at opening nights in their official capacity; much less at the out-oftown tryouts. There are plays which have had long, extensive runs on Broadway as well as successful road tours but which were greeted by the film producers with a silence long, measured and eloquent.

It was only a few years ago, B.T. (before television) that Broadway siphoned almost every stage exhibit into the Hollywood ranks. Today. Pulitzer winners as well as New York Critics' Award selectees receive no recognition from the film capital. Here and there, of course, one or two acknowledged stage hits are actually snapped up for the films, but nothing like the competitive flair of yesteryear.

The only published volumes that have a chance for serious consideration, are those which lend themselves currently to the wide screen; such as the so-called swashbuckling costume affairs, science, fiction, western and biblical subjects. Even then, it takes con-siderable time before the studio finally seals a compact for its purchase. As for "original" stories, in spite of the fact that employment is at its lowest ebb among the screenwriters, they seem no longer interested in submitting original material.

A survey of the low budget films will reveal that their producers

have bedevilled the public with a thousand variations of the Jesse James saga; the doublet and hose and flashing swordplay derived from the Robin Hood legend; the picaresque characters created by Dumas: the monkeyshines from the Arabian Nights Entertainment; the ancient gun, Indian and horseplay business of the west, and those lacklustre and unimaginative Martian exhibits.

Here and there, the majors have made their own forays into the Arthurian and rocket-to-the-moon and Bagdad territories. Notwithstanding these achievements, the general atmosphere regarding the overall story situation is less than inspiring. Perhaps it can be laid chiefly to curtailed production, the continual remakes and the dusting off of the unproduced properties from the shelves. There is ac-tually no enthusiasm nor excitement regarding the acquirement of new properties.

Without ransacking the plots of those works that are in public domain, there are literally dozens of authors of our generation as well as the last, whose eminent offer-ings have scarcely been touched, many not at all. It might prove a windfall for the studios to explore these possibilities.

Specifically, the works of Thomas Mann should be thoroughly re-examined. It is beyond me how anybody could overlook "The anybody could overlook "The Magic Mountain" or his "Joseph" books; the lifetime writings of Sherwood Anderson with special emphasis on his short story "I Want to Know Why," the offerings of James Stevens. Somewhere in the 40-odd volumes of Eliot Paul, you'll surely find something appropriate for the screen. The works of Aldous Huxley have scarcely been tapped. There are several volumes by D. H. Lawrence which should appeal to the producers; not all of his writings are on the order of "Lady Chatterley's Lover." No one has done anything with the marvelous fantasies of Lord Duns-any. I have yet to find any of Joyce Carey's works gobbled up for the screen. A few of the books of John Dos Passos should have long ago been coveted by the producers, for example his Manhattan Transfer which reads like a screenplay. What about Sholem Aleichem who ranks with the literary im-mortals? There is pure gold to be found in many of the works of Paul Green, Christopher Isher-wood, Andre Malreaux. As for the literary elders of the past genera-tion, the works of George Moore, Anatole France, George Gissing, Gerhardt Hauptmann, Romaine Rolland, Frank R. Stockton and many, many others whose names I

will supply on demand. Let it no longer be said that there is a dearth of available material.



First I must explain that I am a dentist who writes on the side, ind vice versa. In other



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tion, requiring the installation of sometimes scarce and always expensive equipment, have made the condition acute.

At this point I must explain that if the independent exhibitors were merely the incidental victims of a march of progress with which they could not keep in step, their complaints might excite sympathy but would not carry conviction.

The relentless reduction in the number of releases in all media— conventional, 3D and CinemaScope —cannot be attributed to technological advances. A refusal to sup-ply prints with a single (optical) soundtrack to theatres that cannot afford stereophonic installations illustrates a state of mind, not a mechanical problem. And to refuse to photograph plays with

\* Chairman of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, Al-lied States Association of Mition Picture Exhibitors.

ROBERT RYAN

WRH

Starring in Shakespeare's Coriolonus for the Phoenix Theatre, New York. Directed by John Houseman.

beside practicing dentistry I sell occasional articles to magazines and contribute at times to televi-sion shows. But that isn't what gives me trouble. It's my name.

A couple of years ago when a piece of mine appeared in a magazine I read this news item in one of the Hollywood trade papers:

"Sam Katzman's article "Laughter by the Yard" appears in this week's Collier's. Sam Katzman had been a writer for Eddie Cantor for five years."

Frankly, I did not begrudge pro-ducer Sam Katzman the mention in a trade paper, but he really didn't need it. That very same daily had an item about what pictures he was shooting, another item about what actors he was hiring, and a news release discussing his distribution arrangements. Sam Katzman needed the extra publicity like TV films need married couples.

When I called the show business

(Continued on page 40)



JAN. 18-First CinemaScope anamorphic lenses flown to 20th's studios.

- JAN. 26-20th executives view preliminary CinemaScope test reels.
- JAN. 28-20th announces "The Robe" will be first production in CinemaScope.

**FEB. 2** – 20th adopts CinemaScope for all its productions.

FEB. 23 – "The Robe" goes before the CinemaScope cameras.

- MAR. 18—First demonstration of CinemaScope unanimously acclaimed by exhibitors, industry executives, technicians and world press.
- MAR. 18-Loew's, Inc., announces M-G-M will produce in CinemaScope.
- APR. 24—CinemaScope demonstrations start in New York, followed by showings in all principal cities of the world.
- MAY 12-20th announces perfection of revolutionary single-film 4-track magnetic stereophonic sound system.

JUNE 2 – United Artists goes CinemaScope.

JUNE 25-Walt Disney goes CinemaScope.

- AUG. 11—Industry and press hail first demonstration of CinemaScope 4-track magnetic stereophonic sound system.
- SEPT. 16-Eight months after first CinemaScope tests, "The Robe" has World Premiere Presentation at Roxy, New York.
- SEPT. 24-First week of "The Robe" at Roxy grosses world record \$264,428.

**OCT. 22**-Canadian premiere of "The Robe."

**OCT.** 29–Columbia goes CinemaScope.

NOV. 4 – Warner Bros. goes CinemaScope.

NOV. 9 - "How to Marry a Millionaire," second great CinemaScope production, starts breaking records across the country.

NOV. 19-London premiere of "The Robe."

NOV. 27-Rome and New Zealand premieres of "The Robe."

DEC. 3 - Paris premiere of "The Robe."

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DEC. 9 – Australian premiere of "The Robe."

DEC. 10-Germany premiere of "The Robe."

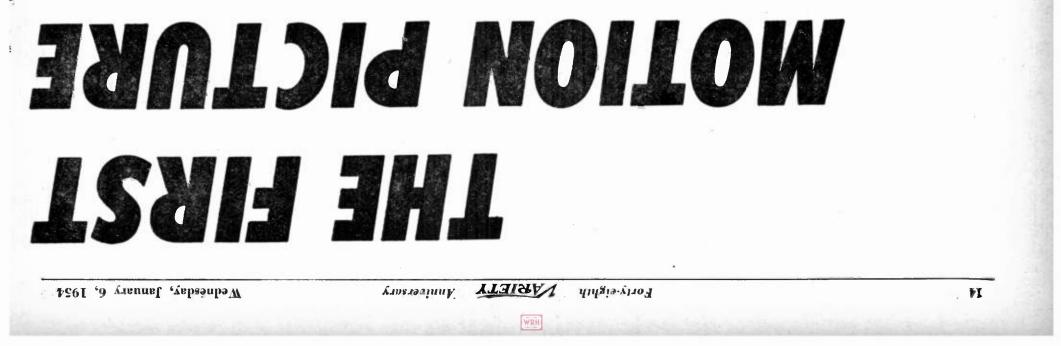
DEC. 16-World Premiere of "Beneath the 12-Mile Reef" at Roxy, N. Y.

DEC. 17 - Mexico premiere of "The Robe."

DEC. 22 - World Premiere of "King of the Khyber Rifles" at Rivoli, N.Y.

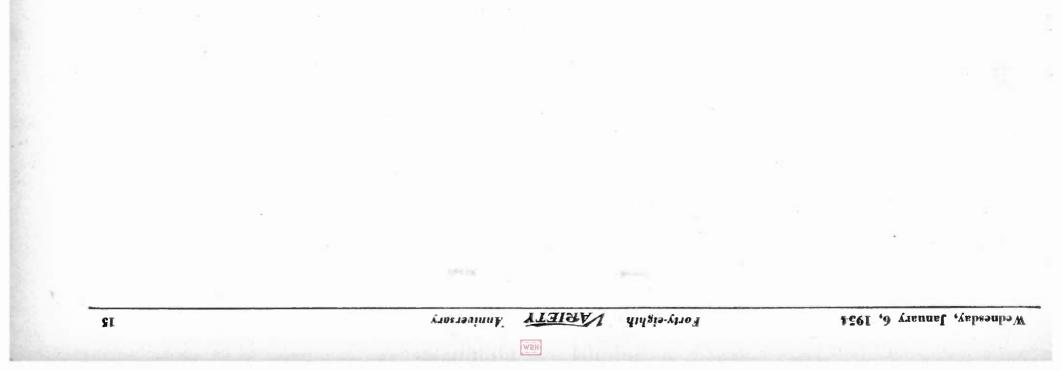
DEC. 25 – 84-theatre day and date Christmas holiday engagement of "The Robe" starts in New York City area.





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Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary Wednesday, January 6, 1954



### starring RD BURTON•JEAN SIMMO with JAY ROBINSON · DEAN JAGGER · TORIN **HATCHER** · RICHARD BO **Directed by** Produced by NK ROSS · HENRY KOS Adaptation

WRH

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



WITHOUT GLASSES

### **NS·VICTOR MATURE·MICHAEL RENNIE** DAWN ADDAMS · LEON ASKIN JEFF MORROW · ERNEST THESIGER · BETTA ST. JOHN DNE Screen Play by From the novel by LIP DUNNE · LLOYD C. DOUGLAS • P

by Gina Kaus

# 'No Business Like The Pushcart Business'

### **By EDDIE DAVIS & MARK FERRIS**

MUSIC (8 Bars, Chorus, "There's No Business Like Show Business"-Fade.)

#### COMIC

There's no business like show business. A lot of words and music have been written about show business. Actors, singers, comedians—all spend hours reminiscing about their profession—about the old days—the great acts the big names—the hardships and rewards. But what about the people in other businesses? The butcher, the But what salesman-the insurance man-the truckdrivers or teachers? No one ever writes a song about them. Take the pushcart peddler for instance. He has his heartaches and thrills, too-his great moments of laughter and drama. Just like show people, he appears before the public. He does one-night stands. With his customers, he wants to be a hit. The pushcart business might have been as popular as show business . . . if Irving Berlin had written a song about it!

MUSIC (Introduction to "There's No Business Like Show Business.)

#### COMIC

(Puts on battered felt hat, bandana, large Italian moustache and ancient corduroy coat. He brings pushcart on stage, loaded with fruits and vegetables, paper bags, scales, etc.) (Sings.)

There's no business like the pushcart business

Lika no business I know. Everything about it is appealing,

Everyone a-like the pushcart man

Nowhere else you get that kind of feelin' When the cop's a-stealin'

That extra banan'!

MUSIC (Fade to background.)

COMIC (Talking)

Sun-ama-gun! Whysa the cop always take-a the fruit from the push-a-cart-a man? He don' go in the theatre and steal-a the actor—maybe he don'-a like ham! But the push-a cart-a business is-a wonder ful! All it takes is a little push—a loud-a voice—and a big-a pull! A pushcart man is not-a made—he's a-born. It takes-a the talent to sell-a the corn. If you don't believe me—ask Milton (Sings.) Berle!

There's no people like-a pushcart people,

They laugh when they are low.

Yesterday they tell you to change your course,

You'll wind up-a broke—with-a remorse; But next day you've hitched your wagon to a horse! Let's go—make-a the dough!

MUSIC (Fade to Background.)

COMIC (Talking)

But-a makin' the money isn't everything. The push-a cart business gets in-a your blood. And it-a runs in the family too. Take-a my wife. I'll never forget-a the day we met. 'We was-a both doin' a one-night stand on the same-a corner. She was-a sellin' lima beans; I was-a same-a corner. She was-a sellin' lima beans; I was-a sellin' corn. I told-a her then-we could-a make such beautiful suc-o-tash together. When I met her, she was-a gorgeous peach. Now, she's just an old-a tomatoe! But what a family we got. They was-a born to be peddlers as a matter-of-fact, they was-a born in a pushcart! The first one we call-a Spud—he was-a born between the Long Island and the Idaho potatoes. The next-a one, he's-a What a born right between the onions and the garlic. little stinker he turned out to be! And the third bambino ... he was-a skinny like-a string bean. He had-a cauli-flower ears, a turnip nose, a head like a cabbage—and

hower ears, a turnip nose, a head like a cabbage—and he's-a grow up to be a vegetable dinner! Instead of a hat—he wears a poached egg An'-a let me see . . . next we had-a the triplets. We named them-a Carrot, a-Radish and a-Celery—because they come in bunches. The only thing about the push-a cart business I don't-a like, is the up and downs. Today, you're up . . . a real high class— tomorrow you're-a flat on your asparagras! MUSIC (Verse to "No Business Like Show Business.")

COMIC

The lettuce—the apples—the kids and the cops, The windows that a raise when you yell. The headaches—the heartaches—the backaches—the flops, The money you lose on what you don't sell.

The people that pinch what you have for sale, The license you buy to stay out of jail!

There's-a no business like the pushcart business

It's either fast or slow

It's-a grand-a feeling when your name you see A-painted on your pushcart marquee ...

And they review your act in VARIETY!

And you read what-a they say!

MUSIC (Fade)

COMIC (Takes copy of VARIETY from coat pocket and reads)

Pasquali! A Soccoli With His Broccoli!

Tony Pasquali does a single and has 'em-a rollin' with his pushcart. He's a loaded! Most of his stuff is fresh and the customers, they went for it. However, some of his oldies laid a big egg plant. His apples need-a polish and tears . . . and a makin' change. But it takes more than wheels and muscle . . . fruits and a vegetables and scales to make a cart. You've a got to have it here—(Taps Breast)-You've-a got to push from the heart! I know them all—the biggest names . . . who reach a the top . . . the big-a time—And the small-a ones, too . . . who pooped out-a tryin' to make-a the climb! Look! across the street

... It's that old soft melon man—Peddler Pete! And over there ... isn't that ...? Yes ... it's a that wonder-ful, sweet old man ... the one and only Garlic Sam! How he used to turn 'em away MUSIC (Intro to "You Gotta Start Off Each Day With a Song.")

#### COMIC

But what's-a happened to the old bunch? Where have they gone? Schnozzola Jim-what-a happened to him? Remember how he used to come on?

(Sings and Does Durante Impresh) You gotta start off each day with some fruit! (Speaks) California style! Stop the music!

### MUSIC (Stops)

COMIC Let me hear a flute solo! A solo on the flute! MUSIC (Flute and Reeds Render Discordant Passage)

COMIC

That's no flute solo! It sounds more like a flute salad! I got a million of 'em! I'm-a walking' down the street with my pushcart of sailor oranges—navel, of course. And I'm yellin' "Get your oranges . . . 10 cents a bushel" And the first think I know, a truck backs into my pushcart of oranges. SOUND (Crash!)

#### COMIC

Get your orange juice—10 cents a glass! Get your orange juice—10 cents a glass! MUSIC (Sock Cue: Last 24 Bars of Chorus "Show Busi-

ness.") COMIC

There's no people like-a pushcart people

The miles they push for dough! MUSIC (Fade.)

### COM1C

That's-a true! The peddler business is-a hard on the feet-but it takes-a the smile to sell folks on the street. And sometimes a song helps the sale along. Remember String Bean Sam . . . and his-a string bean band! String Bean Sam . . . and his-a string be MUSIC (Intro to "Toot Toot Tootsie.")

COMIC

I can see him now-a pushin' along, singin' his-a string bean song! (Sings ala Jolson.) String, string beans a good buy! Come and give 'em a try! (Jump to last 16 bars.) Watch for the sale! A bring-a your pail!

If you want a full bucket then you get it wholesale!

Come and give 'em a try! String, string beans-a good buy! MUSIC (Out.)

COMIC

And there's that-a grand old gal-queen of the pushcart steppers!

Sofina Tucker-the last-a of the red hot peppers! MUSIC ("Some of These Days.")

COMIC (Sings)

Some of these days, you're gonna miss my melons! You'll wish then you had bought what I was sellin'! You're gonna miss my specials-you're gonna miss my bar-

gains! You're gonna miss your big, fat, pushcart mama . . . one of these days!

MUSIC (Segue Back to Nostalgic Background)

#### COMIC

Ah . . . that brings a back memories . . . of all the great ces—and famous places; Mott street and Shubert Alley . Delancey street and Officer O'Malley—the Bronx and faces-Gueens . . . and Brooklyn, too . . . Remember that tenor from Tenth avenue? Mario Lantsman? MUSIC ("Be My Love.") COMIC (Sings a la Mario Lanza)

Buy from me-e-e- (vibrato)

For no other can be-e-e-at (vibrato)

My pri-i-i-ces! (vibrato)

MUSIC (Out Sharply.)

#### COMIC

What a voice! He developed that style, a-singin' while he's-a pushin' up the hill. Ezio Pinza, he may-a sing deeper . . . but, Mario, his-a prices are cheaper. If you don'a believe me—ask-a M-G-M—Mayer's Grocery market! But say, here's a one we can never forget! He's a great old time. and he's a price through with We's market. oldtimer-and he's a not through yet. He's gotta wonderful voice, and a big heart. Look a, they hang a the star on his push-a-cart! It's a Mr. Show Business of the Peddler's Guild . . . Banjo Eyes . . . The only pushcart man what sells-a pizza pies! MUSIC ("Makin' Whoopee.")

COMIC (Al la Eddie Cantor)

A take-a the onion, and garlic too-

A-salt and pepper, tomatoes, too. Melt the cheese in . . . that's the . that's the reason-vou gotta pizza!

### The New McEvoy For the New Year

### =By J. P. McEVOY=

About this time every year I take off on my annual scavenger hunt through the rubbish heaps of Broken Resolutions, mislaid Plans for Self-Improvement and abandoned Lists headed with: Must Do, Must Remember, and

pitiful admonitions from the failing spirit to the weakening flesh: Must Try Again.

Every year the sodden salvage is about the same and the recoverable residue ghastly familiar. Moldering items like Improve Memory, Learn Spanish, Practice Banjo, glow evilly with phosphorescent decay. Hardier projects—veteran carryovers from previous years that started out so bravely—reappear with grueling regu-larity: Read Gilbbon's "Decline and Fall of Roman Empire"; Reduce 10 Pounds; Cut Down Telephone Bills;

J. P. McEvoy More Patience Around the House.

Toting up this tattered inventory I have consoled myself year after year with the legend of the gallant frog in the well—how he climbed up three feet and slipped back two, but finally got out. Today, peering over the crumbling edge of my 59th year, the truth has just dawned on me: I have been kidding myself. I have been climbing up two feet and slipping back three and the only way I can possibly get out of this dark well of defeat is to slide on through to China.

Next New Year's, when I am 60, what will I find in the scrap heap of my good resolutions? Will I have Learned Spanish? Improved Memory? Reduced 10 Pounds? Practiced Banjo? I pause for reply. Sure enough, dear little Hope, so faithful, so persuasive, so optimistic whispers: "Of course! Learn just five words of Spanish a day and in one year you will know nearly 2,000 words—twice the everyday vocabulary of a bartender in Havana, less the swear words."

#### See!

"Your memory? Already it is improved. Look! You have remembered where you left your Roth Memory Course. Start again. Memorize your first five key words: Hat, Hen. Ham, Hare, Hill. Take your time. Visual-ize. Now associate things you wish to remember with these exaggerated images. Read Gibban? (In your Hat, See him these) Loom Spenish? (Visualize a her talk See him there.) Learn Spanish? (Visualize a hen talking Spanish. If she can do it, you can.) Now what can you associate with a big Ham? (You, playing the banjo, while thousands cheer.) See how easy it is!"

Dear whispering Hope! Already I feel better. Once more I will collect my dog-eared Spanish textbooks on my night table so I can utilize those precious minutes when I wake up refreshed, alert, eager. I don't remember ever feeling that way, but I know I can if I just try hard enough. Ah! Here they are: "Spanish is a Cinch." "You, Too, Can Learn Spanish—You Dope," "Eat, Drink, Make Love in Spanish—the Blitz Method."

I must attack all my other problems with the same cool logic, the same iron resolution. Rome was not built in a day. (Memo: Read one page of Gibbon every night before going to sleep.) How easy it is when you have a Plan. Five words of Spanish, a page of Gibbon, 15 minutes of pushups on my memory muscles. Imagine how it will all add up in 365 days. Reduce 10 pounds. Only 160 ounces. Divide into 365 days and what have you got? A mistake. (Memo: Brush up Arithmetic.) Where is that book I bought a few years

ago? I was going to read a page every night. Ah! Here you are: "Mathematics for the Millions." And what's this upside down? "Science For The Citizen." I was going

to read that, too-one page every morning when I woke up refreshed, alert, eager! This year I'll do it. Definitely!

Why that's only about 12 once a day. A cinch. No more hot buttered English muffins for breakfast. Well, maybe only one. And no more crisp, savory bacon—definitely— except maybe on Sunday mornings. You see it's all in the

way you approach it. Think it Through! Write it Down!

Have I been too preoccupied in the past with mundane

Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Envy, Gluttony and What a Sinerama! Perhaps I shouldn't try to van-

matters? This year I shall add new dimensions of spiritual growth. Where is that old list of Seven Deadly Sins?

quish them all at once. Tackle one a year, say. Start with Pride and save Sloth for the last. That will take me up to 1961—when I'll be 66 and Sloth will be an old friend

Virtues, Too!

the years I must have made a thousand lists to practice

So much for the Vices. Now for the Virtues. Through

Carry it Out!

and faithful companion.

Pride,

Sloth.

But first things first. Reduce 160 ounces in 365 days.

is berries are-a loo blue—and-a not in good taste. But his mushrooms, they killed a the people-they was a poison! Standout was his specialty number, "Potatoes are cheaper!" He did a terrific selling job and the customers a ate it up. They asked for more. With a the proper vehicle, Pasquali should go far. For a close, he displayed some a fast footwork when a chased by the cops—and when his a pushcart turned over, he finished with a big smash! Right now producers Rodgers & Hammerstein are talking business with-a him. Sa mRodgers and Irving Hammerstein, producers of fruits and vegetables. They think he's-a cinch to get the push-cart trade.

(Throws VARIETY Away and Sings) There's no business like the pushcart business, You're always on the go. Everything about it is appealing. When you make the pushcart your career. Nowhere could you buy that happy feeling As you go wheeling throughout the year!

MUSIC (Fade to Nostalgic, Sentimental Background)

#### COMIC

The pushcart business is a great. For 50 years I've been a before the public. I'm a celebratin' my golden corn anniversary. Fifty years of one-night stands-of openings and closings—of a work and a grind—the long runs I had, with the cops-a close behind. It seems like yesterday—I was-a playin' two-a-day. Pitkin avenue in the morning ... Flatbush for a matinee! Fifty years of laughter and-a

MUSIC (Segue to Nostalgic Background.)

#### COMIC

In 50 years the times have changed. They say the push-a cart . . . it's-a obsolete—(shakes head)—there'll always be a push-a cart . . . wherever there's a street. Why, look . . . right-a there . . . right up ahead . . . with his battered old pushcart . . . it's the daddy of them all . . It's-a Peddler Ted.

MUSIC ("When My Baby Smiles at Me.")

#### COMIC (A la Ted Lewis)

Is everybody happy? Laugh don't mope . . . keep on smilin'-buy my cantaloupes-they're made with sunshine. The best in fruits and vegetables—come from this old pushcart of mine. The old days are gone . . . but they'll never die. As long as there's a youngster with a bit of the ham—there'll always be a pushcart man. MUSIC (Sharp Cue: Last 24 Bars of "Show Business"—

Sock Finish to Finale.)

#### COMIC

There's no people like pushcart people They come—and they may go! But with a lot of push you can one day be, A veg-e-table celebrity, And who knows, you'll wind up owning A & P! (Pushing cart off) Let's go! Push for the dough! MUSIC (Up and Out.)

on. Al! Here's a dandy! The Four Cardinal Virtues (all good as new.) Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Justice. And here's another daring list: Patience, Modesty, Charity, Faith. Long-Suffering, Frugality, Piety and Benignity. Enough to last a dozen lifetimes at the rate I've been going

Perhaps I have attempted too much in the past-this year will be different. I will make a Plan. I will limit myself severely to these 12 Virtues—no more, no less and take on a different one each month. I will start New Year's day with Temperance-odd coincidence. Of course, I could start New Year's Eve, but no! when you have made a Plan you must stick to it. Also, there is such a thing as being too ambitious and above all, one should guard against inciting in others a corroding envy and a hopeless rivalry.

And there you have it. The New McEvoy for the New Year—gleaming like a white temple on a sunlit hill. But how do I get there? I will follow the paper trail—those scraps of wisdom I have collected through the years and scraps of wisdom I have collected through the years and left scattered behind me. I need only to retrieve and re-read them. Here's good old Lao Tze: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." And good old Thoreau: "Simplify, simplify, simplify." And good old Anon: "The way to begin is to begin." That's it. Begin| Simplify. Take that first step. I will start New Year's Day. I will utilize those first precious moments when I wake up—refreshed, alert, eager!

eager!

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### **Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes** A Few Remarks on the Subject of Ego By MAURICE ZOLOTOW =

stars I may not be exactly typical, but it's still hard to believe the shock of disillusionment the public apparently feels when they get a sudden shaft of light. You would have thought the Godfrey-LaRosa incident was bigger news than Eisenhower firing Dulles because he was seen talking to Dean Acheson or Malenkov canning Molotov on the grounds that Molotov lacked humility. (Incidentally, the word "humility" will have to be taken out of conversation for at least two years until this thing blows over.)

Far from being an exception, Godfrey's feeling of being god to his cast and his audience is rather run-of-the-mill behavior where a star is concerned. Most stars come to believe themselves superhuman.

#### **Idolatry Gets 'Em**

The star is not entirely to blame for this. Audiences must take part of the blame. Americans in-sist on deifying their entertainment and sports heroes. We idolize them out of all reality. We assume that just because a man has a God-given talent for telling jokes better than anybody else or singing ballads, this makes him nobler than the common run of humanity. Of course, it does nothing of the

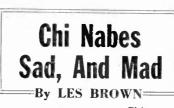
In fact, often the enormous sort. wealth and adulation poured out upon actors, and baseball players, prizefighters, in our society and has the effect of making them very hard to take in personal relations. A good deal of the personality troubles in which Frank Sinatra has been embroiled, such as the breakup of his first marriage and the conflicts with Ava Gardner, I attribute to the fact that when he first exploded into stardom in 1944 he received the kind of wild reception from audiences that would be enough to make any mortal think he was divine.

It is inevitable that a good many actors come to regard themselves above and beyond ordinary moral codes of behavior. Chaplin's political and romantic peccadilloes rise out of this same conviction of egotistical superiority. The star begins to share the delusion of his audience that he is more than human. Actually he has the same weaknesses (and virtues) as the rest of us. I could tell one story after another to bring out how universal this power-complex is among stars but my lawyer, Harold Stern, of the firm of Jaffe & Stern, has other things to do than defending libel suits.

My favorite story about dic-tatorial actors can be told, however, since the hero is the late Al One evening I dined with Jolson. him at Hackney's famous boardwalk restaurant in Atlantic City. With us, were Eppy (Louis Ep-stein), Jolson's amanuensis and Martin Fried, his accompanist. The waitress hovered over us, order pad in one hand. Jolson didn't ask any of us what we wanted. He said, "Four orders of cherrystone clams

I objected. I said I didn't like cherrystone clams. Jolson said I would eat cherrystone clams. I said I hated cherrystone clams. He 1 was with Joison what Jolson ordered. I said I wanted steamed clams.

As a professional interviewer of television or on the screen with the human being behind the makeup and therefore it recoils with a shiver of horror (mixed with the perverse pleasure we sense when someone rich and famous is caught in scandal) when trouble comes to their idols.

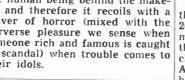


Long dominated by a few power house circuits, Chicago is at this writing a neighborhood exhibitors purgatory. At least that's how you get it from practically all neighborhood theatremen. Neurotics have nightmares about locomotives and eagles in flight. Chicago neighborhood exhibitors have nightmares about the sun blacked out by a covey of reissues. One residential house asserts that for a month running it could not book a single

celluloid which is also, at the same time, peddled to television stations. Translated into common household terms this means that "for fee" entertainment is in direct rivalry with "for free" on the home receivers. They'll assure you, the nabe operators, that this situation is not rare but commonplace.

Syptoms are multiple. The also rans" of Chicago are perhaps the also-ranningest houses in all America. To list a few, these are the woes of the nabes: two-way lacerations from TV, acute malnu-trition from product deficiencies, tax tapeworms, new media neuroses, varicose vandalism, complex profit dissipation, and now clear-ance consumption. Prognosis is

Product drought, severe as it has been, may now become insufferable with the recent removal (for six months) of the Jackson Park ban on pic clearances. Now, if the B&K circuit sees fit, it can hold back fresh product from the nabes for months. Under the decree, now temporarily suspended, B&K had been limited concurrently to two-week first runs in the loop.





new feature. The peculiarly Chicagoesque slant on reissues is this: some nabes are playing the same vintage

anybody's guess.

The situation grows more perplexing with the new tendency among Loop mainstemmers to milk the life out of each fair-to-middlin'

down the product flow. With the four B&K houses downtown and the RKO Grand now free to hold over product like their india loop competitors the their indie loop competitors, the pipelining of films may be all but halted. If hungry before, nabes may now be famished.

What keeps exhibs exhibiting then? One dream is removal of the 20% Federal amusement tax. They make no bones about admitting they want to pocket the extra change instead of cutting prices. As is, admissions in the neighborhoods are as low, in certain sectors, as 25c and 35c, and often too low to meet mounting operating and renovating costs.

Coincidentally with the "blighting" of certain neighborhoods comes the problem of vandalism, growing worse this year than ever before. Scarcely a night passes in the slum districts, and over in some of the better areas, when the seats or screens aren't slashed or the walls defaced by young sore-at-the-world hoodlums.

More than a few exhibs would sooner throw in the towel than watch the peacemeal destruction of their houses. For them it's the final stroke of chaos.

### **COMPO No Orphan But Needs Men**, \$

#### **By MAURICE BERGMAN** (Chairman, COMPO Public

Relations Committee)

Our industry has in the Council of Motion Picture Organizations he perfect public relations setup. However, if COMPO is to be utilized only in crises, then we might as well throw in the towel as far as a planned public relations program is concerned.

Regardless of the outcome of the fight for tax repeal, COMPO should be given the green light to move ahead with its well designed p.r. program.

This requires money. When we consider the war chests of other industries who know how to overcome adversity as well as how to make the most out of smooth sailing, we should feel a trifle backward by comparison.

COMPO has proved its efficacy on many fronts. And this, despite very little money.

The 20% admission tax is our major problem today. But there are many other problems which can pop up any minute. We must gear our ears to these rumblings of the new era. Any one problem affects every branch of the business. To cite one:

the life out of each fair-to-middlin' newcomer. Holdover trend has been exhausting all of a picture's cause any industry that lacks the of mobilization.

# drawing potential before the film ever reaches the neighborhoods and, worse yet, has been slowing Is So Much Confusion Necessary With New Projection Techniques?

### **By RICHARD F. WALSH**

(President, !ATSE and MPMO of U. S. & Canada)

of the film industry workers whom I happen to represent.

For quite a while prior to 1953, penthouse reproducer. the projectionists and stage employes at moving picture theatres scattered over America had been busy learning how to install and operate large-screen television studying the various systems that came on the market and even sending delegates to a school which the International Alliance sponsored jointly with RCA at Camden, N.J

Then, suddenly, theatre television was sidetracked (perhaps just temporarily) by a series of sweeping changes in film presentation. First the Cinerama technique, in-troduced gradually in large cities, called for projection of three adjacent images from three differ-ent booths and for synchronizing these with stereophonic sound on a separate film. No sooner had our members grasped what Cinerama was all about than they discovered themselves confronted nearly everywhere with three-dimension, locking two projectors together for simultaneous showing of overlapping films. At the same time came the battle of the aspect ratios,

resources to combat this type of regulation cannot merit the respect owing to it.

And then we still are molested by crackpols, pressure groups, and even well-meaning people who al-ways think they know what is wrong, but never right, about our business.

It is now time to give COMPO the opportunity to appraise all of these areas; to really do a job in all sectors where we need wellearned sympathy rather than captious, unfounded criticism.

We hear much about the new era in our business—about our hopes and frustrations. But we are not unique. All industries have just as many, if not more, problems than those confronting us.

The public likes us but we fail to reflect this popularity because we fail to capitalize on our friends. Instead. we worry about our enemies.

COMPO can function well on all battlefronts if it is given more money and more manpower. should staff up to our ideals and program rather than play down to our frustrations.

We have a plethora of public

The year 1953 has been a chal- necessitating new wide screens. lenging, stimulating, exciting and And finally, recently, in more than often hectic one for a big majority a thousand situations, the boys had to help pull off the miracles of the CinemaScope lens and the

> After attending quite a few IATSE regional meetings where the new dimensions were the chief topic of discussion, I know that our members backstage and up in the booths fully realize how much this technological revolution may mean to the future of the industry-and how great their own present responsibility is. The difference between good and bad projection at this important juncture may mean the difference between win-ning back hordes of customers or

driving them away perhaps forever. Yes, the value of good projection, I know for a fact, has been fully appreciated, and I am convinced that almost everywhere our IA projectionists have been doing their level best-studying the new requirements exhaustively, making the new installations with minute care. As it happens, they have been working against some very great handicaps, especially in the field of 3-D.

One handicap has been makeshift equipment. Dimentionitis struck this industry at a time when many exhibitors were concerned about the future. During the war, machinery for modernizing was not available, and after the war televi-sion scared them into watching and waiting. All too often, as a result, the projectionist was called upon to make a 3-D setup out of equipment which could better have been junked.

Another grave handicap has been the lack of formal training available to the projectionist. In most other industries today, before technician is placed in full charge of operating new devices, he is sent to a school for as long as six months and drilled in every detail. In our own industry, by contrast, this year at least, the in-terlocks and filters and other necessities were simply delivered at a theatre-and the projectionist told to dope them out and get them running. This he did, with amazingly good results for the most part.

Over and over again in these emergencies, the existence of an IATSE local union was a tremen-dous help. Most locals picked a few of their ablest members, sent them to demonstrations which we held in key cities and brought them back to pass along the new knowledge to their fellow-members. And together, in discussions, the brothers ironed out many a kink.

But many a kink simply could not be ironed out on the theatre Production flaws in those end. early 3-D pictures were constant nightmares, as were the odds against obtaining well-synchronized prints. And the man in the booth, of course, was the one left holding the bag.

Before the end of 1953, great improvements were being made all along the line. The Polaroid Corp. had come out with a device that went far toward taking the guesswork out of 3-D synchronization. Moreover,

Looking back, I wonder if the confusion was really necessary. Why do we keep a development like 3-D hidden away on the shelf for years and years, pretending it doesn't exist, and then suddenly rush it into view without benefit of long and careful testing? Why can't we be a little more like the Why automobile industry, which gets rid of at least most of the bugs before something new goes on to marketed models? The answer, I suppose, is that picture business always was and perhaps always will be a harumscarum scramble. Set up a screen, and you're an exhibitor. Grind out a few reels of film, and you're a producer. Develop a gadget that strikes the public's fancy, and bingo-you may start a technological revolution. Well, that's the American way, the free enterprise system. I guess we can be proud of preserving an industry where every man still has a chance to hit the jackpot. Let's hope and work for the industry as a whole to hit it by the end of 1954.



**Restrained** by Libel

"You just let Joley order for you, boy," he said peremptorily. he said peremptorily. "I know what's good, boy

We continued this childish argument over every course of the six-course dinner. (For instance, he insisted I try Alaska king crab when I wanted broiled lobster.)

Another time I happened to be in the hotel suite of a comedianwho, like Godfrey, has had a myth built up among the public that he is a sweet, lovable, down-to-earth individual-when his girl friend walked into the room. She had just purchased a new dress. She was exhibiting herself in it.

"How do you like this on me?" she asked the comic. "Get out of here," he barked,

without even giving her the courtesy of looking at the dress, "can't you see I'm busy?"

But the public insists on confusing the role played by an actor on

JACK SHAINDLIN SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL MY FRIENDS

WRH

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### 200 Parrots and Mae West A True Confession By MAXWELL SHANE

#### Hollywood.

A very good friend of mine walked into my office the other day. There was a grin on his face and something quite large covered by a cloth was hanging from his hand.

"Wait'll you see what I got you for Christmas." he said. With that he whipped off the cloth and disclosed a full-grown green and purple parrot in a gilded cage!

I took one look and dove behind the desk, screaming. "Get it out of here! Get it out! Hurry! Take it away!"

My friend blanched, rushed the parrot into the hall, left it there, returned, closed the door and turned to me wonderingly. "U's all right" he said. "He's

"It's all right," he said.

Maxwell Shane I came out from under the desk, drank a glass of water to quiet my nerves, and collapsed on the couch.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "You got psitticosis or parrot phobia or something?"

I took a deep breath, sat up, and told him the tragic story. About me, Bill Pine, Bill Thomas. Mae West and the 200 parrots.

It was back in the dim days when I was advertising director for Fanchon & Marco. Among their many projects, they then operated the Paramount Theaire in downtown Los Angeles. Responsible for exploiting all of the Paramount pictures which played that house. I had become very friendly with Bill Pine, who was then publicity director of Paramount Studios, and Bill Thomas, who was then his assistant.

We were about to play "College Humor" starring Bing Crosby. One afternoon an ancient gentleman entered my office and announced that he was "old man Schultz, the best theatrical advance man who ever hit the Main Stem by way of Texas."

He had a new gimmick he wanted to rent me, a truck equipped with an amplifying apparatus. What made it different was this—on top of the truck, old man Schultz had placed a dummy with a papier mache head of Crosby. As it rolled through the streets of Los Angeles, the papiermache mouth would open and close and out of it would come the duleet tones of Crosby's songs from "College Humor." by means of records playing inside the truck.

It was a great gadget. I was to be the first in Southern California to use it. So I signed the rental contract then and there. It worked out fine. We broke all house records with "College Humor."

What has this to do with parrots? Well, old man Schultz was so grateful that he insisted on doing me a favor. He told me he had exploited shows in New York as far back as 1889. So, he figured, many of the stunts he had used were so old that, used now, would be new again. He wanted to present them to me for free, out of sheer friendship and gratitude.

#### 'Deep Purple' in the Black

"Now the best stunt I ever pulled." he said "was used to exploit The Deep Purple' in Manhattan. I bought 20 parrots and trained them to say, 'Go see "The Deep Purple." Then I gave one to each of 20 strategically located eiger stands around town. As customers came up to buy eigers, what was their amazement when the parrots would pipe up with 'Go see "The Deep Purple." People talked about the stunt all over New York."

"Was 'The Deep Purple' a success?" I asked

Old man Schultz patted me on the head and smiled gently. "You just get yourself some parrots," he said. "Train them to advertise one of your pictures, and you'll make history."

I thanked him, gave him a cigar, and he walked out. I never saw him again. Maybe he's exploiting Cinema-Scope in Alaska now at the age of a hundred. I don't know.

But the parrot stunt fascinated me. I couldn't use it myself because our budget for the theatre would never stand the strain of purchasing 20 parrots and training them. So I decided to be a great pai and give the stunt to my good friends, the two Bills, Pine & Thomas. Their studio budgets could stand plenty of parrots.

I rushed out to the studio and told the Bills about old man Schultz and the parrots.

"We'll use it for the new Mae West opus," enthused Bill P.

"Let's get 200 parrots and train them and send one to

to see Mae West," he intoned. "It ain't no sin to see Mae West."

Weeks went by. The picture was edited and previewed. Every day I called to find out if the parrots were talking. The release date was drawing near. The suspense was unbearable.

Then one day it happened. Bill Thomas got me on the phone. He could barely make himself understood. I finally gathered that he wanted me to come out to the studio pronto. I rushed out. He and Bill Pine grabbed me by either arm and hustled me out to the parrot cage. We faced the battery of cages. The parrots were squawking, but I couldn't make out any words. Then the trainer rapped with a little stick on a couple of the cages. Suddenly I heard a raucous voice squawking. "It ain't no sin to see Mae Mest." Another parrot took up the chant. Then another. And another.

The Bills and I grabbed each other in glee. We pounded each other on the back. We laughed like crazy. You would think we had just struck oil. Our laughter was drowned in a parroted chorus. "It Ain't No Sin to See Mae West."

We went back to the office and drank toasts of triumph while secretaries busi'y made out 200 shipping tags for sending the parrots to the 200 lucky exhibitors. I went back downtown tired but happy.

As I entered the door of my office, my secretary was holding a phone and beckoning to me.

"He just came in," she said to the phone. "I'll put him on."

I grabbed the phone. It was Bill Pine. He seemed incoherent.

"Wait a minute, Bill," I said. "Take it easy. Say it again, slower. I thought you said----"

"I did," he moaned. "I said, they just wired me from New York. They changed the title of the picture!"

"What?" "It ain't 'It Ain't No Sin.' They're calling it 'Belle of the Nineties'."

As he hung up. I was positive I heard Bill Thomas sobbing in the background.

That's all there is to the story. Except—that was the first and last time I ever ate roast parrot for Thanksgiving dinner.

### ҮА-ТА-ТА-ҮА-ТА-ТА

By ART ARTHUR (MPIC Executive Secretary)

Hollywood. Sitting around, gabbing with the guys, the ears get cauliflowered by all kinds of yakity-yak. Some of it is gripe tripe, some of it makes sense. Later, when you think back a d start sorting it out, certain things stay with you and maybe, even, are worch passing along for others to bat around, too. . . .

Like the fellow who was doing some amusing musing about an editorial which gave a couple of Hollywood people a going-over for an oli-again-on-again romance which kept bouncing onto the front pages. The editorialist sounded like he was out to break the track and field record for standing high dudgeon. He was busy nominating the couple for total oblivion—in the same issue which front-paged the couple for the umpteenth time.

"Why doesn't Mr. Editorial Page start with his own paper." said our friend, "by giving them a quick brushoff back in the want ads. Nobody around here would mind. It could be that even the couple would be grateful. Seems to me they did their best to duck the reporters. Maybe they really are news and have no right to expect that they can do their family fighting in private. But who really decrees that they are news? Who decides that they are a hotter headline than the latest Vishinsky caper? Who makes the decision to nail the spotlight on them via another hunk of editorial type? Could be that it's the same boys who deplore on the editorial page the very thing they promote to Page One!"

It gave us a little something to think about. So we dug into an old file because it seemed to us that someone else—a newspaperman—had raised that angle before. We came across a remarkably frank paragraph by a Hollywood columnist headed. "Who's To Blame?" and commenting, "When readers complain to me about so many lurid headlines about Hollywood, I'm reminded of a girl who came here from a small town when she was 19 to write for her home-town paper." The columnist told how the girl "needed help in getting stories" and was taken to the Good Shepherd Church in Beverly Hills one Sunday and introduced to Irene Dunne, Loretta Young and several others after the service. "She wrote her reaction in a column for her newspaper." related the columnist, "and was fired for her efforts. The paper wanted only glamorous, sensational stories from Hollywood. . . ."

But that still wasn't what we had been reminded of. And then we found it in a piece by Reed Porter in the Los Angeles Mirror—a paragraph observing ". . . because everything they do is front page news. Made front page news by the very people who frequently revile them the loudest. . . ." That was it—good stuff for others to chew over, too—the thought-provoking sentence:

### 'It's More Than A Jungle'

By RONALD REAGAN

Hollywood.

Nothing is as romantic on the inside looking out, as it is when you are on the outside looking in.

So it is with our business—the most ruthlessly competitive there is. The competition begins with the selection of a story. If the story is a bestseller or "hit play" the producers scramble all-out to sew it up for their production schedule. If, on the other hand, it is an unpublished original, the writer scrambles—competing with his fellow writers in an effort to tell some producer that here is a potential hit picture. Get past this stage, and the producer begins collecting his team, preferably people who share his faith, but more important, people whose talents and names will satisfy the bankers and the paying customers in the theatre. Every stage of this collecting is competitive—the producer competing to sign the best artists, and the artists competing to be recognized as "good buys." Naturally, the competition goes right on to the ultimate attempt to sell tickets to this picture in preference to the one playing down the street.

A producer can be denied financial backing for one failure, an actor can go from \$100,000 price tag to unemployment on the supposition that a picture's failure was due to his lack of boxoffice appeal. No one questions whether he can act. In fact, everyone will admit he is a superb actor and knows his job thoroughly, but because Joe Schmoe, the moviegoer, sat up with a sick friend or played pinochle instead of seeing our hero at the Bijou, he faces starvation or a job on television. Some competition!

#### The Real Golden Rule

Still it's remarkable how much the people of show business practice the Golden Rule. Mayoe it is because the audience looms as the great threat that show folks feel such a bond for each other.

This is reflected in our social pattern—close friendships seem to predominate among people who compete with each other in the selection of roles. Ava Gardner and Lana Turner should be ignoring each other instead of hanging on the phone with a daily exchange of news items. Jimmy Cagney, Pat O'Brien and Spencer Tracy can conceivably vie for roles, but they form three leaves of a friendly shamrock.

However, there are more than personal friendships attesting to this "camaraderie." Ask any actor or actress the story of his or her career and back in the struggling days, you'll hear of some established performer reaching down to lend a hand. As a matter of fact, more young performers are brought to the attention of producers and directors by performers than by any other means—even though the youngsters are a potential threat to the careers of these voluntary talent scouts. The truth is, actors are just suckers for other actors.

Yet, why shouldn't this be so? Why shouldn't the guys and gals of glamorland know how to be nice and how to cook and mow lawns? Actors and actresses weren't created out of backstage magic and deposited in California as already full-grown matinee idols bathed in stardust. Look at the kid in your hometown high school play—the girl with the nice voice—the doctor's daughter—the boy who won the Declamation Contest and works Saturdays in the drugstore. These are Hollywood tomorrow. We were they yesterday.

People are the product of the sum total of all their experience. and the stars of Hollywood came from the eastside of New York (Tony Curtis), a little town in Iowa (Donna Reed), a whistle stop in Texas (Ann Sheridan). Name a state, a town, a country—someone in Hollywood calls it home. They brought to Hollywood all the character and principles that were standard in their communities, their schools and churches—or didn't you know that the education level among show people is 80% high school or better, as contrasted to a national average of 28%, and that 61% of our people regularly attend churches of all denominations. As for those who fall by the wayside, don't blame Hollywood. No one goes Hollywood—they were that way before they came here. Hollywood just exposed it.

and the MPIC, we offered a light dissent—but had to admit that the volume was nothing compared to the need.

Under our nose was a full column in the Toronto Globe & Mail scowling about a Hollywood divorce case—obviously written by a guy who hadn't the faintest knowledge that the Hollywood divorce rate is lower than the national average. How come he didn't know? He's supposed to be well-informed—he's a columnist, isn't he? Well, was the answer, how could we expect him to know if we never point out these things ourselves in ways that can really register. And what about the place of the movle house as a community institution and all the other things that need to be proclaimed with punch and persistence. "Yeh," was the sumup, "how are they gonna know if we don't



each of 200 top exhibitors who book the picture," said Bill T.

"What'll you train them to say?" I asked.

"The title of the picture is 'It Ain't No Sin'." said Bill T.

"Great," said Bill P. "We'll train them to say, 'It Ain't No Sin to See Mae West'"

"Great!" said Bill T.

"Perfect." said I.

"Can't you just hear them now?" said Bill Pine. "200 parrots in 200 theatre lobbies two weeks before the opening of the picture, saying to every customer who passes, 'It Ain't No Sin to See Mae West'."

They shook my hand. They pounded my back. Even before I was out of the door, they were getting New York on the phone to tell the great sunt to Bob Gillham, then director of advertising and publicity for Paramount, and to get the budget okayed for the purchase and training of 200 parrots.

During the next few weeks, like an expectant father, I kept in close touch with the Bills. I wanted to know everything that was happening with the parrot stunt. They got the budget okayed. They bought the 200 parrots. They found a German bird trainer who swore that he could teach parrots to say anything.

The 200 parrots were ensconced in an abandoned stage on the back lot. For eight hours every day, the bird trainer paraded down the row of cages. "It ain't no sin "Made front page news by the very people who frequently revile them loudest. . . ."

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Then there was another alley that the gab had wandered into . . . the way the hanky-panky hogs the front page while the good deeds seemed so completely unknown. We had heard many people in the industry wince over the lopsidedness. Was that, somebody asked, because the editors always seem to relish sinners more than saints. Probably so, who doesn't, somebody else said.

But there's another big reason for the lopsidedness, argued an ex-newspaperman who is now a screenwriter—a reason that lands right back in the industry's lap. "Did it ever occur to you to check how little this industry puts out on paper or on film about its virtues?" he said. "There's plenty to tell. Why is it kept such a secret?" Which struck us as a fair question. Others thought so, too.

We mulled over the Mississippi flow of copy about movies that grinds off the mimeographs every day—with so little of it in an institutional vein. Somebody else said that we appeared to be the only important industry minus a program of institutional advertising. Knowing of the efforts of the MPAA and the occasional stabs by COMPO even tell 'em. . . ."

The yakity-yak slacked off. But we couldn't escape that last sentence. We found ourselves wishing we could string it out in neons at all those industry conventions and meetings that clog the calendar:

"How are they gonna know if we don't even tell 'em."

The cokes had been passed around. And now we were into the entire subject of industry public relations . . . and how so many sounded off so often about what this industry needs is better public relations—but so seldom matched their mooing with their moola.

"There isn't a single thing wrong with industry public relations that can't be cured," said the oldest among us. "Trouble is you can't do the job without staff and facilities and you can't have staff and facilities without money. And this billion dollar industry still hasn't learned to put out for p.r." Somebody else said how come and another fellow thought it might be because so many people in the industry know all about publicity but so very few understand anything about public relations. And that was when they came up with the line that really hung in the ear—and seemed like something so well worth noting and quoting. "Maybe," was the food-for-thought snapper, "the trouble is that, in this industry, public relations needs a public relations campaign..."

Take it from there.

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

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1			
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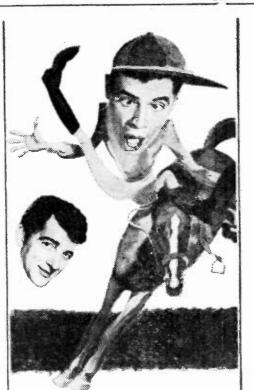
Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# HERE COME THE GIRLS

22

starring Bob Hope Tony Martin Arlene Dahl Rosemary Clooney Color by Technicolor





HAL WALLIS' MONEY FROM HOME

starring Dean Martin <sup>and</sup> Jerry Lewis in 3-D Color by Technicolor



Produced and photographed realistically on the battlefields of Korea in 3-D





# FOREVER Female

starring Ginger Rogers William Holden Paul Douglas James Gleason Pat Crowley



starring Danny Kaye Mai Zetterling Color by Technicolor Stereophonic Sound





ULYSSES

starring Kirk Douglas Silvano Mangano Anthony Quinn Color by Technicolor A Lux-Ponti De Laurentiis Production



starring Elizabeth Taylor Dana Andrews Peter Finch Color by Technicolor





starring Bob Hope Joan Fontaine Audrey Dalton Basil Rathbone Color by Technicolor

PERLBERG-SEATON'S

THE INCA



1

# THE COUNTRY GIRL

starring Bing Crosby Jennifer Jones William Holden





Color by Technicolor starring Charlton Heston Robert Young Yma Sumac Nicole Maurey Thomas Mitchell Color by Technicolor



# HAL WALLIS' ABOUT MRS. LESLIE

starring Shirley Booth – Academy Award Best Actress of 1953– co-starred with Robert Ryan Alex Nicol Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary





# RED Garters

starring Rosemary Clooney Jack Carson Guy Mitchell Pat Crowley Gene Barry Cass Daley Color by Technicolor ALASKA Seas

starring Robert Ryan Jan Sterling Brian Keith Gene Barry Stereophonic Sound



# THE NAKED JUNGLE

starring Eleanor Parker Charlton Heston Color by Technicolor Stereophonic Sound

LIVING IT UP

starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis Janet Leigh Color by Technicolor





Paramount will deliver more hits to more theatres in '54

# FAIR

starring Humphrey Bogart Audrey Hepburn William Holden Walter Hampden Produced and directed by Billy Wilder



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AS YOU READ THIS, THE PROOF OF PARAMOUNT'S BOXOFFICE PERFORM-ANCE IN '54 HAS ALREADY STARTED:

"HERE COME THE GIRLS" – registers sensationally in over 500 Christmas and New Year engagements!

# **HAL WALLIS' "CEASE FIRE!**"-greatest drama of the Korean War is smash hit

in New York and San Francisco!

# HAL WALLIS' "MONEY FROM HOME"

-clicks in 322 special New Year's Eve preview dates with record grosses!

# **AND IN '54**

Every Showman Will Want To Play

ING RERIN'S



### Bing Crosby · Danny Kaye · Rosemary Clooney · Vera-Ellen Color by Technicolor

### **Vet Circuit Operator Decries Slovenly Theatre Methods** By ROBERT J. O'DONNELL

(V.P. & G.M., Interstate Circuit)

Dallas. I refuse to be a member of the defeatist group who claim that the motion picture business is doomed. However, being completely realistic, I recognize that we are confronted with a shortage of product, the burdensome

20% Federal tax, a decline in grosses, and increasing operating costs. Also 3-D, widescreen, stereophonic sound, etc., are revolutionary factors. These innovations are extremely expensive; however, I feel they are essential.

Because of the resulting indecision and turmoil, I decided to make an examination of myself, my circuit and its manpower, and our industry, at the same time checking into other vital industries of our great American na-tion. In the past 60 days I have con-sulted with executives in leading industries, and I found they have just

Bob O'Donnell

as many problems as we have-perhaps more, yet their businesses have increased considerably while ours has been steadily declining within the past seven years. There is cause for concern when we compare our

status of 1946 with 1953. In 1946 we find that out of a gross national income of \$180 billion from all sources, the motion picture industry grossed \$1,810,000,000 at the boxoffice, while in 1953 out of the expected gross national income of \$300 billion from all sources, theatre boxoffice receipts will probably show only \$1.225,000,000. This represents a decline in relationship with the national income of all sources of 60%.

Other industries took advantage of this period of prosperity, which saw an increase in population from 130,000, 000 people to 160,000,000 or a total of 24,000,000 additional people. The motion picture industry failed to capitalize on

this national income or this increased population. In 1946, out of 112,000,000 people who could have attended motion picture theatres, 82,400,000 people bought tickets, and in 1953 only 46,000,000 people attended the movies out of a potential audience of 127,000,000.

All other industries and commodities have shown a gradual but steady increase in revenue from 1946 to 1953. Also, these industries and commodity manufacturers have increased their advertising appropriations, while the mo-tion picture industry has had a gradual but steady increase in revenue and likewise a decrease in advertising budgets.

#### **Diminishing Advertising**

In 1946 the entire motion picture industry expended some \$140,000.000 for advertising, which is 8.3% of the total gross of \$1,810.000,000. In 1953 the industry is estimated to spend \$65,000,000, or 5.2% of the total gross of \$1.225,00,000.

It is an established fact that the major industries and commodity manufacturers already have plans and appropriations for the largest advertising budget in their history for 1954. These budget increases range from 11% to 22% over their 1953 figures. This is their method of doing a selling job if they are to realize benefit from the 24,000,-000 increase in population.

There are those who say that our decline at the boxoffice can be attributed to lack of product or bad product. In my opinion, this is not true, especially this past year, as pictures have been better than ever. I believe the fallacy has been our own failure to sell these pictures.

Certainly television has hurt to some degree, but so have many other types of entertainment. For example, professional football in the relatively new field of sports has enjoyed an increase in attendance from 2,046,724 in 1946 to an estimated 2,800,000 in 1953. Incidentally, the attendance in bowling allies has increased to a fabulous figure over this seven-year period. Of particular interest to theatre owners and managers

of particular interest to theatre owners and managers is the fact that in 1946 the age group from 12 years to 22 represented 27% of the theatre-going public. In 1954 the percentage for this group will increase to 29.9% of the entire potential movie-going public. The age group of 22 to 30 years in 1946 represented 23.8% of the potential and will increase to 25.5% in 1954.

### **Too Many Divergent Factors**

The age groups from 20 years on are living in a volatile economy which gives them such spending power that they have the privilege of choosing among many different recreational pursuits, such as sporting events, night clubs, tele-vision, legitimate theatre, as well as doing home entertain-ing on a big scale. Weekend travel, for instance, is taking an increasingly large amount of the average individual's time and increase time and income.

Our challenge, therefore, is selling these same individuals on attending motion picture theatres each week and making certain that they will find entertainment and relaxation which will bring them back again and again. relaxation which will bring them back again and again. In my estimation 1954 looks brighter than ever for our industry. There are now 24,000,000 more people than we had in 1946, our best year. Perhaps there will be fewer pictures, but they will be much better pictures. 1954 can bring our largest grosses and our greatest profits despite rising costs of operation, but, only by taking full and complete advantage of the selling avenues so easily available to us. available to us.

ease of driving for the woman. In addition, the new model cars are changing in color from the browns, blacks and greys to the pastel shades so dear to milady's heart.

Anniversary

Forty-eighth VARIETY

The merchandising of food and supplies is today something to behold. The supermarkets are really super in their appeal to the housewife. She selects her choice from the finest in foods including scientifically and attractively wrapped meats, vegetables and staples in a shop that is impeccably clean and airconditioned, brightly lighted and attractive in the smallest detail; in many instances she knows the manager and the staff and they are interested in her orders and courteous in their attention.

Too often the reverse happens when she goes to the theatre with her family. The odor is offensive and the rest rooms are dirty. The picture from the projection machine hits everything but the screen. The sound is too loud and the carpets worn. In general, the atmosphere is depressing, with sullen, arrogant, untrained and understaffed per-sonnel to make the condition even worse.

This is one of the vital reasons for our declining box-office. In Texas—and we are supposed to have the best— 43 theatres are without rest rooms, 65 still use wall and ceiling fans for ventilation. More than 100 theatres are cleaned only once a week. As a result, rats and roaches have taken over, and the patrons, especially the women, are horrified.

Our plans at Interstate for 1954 are complete and now under way not only to achieve our 15% attendance increase via advertising and selling, but there is going to be a veritable upheaval in the housekeeping department.

We recognize the error and we are determined no longer to spend vast sums using all channls of newspapers, radio, television, and others; vast sums for new screens and equipment to operate them and yet expect men, women and children to attend and pay for the privilege of attending a theatre that is not kept as well as the most slovenly kept house.

This program is my task and I have dedicated myself to fulfill it

### "That's Why I Never Go To Movies" By EDWIN KNOPF

Hollywood. "Write about Europe," the man said. "Write all about the motion picture business in Europe."

What can I write about the motion picture business in Europe that hasn't already been written over and over

again? That business is good? No secret! That the people on our side of the Iron Curtain still have the moviegoing

habit? Turn to "Foreign Grosses." That the French and Italian exhibi-tors achieve with their poster work effects that make practically all American billboards look tired and in-fantile? That story could be told by anyone who has walked down the main drag of any European city large or small.

Or perhaps that there is in the Eu-

Edwin Knopf ropean branch offices of all American studios an excitement, a dynamism, a determination to sell to the ultimate potential each and every foot of film the studio sends them? Anyone who has spent an hour in the studio sends them? Anyone who has spent an hour in the office of any sales manager in Paris, Rome or anywhere else on the Continent knows that is true. Try it. You'll be inspired. But you will be sadly aware of the contrast to the tired, bored climate that prevails in so many sales departments in America.

I know, of course, that none of the foregoing is news. And that is why I do not want to attempt to write all about the motion picture business in Europe.

I want, rather, to write about the tens of hundreds of passenger-carrying liners that sail the seven seas. Each and every one of these is a floating motion picture theatre From the great Cunarders and our own S. S. of sorts. United States with their large auditoriums, down to the afterdeck of a small freighter sailing the tropical seas with one 16m projector, they are entertaining audiences that add up to hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions each year. And this audience is a captive audience.

Bored, relaxed, tired of reading or just looking at the sea, they go to the movies because there is nothing else Very few of them are regular filmgoers, but all of them are potential customers if only we would make it our business to entertain them. But what do we do to cap-tivate our captives? Well, for the most part, we bore them even more than the endless miles of sea. We do this for the simple reason that four out of five pictures are for the simple reason that four out of five pictures are pretty bad. And thus four out of five pictures shown on shipboard are pretty bad. Which is why in more than a dozen Atlantic crossings I've heard so many of our "cap-tives" emerging from the theatre uttering those frighten-ing words: "That's why I never go to movies." Now I know of course that the picture companies are in hypings to come money. But inst the companies are in

### WHAT'S A MOTION PICTURE?

By ERIC JOHNSTON

(President, Motion Picture Association of America)

Washington.

Attention, coffee-house intellectuals, eggheads, pundits and pontiffs:

Are you weary of debating cold war strategy? Seeking escape from the pros and cons of McCarthyism? Tired of speculating about what's going on in-

side the Kremlin? Are you up to your

money belt in tax arguments? If you are, I can promise you relief —a relief that does not make you swear off or cut down on your habit of making tall talk in the small hours. I can offer you on free trial a substitute subject which will get an argument out of anyone. It is as safe as it is indecisive and as profound as it is provocative.

It's a wonder remedy that cures your ailment without removing any Eric Johnston of the symptoms. It's a way of eating

your cake even if you haven't got any in the first place. The substitute subject is: "What's a Motion Picture?" Now at first view, you might be tempted to make sweep-ing generalizations. You might be led to believe that the question is a simple one and the answer plain. Don't get trapped. It isn't that easy.

For instance, have you stopped to think whether a motion picture is art or amusement-or is it both? Can it be a form of education and entertainment at the same To what extent are pictures a medium of public time? expression? Of self-expression? Of no expression? Now the type that I call the O.S.S. (the over-simplifying

so-and-so) will try to hack his way out of this over-simplifying so-and-so) will try to hack his way out of this overgrowth of queries with glib cliches. He is ready with the grand answer to these questions: "It all depends." So far as the O.S.S. is concerned, all documentary films are educational by definition, but if it is an especially good one, he might rate it as a work of art. If he likes it, he might regard it as entertainment as well

might regard it as entertainment as well. The O.S.S. will tell you flatly and patly that motion pictures are a medium of public expression. No argument about that.

Comedies by O.S.S. standards are outright amusement. What else? So are musicals unless a coloratura is perform-

ing. Then once again, they come back to art. The O.S.S. can dispose of Westerns too without any trouble. They are tales of adventure and as such come under the heading of entertainment and amusement— unless, of course, he is referring to "High Noon" or "Shane." Even the O.S.S. is not inclined to write these productions off as mere galloping stories.

#### **More Initials**

Having breezily buttoned up the subject to his own satisfaction, the O.S.S. is ready for smug departure. He'll never get away even with interference spearheading an exit for him-not if a P.P.P. is within earshot.

The P.P.P. are the initials of the philosophical popular-ity-phobes. They aren't really interested in the content or form of any presentation or production. What counts is the kind of audience it draws.

The way the P.P.P.'s have it figured out, any performance which has popular appeal cannot be lofty. If a message is easily understood it cannot be important.

Take drama. In between acts in the theatre lobby, they can talk of art, they can laud the author for having gotten something great off his chest. But let someone adapt the play for the screen and the P.P.P. is ready to turn up his nose.

The O.S.S.'s and the P.P.P.'s are but two debating teams with views of their own on motion pictures. There are several others like the A.G.'s (the anti-gaiety types) who consider laughter and music as frivolous forms of entertainment bordering on luxury; and the M.H.'s (the Midway Hawkers) who regard movies as carnival concessions.

Get all these characters together any night and you are bound to have a super-charged exchange of conversation and philosophies. If in this spicy stew you would like to add a balancing ingredient, you might try inviting a normal movie-goer who goes to the picture show to pass the time pleasantly and to get away from everyday prob-lems and cares.

Hollywood's critics very clearly use artistic yardsticks for judging our films. The tax collector uses the standards of the carnival in placing amusement levies on the trade. The censor looks at movies as instruments of expression against which he must protect, not himself, of course, but the other fellow.

In the final analysis, wouldn't you conclude that motion pictures are just about all things to all people? I would like to see the critics, the collectors and the

censors get together and try to come to a common decision. Come to think of it, what if you put all three of them in one room and locked the door-maybe nobody would ever come out. And wouldn't that be a shame!



Edwin Knopf





Available to us. Our objective at Interstate is an attendance increase of 15% in every theatre in 1954 over 1953. We are confident that this can be done through two major projects, namely, exhaustive use of advertising and selling campaigns for each picture, plus . . and this is a big plus . . . a com-plete remodeling of our housekeeping methods. I do not need to call your attention to the fact that the women of our nation not only rule the home, they control the pursestrings as well. They have set high standards and they maintain them.

### **Mistake to Ignore Femmes**

I know of only one major industry which has failed I know of only one major industry which has failed shamefully, but not hopelessly, by ignoring this fact. The infiltration of indifference to women is so apparent and pronounced in the case of this single industry that it would seem to have almost become a policy. The automobile industry is high on the list of those who have consistently catered to the woman carowner. Each new car has brought the last word in comfort, safety and

business to earn money. But isn't the opportunity to win hundreds of thousands of new friends a bigger chance for greater revenues than the few dollars we now collect from seagoing rentals?

If instead of just selling any old piece of film to the steamship companies we allowed only the cream of the crop to go aboard the ships mightn't we win many new "regulars"? Remember the "regulars"? That golden group of once-or-twice-a-weekers? They were the real financial backers of our industry. How could we achieve this? Perhaps by forming a com-

mittee to pass upon all pictures to be shown at sea. A committee the members of which would not be connected with any producing studio and thus would be objective in their selection of films. And if that last sentence is nonsense then it is the kind of nonsense that will ultimately destroy our industry. The fact that we have never been able to get together on anything should serve only to highlight the necessity of getting together on everythingand very soon.

Last spring, crossing on the Liberte, an exceptionally fine film was presented. Within an hour it became the main topic of conversation. "One forgets how wonderful movies can be." "I must go to the pictures more often." "I wonder what's showing tomorrow."

Well tomorrow, alas, a real brute was thrown on the screen and once again my shipboard acquaintances were informing me, "That's why I never go to movies."

### Speaking of Women

When does woman speak? Sometimes if you're sort of near 'em But always if you cannot hear 'em That's when women speak

When you are shaking in a shower, Or splashing up a whiskey sour, Or writing thanks to Cousin Joan, Or answering the telephone-That's when women speak---In pique.

When does woman confide? When you are with a magazine, Or when you're not where you had been, Or when she runs the kitchen tup, Or you decide to take a nap— That's when she'll confide-In pride.

When does woman confess? When she's on deck and you've the galley, When TV has a V-necked Valli, Or Lewis is making funny cracks, Or you compute your income tax-That's when women confess-The rest is silence-Oh, yes?

Alan Jackson.

### The Extra-Sensory Screen

By HAROLD ROBBINS

PICTURES

It was one of those dull afternoons in the office between We hadn't had a panic for almost 48 hours. I was sitting at my desk, looking out the window, supervising the erection of a 20-story skyscraper going up across the street when the phone buzzed. I picked it up. crises.

"Professor Smith on the wire," my secretary said.

"Smith?" I asked. "What does he want?"

"How should I know?" my girl asked. Always practical, always polite. The well trained secretary type.

I thought for a moment while looking out the window. Things across the street were going along all right. It looked as if they could get along without me for a while. Besides, Prof. Smith was no guy to slough off. He had come in mighty handy in several crises before. Especially the television panic of '48-'49. He figured out a method of theatre lighting then, which immediately reduced the size of the theatre screen to that of a 12-inch TV set as soon as the patron assumed his seat.

I pressed the button. "Professor Smith," I said cor-"Good to hear from you. What's the occasion?" dially.

"Mr. Robbins," he said gutturally, in his indescribable cent. "I godt idt! I godt idt!" accent.

"Got what, Professor?" I asked, my eyes wandering back to the building across the street. They were hoisting a steel beam up to the 15th floor. There's something fas-cinating about a steel beam going up, spinning slightly in the wind. You wonder if at any minute it's going to snap the slender cable and come tearing down into the street. In your mind's eye, you can already see the head-lines in the evening papers. I wondered vaguely whether I should call the newsreel to come down and cover it.

"The new screen," he answered. "Idt vill revolutionize the picture business!"

the picture business!"
"What new screen?" I asked, my mind still elsewhere.
"Mr. Robbins," his voice was petulantly reproachful.
"Last April your company gave me \$100,000 to develop a new screen for your exclusive use. Remember, you said, such a new screen for your exclusive use. each company has its own process. Three D, Cinerama, CinemaScope, Warnerscope-

Now I remembered. Last season's panic always seems to all. "Yes, Professor," I interrupted. dull.

"Vell, I god't idt," he said. "The extra—sensory screen. Eggsclusive vidt Magnum Pictures." "Extra—Sensory Screen," I mused aloud. I liked the sound of it even if I didn't know what it meant. "Great work, Professor," I added enthusiastically. "Let's make a date for user month to look at it " date for next month to look at it." "No." he said firmly. "You vill come now andt look adt

Idt. Idt's costing \$1,000 a day to keep vorking." "In that case, Professor," I said quickly. "I'll be over at your laboratories in 20 minutes."

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Professor Smith was a small man, with a white moustache and goatee. He looked like a professor. He met me at the door to his office and took me by the arm. "Mr. Rob-bins," he said. "Ve vill go ridght to the projection room."

I allowed him to steer me down the hall to another door. Over the door was a sign. Big red letters. TOP SECRET. KEEP OUT. I hesitated a moment, waiting for beckel. REEP OUL. I nestated a moment, waiting for him to produce a key to the door, but he merely turned the knob and walked in. I was bewildered. "Don't you keep it locked?" "Vhat for?" he asked. "I godt der sign outside." Made sense. I followed him into the room. The first thing that hit me was the sensen. If was a white shroud

thing that hit me was the screen. It was a white shroud that covered the whole room. The walls all around, reach-ing to a peak on the ceiling directly over our heads. We were completely surrounded by it. In the center of the room were approximately 30 seats, placed in a circle, facing out toward all corners of the room. Behind the seats was a large metal bulb set with various colored prisms.

"But where's "Looks great, I said to the professor. the projector?

He pointed to the metal bulb. "Dot's idt." He pressed a button.

Immediately the bulb began to glow, throwing soft multicolored lights that danced slowly around the room. At the same time, a low discordant hum of music came to my ears, as if an orchestra was tuning up in the distance. Behind the sound of music I could hear the hum of a thousand voices, all speaking under their breath. It was weird.

I turned to the professor. "Fantasia de luxe," I said. "But where's the picture, the film?"

He shook his head proudly. "Don't der whole secret. No film. "No film?" I cried. "Then how do you get the picture?"

"Zimple," he smiled. He peered knowingly at me over his glasses. "You hear of der great psychologist, Ror-schach?" Without waiting for me to reply, he continued. "He developed a test. Inkblots on a piece white paper. You look adt idt and your mind sees vot it vants to see. Don't how my screen vorks, only vit sound and music

added.

suspected myself of having such dramatically expressive talent.

All too soon the picture came to an end. The varied color lights and sounds were back into the room. I turned to the professor. "Simply magnificent!" I exclaimed "It was like a dream come true."

The professor smiled at me. "Yah, dot's idt. Dot's just vot idt vas."

My voice was incredulous. "You mean you made no film of that wonderful story? That it will never be seen again!"

"Nodt my anyone else," he said reassuringly. "But you can see idt vhenever you vant. As many times as you vant " vant.

I thought for a moment. In my mind's eye, I could see A few hunwhat effect this would have on Hollywood. A few hun-dred of these and it would be the end. Millions of people out of work. The failure of the whole investment. Stockholders losing their fortunes. People losing their jobs. Me. too.

I turned to the professor. "Professor Smith," I said slowly, "The world is not ready for this great step forward. We have to bring it along slowly. Pre-condition the people, you know.

He nodded thoughtfully. "Yah." he said, "I see vot you He looked around the room. "But meanvhile, mean." vot should I do vit dis equipment? So much money und all paid for?"

"All paid for?" I asked. I thought quickly, then without aiting for a confirming reply. "Tell you what to do," I waiting for a confirming reply. "Tell you what to do," I said confidentially. "Ship the whole works out to my place in Norwalk and we'll keep it out there until the world is ready for it."

Twenty minutes later I was on the phone to my wife. "Lil," I said, "tonight you're in for a treat. You're going to see the greatest motion picture ever made."

### After 40 Years It's the Same Old, Yet New Cry In H'wood

### By HENRY KING

(Editorial note: Hollywood recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. Henry King here looks around at the situation after a half century. The director's latest for 20th Century-Fox is "King of the Khyber Rifles.")

Hollywood.

The real pioneers of the motion picture industry had already blazed the trails when I first came to Hollywood nearly 40 years ago. The situation in Hollywood when I first got here was something like this:

It was still a new but expandingand tremendously exciting-industry. It was a business with a great future and unbounded horizons

This was despite the fact that it was temporarily beset with a number of adversities and threats of immediate extinction, especially from competitive entertainment media.

The story-telling form of the screen was changing and dynamically being adjusted to a slow but constant stream of new technological developments. Some of these developments were resisted in some quarters of the industry as being too revolutionary, as requiring prohibitive conversion costs, and for other reasons including simply

the fact that they were new. But the industry leaders were going right on and developing these new ideas and techniques just the same. Well, in every particular enumerated above, the Hollywood scene hasn't changed much in four decades.

It's still a new and exciting business with a tremendous future. It is still a business of exciting possibilities, of gratifying rewards to the deserving, of challenge.

It is still beset with temporary adversities of competitive threats-albeit new ones-and new developments are still being resisted in some quarters. But the leaders are going right ahead with progress anyway.

In the half-century since it was born, Hollywood has become one of the most famous communities in the world, and has been compared to Mecca, Bagdad, ancient Rome or the other storied cities of Scriptures, lore and legend.

Its real importance doesn't rely on Hollywood & Vine being as famous an intersection as Piccadilly Circus or Times Square or Unter der Linden, or the Champs-Elysees or Canal Street or the Bund. It lies in the fact that Holly-wood & Vine is still a spiritual brother to Main Street and Elm or any other business centre of a thriving American

city. If we ever lose that bond with Main and Elm, we'll be a duller city for it. And if the motion picture industry, which has become inseparable with the city itself, ever loses that touch, it will also lose its audiences. Last year, Hollywood turned out motion pictures costing

in excess of \$500,000,000. It paid more than \$77,000,000 in corporate taxes alone to the Government, in addition to being responsible for 75% of the some \$330,000,000 collected in Federal theatre admission taxes. The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates it now has a capital investment of almost a whopping \$3,000,000.000. Hollywood and the motion picture industry were born almost exactly at the same time. When H. H. Wilcox was beginning to think possibly of subdividing his apricot, fig, and citrus groves seven miles out of Los Angeles, in the last years of the last century, men like W. K. L. Dickson, Thomas A. Edison, and George Eastman of Eastman Kodak were first beginning to think of commercializing their fantastic new gimmick, the movies. At the same time that the surveyors were beginning to drive stakes in the ground out in the orange groves, the executives of the infant movie companies like Vitagraph, Biograph, Kalem, Melies, and Lubin were beginning to wish that the Philadelphia skies were sunnier so they could get in more hours of filming. In Chicago the bosses of the Thanhouser, Essanay and Selig studios were beginning to study weather reports from California and ask travelers if Los Angeles really had as many sunny days per year as were reported. Film-makers, wheeling Edison's cumbersome "Black Marie" stage around and maneuvering to catch a little sunlight on the top of a New York building, were beginning to wonder if there wasn't an easier, a pleasanter, a nicer and a more dependable way.

### PROJECT

Hollywood.

It's an exciting thing to stumble on a morsel of the past hidden away in some forgotten pocket of time. Almost everybody hears of such discoveries with an unaccountable lift of the spirit.

> In 1840 Major Stone happens to drop into a shop in Bologne to buy a The sausage is slice of sausage. wrapped, as was the custom of the day, in an old letter. Major Stone nolices that the letter is written in Eng-lish. Then he reads the signature: James Boswell. It had been written by the James Boswell, Dr. Johnson's biographer. The clue leads to a collection of immensely valuable Boswell letters which no one knew existed.

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It's mysterious that that, or Carl Sandburg's discovery of the Lincoln letters in a barrel, should be such a

pleasing tale. Maybe it's simply because we all like to get confirmation of our belief in Buried Treasure. Or maybe it's just that the sudden, unexpected survival of the past strikes some chord in us.

This seems a far cry from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, but the Academy has been going through an adventure vaguely similar. It concerns a longforgotten by-product of the motion picture industry. Our story begins in 1894. In that year, Thomas A.

Edison wished to patent something connected with his new gadget, the motion picture camera: a roll of film called "The Sneeze." There was no way to patent film, so Mr. Edison, being a man with a certain ingenuity, submitted an 8-by-10 card on which were printed the 45 frames of his celluloid movie, and received a certificate of copyright for "The Sneeze" as a photograph. Until the copyright laws were amended in 1912, every motion picture had to be submitted to the Copyright Office as series of photographs on paper strips.

**Treasure Trove** 

Thus the Library of Congress had in its possession a million and a half feet of 35-millimeter paper film, whose sole value at that time was evidence of copyright. Meanwhile the actual films, on highly perishable nitrate stock, gradually dropped out of existence. Most of us know that unless film is given expert and constant care, it deterio-rates, the emulsion cracks away, and finally it drops apart entirely. Only a precious few pictures were preserved by their owners. And the paper films, born of a necessity, gathered dust in the archives of the Library of Congress, regarded, when thought of at all, as unique and curious items-not motion pictures, but the mummies of motion pictures.

The Academy stumbled over the fact that these paper films existed, and then learned that the Library of Congress was anxious to have its paper library transferred back into celluloid. However, the Library lacked an appropriation for the expense involved, even though finegrain film and microphotography suggested possible methods of restoration.

Six years ago the Academy borrowed a selection of the paper rolls from the Library and assumed the responsibil-ity for conducting an experiment in Hollywood. Photographing the fragile paper, much of it without sprocketholes, some without frame lines, required time, patience and adequate financing. Differences in thickness of the paper, quality of the emulsions and the original processing, complicated the problem. Some methods of transferring the paper to 35m film were fairly successful mechanically, but proved too costly for a non-commercial project.

Then, out of the blue, the Academy came upon a brand new firm, anxious to make a name for itself and willing to tackle the problem with a fanatic fervor. The firm, Primrose Productions, abandoned conventional equipment and improvised new equipment for the job. Such equipment literally combined among its component parts, bits from a Norden bombsight, a jukebox and a pinball machine.

This brings us up to September, 1953, at which time the Academy's executive director, Mrs. Margaret Herrick, presented the Library of Congress with the first four rolls of successfully reclaimed film. The Library liked them and agreed to let the Academy proceed with the entire project of converting the paper prints to 16m film. As each film is reclaimed, a print will remain in the Academy employee with a print and a progetive gaing to the Library archives, with a print and a negative going to the Library archives.

#### 56-Year-Old Newsreel

On Nov. 30, 1953, both the Academy and the Library of Congress held a press showing of 12 of the early motion pictures, representing the period between 1897 and 1907. It was a gratifying experience to flash a 56-year-old newsreel on the screen-gratifying because time the press had seen these films, over a half-century old. Gratifying also because it was the first step toward filling the blank spaces in a photo mural that spans that half century. As rapidly as funds are available, the project will be completed. The twelve films shown were: Gatling Gun Crew in The twelve films shown were: Gatling Gun Crew in Action, Edison, 1897; "Gatling Gun Firing by Squad," Edison, 1897; "The Corset Model." Biograph, 1903; "The Way to Sell Corsets." Biograph, 1903; "The Ex-Convict." Edison, 1904; "The Girl at the Window," Biograph, 1903; "An Englishman's Trip to Paris from London," Biograph, 1904; "Great Baltimore Fire." Biograph, 1904; "Latina, Contortionist." Biograph, 1905; "International Contest for the Heavenueith Championchip Scuirge Versus Burns." the Heavyweight Championship, Squires Versus Burns," Miles Bros., 1907; "Automobile Race for the Vsnderbilt Cup," Biograph, 1904; and "The Inn Where No Man Rests," George Melies, 1903. The comedies and dramas have the qualities of primi-As for the news events, they are pure gold. This tives. first batch of work only scratches the surface of the col-We can look forward to scenes from the Spanlection. ish-American and the Boer wars; the Houston Flood of 1900; rare shots of Teddy Roosevelt, and tragic shots of President McKinley just before his assassination. As each roll of paper film is reclaimed and returned to the archives of the nation, the Academy will have the satisfaction of having made a contribution to an important record of American history.



Henry King

### Forty-eighth





**Charles Brackett** 

I was real bewildered now. I looked around the room. Damned if I could make anything out of this mish-mash of "Professor," I asked suspiciously, "Have color and noise. you been drinking?"

He shook his head proudly. "Dot's der whole secret. No you people in der picture business. No imagination. I haff vit vun svoop, solved all der problems of der busi-From now on the patron sees nothing but vot dey ness.

vant to see. Every time a hit." "I don't see anything," I said stubbornly. "Of course not," he said. "First you must sidt down. Then der chair vit its extra-sensory selector vill tune you in to der picture.

He pushed me toward a chair and I sat down. For a moment I was vaguely conscious of him fumbling at something behind me. Then suddenly, a string of screen credits were flashing in front of me. HAROLD ROBBINS PRESENTS A HAROLD ROBBINS PRODUCTION

BASED ON HAROLD ROBBINS' NOVEL BASED ON HAROLD ROBBINS SCREENPLAY BY HAROLD ROBBINS DIRECTED BY HAROLD ROBBINS STARRING HAROLD ROBBINS A nice warm glow ran through me. I turned to the pro-fessor in the dimness. "This is real great," I said. "About time I was recognized in this business."

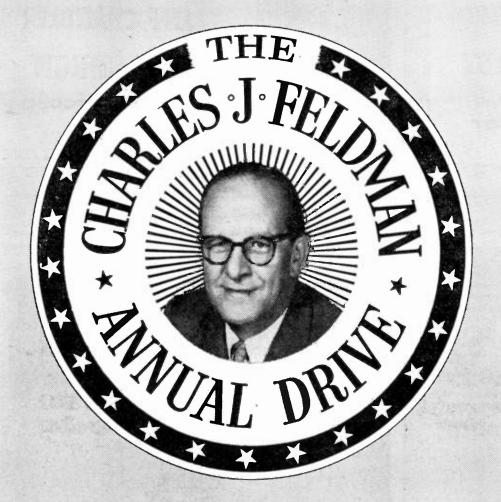
I looked up at the screen again. It was a wonderful Full of beautiful girls and exciting situations. And last, but not least, I was marvelous in the lead. I never

There was-Hollywood.

Universal International

Announces

with Pride .....



JANUARY 3 THROUGH MAY 1, 1954

t's a Happy Boxoffice New Year for you, Mr. Exhibitor, with U-I's "Golden Dozen" for the Charles J. Feldman Annual Drive.

Never in this company's history has there been a stronger group of pictures released in sequence.

Again it demonstrates U-I'SCONFIDENCE in our Industry ... RESPONSIBILITY to you, the Exhibitor, to keep on delivering our present high number of releases ... and **RELIABILITY** of entertainment to please your patrons and keep them coming.

Confidence . . . Responsibility...Reliability!

The Charles J. Feldman Annual Drive gives these words more meaning (meaning more profits) for you than ever before!

Join us for your happiest

### CONFIDENCE, RESPONSIBILITY

### AND RELIABILITY

boxoffice New Year.

### UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# U-I'S "GOLDEN DOZEN" FOR THE



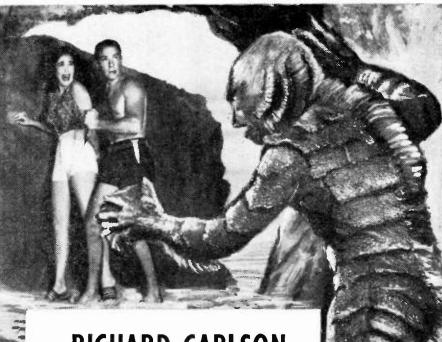
### JANET LEIGH WALKING MY BABY **BACK HOME** COLOR BY Technicolor with **BUDDY HACKETT**

LORI NELSON • SCAT MAN CROTHERS

### **MAUREEN O'HARA JEFF CHANDLER** WAR ARROW COLOR BY Technicolor

co-starring SUZAN BALL with JOHN MCINTIRE . CHARLES DRAKE **DENNIS WEAVER • NOAH BEERY** 





**RICHARD CARLSON** JULIA ADAMS

# Creature from the Black Lagoon

with RICHARD DENNING . NESTOR PAIVA ANTONIO MORENO • WHIT BISSELL

Available in both 2-D and 3-D

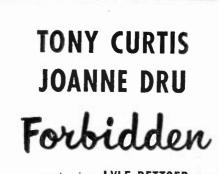


Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

# **CHARLES J. FELDMAN ANNUAL DRIVE**





co-starring LYLE BETTGER with MARVIN MILLER



JEFF CHANDLER

# SUSAN CABOT ABBE LANE *RIDE CLEAR OF DIABLO*

### RHONDA FLEMING YANKEE PASHA COLOR BY Technicolor

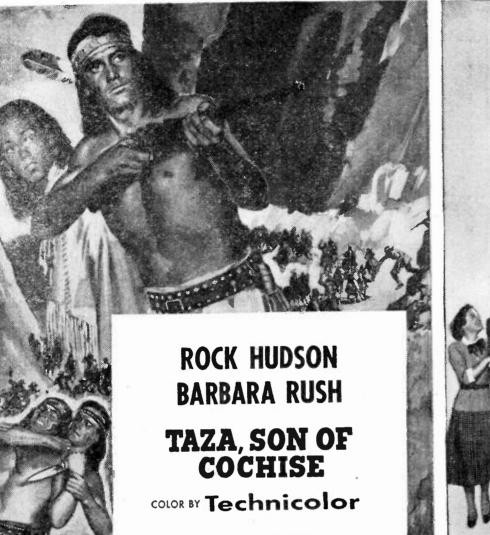
with LEE J. COBB • MAMIE VAN DOREN BART ROBERTS and the MISS UNIVERSE BEAUTIES





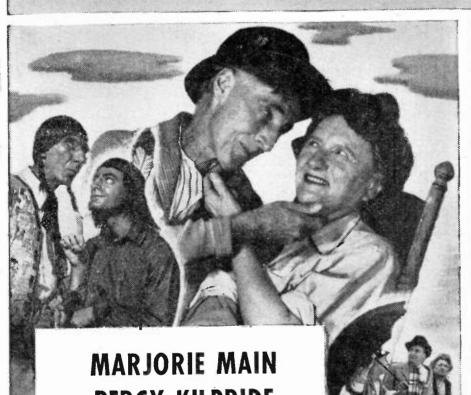
Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# ... for the CHARLES J. FELDMAN ANNUAL DRIVE



Available in both 2-D and 3-D

JAMES STEWART JUNE ALLYSON The GLENN MILLER STORY COLOR BY Technicolor with CHARLES DRAKE • GEORGE TOBIAS and Guest Stars FRANCES LANGFORD • LOUIS ARMSTRONG GENE KRUPA • BEN POLLACK THE MODERNAIRES





JOHN PAYNE MARI BLANCHARD



with ALICE KELLEY • BRETT HALSEY ALAN MOWBRAY



# DAN DURYEA

### FORT LARAMIE COLOR BY Technicolor

with JOYCE MacKENZIE BARTON MacLANE





### **Theatre Tele: More Hope Than Real**

### By HY HOLLINGER

the industry's retarded child. Enthusiasm of proponents of the medium has not waned, however. They still feel it can serve as a potent sideline biz for theatres throughout the country once the technical and programming bugs are ironed out. However they were saying just that a year ago.

Closed-circuit hookups were snowed under the avalanche of conversation and concrete accomplishments relating to 3-D, wide-screen, CinemaScope and stereophonic sound. The problem of retrieving audiences via the theatres' standard product — pictures — became more immediate.

### **Only 100 Equipped**

As a result, except for temporary installations for specific theatre tv events, not a single new permanent closed-circuit unit was unveiled during the year. The number of theatre TV installations remains at about 100, an infinitesimal number when compared to the approximately 20.000 theatres in the country. The largest number of thea-tres yet corralled for a theatre tv event has been 50 and that was two years ago for the firs' Rocky Marciano-Jce Walcott heavyweight championship fight.

This factor points up the dif-ficulty in obtaining sufficient line clearances from the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. Biggest complaint of the closed-circuit promoters has been the turtle-like pace of the AT&T in providing and servicing long lines and local loops. Frequent attempts have been made to lick this bottleneck and the objective was one of the prime aims of the National Theatre Television Exhibitors Committee in appealing to the Federal Communi-cations Commission for separate theatre bands. While the FCC did not grant this request, theatres received assurance that the lines would be available once the me-dium operated on a more or less regular basis.

There were only two attractions available to theatres during the past year—both in the field of sports. A lineup of 45 theatres with New York and New England blacked out was obtained for the Rocky Marciano-Roland LaStarza heavyweight championship fight on Sept. 24. This Nate Halpern Thea-tre Network Television event grossed about \$300.000, with thea-tres charging \$2.50 to \$4.80. Second attraction, a series of five Notre Dame football games pre-sented on Saturday afternoons during the fall, brought in a total of about \$65.000. The lineup of theatres varied from eight to a peak of 15, with the admission charges ranging from 85c to \$2.40.

#### Lots of Big Talk

The gridcasts were offered by Box Office Television, Inc., which entered the closed-circuit field during 1953. BOTV, headed by attorney Milton Mound, is "talking" an ambitious program of 30 closedcircuit events annually including sports, Broadway plays, music opera and concerts. To encourage exhibitors to install closed-circuit units, BOTV is offering units. both do not, in every instance, agree permanent and portable, on a with the thinking of one pioneer permanent and portable, on a with the thinking of one pioneer rental basis. However, it is de-manding such rental payments for nameless. one year in advance. For example, at \$50 per use, it is asking theatres in the world our experiences in the contracting for the portable out-fits to shell out \$1,500 when signing for the service. Halpern's TNT BOTV represent two different philosophies pertaining to the closed-circuit medium. TNT favors the occasional outstanding event of to the national importance while BOTV leans toward a continuity of events as a means to build the medium. On the basis of b.o. receipts, the "occasional use" people seem to have justified their claim so far that "you need a big attraction to do big boxoffice." TNT and BOTV are the only promoters so far that have succeeded in presenting events. There have been others who have attempted to invade the field, but their efforts have so far consisted of conversation only. Biggest bust of the year was the attempt of Capell, Mac-Donald & Co., the Dayton, O. sales

Theatre TV marked its fith birth- | closed-circuit subsidiary. No sooner day during 1953, but it remained had it grandiosely announced its intention to present a series of weekly boxing bouts and to pro-mote sales meetings via the medium than it disbanded the project. Also established during the year was Stadium Network Television, an outfit headed by Ed Doriman which had as its objective the presentation of theatre tv events in ballparks. Two other firms-Tele-Conference and Closed-Cir-cuit Television Co.—were conspicu-

ous by their silence. One of the prime objectives of the medium, eyed by exhibitors as well as the promoters, is use of the medium during theatre off-hours, especially for business and industry use for sales meetings, etc. Both industry's reluctance to try something new and the lack of big screen color have been the factors that have delayed the advance of this project. The color problem is on its way to solution and may be one of the major advances theatre tv will make during 1954. RCA, General Precision and 20th-Fox. latter with Eidophor, are expected o push developments in this field during the coming year. Business use of the medium, al-

though dormant since TNT's presentation of a Lees Carpets meeting last year, appears headed for a comeback in 1954, with two business meetings scheduled for this month. TNT is staging a 16-Theatre confab for the Sealtest Division of the National Dairy Products Corp. on Jan. 22 while BOTV will present a 31-city meet-ing for the Ford Motor Co. on Jan. 28.

### **Thinks Fewer But Better Pix Can Keep Theatres** Alive By ROBERT J. O'DONNELL

Dallas. In my opinion, fewer but bigger pictures could keep the big city theatres alive; for today, I think, the weekly same opening day, year in and year out, is a thing of the past. Cities from 250,000 up must be flexible and exploit every bit of amusement income before indiscriminately changing shows every seven days. However, these are not the theatres that are most in jeopardy. It is the three-and-fourchange-a-week theatres and the split-week theatres that are a probem, although in our situation we have been for many months extending the three-day runs to four and five days; the four days to seven days; and the two-day to three-days—and attempting to get the money out of the better at-

tractions. The equipment migraine in our situation is no particular headache, as we jumped the gun last spring and have completely equipped for widescreen and stereophonic sound more than 80 of our 100 theatres. We have attempted to secure the best all-purpose screen, and be-lieve we have done this. But our ideas of a fine, all-purpose screen

most active and successful summer wherein we emphasized widescreen and Mound's and stereophonic sound. We have two different found it well worth the gamble. despite the fact that in 38 sets of our RCA equipment we have an extra sound-head that will be obsolete when and as all companies go to the four-track sound-on-film. Writing this off will be a bit burdensome but we believe it has proven our point during the past summer, as it has always been our aim and ambition to keep abreast of the times and to attempt, in our theatres, to give the last word in entertainment. We feel that if we had not installed stereophonic sound an all-purpose screens and every facility for three-dimension pictures, we would have been derelict in our duty. We have been guilty of juggling our prices in Texas, and raising consultancy agency, which formed them for outstanding attractions be able to sell? As presently con-Theatre Television Associates as a such as "From Here to Eternity," stituted, television cannot pay

"Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," "Shane," "House of Wax," etc. But it is still the poor man's entertain-It is still the poor man semicitan-ment when you consider that our normal admission price is 70c in-cluding tax, and our increase— with the exception of "The Robe"— has been around 95c including tax, and increase plus three and in some instances plus threedimension glasses.

On Dec. 1, in my local garage, they raised my daily parking rate from 60c to 70c. Not too long ago it was 40c. How can anybody object to paying 80c or \$1 for a great evening in a theatre when a second-rate parking lot charges almost that much for parking an automobile for a day?

With reference to widescreens, it is not my opinion that Cinema-Scope is applicable to all pictures, nor would I care to see it that way. It has been my hope that we would have an all-purpose screen and an all-purpose theatre. By that I mean that each week we could put plenty of exciting advertising and showmanship in our publicity—not just showing a standard motion picture, but appealing to the public by showing a CinemaScope one week, a three-dimension the next. and perhaps a widescreen and stereophonic sound attraction next week. This would put our management and advertising departments on their toes and get us out of the rut of selling 52 attractions in 52 weeks in almost an identical manner. Certainly, different types of pictures lend themselves to different types of exciting copy.

As you know, Dallas was one of the guinea pigs for "Kiss Me Kate" in three-dimension, and I do be-(Continued on page 56)

### **TRUE WESTERNS VERSUS** H'WOOD COWBOYS By WILLIAM ORNSTEIN

#### Tucson. guns; and the cattle are running

and the right tempo in literature and movies to turn out a true western," in the opinion of J. Frank Dobie, erstwhile professor of English at Texas University and author of such books as "The Voice of the Coyote" and "The Mustangs."

Dobie appeared here in a onenight stand at the University of Arizona where "The Cowboy in Literature" was the topic of a Sunday evening. Gathered in the tre-mendous stadium-effect auditorium of the University, whose stage is almost, if not as large as. Radio City's Music Hall in New York. were more than 1,000 listeners and curious who turned out to see what the Texan historian of the western looked like and what he had to say

Shocked with a goodly crop of white hair. Dobie could pass off as a second Will Rogers. He has the drawl, the mien, the unruly wave flowing over his brow and all the general mannerisms of the late great humorist whose "All I know is what I read in the papers" was his calling card.

"The popular Hollywood cowboy," Dobie declared. "never walks through a door but jumps out a window; he is always shooting two

dump their product—as some fear they may—the only effect this would have would be to drop the

The film industry has begun to realize that Subscriber-Vision of-

fers an electronic distribution sys-

tem to many millions of TV homes,

which will eventually permit a high

quality film to gross \$6-\$7,000,000

Our 10-day test of Subscriber-

Vision in New York last June

proved conclusively not only how well our system works, but, equally important, that more than 90% of

all set-owners would be willing to

pay for superior TV entertainment

alongside the regular sponsored

Our method, involving transmis-

sion of a coded signal which is unscrambled at the home set by

dint of a small, compact decoder.

has been developed and improved

over the past three years in tests authorized by the FCC, and held in conjunction with WOR-TV in New

York. All of the FCC Commission-

ers, together with the chiefs of the legal and engineering departments,

came from Washington last year to witness Subscriber-Vision and expressed themselves as deeply

We are going to the FCC shortly,

with an application for a commercial tollcasting license in metro-politan New York. We expect that.

within 18 months of obtaining FCC

approval, we will have installed at

least 500.000 decoders in the

impressed with the system.

bottom out of the market.

in a single evening.

shows.

### **Skiatron's Tollvision** And Hollywood **By ARTHUR LEVEY**

(President, Skiatron)

Radical changes have taken place | enough to suit the studios. And in the thinking of the film indus- even if all the producers were to try in relation to subscription television. And the film people are not the only ones to see the poten-tials of tollviewing. We have been contacted by leaders from many fields, from doctors, scientists and educators to important figures in the world of sports and the legiti-mate theatre, and even by heads of theatre circuits.

Even though the Federal Communications Commission has yet to make up its mind where pay-asyou-see television fits into the developing broadcasting pattern, subscription TV is already a reality in the minds of a great many of the policy-making executives. Never before has there been such intense interest in Subscriber-vision, such determination to ex-amine every aspect of the method for its potential as the cheapest. most effective way of establishing a box-office in the home.

To a very considerable extent, the march of events during the past year has pinpointed the need for tollvision. The economics of commercial telecasting are such that even the broadcasters themselves, who might be considered having a vested interest in the status quo. are no longer shutting their eyes to the simple truth that they have reached the saturation point in programming quality under the prevailing guarity under the prevailing sponsor-telecaster rela-tionship. Today, subscription tele-vision is no longer in a position of trying to force itself on an unwilling industry. Events during 1953 have proven conclusively 1 TV broadcasting is to survive and prosper, it must broaden its base to take in pay-as-you-see telecast-ing. Resisting it not only defies economic logic, it is merely delaying the inevitable. The film people are watching the spectre of color TV over the horizon. It doesn't take much imagination to figure out what this could mean to those millions upon millions of dollars worth of blackand-white negatives now crowding the vaults. These pictures are being held back with the optimistic hope that the day may come when some television sponsor will fork over a sum large enough to compensate producers for their investment.

"You gotta have the right tune from the time they leave the range and the right tempo in literature until they get to Canada." The only film he saw that was any good, the author stated, was "North 36," a mute drama. He admitted he only goes to see those westerns "advertised as masterpieces," and there haven't been many such advertised. Another thing about western

films, according to Dobie, is that in all the traveling the cows do, "it is very rare they stop for grass or water and I can't even read-their brands. 'Git Along Little Dogie' has been sung and played so much it's become a Texas lullabye.

"The touchstone for all kinds of literature is the use of the right words and the right tune, the right tone and the right time." He pointed to specific examples of Mark Twain and Zane Grey, com-menting that "Twain's wife, Livvy, tried on several occasions to repeat the slang used by her husband in his books but couldn't. She got the right words but the wrong tune.

As for Zane Grey, Dobie added, He had his hired hands put on local color for his books. Gone these many years, his books are still coming out. He provided his secretary with enough stories for lifetime. He doesn't have the right time for the tune in his books."

During the talk, Dobie made use of all the mannerisms of Will Rogers, adding a drawling pun here and there to eke a laugh out of his audience. He is sharp and keen-witted and shifted his balance from time to time for an easy stance before the music stand. He read from notes and embellished them from memory. His stage audience was as spellbound as the visitors out front. At least they appeared as such, including Mary I. Jeffries, forum director, who drew the centre gold chair behind the footlights.

#### Literary Hopalongs

"Cowboys read Police Gazette then as they do Life today," Dobie said

When asked whether the real cowboy was disappearing, the Texan novelist and authority on Lone Star lore answered, "I don't think so. More cowboys are wearing spurs in cars than on horses. There is something about living in ma-chines that fascinates them."

Dobie went on to say that, in his opinion, "The Virginian" by Owen Wister is the most popular light novel in the last century. Not a cowboy or cow is mentioned in the book. It has no cow psy-chology and it has left an indelible impression on the mind of the public. So much so, there has be-come an American saying, 'When you call me a Virginian, smile," he drawled.

In early books, all cowboys were witty and lantern-jawed men. They were called lifters and Cow Boys (because they attended cows) and most of the yarns dealt with cattle thieves. Dobie declared. He drew a verbal picture of the inception of the cowboy to present-day literature.

One of the best cowboy literature which reveals the natural life on the trail which is slow and provides natural Andy Adams' "The Log of the Cowboy." he said. "There are no women in this book," Dobie added, "and when Adams was advised to put a woman and love story in the book to make it popular, he refused stating he had never seen a woman on the trail and if she had been there she would have only been in the way. There is shooting and one drowning and true-to-life. It has the right tone and the right tempo, and 40% of the book dealer with anecdotes and natural set-tings," he said. In concluding, Dobie told of visiting small towns where there were two film shows a week and all he could see advertised were westerns." The popularity of the western movies in Europe and Japan can be accounted for as in the small towns of the west. These pictures are a travesty on life, but apparently the range people like them.

Hollywood, in its search for greater revenue, has gone to a wider screen. Here again, the reissue value of ordinary pix is depressed. What will happen to those millions of feet of standard film

that the companies will no longer

metropolitan area, where nearly 4,000,000 sets are already in use. Manufacturers have assured us that they stand ready to swing into production of the decoders almost as soon as the FCC acts, and we are prepared to license them under our patents.

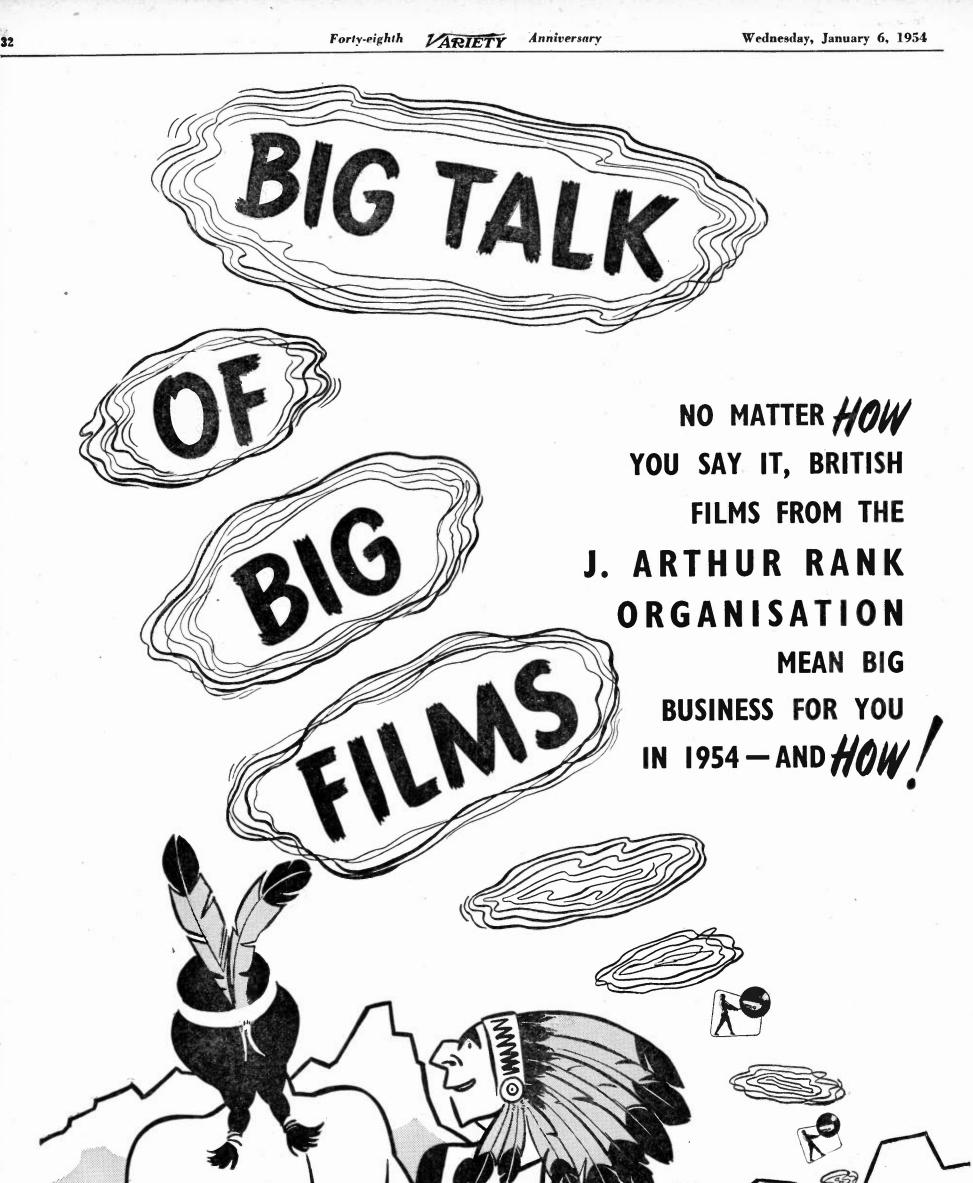
The cost of the decoders will be quite small in mass production. Following FCC approval, we expect to implement a cooperative arrangement with Western Union which will process all subscription applications, including billing and accounting etc. Installation of our decoders is

so simple, it should cost no more than about \$2.50. However, our present thinking is not to charge our subscribers either for the decoders nor for the installation since we hope to amortize the cost out of our eventual subscription fees.

We feel assured that, once the FCC has approved tollcasting the entire broadcasting industry will be revitalized along with allied entertainment industries.

"In time all cowboys will be modeled after Hollywood.

.





THE CRUEL SEA by Nicholas Monserrat Jack Hawkins Donald Sinden Denholm Elliott Virginia McKenna Producer: Leslie Norman Director: Charles Frend A Michael Balcon Production

#### CENELUEN

GENEVIEVE Colour by Technicolor Dinah Sharidan John Gregson Kay Kandall Kenneth More Produced and directed by Henry Cornelius

THE SEEKERS Colour by Eastmancolour Jack Hawkins Glynis Johns Noel Purcell Inia Ti Wiata Producer: George Brown Director: Ken Annakin

### THE TITFIELD THUNDERBOLT

Colour by Technicolor Stanley Holloway George Relph Naunton Wayne John Gregson Producer: Michael Truman Director: Charles Crichton A Michael Balcon Production

### YOU KNOW WHAT SAILORS

Colour by Technicolor Donald Sinden Akim Tamiroff Sarah Lawson Naunton Wayne Producers: Julian Wintle and Pater Rogers Director: Ken Annakin

DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE Colour by Technicolor Dirk Bogarde Muriel Pavlow Kenneth More Donald Sinden Producer: Betty Box Director: Ralph Thomas

FORBIDDEN CARGO Nigel Patrick Joan Collins Terence Morgan Jack Warner Greta Gynt Producer: Sydney Box Director: Harold French

THE RAINBOW JACKET Colour by Technicolor Robert Morley Edward Underdown Bill Owen Producer: Michael Relph Director: Basil Dearden A Michael Balcon Production

.

THE MILLION POUND NOTE by Mark Twein Colour by Technicolor Gregory Peck Roneld Squire Jane Griffiths Producer: John Bryan Director: Roneld Neame PERSONAL AFFAIR Gene Tierney Leo Genn Glynis Johns Producer: Antony Darnborough Director: Anthony Pelissier

ROMEO AND JULIET by William Shakespeare Colour by Technicolor Laurence Harvey Susan Shentall Flora Robson Norman Wooland Producers: Sandro Ghenzi, and Joseph Janni Director: Renato Castellani

### THE LOVE LOTTERY

Colour by Technicolor David Niven Peggy Cummins Herbert Lom Anne Vernon Producer: Monja Danischewsky Director: Charles Crichton A Michael Balcon Production

.

MEET MR. LUCIFER Stanley Holloway Peggy Cummins Kay Kendell Barbara Murray Producer: Monja Danischewsky Director: Anthony Pelissier A Michael Balcon Production

TROUBLE IN STORE Norman Wisdom Margaret Rutherford Moira Lister Derek Bond Producer: Maurice Cowan Director: John Paddy Carstairs

THE BEACHCOMBER Colour by Technicolor Glynis Johns Robert Newton Donald Sinden Producer: William MacQuitty Director: Muriel Box

PROJECT M.7. Phyllis Calvert James Donald Robert Beatty Herbert Lom Producer: Antony Darnborough Director: Anthony Asquith

WEST OF ZANZIBAR Colour by Technicolor Anthony Steel Sheila Sim Producer: Leslie Norman Director: Harry Watt A Michael Balcon Production

### HIGHLAND FLING Paul Douglas Derethy Alise

ul Dougles Dorothy Alison Producer: Michael Truman Director: Alexander MacKendrick A Michael Balcon Production MALTA STORY Alec Guinness Jack Hawkins Anthony Steel Muriel Pavlow Producer: Peter de Sarigny Director: Brian Desmond Hurst

ALWAYS A BRIDE Peggy Cummins Terence Morgan Ronald Squire Producer: Robert Garrett Director: Ralph Smart

.

THE SQUARE RING Jack Warner Robert Beatty Maxwell Reed Joan Collins Kay Kendall Producer: Michael Relph Director: Basil Dearden A Michael Balcon Production

TURN THE KEY SOFTLY Yvonne Mitchell Terence Morgan Joan Collins Kathleen Harrison Producer: Maurice Cowan Director: Jack Lee

.

THE KIDNAPPERS Duncan Macrae Adrienne Corri Producers: Sergi Nolbandov and Leslie Parkyn Director: Philip Leacock

FAST AND LOOSE Stanley Holloway Kay Kendall Brian Reece Producer: Teddy Baird Director: Gordon Parry

BOTH SIDES OF THE LAW Anne Crawford Peggy Cummins Rosamundi John Terence Morgan Producer: William MacQuitty Director: Muriel Box

.

A DAY TO REMEMBER Stanley Holloway Odile Versois James Hayter Producer: Betty Box Director: Ralph Thomas

DESPERATE MOMENT Dirk Bogarde Mai Zetterling Philip Friend Albert Lieven Producer: George H. Brown Director: Compton Bennett

THE GENTLE GUNMAN John Mills Dirk Bogarde Robert Beatty Elizabeth Sellars Producer: Michael Ralph Director: Basil Dearden A Michael Balcon Production 27

### RANK ORGANISATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

# - then there'll be Gregory Peck in THE PURPLE PLAIN

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Jerry Wald

## SADIE, SHEIKS AND SIRENS

### (Sex On The Screen)

By JERRY WALD (Executive Producer, Columbia Pictures)

### Hollywood

Sex not only helps make the world go around (as poets and composers have told us), but sex also keeps pix pro-jectors revolving in theatres from Broadway to Burma. Sex, it is said, and not silver nitrate, is the chief ingredient of motion picture film. If this is so,

then one may well ask, How has Hollywood handled sex?

What is essentially a very difficult question has been given many easy answers. Nowhere is Hollywood more vulnerable than in the realm of sex and passion, and the attack upon the screen and upon movie makers dates back almost to the time when Thomas Alva Edison turned his first crank handle.

Critics of the screen are apt to forget that home audiences see as many stories of love, unrequited love, pas-

sion, marital contentment and sheer animal attraction in one week of television viewing as they are apt to get in three months of moviegoing. Yet despite this concen-trated dose of sex at home, interrupted only by special pleadings for cake mixes and beauty applications, the movie screen and the movie industry have been burdened with the onus of offending public morals in matters con-cerning sex. For almost all of its history, the movies have constituted an "open season" for the moralists, the watchand-wards, the Comstocks of American society.

In 1896, two years after the first public exhibition of film. two stage performers, May Irwin and John C. Rice, posed for a kiss interlude which delighted some and shocked others. The kiss itself, was lifted from a scene in the play in which the two performers were then appear-ing, "The Widow Jones," and although there was no hue and outcry against the stage performance, there was considerable agitation about it up on the screen, and one Chicago newspaper editor referred to this friendly buss as "no better than a lyric of the stockyards." It should have been obvious even to the earliest pioneers of this infant entertainment medium, that the movies were "in for it." Even such eminent and clear-thinking historians as Charles and Mary Beard joined the attackers of the silver screen, charging the movies with debasing the moral fibre of America.

### A Force for the Good

It is my sincere conviction that during the past 50 years the movies, in many respects, have served to raise the level of public taste not only in the realm of the physical appur-tenances of daily living, but in the realm of ideas and ideals as well. It is also my belief that the movies have performed an exemplary service in the careful handling of sex on the screen. There have been, of course, exceptions; but these exceptions have been at a minimum and have earned the same degree of reproach from Hollywood, which they earned at the hands of the public. The movies have mirrored the temper of the tiems in morals and mores, and, if anything, have actually anticipated the trend of attitudes toward sexual relationships. The movies have not created moral values, nor debased them, nor undermined them.

In an industry which has produced some 25,000 feature length pictures in 50-odd years of its history, it would be unusual, to say the least, to discover that a few of these have offended public morals and good taste, including, by the way, the taste of Hollywood and serious film-makers as The attributed immorality or a-morality which has been fastened upon the picture industry is no monopoly at all, when one considers the publishers and their comic books and lurid book jackets, and the theatrical producers and their revues, their burlesques and some of their threeact dramas. This consideration is not noted here as either a justification or an apologia; the point is that pix have been more subject to censorship and scrutiny; films are more immediate to their audiences and therefore more vulnerable; movies deal with live images, and being more immediate are, generally, the first point of attack. There has been justified and temperate criticism of the content of motion pictures, and in these instances producers and the industry have worked for improvement. There is no reason why the celebrated (or infamous in

its day) Irwin-Rice kiss should have raised such a storm of protest except for the fact that it was a daring novelty. Kissing had been evinced in Shakespeare, in the robust Restoration Comedies, and even in the theatre of the Kembles and the Booths. Sex on the American screen, in fact, had a dry, puritanical aura to it for at least the first two decades of film history, and romance was best expressed in the pollyanna school of fingertip-touching romance.

This was the period when the heroine inevitably had long, golden curls, wore a wide-brimmed hat, and strolled into the sunset with "The Boy" to eternal happiness or its 1910 equivalent. American womanhood-girlhood would be more appropriate—was personified in the lovable roles which Mary Pickford portrayed to delighted audiences. Sex manifested itself generally in hand-holding and was never the central problem of any story. It was World War I which wrought almost overnight changes in the moral attitudes of the people of America. America had been canvassing for the politically emancipated woman since the Civil War and the Susan B. An-thony Crusade for suffrage. The campaign for the sexually emancipated woman began when the boys came home from Parec, when the hemlines started to climb, and the cigaret holders began to appear. "The America of the beginning of the last decade (1920-30)," writes James Truslow Adams in "The Epic of America" (1933), "was a very different one from that which had entered World War I. The idealism that had been rapidly making progress in accomplish-ment under Roosevelt and under Wilson in his first term had largely disappeared. A certain recklessness had taken its place." This recklessness was an aftermath of the war, a moral backwash as some historians have called it, and the movies went about the business of reflecting the tenor of those days.

of the gangster: "Male and Female." based on Barrie's 'Admirable Crichton," co-starring Meighan and play, Gloria Swanson (who had had a rather short run as a vamp herself) dealt with the intimate love story of a lady of quality and her butler on a desert island. The story flouted moral conventions, dealt in sophisticated fashion with problems of illicit love, and was as open in its defiance of the pre-war moral status quo as America's flourishing racketeering, as revolutionary as the new era of jazz, and as flaunting of traditions as the newly created Prohibition era drinkers.

Cecil B. DeMille followed with other pictures in the same vein, including "Don't Change Your Husband," "For Better or Worse," and "Forbidden Fruit," all stressing sex and moral emancipation. Naturally, he had imitators who tackled the same theme with varying degrees of taste and license. But the trend toward this new attitude toward sex on the screen had its counterpart in other phases of Amer-ican life. "DeMille's imitators." Ruth Inglis writes in "Freedom of the Movies" (Chicago U. Press, 1947), 'were even less subtle, and pictures defying the old-fashioned canons of decency and morality became as common as the contemporary novels and plays in similar vein.'

#### Namby-Pablum Pix

If American movies are to share any kind of guilt at all, then conceivably it might be for perpetuating the girly-girly myth about American womanhood. Long after the "Down East" and the "Pollyanna" school of motion pictures had passed public vogue, there were producers and filmmakers who persisted in offering the public this pablum-loaded view of the relationship between men and women. As one looks back at pictures of that era, the sacrosanct era of sex, one gets the feeling that unlikely children, dressed up in adults' clothes, were playing at lovemaking. The hero invariably chased the heroine through some backlot sylvan glade and finally caught her neath a weeping willow; the heroine dropped her eyes when the hero went after his reward kiss; and when he forced himself to a point of proposal, he dropped to one knee and rapped his chest manfully.

The early Mary Pickford pictures and Charles Ray films Cupid-bow lips-when razzy, jazzy Clara Bow and 'It' burst upon the screen. American audiences awakened to sex by the aftermath of World War I were delighted with what they saw.

The flapper era offered moviegoers a new view of the American woman as the rolled-stocking, hipflask-toting, bobbed-hair hoyden. The flapper era also made discussion about sex socially acceptable in quarters where it had never even been whispered before. But Clara Bow's pic-tures and Sue Carol's may have asked questions about sex, but never attempted to answer them. "Sex is here to sex, but never attempted to answer them. stay," was a contemporary wisecrack. But no attempt was made to explain what sex was and how it operated.

"Sex is sin" has been a prevalent view in many parts of American life. In the early days of the screen, when sex exhibited itself on the screen, aside from the already referred to idyllic concept of fingertip-touching romance, it was portrayed as evil—the vampires, the illicit lovers, the cycle started by Cecil B. DeMille with his production "Male and Female." The vampire school shocked its audi-ence, but it was superficial. The flapper school was a shock, but it, too, was superficial. The happet school was a shock, but it, too, was superficial. The fatal female tribe— Garbo, Dietrich, Lamarr, Swanson—made the first hesitant steps toward exploring the anatomy of love.

Interestingly enough the Garbo type, the neurotic, introspective lover so well exemplified in the actress' por-trayal of "Anna Karenina" or "Camille," had its begin-ning with that cycle which began with the great "Latin Lover"—Rudolph Valentino. Valentino was the male counterpart to the Bara vamp. Valentino had many imita-tors and successors—Rod LaRocque John Gilbert Birardo tors and successors-Rod LaRocque, John Gilbert, Ricardo Cortez, Antonio Moreno, Gilbert Roland, Ramon Novarroall men whose performances showed them to be practiced in the arts of love. Their counterparts were to be found in the "rough-em-up" school of lovers—James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, Charles Bickford, Clark Gable.

#### Don't Talk It to Death

When the movies were silent, if our hero wanted to make known his love, he generally offered his lady a freshly plucked rose, and clasping his free had to his bosom, gesticulated expressions of adoration. She, on the other hand, bowed her head with benign satisfaction and a carefully manufactured shyness which reflected propriety as well as acceptance.

Greta Garbo during the latter stages of the same era refined the art of silent love-making to something more subtle, more realistic and more natural. Although we might characterize her performance today as something with what had comparise gone on befor she was subtle.

### **OPERATION EYEBALL** By ARCH OBOLER

I have been in Europe for many months. I have returned to find my infant 3-D already buried and already resurrected. I have come back to screens that have widened. I have returned to a most complicated motion picture world of Unistrut curvaceous

screens, Lenticular polaroids, interlocks, Lucky Seven Magic-Vuers, Nord-on-one-strip, anamorphic lenses, not to speak of front, back and sideways Altec speakers, quadruple magnets on the soundheads, Kinevox, Stancil and N.T.S., with Matty Fox in the middle, and whose ratio is on first?

Gentlemen of science, promotion, and merchandising, enough is enough! I recently attended the Chicago TOA meeting and am still bleeding for the TOA-ers. There won't be enough psy-

chiatrists invented even in Russia to take care of them. Between off-angle filters, and the bank-won't-loan-for-newprojection-lenses, and rental glasses weren't sterilized. and Max next door won't let them have the back where ne sleeps so that the new screen can be spread out-well, as I said, enough is enough!

So out of the wisdom that I have accumulated from a careful study, these months abroad, of the techniques of da Vinci and Michelangelo, I have a simple solution which solves all.

It goes like this-since the new techniques of the motion picture business are having difficulty adapting themselves to the public, why not adapt the public to the new techniques?

We will start with true three-dimension. Since, by now, everybody knows that you can't get true 3-D without glasses, let's eliminate the glasses by polarizing the customers. John Dreyer, the eminent scientist of Blue Ash, Ohio, has excellent polarizing solutions which could be sprayed left eye, right eye into the customer's optics as he enters.

With the problem of the glasses so neatly solved, let us attack, with equal forthrightness, the matter of wide-screens. How ridiculous to expect each exhibitor to have a variable masker which, almost reel to reel, shivers outward or inward to compensate for a palpitating picture ratio

If CinemaScope is here to stay the answer, again, lies not in the theatre but with the public.

My solution for CinemaScope, then, is a simple operation which permits the squeezed CinemaScope picture to be projected un-unsqueezed on a normal screen and with the compensation for the squeezing taking place right in the viewer's eyes.

#### Can Get It for You Wholesale

I've consulted a local charlatan, well versed in wholesale operations of all sorts, and he tells me that, on a mass operation basis, an anamorphic-type viewing lens can be inserted into the human eyeball, in plastic, at something

under \$5 per operation, including the towels. In my "Cut-Up The Customer" solution to the motion picture industry's mechanical problems, I've also considered the problem of Cinerama. Cinerama is a special case, since the true wrap-around screen is really hard to engineer internally.

This now becomes a matter of eugenics; in other words, we must scientifically culture a "customeriens sapiens" over a number of generations who is hereditarily able to resolve the Reeves-Waller wonder-flicker.

I hear soft objections from Exhibitor Marc Wolf. My dear Mr. Wolf, if you think it is impossible to develop a human being with an eyeball that reaches back to his eardrums, consider what has been done with goldfish. Compare the miracle of the goggle-eyed, multifinned fantail, shining in iridescent Technicolor, to the fish from which it originated—the flat, sepia-colored, mud-lurking carp.

I say that anything that the goldfish can do we can do. Not quickly, not easily, but then, gentlemen, what comes easily in this life other than a stock contract at Republic for a pretty horse?

If the exhibitors will join together and permit their genes to be the first used for this new treatment, I am sure that within a few generations we will have customers with built-in Cinerama.

of the Somerset Maugham story, Rita Hayworth and Aldo Ray as the celebrated Sadie and sergeant in "Sadie Thomp-son," discuss sex and sex problems with an adult approach.

Illicit love has been the central theme of literature since Biblical times. The screen had only dared to touch upon it in a direct and realistic fashion within the past few years. Certainly movie makers knew illicit love existed; the propriety of exhibiting this theme on the ion ( timing



Arch Oboler

There were two pictures which blasted away the two proceeding trends—the age of innocence, and the saga of the vampire—and these were "The Miracle Man" and "Male and Female," both produced in 1919. "The Miracle Man" with Thomas Meighan exploited the growing order But sound was to prove very devilish in its develop-ments. One could hear "I love you" enunciated just so many times, before it grew wearisome. And the more talky these love sequences grew, the more annoyed were the paying customers. Human passion is not an emotion which is discoursed about by the participants, as any man or woman in love will freely attest. Movie makers now faced the problem of reflecting proper sex mores, without talking audiences to death.

Motion picture producers are men extremely sensitive to public reaction. No producer within my knowledge has ever knowingly sought to offend public sensibilities. No producer has ever knowingly made a picture which he even thought would flaunt public acceptance. Some producers have made pictures in advance of prevailing Hollywood notions on sex and morality; but never in advance of public mores.

The cardinal rule of picture making is never to offend the innocent or frustrate the intelligent. Contrary to popular belief, the Motion Picture Producers' Code is not simply a guide to express prohibitions; it is a compendium of common sense and good taste. The critic who fancies himself a realist says Hollywood never treats the subject of illicit love, because of prohibitions of the Code. This is not true. The relationship between Deborah Kerr and Burt Lancaster in "From Here to Eternity" was, first, adult; and, second, very natural. In the screen version

Do the participants in illicit love affairs always pay for What is the norm of illicit love relationships? their sin? Dr. Kinsey has written two significant books on the subject which have already received a wide acceptance. Certainly the behavior pattern of men and women, as evinced in his statistical survey, is so basic and so deep within human personality itself, that even the most avid enemy of the movies cannot blame the screen for Dr. Kinsey's interesting findings. Dr. Kinsey's book, if it says nothing else, makes the point that based on his findings Americans are indeed a grown-up and adult race of people. The movies, over the years, through the intrusion of adult themes, and adult handling of adult themes, have been saying the same thing.

In the specific regard to illicit relationships the Code works no hardship on the producer making his picture within the framework of good taste and good sense. The Code, in fact, is the sum total of accepted moral be-havior, and is entirely realistic in the handling of this There is no inexorable rule that this sin necestheme. sarily be followed by punishment, but rather than repentance be the consequence, at least, of this infraction of our moral code.

We have moved from the silly in sexual matters to the subtle; we have moved from the supercilious siren to Sadie. In short, we have moved from the siren to subtlety, and everyone seems better off for it-including the motion picture industry.

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JOSE FERRER "MOULIN ROUGE"

HUMPHREY BOGART JENNIFER JONES · GINA LOLLOBRIGIDA • "BEAT the DEVIL"

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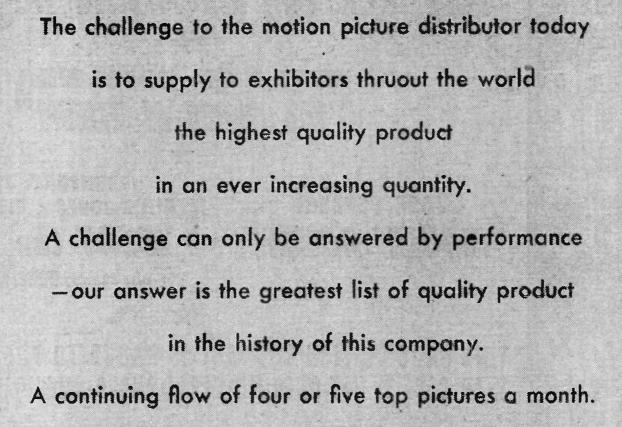
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AND NOW

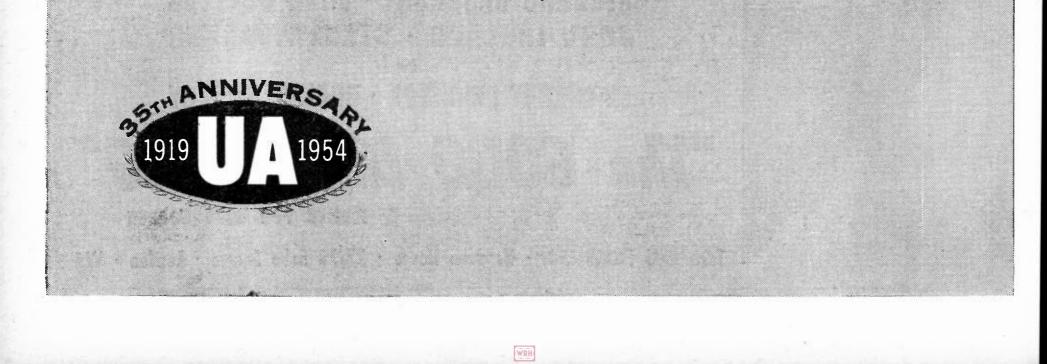
## JOHN IRELAND · STANLEY BAKER and MARGARET LEIGHTON · ROBERT MORLEY "The GOOD DIE YOUNG" \* FILMED FOR WIDE SCREEN ROMULUS FILMS LTD. · Nascreno House · 27/28 Soho Square · London · W.1

WRH

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



### UNITED ARTISTS



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

**ADVENTURES OF** ALEXANDER AMERICANO ACT OF LOVE ROBINSON CRUSOE THE CONQUEROR In Eastman color, Widescreen Anatole Litvak Prod. Starring Starring Glenn Ford, Kirk Douglas and Dany Robin Color by Technicolor. Produced in PatheColor Arthur Kennedy Produced by Benagoss Inc. and Directed by Robert Rossen Starring Dan O'Herlihy CAMELS WEST BEAT THE DEVIL **BRONCO APACHE** BEACHHEAD in PatheColor. Starring John Huston's Production, starring Color by Technicolor, Widescreen Prints by Technicolor Humphrey Bogart, Jennifer Jones, **Starring Burt Lancaster** Rod Cameron, Joanne Dru Starring Tony Curtis. An Edward Small Presentation An Aubrey Schenck Prod. Gina Lollobrigida **A Hecht-Lancaster Production CAPTAIN KIDD** and CHALLENGE CANNIBAL ISLAND CAPTAIN JAN the **SLAVE** GIRL THE WILD Based on the best seller in Color, 3-D. Starring Lex Barker Color Corp. of America. Starring Produced and Directed by An Edward Small Production in Eastman Color. Produced and Anthony Dexter, Eva Gabor. Prod. **Brian Desmond Hurst** Directed by Frank O. Graham by Aubrey Wisberg-Jack Pollexfen **GILBERT AND** GOG CHIEF **CROSSED SWORDS** SULLIVAN Color by Color Corp. of Amer. 3-D **CRAZY HORSE** Starring Richard Egan, Constance in PatheColor. Starring Errol Flynn Color by Technicolor. Starring in Color **Dowling, Herbert Marshall** and Gina Lollobrigida **Robert Morley, Maurice Evans** An Edward Small Production **Produced by Ivan Tors** A Lopert Films Release THE **KING SOLOMON NEW YORK** KHYBER PASS DIAMOND and his CONFIDENTIAL Color by Technicolor. Starring THOUSAND WIVES Richard Egan, Dawn Addams. in 3-D. Starring Dennis O'Keefe A Greene-Rouse Production An Edward Small Prod. Produced by Steven Pallos Presented by Edward Small in Color. An Edward Small Prod. **RETURN TO** OVERLAND PERSONAL AFFAIR OTHELLO TREASURE ISLAND PACIFIC Starring Gene Tierney, Starring Orson Welles. Produced in PatheColor, Widescreen Color Corp. of Amer., Widescreen Leo Genn, Glynis Johns and Directed by Orson Welles Starring Dawn Addams, Tab Hunter Starring Jack Mahoney, Peggie A J. Arthur Rank Presentation **An Edward Small Presentation** Castle. An Edward Small Prod. **RIDERS TO RING AROUND** SCREAMING SITTING BULL THE STARS SATURN EAGLES Color by Color Corp. of America Eastman Color, 3-D, Widescreen Color Corp. of America. Starring Starring Dennis Morgan, Boris Karloff Starring Rod Cameron, Tab Hunter William Lundigan, Richard Carlson, With electrically animated puppets. Produced by W. R. Frank An Edward Small Production A Nassour Bros. Prod. Herbert Marshall. An Ivan Tors Prod. THE BAREFOOT THE CAPTAIN'S THE CONQUEST STAR OF INDIA CONTESSA OF EVEREST PARADISE Color by Technicolor, Widescreen Color by Technicolor Starring Cornel Wilde, Jean Wallace Starring Humphrey Bogart, Ava Prints by Technicolor Starring Alec Guinness and Yvonne Gardner, Edmond O'Brien. Written, **Produced by Raymond Stross** Full-length feature documentary de Carlo. A Lopert Films Release Dir., Prod. by Jos. L. Mankiewicz THE GOLDEN MASK THE MAN BETWEEN THE LONG WAIT THE MALTA STORY Color by Technicolor. Starring By Mickey Spillane. Starring Starring James Mason, Claire Bloom **Starring Alec Guinness** Van Heflin and Wanda Hendrix Produced and Directed by Carol Reed Anthony Quinn and Peggie Castle A J. Arthur Rank Presentation **Produced by Aubrey Baring** A Lopert Films Release **Produced by Victor Saville** and Maxwell Setton THE STORY OF THE THE MILLION THE PURPLE PLAIN SCARLET SPEAR WILLIAM TELL POUND NOTE Color by Technicolor PatheColor, in CinemaScope Color by Technicolor Color by Technicolor Starring Martha Hyer

Forty-eighth

VARIETY

Anniversary

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## THE TIME OF THE CUCKOO

**Starring Gregory Peck** 

J. Arthur Rank Presentation

Color by Technicolor A Lopert Films Release

### THE WONDERFUL COUNTRY

**Starring Gregory Peck** 

A J. Arthur Rank Presentation

Color by Technicolor Starring Gregory Peck

## TIMBUCKTU

Produced by Charles Reynolds

Color by Technicolor An Edward Small Production

## TWIST OF FATE

Starring Errol Flynn

Produced by J. Barrett Mahon

**Starring Ginger Rogers Produced by Maxwell Setton** 

## **VERA CRUZ**

Color by Technicolor, Widescreen Starring Gary Cooper, Burt Lancaster A Hecht-Lancaster Production

### YELLOW TOMAHAWK

Color Corp. of America. Starring **Rory Calhoun and Peggie Castle** A Schenck-Koch Production

## WICKED WOMAN

Starring Beverly Michaels and Richard Egan. A Greene-Rouse Prod. **An Edward Small Presentation** 

WRH

### WITNESS **TO MURDER**

Starring Barbara Stanwyck, George Sanders and Gary Merrill **Produced by Chester Erskine** 

## Humor History of '53

The advent of 3-D, Malenkov, an acting Lt. Governor visiting a labor leader in jail, the Godfrey-LaRosa hassle, the Kinsey Report on Female Behavior, Eisenhower's addiction to golf, traffic, politics, Communism, taxes, Mari-



lyn Monroe, and Rose and Rockefeller alimoney jousts and the UN provided 90% of the themes around which the pro and semi-pro wits and quarter-wits embroidered topical jokes. Here

is a reprise of some of the jolliest. Henny Youngman's comment, when asked whether he read a copy of the Kinsey Report, jet-propelled itself around the show-world. "No," Henny answered, "I'll wait and see the movie!" When New York's acting Light Cov-

When New York's acting Lieut.-Gov-

Hy Gardner Hy Gardner leader Joe Fay in Sing Sing prison, somebody said Dewey was trying to burn the Wicks at both ends.

Senator Wayne Morse talked uninterruptedly for 22 hours and 26 minutes and an editor summed it all up by commenting "Every Morse to his own Code!"

When Russia's UN diplomats began to act a little palsy-walsy with Washington, Nat Harris of La Vie En Rose figured they probably needed a loan before they could start war.

When N. Y. City Magistrate Murtagh began dragging in "scofflaws" for failing to answer traffic summonses, teevee actress Syd Smith said this about one violator: "She's had her entire home redone in Early Parking Tickets." In midseason it looked, and rightfully so, that the N. Y.

Yankees were going to run away with the pennant. This inspired a "Hate the Yanks" campaign—which inspired this crack: "If the rest of the league doesn't cut it out they'll be renaming it the Un-American League!"

Senator McCarthy got married and everybody wondered whether the marriage ceremony also included a loyalty oath.

When a Russian in a labor camp committed suicide, John Cameron Swayze remarked, "You can't blame him for wanting to better his position!"

The Washington book burning incident created a lucrative new sideline for singer Karen Chandler—selling matches to State Department librarians.

Parade publisher Red Motley made a speech titled "Bet-ter Selling for Better Living" and got a request for 700 reprints from the National Cemetery Assn. of Washington, D. C.

#### Jane Kean's Crack

During a waiter's pension walkout Jane Kean waited almost 20 minutes before her waiter would even talk with her. "What are you stalling for," she snapped, "your pension to come due?

After a rash of film theatre hold-ups, Oscar Levant observed that "the movie business must be improving." Another Americanism was uttered when a radio critic

noted that in some of those late, late television movies the only familiar names in the casts were those of the sponsors

Milton Berle met the most spoiled animal in the world-

"An iron hand with a boarding house reach!"

Remember the fellow who wrote a book telling you how to cut corners on your taxes? Well, he's now working on a sequel titled "My Five Years at Leavenworth!" Returning G. I.'s who enjoyed Japanese food occasion.

ally were invited to patronize a West Side restaurant which advertised: "Suki-Yaki Like Mother Used to Make."

After Dick Haymes and Rita Hayworth married there was a rumor around that Rita was working up a nightclub act with her husband. "But what can she do in person?" was the question. "In a pinch," was the shrugged reply, "she can always do scenes from her latest divorce!"

N. Y. Journal-American critic John McClain's observa-tion upon the revival of "Oklahoma," scarcely a man is now alive who has not become related by marriage to some member of some company of 'Oklahoma'." A Boston bookshop placed the novel "Live Alone and Like It" under, a shelf marked "Humor."

#### Ed Noble in a Rut

After ABC chairman Ed Noble dropped a hole-in-one at the Wee Burn Country Club a wag noted that Noble holds the record for making holes-in-one-that he's been manufacturing Life Savers for years.

Walter Tenny described an alcoholic as a guy who drinks as much as you do-but happens to be somebody you don't like.

Boxing Commissioner Robert K. Christenberry gave the real meaning of the letters U.S.S.R.: Union of Silently Swallowed Republics.

A fellow called up the boxoffice of "End As a Man" and inquired if Christine Jorgensen would positively be in the performance that night. Many fans complained that Marciano wasn't very grateful while knocking out challenger Roland LaStarza. Which made one wit spout: "I wonder how many of his critics would pay \$30 to see Rocky starred in a ballet?"

bank teller was held up who displayed real humility. When the yegg stuck a gun in his face the teller asked "Will tens and twenties be all right, sir?"

VARIETY

Anniversary

Forty-eighth

When the UN complained it had a parking problem some back-seat driver observed, "No wonder. They keep going 'round in circles!"

A sign in a voting booth behind the Iron Curtain: "Vote Communist-the life you save may be your own!'

Unretouched photos of Georgi Malenkov revealed he was Russia's outstanding capitalist-had the biggest corporation.

And somebody, after Charles E. Wilson was forced to sell his General Motors stock upon becoming Secretary of Defense, wondered if he'd have to sell his Defense Bonds if he resigned to return to General Motors.

When President Eisenhower started to practice drives on the White House lawn it was suggested that the "Keep Off the Grass" notices be removed and replaced with signs reading "Please Replace Divots."

Hayden Wallace came up with the brightest idea yet to put an end to quiz shows; give contestants both the ques-tions and answers and let them guess who sent them in!



Paris. My friend Herb Kretzmer is real gone, in fact he's just gone south, South Africa that is. He was up visiting me for awhile on a travel junket prepared for him by one of the local wing stations here South Africa is now open game for tourists and the veldt will soon hum with north-erners looking for those lions in the street. However, Herb, who is the heppest show biz journalist down there, and runs the spec page for the Sunday Express and other pubs under a barrage of bylines, says the last lion was mortally wounded when a certain HK said that big screens are just magnifying the incompetence of certain films. Aside from making and breaking pix my friend Herb is also a great unpublished short story writer and to prove it I submit a few samples from his yet unwritten, unpublished manu-script, "Real Gone Stories." Told to me during mugg sessions at the Nouvelle Eve Lido and pix and legit seances, these outlines may have a few loopholes, but I'm sure you'll be convinced, as I am, that some of them are cool, others crazy, still others gone, but they'll all stone you: Ladislas Lipstein had an obsession. Not only was he a

great composer, crazy arranger and cool genius, but he loved dogs. Putting Towser and Towskonini together, he decided to write a great concerto one day that could only be heard by dogs. The great work began. He managed to convince 100 unionized musicians that the sounds they were not making were great ultra-frequency music. They worked and worked and Ladislas worked and worked, and though hydrophobia and runaway dogs increased he pushed his composition to the end. Then one day it was ready.

In an empty studio the orchestra played and played and there wasn't a sound, but everybody knew it was great. But suddenly an old janitor, who had been cleaning up, stopped working and sat down to listen. He was moved and trans-ported, and after it was over rushed up and congratulated Ladislas. Ladislas was aghast and wanted to know if he was being kidded. The janitor assured him it was fine and hummed snatches from the piece. Soon everybody was aghast. They all crowded around the janitor and wanted to know how he heard sounds that no mortal could hear. That was easily understood as the janitor took off his clothes and frisked around the podium before telling them he was a dog.

The French love folk singers, especially if they have a guitar accompanying them. So when a leading impresario got a visit from a finger who was a folk singer he was attentive. The finger didn't say a word but immediately played up and down the strings and gave out with a fine medley of early Irish, Celtic and American folksongs that soon had the impresario gurgling. The finger was booked into one of the leading night clubs in Paris where even the waiters have gold Louis buried in their gardens. The big moment came.

After the blackout a beam of light played on a guitar which began to play and sing folk songs in a rich baritone. The practical French were enraged and smelled a hoax. demanded their gold Louis back. The manager They quelled them and had the folk finger come out from inside the guitar where a caprice had put him. A series of shrugs spread over the room denoting that was different, and they all sat down to listen to the folk finger sing.

A dance team who had been doing the same act for 30 years and lived in the same small flat for 30 years and came home to it every night for 30 years, one night got bored with each other. The man sulked over his VARIETY and the woman just moped over her mop. After hours of this the man remarked that he couldn't stand this cramped apartment any more. He said that one couldn't even swing a cat in there.

So he grabbed his cat and swung it. To this day the blood stains, furry spots on the walls and the messy floors prove he was right.

## **Further Adventures Of Myself**

(Or a Sure Cure for Wastefulness)

#### By HAL KANTER

Hollywood. As constant readers of this annual seminar may recall, I once labored in the rice paddies of radio, shifted to the cornfields of television and eventually landed in the fun factories of Filmville. I don't expect this to last, either. I

have never been able to keep a job very long. Take the Army. I got into that select(ed) group in 1941 but the war ended and I was jettisoned.

But no matter how long this lasts, I am grateful for one thing that has happened during my career as a screenwriter. I have learned how to get up in the morning. The rigors of studio life are demanding. The front office demands that you show up. Preferably before noon. A shoddy attitude, granted, but it exists.

Now, in all my years as a radio

much less any place. Nowadays, though, I'm out of bed by sevenish each morning and I'd like to tell you how to do it.

Hal Kanter

When first faced with the problem of rising early I had a choice of methods: an alarm clock or a rooster. Because they don't seem to be making roosters the way they did when I was a farm boy, I chose the clock over the cock. But the first week proved that wouldn't do. At a quarter of seven, the bell would put the silence of my room to rout with such sudden ferocity my heart was running around nervously seeking an exit even before my eyes could open. Common sense and frequent reports of coronary cases among my contemporaries called for less severe methods of waking.

So we tried the rooster. I shopped at the San Fernando Valley Fair for a large, vocal Plymouth Rock. His first day on the job the only one he woke was a neighbor's Dober-man. The Doberman ate the rooster. We slept on and the children arrived at school the next few days just in time for recess.

It was about this time I discovered the clock-radio. All you have to do, the ads said, was set it and forget it. Comes morning, you'll be awakened with music, soothing and de-lightful, they promised. How lovely! But clock-radios are expensive and by the time a fellow gets his Jaguar paid off, it's his wife's birthday and he has to have her shoes half-soled. Then the water bill's due or you hear where you can pick up a couple of cases of bourbon on sale and what with one thing and another you never seem to have enough money for the clock-radio.

#### Need an M.I.T. Degree

One day last summer, the company picnic featured a raffle and when I least expected good fortune, I won a clock-radio. It took only a week to figure out how to work it: you set the small dial to the hour you want. Or is it the big dial? . Anyway, you switch off the automatic switch-on . . . or switch on the automatic switch-off . . . (if I had it here, I should show you) . . . then select your sta-tion, cut off the alarm and plug in the socket.

But you have to know what station to select.

That first morning, I was startled up by a group of cowboy musicians, all with sinus trouble, banging madly on their catarrhs and wailing hysterically about the plight of a mountain woman who got a letter edged in black.

So pitiful was the tale of woe, a tear coursed down by cheek. I turned my head, buried it in the pillow and sobbed myself back to sleep.

No fool, I consulted the radio log of the evening news-paper before selecting the station for the next morning.

Did I say no fool? Fool! I was awakened by a delighted madman who laughingly told the world it was "now 12 minutes to seven—and here's an oldie but a goodie by ole Woody!"

"Look," my sensible wife said to me that evening, "why don't you set the radio for a news program?" She pointed out that one of my favorite newscasters, a dulcet-toned gen-tleman who has an apologetic delivery, comes on at 6:45

every weekday. So I dialed in his station and retired. And it worked. He came on quietly, almost whispering the news. He'd talk for possibly five minutes before I became aware of his presence. Gradually, I would wake up. His voice would begin to beguile me. I would reach over and turn up the volume so that I could hear what he was saying.

#### Such a Miserable World!

Then, every morning without fail, it would happen. I would begin to actually hear the news. Tornado wipes out city in midwest. Seven car pile-up on Hellywood freeway. Explosion destroys veteran's home. Spies discovered working in Army mess kit manufacturing centre. Hitchhiker slays pretty baby sitter. Baby sitter slays pretty hitchhiker. Baby slays pretty sitter. Prison riot, Political scandal. Robbery. Arson. Rape. And then the stock market. Everything has gone up. Except your stocks. "Getting up?" my wife would ask.

After Dior came out with his idea of a high hemline, Jean Carroll said she thought it was silly because a woman's most prized asset is a man's imagination.

sir Edmund Hillary, who conquered Mt. Everest, asked a London real estate agent to please find him a flat preferably on the ground floor!

Bob Cummings told about the French politician who fell asleep during a debate and woke up to find he'd been named Premier twice, impeached once, reinstated and awarded the Legion of Honor.

#### Mislaid the Theatre

Fred Allen said his aunt in Brooklyn, hearing that you don't have to wear glasses to see a CinemaScope movie, left her glasses home-and then couldn't find the Roxy.

Upon hearing that Winthrop Rockefeller was going to settle with Bobo for some \$5,500,000, columnist Irv Kup-cinet claimed that Tommy Manville wired Winnie: "What are you trying to do-start a price war?

With both Deborah Kerr and John Kerr featured in "Tea and Sympathy," it was suggested that the hit be retitled "Calling All Kerrs."

During the Godfrey-LaRosa humility conflagration a

#### The Inelastic India Rubber Band

A rubber band grew up thinking it was an India rubber man due to un unfortunate tendency of its mother to lisp. Therefore he neglected to get vulcanized, for India rubber men never get vulcanized and when he felt he was ready the lure of show biz led him to a carnival. He presented himself to the boss and told fiim that he was an India Rubber Man and wanted a job in the side show. The Boss told him that he was mad and that he was only a rubber band. The rubber band was furious and insisted he was

a rubber man. The boss told him to prove it. The rubber band cried, beat his chest, ranted and panted, acted arch and coy (a well known comedy team at the time), broke into a softshoe routine, was cynical and shy, recited poetry, spat on the floor and in general cavorted like a man. The boss was convinced and decided to hire the rubber band as a rubber man, but when the rubber band stretched out his hand to sign the contract he broke into little brittle pieces. He was gone....

As I said, these were just fragments of the K papers, and the smoke and general rumpus (a well known soldier at the time) might have gotten in the way of my hearing everything. It is even possible that a couple of these outlines may be mine. But it was his fault, he started it, and if he comes up here with a lion to chastise me for lying, why, I'll probably be gone anyway.

"Up! Who the heck wants to get up and go out into a world like that!"

Then my conscience would begin to work on me. Okay, Then my conscience would begin to work on me. Okay, so it's a terrible world. Lots of things wrong. You realize it. You recognize them. Are you a man? Of course you are! Then get up. Get out of bed. Get out into that world, mister—and save it! Snap on the light. Yawn. Stretch. Work my lips over my teeth. Stick out my tongue. Turn on the water., Scoop up a handful, splash it on my face. Then horror would strike. I'd look in the mirror

strike. I'd look in the mirror.

Bags under the eyes. Bristles of whiskers. Hair like an abandoned haystack.

"Ha!" I'd snort at my reflection. "Look who's going to save the world!"

Aaah! Back to bed!

And the children were late for school.

Now I come to my discovery. I threw out the clock-radio and rely these days on the one thing all of us can trust: our minds. My method is simple and infallible.

Before going to bed each night, I say to myself, "Hal, get up at seven o'clock. Get up at seven o'clock. Get up at seven." I keep repeating this, drumming it into my mind.

And it works. Only once has it failed to get me out of bed by seven. That was last month. For some reason, during the night, I fell asleep.

## The Woman In the Typewriter

#### **By CLAUDE BINYON**

Hollywood. This fellow lived in a cabin in 101. the mountains beyond my ranch. He had fought in the Spanish-American war, but he would not tell his age.

The

ways

they had

Levis

his old new

would



wear out he Claude Binyon

would replace them with new Levis, and for a few days the lower half of him would look fresh and clean. His name was Bob Deckett.

Deckett was an inventor, prospector, author and cabinetmaker, but mostly he did nothing. I hired him to make a cabinet. As I mentioned, mostly he did nothing.

One day he said that when he got around to finishing the cabinet he'd like to give it to me as a present. I asked why he should give me a present, and he said for reading his novel. I asked what novel, and he went to his ancient pickup truck and came back with a manuscript that looked like it had been excavated from a pile of his old, old Levis. It was the first manuscript I had ever encountered that actually smelled physically.

Deckett said he had sent the manuscript to quite a few pub-lishers years ago but it always came back. He mailed it to a publisher and the pages came back still glued together. For the next publisher, he glued pages 100 and 101 together, and again the manuscript came back with its glue intact. Finally he made the supreme test by gluing the cover to page That's the way it came back one. from the publisher, so Deckett de-cided that no one in the world had ever read what he had written. And now I was to be the first.

That evening, holding the manuscript at arm's length, I began of medicines and salves) then to reading "The Final War," by John sleep (?) Deckett. I had to start on Page 2 because of the glue, and when I finished Page 100 and found it still glued to Page 101 I put the thing down and decided to rest my head for the remainder of the night.

#### **Cleancut** Truckdriver

So far I had read about a cleancut truckdriver who was in love with a beautiful waitress who worked in a roadside diner. She was a gay one, given to consider-able flirting with other truckdrivers, but our hero figured that eventually she'd settle down and become his wife. But one evening when he parked his truck and trailer outside the diner, and neatly combed his hair before entering, he discovered she was gone. The owner simply shrugged when questioned. "They come and go," he said. "They're all alike. If you ask me, she climbed into the cab with some young truckdriver and took off for nowhere.'

Brokenhearted, our hero decid-ed the owner was right. He de-cided to forget about the girl, but he couldn't. Then his suspicions slowly became aroused, and he be-gan investigating—and he ran into the biggest secret in the world. discovered that the Knights Columbus had begun an unde-clared World War against the ways be sure and wake up Masons!

of Page 100, which was glued to

Reading can excite you at one extreme and put you to sleep at the other, but this left me right in the middle with a headache. Dazedly I crawled into bed.

most The next morning Deckett was waiting for me outside the house. striking thing about him was "I just wanted to tell you the cabi-net is coming along fine," he said. And before I could thank him he that he alwore new Levis, to the extent that script. I countered by asking him why he had wanted me to read it. never been washed. When

#### How About It?

"I figured you might want to make a movie out of it," he said. 'How many pages did you read?'' "From page 2 to page 101," I inswered. "Between the glue."

answered. Deckett was satisfied. "You're telling the truth," he conceded. You're just getting to the good part, but can't you see already you

could make a movie out of it? "I don't know," I hedged. " "That dirigible that runs on two 12-volt

batteries—it's pretly far-fetched." "They don't power the craft," Deckett retorted. "They power that machine that generates the power. You must've skipped that part.

"It's still far-fetched," I said. "Why do you say that?" asked Deckett. "I made a working model of it that could lift a man as high as he wanted to go, and it ran on two flashlight batteries.

## I stared at him. "You actually blackhearted Kelly."

Eddie Cantor and I were on the Chief en route to New York, to play the Palace Theatre.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Eddie scheduled our days on the train-to breakfast early, talk layout of our show, three games of casino (two out of three for a buck), lunch, a nap, talk about show, casino, dinner, an hour for reading, 30 minutes of making ready for bed (11 different kinds

This was fine for Cantor, but ner vous me, had no salves and 8 o'clock to bed meant I had pneumonia and both legs broken. ever, you know Eddie. We did it all to the letter and finally when both plates were in the glasses, and him in the lower, with me on the couch, the lights went out.

Instead of benefiting from Cantor's talk, by trying to gather health from sleep, all I could think of was that redhead in the club car. can't get dressed in the dark and, if I stir I'll wake him. My eyes hurt from trying to shut out the sight of the dame and replace her with girl sheep. Nuthin!

So-I'll smoke. No, that would wake him too. This is murder! what's that noise? ... He's napping his fingers. Ah ha, he must be rehearsing to himself. See if I can catch the song from the tempo of his snapping ... "Susie"? ... No, too slow. "Potatoes Are Cheaper, Tomatoes Are'. . No, they hadn't written it yet. I've got it! "Mar-gie"! Good, now I can smoke. I lighted a cigaret and he jumped up like a shot. And so help me, this was the dialog. Cantor: Thanks for waking me up.

Me: I thought you were

VARIETY made it?" Deckett nodded. "Where is it?" I asked.

"I had it hid in a mountain cave on the edge of the Mojave desert." said Deckett. "I used to fly it every night when nobody could see me." "Where is it now?"

"Gone. The Knights of Columbus stole it. If you want, you can use that in the movie-about how they stole the invention from me."

"I'm afraid this isn't a story for pictures," I said as gently as pos-sible. "That World War between the Knights of Columbus and the Masons . . .

"Try to tell me that's far-fetched." snapped Deckett. "It's going on right now under your nose, and you don't know it. One of these days it's going to pop out in the open, and all hell's going to break loose. We'll be lucky if a hundred people are left alive on earth."

#### Just a Lucky Guess

Deckett obviously was a man who believed in what he said. I decided not to argue with him. "Tell-me," I said finally, "were you ever a truckdriver?" "A long time ago." said Deckett.

"Were you ever married?" "Never," said Deckett decisively.

"Did you come close to it?" "Once," admitted Deckett; "but I found out about her in time."

'Did she run away with another truckdriver? Deckett looked at me in surprise.

When did I tell you about that? "Do you remember his name?" "Remember?" said Deckett. "To

my dying day I'll never forget that

**A Trip With Cantor** By BENNY RUBIN

> \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* smoker, you wouldn't under-

stand. Cantor: I guess I'm a pretty big dope.

Eddie. Please listen. Me: No. Weren't you snapping your fin-

gers and rehearsing a song? Cantor: (He laughs for at least a minute) Benj. (He laughs for 30 seconds more).

Me: Yes, Eddie. (he's really scaring the beegee out of me).

Cantor: Kid, I'm sorry I yelled at you. Put on the light. (I did, and he laughed some more). Let me explain. You see, Ida used to snore, so when we went to bed I'd snap my fingers to keep her awake 'til I fell asleep. Me: Oh no!

Cantor: Forgive me for blowing my top. You have another cigaret and we'll play one game of casino; loser to pay for a sturgeon sandwich at Lindy's.

#### **Mel Ballerino Returns**

Metro casting director Mel Ballerino returned to the Coast over the weekend, following a trip to Europe in connection with the casting of several pictures in work by the company in Egypt, Italy and England.

William F. Rodgers, Loew's vee-



Hollywood. Moppets, once top money mak- stores.

ers, top fan mail magnets and tops in boxoffice polls, aren't hitting the

who are still bustin' out all over. Another news story dealt with the

solitary student enrolled in sum-

mer classes on a major lot—a sharp

contrast with the starlet school at

Metro a few years ago when Eliza-

beth Taylor, Margaret O'Brien,

Jane Powell and Skippy Homeier

were among the dozens tutored by

For downright, dependable, two-

fisted boxoffice appeal, kids used to

rate top billing. Although studio contract lists have been cut to the

bone and production generally has been curtailed, the dearth of Midas-touched kid thesps stems from

Recurrently, through the years

before video, filmgoers centered all their love and affection on one

child player or another; and every

film company dreamed of that happy golden moment when it might find "another" Jackie Coo-

gan under some rock just as a pros-

pector dreams of discovering an-other Comstock Lode.

During his "Kid" days, Jackie raked in \$4,000,000, while the Our

Gang Kids and Mickey Rooney

didn't exactly get paid off in small

chips. And during the prodigy-packed late '30s, the parade of

child talent was one of Holly-wood's minor miracles. The line-

up included Shirley Temple, Jane

Withers, Deanna Durbin, Freddie Bartholomew, Judy Garland, the Mauch twins, Jackie Cooper, Bo-

nita Granville, Baby LeRoy, Vir-ginia Weidler, Sybil Jason, Bobby

Breen and Spanky MacFarland.

Their combined incomes, derived

not only from the silver screen but

from radio, recordings, endorse-

something deeper than that.

of child stars and what's becrop of kid headliners overdue? Recent sto-

"Criminal

ries in VARI-"Child ETY, Star Dodge Goes On";

a million dollars in the 5- and 10c

Jane Withers, with seven years of stardom, 29 financially successjackpot today. What's happened ful pix, and several annual ratings to the heydey among the top b.o. names, grossed come of the heydey mop-pets? Is a new movieland during plush movies '37-'40.

#### Another Decade, Another Crop

During the next decade, a new roster of child talent drew fan mail and money. These included Eliza-beth Taylor, Margaret O'Brien, Claude Jarman Jr., Peggy Ann Gar-ner, Joan Evans, Natalie Wood, Contempt Hits Head of Guild For Screen-Dazzled Kids," referred to But during recent years, though the rackets exploiting fond parents plenty of talented youngsters have made their appearances, some of them over and over again, none has tugged at the heartstrings of housewives as for example Davey Lee did in the old days. The mailbags are no longer overflowing with fan letters for the soda set.

What's happened? That's the \$64 question which is puzzling producers, casting directors-and moppets.

Sherry Jackson is a veteran of some 30 pix; Tommy Rettig is no novice in front of the cameras despite his years, and George Wins-low, pint-sized basso, has stolen more than one scene. Bobby Driscoll won a junior Oscar for the best juve characterization of '52. Billy Ward, a member of the postdiaper set, has landed some important roles. And Kathryn Beau-mont ("Alice in Wonderland"). Mary Jane Saunders, Beverly Sue Simmons, Johnny Stewart, Todd Karns and Peter Miles have given good performances, but the film-goers are sitting on their hands instead of writing fan mail.

The days when Shirley Temple zoomed to fame with one epic, "Lit-tle Miss Marker," Jane Withers with "Bright Eyes," Deanna Durbin with "Three Smart Girls," Liz Tay-lor with "National Velvet," Freddie Barthelauwrwith "D Bartholomew with "David Copper-field," and Margaret O'Brien with 'Journey for Margaret," are gone but not forgotten.

Of the hundreds of movie moppets who entered the post-diaper division of the Hollywood Handicap, only a small percentage have reached the home stretch. Many of them ran well at the start and half-way marks, but when child-hood charms and puppy playful-ness disappeared with 12-year-old senility, it took the stuff that makes professionals to cross the tape and hit pay dirt.

Shirley and Deanna and others have retired—permanently, it says here in fine print. Jane has plans for a telly show with her own four-TV director. Bobby Breen is tag-ing a "comeback." Johnny Downs, former "Our Gang," has returned to Hollywood following success in a Broadway musical. Jackie Cooper was a recent Broadway hit. Dickie Moore, who made his first screen appearance clad in three-cornered pants and a winning smile as the Rogue," recently completed his 25th year in films. And Peggy Ryan, who debuted at four, is still going strong.

Judy Garland and Liz Taylor get top billing in any epic, while Ben Alexander's work in "Dragnet" is not to be overlooked. June Lockhart is doing okay, too. And Sybil Jason has returned from her native Australia to Broadway. Wesley Barry, George Brakestone and Roddy McDowell have turned to the production end of pix.





Kay Campbell

Mary MacDonald.

Anniversary

Forty-eighth

#### Anchored In Space

Further, he learned that the waitress had learned about this from a drunken Knights of Columbus truckdriver, and when the big brass discovered this they kid-napped her and were holding her napped her and were holding her prisoner on a dirigible that was anchored high in space. The Knights of Columbus had a huge fleet of these dirigibles anchored in space all over the world, and each housed 250 armed Knights. They were waiting for The Day.

These dirigibles were buoyed by a gas that was lighter than nothing, and each was powered by two 12-volt batteries. That's what it said.

When our hero learned all this he was too hot to remain free, so he was captured and whisked away of the night? to the dirigible prison of his Me: (dramatic pause) Eddie? Liswaitress' love. And that was the end

with a startle, this is good for my nerves.

Me: But you were-

Cantor: Ida said to get two rooms. Me: Now wait a minute, Eddie, you were rehearsing, weren't you?

Cantor: (still softly) I always rehearse under the covers with the lights out after taking a sleeping pill.

Me: Look, Eddie-

Cantor: (Voice rising slightly) Benj., this is a very selfish thing you did.

Me: Eddie-

Cantor: Beside not having consideration for me; are you such a dope fiend (now he's yelling) that you've got to have a cig-aret in the (screaming) middle of the night?

Not being a cigaret ten.



**JOHNNIE RAY** 

WRH

## **Biblical Painter to Work On 'Ten Commandments'**

#### Hollywood.

Arnold Friberg, a painted of Biblical subjects, has been signed by Cecil B. DeMille for a series of realistic pictures based on the Scriptures. These will be used as foundation for the production de-sign of "The Ten Commandments."

Paintings will depict 12 important events including the Exodus and the Deliverance of the Ten Commandments.

## Join Metro and See the World

#### And All This Ex-Philly Flack Wanted Was to Anchor In Sunny California

#### By MORGAN HUDGINS

Philadelphia climate. Why, some wise part of my subconscious kept repeating, suffer through four months of snow, furnaces that won't work, and overcoats, plus four months of airconditioning, mosquito bite lotion and just plain sweat in order to enjoy four months of decent weather, of which, as I recall, only October and May might be called ideal.

And so I gave up my job on the news staff of the Philadelphia Eve-ning Bulletin (and let it be stated now there isn't a finer paper in the whole of the USA) and headed for Hollywood.

The position offered me by Howard Strickling in M-G-M's pub-licity department sounded enticing enough. More fun (if you like mo-tion pictures, which, I'm frank to admit, I do). And more pay.

But it was California that really sold me. The chance to bask in that Pacific sunshine 12 out of 12 months (okay—so maybe it does rain in January occasionally) was more than any self respecting Phil-adelphian could resist. Or so it seemed to me.

Following Greeley's popular ad-vice, I headed west in 1946. California, I might have sung after my cross-country automobile trek, here I am! And there, I felt like shouting, is where I want to stay.

So what happens?

They made me a Unit Publicity Representative and started me travelling. Sure, I touch home base occasionally. I have my house in California (it practically looks out over the blue Pacific I once dreamed about) but I'm practically

a stranger to my neighbors. Just let an M-G-M producer start planning a film that calls for a long location and automatically I start packing my bags It's 10-1 I'll be on whatever plane or train is taking the cast and crew to wherever It is that some big shot has decided this movie must be made "in the interest of authenticity."

California and Hudgins, it would seem, are destined to be married in dreams only. At least until we

both reach a much older age. During eight years of association with the studio "where there are more stars than there are in heaven." I've visited virtually every state in the Union and at least 14 foreign countries. I've travelled an estimated 1,000,000 miles (and it's a conservative guess at that). I've ridden across the U.S. by train, plane and automobile. I've crossed the Atlantic Ocean 16 times, not

once by ship. Yes, and my job has taken me back to Philadelphia (never, alas, in October or May) almost as many times as I've roosted in California.

I've gone boating on beautiful Lake Michigan with Esther Williams, Jimmy Durante and Lauritz Melchior while making a film on fashionable Mackinac Island. I've shared a suite at the sumptuous Del Coronado Hotel near San Diego with Van Johnson and shared a one-room mountain shack high in the Sierras with the same Mr. Johnson.

**Hudgins'** Travels

I've ridden on horseback with Sinati tain 'ran long trails in the California lode country. I've taken Elizabeth Taylor dancing in London's Mayfair clubs and photographed her feeding the pigeons in Trafalgar Square. I've spent Christmas dining at Maxim's in Paris with Robert Taylor, floated in a gondola along Venice's Grand Canal with Taylor and Barbara Stanwyck, and strolled the streets of Dublin, Rome and Cairo with the much travelled Mr. Taylor; lived for a week with Esther Williams amid 1,000 Navy WAVES; slept next to Clark Gable's tent while on a four months safari through darkest Africa. I've also chased autograph seekers from Mr. Gable while he was being photographed in front of Buckingham Palace and have done the same while making pictures of him at Versailles Palace and on the Eiffel Tower. I've gone with Van Johnson to a reunion of his high school class in Newport, R.I., and assisted Ava Gardner through interviews with the press in Athens (Greece), Zurich (Switzerland), and berg.

Cairo, Egypt. It all started because of the foreign cities. I've lunched with Lana Turner in London and the same day dined with Mel Ferrer in Ireland. I've lived in a log cabin alongside those occupied by Jimmy Stewart and Janet Leigh in the mountains of Colorado and have introduced Eleanor Parker to crack Air Force pilots at an Arizona base where she was making a film. I've escorted Ava Gardner to a party at Noel Coward's house near Picca-dilly; sat with Gable, Taylor and Johnson through plays in San Francisco, New York and Paris, and have done the same with Pier Angeli and both Elizabeth Taylor and Ava Gardner in London.

I've accompanied Deborah Kerr to a private audience with Pope Pius at the Vatican and been present when both Robert and Elizabeth Taylor were presented to the King and Queen of England.

#### More Roamin

It has been exciting to watch Sam Zimbalist and Mervyn LeRoy feed the Christians to the lions for scenes in "Quo Vadis," and more than interesting to hear Pandro Berman and Richard Thorpe map out a battle of literally hundreds of armored warriors for "Knights of the Round Table." I've listened while John Foid patiently ex-plained to the black skinned African natives how he wanted them to hurl spears at Gable and Gard-ner in "Mogambo" and heard him read "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" to natives and whites at a Yuletide party deep in the jungle, more than 300 miles from the nearest village. I've looked on as Gene Kelly auditioned the top dancers of London and Paris and then, after making his selection, put them through a graceful ballet for "Invitation to the Dance," M-G-M's all dancing film. I've gone shopping with Gene Tierney in London and done the same with Grace Kelly in Nairobi. Ditto with Bob Taylor in Paris, Esther Williams in Chicago, and Gable in a village of 200 on the shores of Lake Victoria.

All of this travelling and these tasks (if they can be called that) have been in connection with motion pictures in production. They have been, it is obvious, interesting and indeed, exciting. But probably none of them can equal in thrills the assignment upon which I am presently engaged. M-G-M has sent me to Cairo with Robert Taylor (whose visits to California have been almost as infrequent of late as my own), Eleanor Parker, Kurt Kasznar, Carlos Thompson and Director Robert Pirosh. We are filming, in wide screen and color, "Valley of the Kings" (I'll be par-doned if in hest prose agent fashdoned if, in best press agent fash-ion, I describe it as an exciting adventure romance).

During most of the filming we are living at the Mena House Hotel, in the outskirts of the Egyptian capital, where Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek met for their historic conference in 1944. And like those great historical figures, I awake each morning to find the Sphinx and the Cheops Pyramid are less than 100 yards from the hotel. After a few days here we

move on to the Suez Canal, the tombs at Luxor, the ruins at Sa-karra and the famous St. Catherine's Monastery at the base of Mr. Sinai.



## Sam Katzman

Continued from page 12 ; newspaper to complain, they very nicely promised that the next time the producer releases an epic their reviews will read, "Produced by Sam Kurtzman."

This mistaken identity bit does have its compensations, however, as when it comes to restaurants. A few weeks ago when my wife and I celebrated our wedding anniver-sary and I phoned Dave Chasen's for reservations I was a little surprised at the girl's immediately happy tone when I told her my Upon our arrival the waiter name. was extremely cordial as he mumbled something about the other four would most likely arrive later and seated us at a large private booth. My wife was quite im-pressed. On our way out we saw a party of six squeezed around a table for two near the swinging door to the kitchen, and I felt a little sorry for the producer who has a name like a dentist.

I don't always come out on top, however. When I phone an agent or network to discuss a sketch or story idea, instead of letting me speak to a hireling who handles writers, I am immediately connect-ed with Abe Lastfogel or General David Sarnoff. Naturally, at the moment I am extremely flattered to think that these gentlemen should be personally interested in my selling a five-minute routine to Bob Hope, but the period of elation quickly disappears when it turns out that I am not Sam Katzman. A glacier covers the telephole wires, and I feel I had committed grand fraud.

Upon investigation I found the cause for the misunderstanding. some unfathomable reason For high class receptionists, telephone operators and secretaries cultivate British accents, and just as Deborah Kerr becomes Deborah Karr, Sam Kurtzman becomes Sam Katzman.

When my wife reads that Mr. Katzman has interviewed a glamour girl for a part, she stops talking to me for a week. My mother-in-law follows suit, too. When my wife showed her a gold bracelet and told her that she got "Sam it from Sam, she asked, who?"

Psychiatrists are no help. One explained it as a subconscious transference of affection, perfectly harmless. Another said it was a deep seated craving for fame. A third just sent a bill.

Now, frankly, I have against Mr. Sam Katzman. I have never met the man, I don't know what he looks like. All I know is that he makes good pictures, otherwise my patients wouldn't be congratulating me. All of these experiences, however, are frustrating to me, and I had to get them off my chest.

## The Spinning Reel - By NOEL MEADOW

Newly available is popcorn in five flavors, and eight more are oming up, differently colored. Now that the stuff comes in Techcoming up, differently colored. Now that the stuff comes in Tech-nicolor, manufacturers are hesitating to make it in the giant Cinema-Scope size, but they're working on a scheme to produce it in 3-D. That third dimension ought to be-Taste.

With all its miracles, medicine still has no cure for the common cold. Film exhibition has an equally baffling problem. It has widescreen, three-dimensional visual and audio effects, electronic projec-tion and a brand-new wonder drug to pull people into the theatres, something called Marilyn Monroe. But the industry will never feel it's here to stay until someone invents a crackle-proof popcorn bag.

With the general introduction of the king-size screen, the old slogan, "Movies are better than ever," should really make way for "Movies are bigger than ever."

Doomed to sure failure is the pitch being made by an Illinois fire-works-maker, who's sending his 60-page catalog to drive-ins. The drive-ins don't have to blast the customers out. For that matter, many of 'em are doing OK with their films.

Here's a switch: Moravia Productions has been formed to make films with European settings—in Hollywood! Maybe if they keep at it for 18 months, the producers hope to be declared tax-exempt in Inner Mongolia.

An indie producer whose recent picture was declared by a critic to be "wholly lacking in taste" is using the remark in his advertising, along with his switch on a cigaret slogan, "It screens out flavor!"

Those cigaret manufacturers needn't think they invented the "filtered" gimmick. Movies have been filtered for years — right through big cottony wads of censors.

Two Iowa juveniles, paroled on a burglary rap, were ordered to repay the filched \$68, attend church every Sunday, report to the police chief weekly and—stay away from the movies for a year. Could it be this is a way of building up bigger audiences—by letting 'em hunger for a while.

Any fair investigation of the judge is sure to prove he owns TV stock.

Ohio moviegoers, asking the local high school for babysitters, were

told the rate was 60c hourly, and 50c in TV homes. (a) The kids, no doubt, pick up the extra dime from the local Bijou boys for helping tear 'em away from the video sets. (b) Blow a picture tube, ya little brats, ya!

A midwest Ohio theatre owner has engaged as manager a woman with no experience—except in bringing up six daughters. "no experience?" This is

#### And now, if they'll only fix 3-D so it will give depth to shallow plots!

While 3-D was just a gleam in an engineer's eye, the film industry was working on a fourth dimension-Boxoffice.

It's not sure what the widescreen will ultimately do for the film business, but It'll make a lot of doctors richer curing swivel-neck.

We know a projectionist who was so thin he'd be a flat failure in 3-D.

It's practically a sure thing that a two-dimensional film will hereafter be known in the trade as a Cyclops.

And one brought into illicit traffic will be Bicyclops.

### **All Towns Now Have Clean Sheets By ROBERT J. LANDRY**

Back in the old, old era beyond recall, show business was very "personal" and managers and actors judged towns by the quality of the coffee, cleanness of the hotel sheets and redness of the customers' necks. In the books of traveling show biz, certain towns were semi-permanently on the fritz. They were lemon-sour, busts, faceless and soulless. They were towns in which you knew the train schedule out the second day. They were lulls in existence. Light a candle and pray not to be stranded. Entertainers were convinced that the adults in certain tough burgs

had been so suppressed as children that they were conditioned not to express themselves until asked—and they only applauded on direct invitation. If a turn didn't know that, they could bow off in heavy A prominent citizen in the Bible Belt once met a comic by mourning. accident socially and said, "Hey, you were so durned funny, I could hardly keep from laughing."

All this has changed. The hick is gone. The rube is quaint Ameri-cana. East, West, North, South—America now shares the same am-moniated, anti-enzymed culture, complete with Technicolor, 3-D, CinemaScope and back-to-back commercial announcements on radio and

In short, I'm seeing the worldat M-G-M's expense-when all I wanted to see was California.

No complaints, you understand. A guy should know when he's in luck

## Henry Ginsberg to Coast

Henry Ginsberg returned to the Coast over the weekend following confabs with Warner Bros. homeoffice executives relating to the release plans for George Stevens' production of Edna Ferber's novel, 'Giant."

On the Coast, Ginsberg will work on production plans with Stevens, who is scheduled to be in New York late in January. Picture will be directed by Stevens and produced in association with Gins-

Besides, I have heard that there is a possibility that producer Sam Katzman is going to be honored by Ralph Edwards on "This Is Your Life." If and when you see the If and when you see the show and find that the great producer is a disheveled, disgruntled, unhappy neurotic, don't be sur-prised. It'll be me.

Billy Keaton Named by Buffalo Buffalo. Variety Club of Buffalo, Tent No. 7, has elected the following of-ficers for 1953-54; Chief Barker, Billy Keaton; first assistant barker, Mawiin Lucobe, encode conitant Marvin Jacobs; second assistant barker, Arthur Krolick; doughguy, Robert C. Hyman; secretary, W. E. J. Martin.

TV. According to the film company gentry who travel about the coun-try setting up premieres, tieups, television spot saturations and so on, there are very few towns that are real duds. And even the few that are deserted villages after 6 p.m.-like, for instance, Baltimore-will have an occasional spurt of animation.

Here are some flippant capsule summations of various film situations today, as culled from the salty dialog of travel-weary exploiteers, and about as scientific as most surveys, if you ask us:

New York City-Remains the mostest of the bestest as a show town, but don't try to gravy up tripe as truffle.

Chicago-Filmgoing is the second most popular nighttime, winter time diversion still.

Philadelphia—It's the first most popular here. Los Angeles—The home of the two-theatre, three-theatre, four-theatre day-and-date opening. A big matinee town because they want to get in out of the smog.

San Diego-A good show town with palmtrees.

Bakersfield—A good show town with too many earthquakes. Las Vegas—Where night is superfluous.

Portland-Not as bad as Seattle.

Denver-Where the Post wants four-to-one on the Rocky Mt. News. Salt Lake City-A Mormon Milwaukee.

Topeka-You hear no complaints.

Oklahoma City-Baltimore in the oil country.

Montreal-Canadian television is no competition.

Detroit—A town without roots, so they go to the films. Memphis—Still the week before Christmas.

Cincinnatti-A tipoff town. If you do big in Cincy, you're a wow Baltimore—America's seventh largest city and successor to Phila-delphia's old early-to-bed motto.

# The best loved picture of our time! The most honored picture of all time!



· IT'S GOING to be interesting to watch the results of Sam Goldwyn's reissue of, "The Best Years of Our, Lives."

Previously the reissue of a good picture has just been a reissue prompted either by a void in a company's releasing schedule or a jump for ticket sales because of the timeliness of the showing of an old subject.

With Goldwyn, it will be on a different plane. Coldwyn will do it as Coldwyn does most things, with all stops out. He'll advertise and exploit this great picture of 1947 with even more advertising and exploitation than he draped around the show when it was first shown, AND RKO will go after exhibitor deals comparable with its '47 sales. Accordingly, this becomes more than just a reissue. It will bring back one of the great money pictures of six years ago at the same time as the stalled war and the probable retum of U.S. GI's to their home diggings and their look at a new life.

Because of the great shortage of new pictures and because of the fact that Goldwyn is going to spend a lot of money giving "Best Years" a new start, the picture's reissue should become something of a boxoffice event; that is, provided the theatremen take the picture in the same stride that inspires Goldwyn in its new run.

We saw the picture the other night in its new screen form - on the big screen - and liked it even better than when we first saw it. The great story of the returning three GI's from the Japanese war fits currently like a glove. The story is not worn, to any extent, and the show could have been made today and released tomorrow.

The return of "Best Years" should be welcomed by the theatre operators as, we are certain, it will be greeted by the ticket buyers. It's a wonderful picture, and there are a lot of wonderful pictures of other years that could, with proper handling, go out and attract top patronage IF the distributors and the exhibitors will give them the proper support.



#### "Best Years" Is Still Best

• • SOME SEVEN YEARS and a few days ago "The Best Years of Our Lives" first appeared on the screen. . . . Immediately it was recognized as a monumental production achievement by Samuel Goldwyn. . . . William Wyler's striking direction of the Mackinlay Kantor story, scripted by Robert E. Sherwood, was a noteworthy effort. . . . The cast was just about the best selection ever. . . . The picture went on to bow throughout the world and everywhere it created prefound impress. . . . Now Goldwyn is again about to issue the noted Academy Award winner. . . . Viewed the other night in an RKO neighborhood spot, the 172-minute film is still a profoundly affecting experience with pointed realism, tremendous emotional impact and high dramatic register. . . . The effect upon the audience was great-as great, Phil M. ventures to say, as it was upon audiences in 1946. . . . The varied messages contained in "The Best Years" are as timely and as potent seven years later as they were the first time around, and maybe more so. . . . So, it must be said and said emphatically, that if ever a film rated a comeback it is "The Best Years" ... From this preview demonstration, said comback is going to be quite something to watch and report.

## VARIETY 'Best Years' Stands Test of Time

"Best Years of Our Lives," Samuel Goldwyn's 1946 Academy Award winner, is being reissued in 1.65 to 1 widescreen ratio late in January. New \$250,000 advertising campaign will back dates in firstrun situations.

late in January. New \$250,000 advertising campaign will back dates in firstrun situations. Shown in Hollywood to special press group last night (Monday) it's surprising how well this William Wyler-directed and Robert E. Sherwood-written film stands up in light of curreat events and at-mosphere.

mosphere. With Goldwyn giving film brand new ad campaign as though it's a fresh release, "Best Years," which runs two hours and 55 minutes, should again prove a boxoffice winner for exhibitors. Since there's whole new generation of veterans once again returning from war, should again prove a boxoffice winner for exhibitors. Since there's whole new generation of veterans once again returning from war, Dicture is same provocative subject it was seven years ago. Then there's added exploitation asset of film having won seven major Oscars, not counting Thalberg award to Goldwyn and special award to Harold Russell for bringing "hope and courage to his Scho.

Scho.



#### Good Timina

An important factor in the success of motion pictures often is timing of release. A fine production, such as "The Best Years of Our Lives," was sensationally successful, doubtless because it was initially released at a time when its story was given added impact by its timeliness and appeal to virtually every family in America. That factor should add in good measure to the drawing power of this production which Samuel Goldwyn has wisely timed for re-release around the first of the year. Conditions today, after the Korean war, are much the same as they were seven years ago, after World War II. Returning GIs, many with newly-acquired families, are experiencing the same problems attendant to their return to civilian life. The realistic aspects of the "Best Years" story made it one of the great motion pictures of our time. It should, again, prove to be a great attraction.



**\*** Because of its great entertainment, "The Best Years of Our Lives" is the only picture ever to receive nine Academy Awards and an avalanche of honors and prizes from all over the world.

By JAMES CUNNINGHAM Dy JAMES CURRINGIAM Our Lives" 'way back in Nov., 1946, were not dimmed one jota Tuesday evening when distributor RKO Radio brought back this great production to tre here, to show it to the press prior to its re-release in February. Rather, plegics, like Harold Russell in "Best Years"—all needing the sympathetic understanding that the sterling per-formances of GI's Russell, Fredric March and Data Andraus to its re-release in redruary, kather, those memories of the unusually hu-man tale about the homecoming of a trio of World War II veterans gained added lustre from the knowledge that here is one of the few great screen March and Dana Andrews inspire in "The Best Years." "The Best Years." We are told that a mounting suc-cession of demands for the re-release have been voiced by spokesmen from organizations like the General Federa-tion of Women's Clubs, from veterans' organizations and from newspapers and writers, especially those speaking for the generation that has grown up-since the production was withdrawn from circulation some five years ago. "Pamilies Coldwarm Manage" masterpieces about contemporary life that is as timely today as it was on the day it made its debut, seven years ago. For there are now "GI's" everywhere returning from Korea whose lives, home-life and problems are pretty much the counterparts of those of the returnees from World War 11, as depicted in "Best Years."

as depicted in "Best Years." Unlike most other top re-releases, "The Best Years" will be handled in the same manner as a new production is merchandised and promoted, with is merchandised and promoted, with complete campaigns and showmanship treatment. Justifiably, much will be made of the fact in the contemplated \$250,000 promotional campaign that this Samuel Goldwyn-produced and William Wyler-directed production is the "most honored picture of all time," with nine Academy awards and "virtually every other prize available to a motion picture."

A new approach will be made to A new approach will be made to all advertising, accessories and trailers. Co-operative advertising will give the production strong support and field men will operate much in the same manner as they do country-wide in behalf of a brand new top production. We left the theatre particularly im-

We left the theatre particularly impressed with the picture's timeliness pressed with the picture's timeiness and significance, made so by the long-drawn-out participation of the armis-tice negotiators in Korea while our CLP stood by tediously availing the G.I.'s stood by tediously awaiting the start of their trip home. They have been trekking back to these shores for months; home, too, are the para-

# **"THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES"**

MOTION PICTURE 'Best Years' Still a Very **Timely Motion Picture** 

'Familiar Goldwyn Manner'

On Nov. 22, 1946, Motion Picture Saily's review of "The Best Years" said: "The modern motion picture audience . . . will like its humor, its love-making, its glimpses of family life, its small-city scenes and social life, its quite likely they will swarm to it for many months.... The entire production is in the familiar Goldwyn manner of excellence and completeness, ... The acting is excellent throughout" Not a word need be changed for any review of "The Best

Years" today. Many names of the cast are highly saleable—besides March, Andrews and Russell, there are Myrna Loy, Teresa Wright, Virginia Mayo, Cathy O'Donnell, Hoagy Carmichael, Gladys George, Steve Cochran, Ray Collins and Victor Cutler, to mention some. The production runs two hours and The production runs two hours and 50 minutes; we enjoyed every one of them on this abient them, on this, our third time around. This time, RKO projected it on widescreen; it enhances some, but it does not need it. Robert Sherwood wrote the screenplay.

ednesday, January

**9** 

1954

Forty-eighth

VARIETY

Anniversary

2



KO

These pictures are completed:

R

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# HOWARD HUGHES presents

SHOTIMA

starring JANE RUSSELL an Edmund Grainger production in 3-D Color by TECHNICOLOR

## HOWARD HUGHES presents SHE COULDN'T SAY NO DODEDT MITCHINA JEAN SIMMONS

co-starring ROBERT MITCHUM · JEAN SIMMONS

WALT DISNEY'S **ROB ROY,** THE HIGHLAND ROGUE starring RICHARD TODD and GLYNIS JOHNS Color by TECHNICOLOR

## DANGEROUS MISSION

co-starring VICTOR MATURE · VINCENT PRICE PIPER LAURIE · WILLIAM BENDIX Color by TECHNICOLOR

# KING BROTHERS present

starring ANNE BAXTER • STEVE COCHRAN prints by TECHNICOLOR

## HOWARD HUGHES presents **SON OF SINBAD** starring DALE ROBERTSON · SALLY FORREST

VINCENT PRICE · LILI ST. CYR Color by TECHNICOLOR

W. LEE WILDER'S

## KILLERS FROM SPACE starring PETER GRAVES · BARBARA BESTAR JULIAN LESSER'S THE SAINT'S GIRL FRIDAY starring LOUIS HAYWARD · NAOMI CHANCE

WRH

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

SHP UDERPARY

These two great These two great pictures are ready for re-release for re-release next month:

These pictures are now filming: SAMUEL GOLDWYN'S THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES 43

WALT DISNEY'S PINOCCHIO Color by TECHNICOLOR

## **THE BIG RAINBOW**

JANE RUSSELL • RICHARD EGAN GILBERT ROLAND • LORI NELSON Color by TECHNICOLOR

## **SUSAN SLEPT HERE**

DICK POWELL • DEBBIE REYNOLDS HORACE MCMAHON • GLENDA FARRELL

BENEDICT BOGEAUS' DESPERATE MEN starring

JOHN PAYNE and LIZABETH SCOTT

ROBERT STILLMAN'S THE AMERICANO starring

**GLENN FORD** • ARTHUR KENNEDY CAESAR ROMERO · URSULA THIESS R K O RADIO PICTURES ... and many, many more to come ! WRH

PICTURES 44

## **Throwing Shakespeare For A Prat-Fall** By THEODORE PRATT

Bill Shakespeare, the theatre man, has a long reach from the grave. He comes into the lives of everybody named Pratt, of which I am one. In Bill's time there was an Elizabethan expression, "prat," wrich meant "buttocks," or the rear part of the anatomy. Bill took up the term and used it in a number of his plays. "I'll

"I'll spank you."



Bill popularized the term so that it came down through the years in the theatre, ending up in burlesque, where the term, "pratfall," became universal. From there it has come into the modern colloquial language, with many people now using the expression.

prat you," one of his characters says, meaning,

For some time I have appointed myself a committee of one Pratt to protect all people named Pratt from the misuse of our good name. To all

Ted Pratt

who do not know better I point out that a sudden, ignominious sitting down on the posterior is a "pratfall," not a "Prattfall," as some mistakenly

use it. You take a pratfall as a hyphenated word, in lower case, and with only one t. If you don't, you are out of order. Mr. Webster, rival dictionaries, and "The American Thesaurus of Slang," all substantiate this.

The same spelling of the term, with much the same connotation, appears for other meanings. The back pocket of trousers in some circles is referred to as a "prat." In the underworld a "pratman" is a pickpocket or "prat digger" who goes on a "prat prowl." This last term is also used by the police when conducting the search of a person's rear pockets. A "prat cutter" is a pocket knife kept in the hip pocket. A "prat poke" is a term for a pocketbook kept in the same To "prat" also means to go away, get out, walk along, preplace. sumably applied because the rear of a person is seen as he leaves.

#### **One-Man** Campaign

Among those who have had the excellent wisdom to accept the evidence (after I pointed it out to them) that the term "prat," and the fine, upstanding name, "Pratt," have no connection whatever, are VARIETY, Earl Wilson, H. Allen Smith, Robert Wilder, the old N. Y. Evening Sun. and another Bill—William G. Lengel, editor-in-chief of Gold Medal Books, publishers of "Escape to Eden," by a man named Pratt, 35c on any paperback rack.

Life magazine, unlike these, did not acknowledge my correction, but after I made it I noticed that its spelling improved, at least most of the time, or whenever the editors remembered. H. L. Mencken, who is accepted as the last word on these things, uses me as a reference authority on the subject in the second volume of his "American Language," firmly pointing out that it is prat and not Pratt.

Mr. John O'Hara, a fine, first-class, excellent author, did not need any correction even from scratch. He knew, being something of a theatre man himself. When he writes in a story, "You're going to sit on atre man himself. When he writes in a story, "You're going to sit on your prat in Vermont" he knows the right place to sit and the proper way to express it. Mr. Joel Sayre, however, another writer, is not of this calibre at all. On his story, "The Man on the Ledge," as pub-lished in The New Yorker, he has a character named Glaco state, "I'll lay my pratt on the sill." Tch, tch, New Yorker! This dangerous literary path leads to making enemies of people named Pratt, of which there are merey theorements in the country. Included is Boris Karloff there are many thousands in the country. Included is Boris Karloff, whose real name is Pratt, while an awful lot of the Standard Oil Co. is

There is only one problem about all this that we Pratts probably never will be able to lick. When the term is used orally there is no way to make a distinction between the correct "prat" and the wrong "Pratt." Finding some means to pronounce each differently best "Pratt." Finding some means to pronounce each differently beats us Pratts where it hurts. The only advice I can give the membership on this is, when a person uses it in the presence of a Pratt, for the Pratt to say, witheringly, "Don't look at me in your ignorance," and proceed

to give cutting instructions about the term. At the same time we don't flinch from the use of the term when properly applied, for it is a rich and colorful one. To support this statement I wish to note that, following the whimsical fashion of giving names to houses, my heap at Boca Raton in Florida is labelled "prat-fall." That confuses everybody except Elizabethan scholarsrather scarce in these parts-and enthusiasts of burlesque, of which there are quite a few about.

## **No Business Like Shmoe Business By PETE SMITH**

### a dither. "Anyone knows colored

Hollywood. And Shmoe's business is selling show business short.

I'm sure you'll recognize shmoes headaches." breed after having imbibed of this

moving pictures are bad for the eyes. You'll drive 'em away with

Yes, the Shmoes are ever with



WILLIAM HAIRSTON Currently→ "Take the High Ground" (MGM) New York STEPHEN DRAPER JU 6-4180 Hollywood SID GOLD AGENCY CR 6-2338

endeavors to march forward with the advancing times by making important scientific strides via Cineama, Cineramascope and other widescreen processes generally (not to mention stereophonic sound), the Shmoes wag their heads and again tell you it's all in vain.

For years, the Shmoes have said that double bills are a "must" in picture houses. These claims have been made despite the fact that the Interstate Theatre Circuit of Texas, guided by the astute Bob O'Donnell, has one of the most successful and profitable opera-tions in the country, favoring a single bill policy. Interstate and O'Donnell have proved over a pe-riod of many years that it is not necessary to run two features on the same program.

Pictures of the calibre mentioned elsewhere in this compendium do not require a questionable second feature to lend it any boxoffice allure. I happen to subscribe to that school that never believed a questionable second feature helped any rogram. I can't imagine a mer chant featuring one top-grade ar-ticle and then throwing in a second shoddy item to attract sales. That would tend to ruin any man's business eventually. Not content with the second questionable feature, some of the boys also threw in Bingo and Bank Nights, as well as other giveaway gimmicks. The folks who put it on the line aren't intrigued by that sort of shenanigans any more. It may have served its purposes at one time but we are in a different business today.

For next year Metro will make only 18 features which is a re-duction of about 40% compared with previous production slates of that company. From present in-dications this seems to be the trend at other studios. These pictures will be high budget pictures—made by the foremost creative brains in the show world-writers, directors and producers. With the return of top product, as indicated, we may anticipate a return to the type of showmanship that flour-ished during the single bill era. Exhibitors having fewer features to program will be encouraged to properly merchandise quality product. Any exhibitor worthy of the name is proud to exploit attractions he knows will please his patrons. I feel reasonably certain those attractions will be his good fortune from now on. At least there has never been such a concentration on the making of important pictures as there is today.

## The Screen Changes

=By LEONARD SPINRAD=

3-D

I've been spat at and thrown at And I've ducked evil passes: But they wouldn't dare hit me While I'm wearing glasses.

#### **Theatre TV:**

Theatre TV for Gus H. Fanno Has a simple frame-Notre Dame and Marciano, Or Marciano and Notre Dame.

Subscription TV: The list of things you get for free They carefully finecomb. Now comes subscription-type TV: You pay to stay at home.

#### 20% Tax:

Whether your show is a hit so grand Or a flop without any skill, It's bound to get at least one hand-

Your Uncle Sam's-in the till,

#### **Product:**

Lots of pundits, lots of strictures; What this business needs is pictures.

#### Stereo Sound:

Stereo sound will improve, it appears. Wish I could say the same for my ears.

#### Vandalism:

I wonder where the well-bred kid With cheeks so healthy pink went And what the devil changed him To a juvenile delinquent.

#### **Tape Recording:**

For one poor, lonely little soul They're throwing out a dragnet. He ruined a picture-one whole roll-By passing with a magnet.

#### **Overseas Shooting:**

It's fun in Paris and fun in Rome Or Bangkok or Madrid.

As long as your pictures are bought back home And they let you return here, kid.

#### **Critics:**

A critic reviewing a brand new show, Like a gal asked to transgress, May feel more honest saying no, But more popular saying yes.

#### Investigations:

The gents from Washington want to be sure That films are ideologically pure. If the job they do is extra good, They'll have to call filmland HOLYwood.

#### **Drive-Ins:**

Drive-in owners knock on wood With refreshment business good. Bad films never leave 'em flustered, Like when they run out of mustard.

#### **Dubbing**:

The dubbing of pictures is strictly a plus-The foreigners speak so much better than us.

#### Folkways Dept.:

- I used to neck at the movies when
  - They made my passions smoulder.
- I wonder-were films hotter then Or am I that much older?

#### Financial:

Film hope still springs

With yearning eternal

less. He's been around ever since Eve broke in her apple act at Loew's Garden of Eden. At the time Shmoe said, "She'll be a flop. The kid needs a wardrobe.

Does that give you a clue? Sure, Shmoe is strictly a weeper Shmoe is strictly a weeper ... a cry-baby ... the original "blues" singer.

It was Shmoe who was first in line at the wailing wall when the cinema made its debut. "Who wants to watch those jumping tin-types when you can see real fleshand-blood actors?" he asked. "Nobody" he answered. (Shmoe is like that—he asks questions and then answers them.) "Movies will never last. They are strictly a nov-elty."

Later those same jumping tintypes gave out with sound and Shmoe turned on the tear ducts thusly: "People go to a theatre to relax, so you give them talkies and wake them up." Then came

tiny treatise, regardless of your vintage. Actually, Shmoe is age-so than at any time during theatso than at any time during theatrical history, the Shmoes continue to be the weeds in the Garden of Show Business. They are still try-ing to sell the industry short. You meet them every day as they lu-gubriously bemoan our future. "TV is stealing the show" they say. "How can the theatres compete with free entertainment at home?

Well, the answer to that one is, "What about 'The Robe,' 'Shane,' 'From Here To Eternity,' 'Band 'Band Wagou,' Mogambo,' 'Little Boy Lost,' 'Gentlemen Prefer Blondes,' 'Stalag 17,' among others, which are currently kicking the pants off some of the top grosses of the yesteryear. Also 'Kiss Me Kate,' 'Roman Holiday,' 'Caine Mutiny,' 'Executive Suite,' 'The Cantor Story,' 'Red Garters,' 'River Of No Return,' 'Dial M for Murder,' all for Murder,' all Calle Robertson, Jane Powell, Pier of which should keep the boxoffice ticket machines clicking a sweet rhapsody."

#### No Foresight

The Shmoes are not content to plug an attraction unless the cast is headed by some of the stalwarts who have proved their worth over dio executives, however, are ever developing new talent that will some day march in the front ranks derive their livelihood? top stars are doing today. How's

For favorable things In the Wall Street Journal.

proper exploitation-the kind that chandise, their stores. their pays big dividends. future?

Returning to Shmoe and his relatives (and we're throwing in his relatives because they should Shmoe, among the be "thrown in"), they have a way and vice versa. Th sounding off to the press peof a period of years. Far-sighted stu-riodically about Show Business. And do they have anything good to say to the press about that same Show Business from which they (And of the picture parade just as the aren't you the funny one to ask such a question?)

The Shmoes are truly our Am-Angeli, Mitzi Gaynor, Bob Wag- about the theatres that are clos-Angeli, Mitzi Gaynor, Bob Wag-ner, Tony Curtis, Keefe Brasselle, ing or will soon close. Can you imagine Gimbel, Macy and Saks ranks whose mournful mouthings and wake them up." Then came And when a branch of show and we could go on almost indefi-color and Shmoe again went into business, such as the movie branch, nitely. They're all deserving of about their business, their mer- the prattle.

same world raises its eyebrows and wonders. Withal, let it be said to the credit of all concerned that the Shmoes herein depicted are not typical but you and I know they exist.

Then you'll find Shmoe, among

distributors,

They air their

the exhibitors, taking pot-shots at

troubles before the world and that

Fortunately, the great majority of showfolk march along with Irving Berlin singing, "There's No Business Like Show Business." And they really mean it. That's will continue to give us a pain in

## Talent Can't Complain; Bush League Or Backwoods, H'wood Seeks It Out By RICHARD THORPE

#### Hollywood.

For a long time I've been hearing that film stars can be synthesized, manufactured, turned out on an assembly line. With this goes the old chestnut about "for every star on top, there are at least a dozen equally or more



talented and deserving actors who just weren't as lucky." Can a film star actually be synthe-

sized? Is it really all in the breaks and

the buildup? To begin with, naturally there is no denying that there is some element of luck in any career. In a certain sense there isn't a day goes by but what sheer chance influences our lives, including the fact that sheer chance could have ended your life in

**Richard Thorpe** 

a traffic accident an hour ago. In that sense, luck enters into every success in any field of human endeavor.

But in the sense that the fates play dice to see who is going to be a success pic star and who is not, I'm afraid that success and failure aren't that arbitrary.

The crucial, inescapable fact is that with Hollywood's tremendous demand for new faces and its vast and elaborate machinery for searching out promising newcomers, it is virtually impossible for genuine talent to remain unrecognized in America today.

On the other hand, Hollywood and its public are so critically discriminating, and the profession of acting is so fiercely competitive, that the spurious and the mediocre can't masquerade for long without being spotted and sent to the foot of the class.

If there were some way to turn out film stars on an assembly line, I will be cynical enough to say that Holly-wood would probably embrace it, inasmuch as such a system would eliminate the necessity for the hundreds of thousands of dollars it now spends annually in the honest search for real talent.

If you know some way to synthetically turn out and deliver a Gary Cooper, Bing Crosby, Audrey Hepburn, Lana Turner, Gregory Peck, Jack Palance, Doris Day or a Jean Simmons, then you should drop everything and hurry to Hollywood. There's a fortune waiting for you here.

There is an entire, elaborate and handsomely-rewarded stratum of the motion picture industry which devotes its energies exclusively to the assaying, discovery and intro-duction of bona-fide promising picture personalities.

#### **Career In Itself**

The ability to recognize such talent is a career in itself. The men who have this gift are respected and rewarded for it. In Hollywood few honors are as bright or as enduring as the credit for having discovered a top star or stars.

(Parenthetically, it can be pointed out that this facility does not hinge on recognizing a physical resemblance between an unknown and a popular star. A prime requi-site is that the newcomer offer a personality that is utterly unlike that of any ortholished staw. unlike that of any established stars.)

This has resulted, naturally, in the keenest competition imaginable in the realm of talent-scouting. And this situation, in turn, brings on both a promise and a threat to newcomers.

The threat lies in the fact that producers, directors, talent scouts, agents and others in a position to discover new talent, acquire an almost critically grim cynicism in their hard-boiled, cold appraisal of newcomers.

This doesn't mean that they are rude or unsympathetic or even indifferent. It simply means that they are most difficult to impress.

On the other hand, the promise lies in the fact that these men are all desperately anxious to uncover real pay dirt, and to recognize it when they find it.

The single accomplishment of spotting an unknown girl in an obscure little theatre performance and recognizing her as a great star of tomorrow-and being vindicated in your conviction by her subsequent success—alone and in itself is enough to launch one on a fabulous career as a talent scout.

The screening process in this eternal and universal digging for boxoffice gold in the form of new personalities is thorough and all of it is dedicated to the one goal of finding potential future stars, wherever they might be.

It is so thorough, in fact, that it is pretty difficult for a really promising newcomer to escape the net that the motion picture industry spreads across the country. A report that an unusually gifted young player is making an appearance with some remote and obscure little theatre group is sometimes enough to have four major studios fly high-salaried talent scouts across the country to see the performance in the hope of finding a real talent studio, bringing the complicated financial organization out of the red and into the black within the course of a few pictures.

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Deanna Durbin is generally credited with having turned the tables for one major studio, alone and single-handed, with the series of pictures which made her top boxoffice. In any event, a marquee name is money in the bank as

far as Hollywood is concerned. If there were any easy way of creating stars, or of finding them, the picture industry would long ago have uncovered it. There isn't an easy way.

Great screen personalities are rare and cannot be counterfeited. The only way to find them is the way we do it now-get out in the bush leagues and the backwoods, and everlastingly search for the real McCoy.



The Schnoz was hitting on all 88 when he said, "Every-body wanta get inta de act." From the Halls of Madison Square Garden to the Shores of The Neversink, I have been circled and cornered by squares who insist, "I got a joke for ya!"



The Civilian is never content with merely telling you a joke. He wants to be physically inducted into the Army of Comedians. He figures he hasn't earned his stripes until he gets you in a half-nelson and pins you to the wall while he convulses himself by telling you an old joke that somebody probably discarded 20 years ago. Then there's the Lampshade Wearer who gets a death grip on you as you're in the wings ready to go on. Your intro music is always the cue for this clown to hiss, "I got a joke

for ya!" Try giving him a polite brush and right away you make a life-long enemy.

"Big Man," he'll scream. "I useta watch him from the balcony when he worked Loweys Boro Park for peanuts. I useta feed the bum when he didn't have what t'eat." If all the guys fed me who claimed they did. I'd make Fat Jack Leonard look like a thermometer. Besides, if this character had all the loot to feed me, what was he doing in the balcony?

The Louis Hayward approach is the most dangerous. This type stabs you in the chest with his finger (a la D'Artagnan in "The Three Musketeers") while telling you his joke. Of course, you're always too polite to inform them it's a Moran & Mack oldie because they're doubled up hysterically relating the punchline.

The Torture Boys are the ones to look out for. They are the Back-Bangers, Hair-Mussers and Cheek-Pullers who can usually be counted upon to know the latest dirty joke with every naughty word in the book. These guys would make B.S. Pully and Belle Barth blush. Their topper invariably is, "You can clean it up!!"

Happy Harry The Highway Hazard is never content with merely waving Hello in traffic. Our Hero makes a "U" turn, races his hot rod like it's the last lap on the Indianapolis Speedway and weaves in and out of the cars. He's not satisfied until he runs you up a pole, if need be, to tell his gag.

I like being a comedian and I love being recognized,

but ... How about the time I was doing the impression bit with a young gal in her teens when a man who could barely walk comes up to me. He looked like 108 and his bones creaked as he lowered himself into a chair I did not invite him to take. He wheezed, "Joey Adams! I haven't seen you since you entertained at my bar mitzvah!"

#### Quiz Showoffs

The Who Am I? or Remember Me? approach is the gasser. This type begins his onslaught by first blocking out your line of vision. This is accomplished by the sim-ple expedient of planting his body directly in front of yours. Head high, arms akimbo and eyebrows raised, he jams his kisser right into yours and bellows, "Well? ... Where do ya know me from?"

Like this clown in Albany who was annoyed. "So ya don't remember me, eh? Will you feel like a jerk when I tell ya. Did you once work with a fighter? Is his name Tony Canzoneri? Do you know his managar? Well his Tony Canzoneri? Do you know his manager? Well, his best friend and my best friend are cousins." If you take these guys seriously you have to wind up saying hello to lampposts and cigarstore Indians.

Every group or party has its Monster of Ceremonies. This harmless character hits you with staleys like, "Actors eat too, huh?" are of you're smoking with a holder, "Doctor told you to stay away from cigarets, huh?" This is the signal for their friends to fall on the floor, get hysteri-cal, smack the table and wipe their eyes. If the most you can muster is a weak smile, they usually sneer, "Whassa matter? Ya only laugh at your own jokes?" Then there is the friendly killer who spends his off

## Why No Capital Gain For Creators Also? By MORRIS L. ERNST

Our nation is still proceeding to discriminate in many ways against creative ability. The vicepresident of a hairpin company is in a position to get vast tax advantages which, by and large, have not been made available to

writers, actors, directors and that element of our society which determines not only our culture but which generates the ideas needed to raise our standard of living.

The important employees of most American corporations are put in a position where they can obtain wealth in the only form where it has substantial dollar value, i.e., in the form of capital gains. Practically every big American company finds that its top employees see little value in increased annual salaries since the em-

realistically they are little more than tax collectors for Uncle Sam at 20c on the dollar. Hence, the corporations, in order to procure more productivity from the brains in their companies, have accorded stock options to top employces. Our laws, which have always favored large corporations as against the creative sectors of our society, provide that there is no tax on the option when received, and properly handled, the profit ultimately obtained on the exercise of the option and the sale of the stock purchased pursuant to it, is taxable at the prevalent capital gains rate of 25 or 26% as compared to the possible 80%which would be imposed on increased salaries.

M. L. Ernst

I doubt if there is any valid factual or legal reason why the writer of a play or film, the actor who gives real life to a picture or a play, the top producer of a television program, or any important cultural creator of important literary and artistic property, cannot get himself into that rare preferential group of American entrepreneurs, the oneshotters in the market place, for whom the capital gains tax provision was primarily written into our laws. Isn't it really an insane society where the top thinking people, except for a few who have established their own individual enterprises, continue to get paid in astronomical dollars-two, three, five and \$10,000 a week, which have no relation to actual take-home pay. Such salaries create a burden on our economy and are important only because they satisfy the egos of foolish employees.

For further relief, whenever the entertainment groups feel keenly enough the present discrimination levelled against them, there is little doubt but that they can create the greatest lobby ever existing in our nation and get much needed relief from the Congress of the United

## The Best Is Yet To Come

By N. J. BLUMBERG (Chairman of the Board, Universal Pictures)

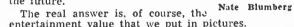
Hollywood.

The past year in our industry has been one of the most significant. The big question is: Will the impetus given to us by technical improvements stand us well for the future.

All through our industry's history we have benefited by scientific prog-ress. But as we look back (and we must look back in order to look ahead), we see in retrospect that technology is not the final answer.

If it were, then all our problems would have been over with the com-

would have been over with the cont-ing of sound and color. We might as well face this fact: Processes, without good entertain-ment, will stimulate the boxoffice for an interval but are not the answer to the future.



For the past year we have given the motion picture audiences throughout the world the best pictures in our 50-year history.

In this country these good pictures produced big grosses despite the competition of television.

The public responded to good entertainment just as it always did in the past

Our job is to maintain this high level of entertaining pictures.

There is only one way to accomplish this. First, we must mind our business and worry about nothing except



јаскрог.

#### **Scouts Are Everywhere**

There is hardly an opening performance presented by any recognized little theatre or amateur troupe in America today that is not covered by Hollywood scouts. These experts wire or telephone their reports and recommendations to their Hollywood bosses right after the show, and if they think they've found something hot, they will get out and grab a phone before the first act is over.

Of course, being all too human, scouts make mistakes. Studio bosses figure on a reasonable percentage of bad guesses. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are written off annually in salaries and other expenses connected with the signing and coaching of promising newcomers who never quite pan out.

Every year dozens of such players are signed to term contracts, brought to Hollywood, given the advantages of the finest and most expensive voice and acting coaches in the world. Sometimes the studio adds to the investment by paying for plastic surgery, expensive dental work, and even stakes the newcomer to a personal wardrobe.

This might go on for a year or two years without the player ever once appearing in a picture. Then, at the end of this period, the studio may change its mind, write off the investment and call it quits.

There have been instances in which a single player has suddenly emerged to turn the tide of fortune for the entire

hours doing research. His idea of a perfect evening is to espy a celebrity and call him by his real name. He blows his top when he can yell, "Aaron Chwatt" to Red Buttons, "How is Milton Berlinger?"

One of these pally pallbearers was in the audience one Joey Abrams-ed me three times, he said. "I don't care what they say. I like you." "W-W-What do they say?" I whimpered. "Well, I hadda fight three guys for ya, pal, but I still like the old stuff no matter how many times I hear it!"

#### **Other Jolly Joes**

The one to watch is the fellow who greets you after the best show of your life. He's the one with the friendly hay-maker. "Wot was the matter wit ya? You ain't yourself tonight. What threw ya, kid, the mike? Aah, don't let it worry ya, everybody's entitled to an off day."

When I made the Red Apple Route years ago-Years ago! Labor Day!—there was always one joker who began the, "Whaddya do inna winter—wear an overcoat" routine. This, the forerunner of the crazy mixed-up kid, is the same joker who digs you now in a movie theatre. By some quirk of seating you are facing the screen. You have popcorn in one hand, a girl in the other and polaroids in the other (three-dimension!). His opening line must be, "What're you doin' here?"

those things that must be put into successful pictures.

There is no secret formula. It's a wide-open book.

Our biggest problem involves stories and personalities. The second problem involves the selling job that is required on every picture. It is always difficult to find the right stories and just

as difficult to cast them properly. But once this is done, then we must put everything we have behind the selling job.

Exhibitors share this responsibility with distributors. Selling on the local level is just as important as the preselling national campaigns conducted by the distributors.

With more and more television stations, the local ex-hibitor must recognize the value of local television spot selling. There is no reason why cooperative plans for television advertising can not be developed with distributors. In fact, our company already has successfully done this.

But as important as the foregoing is to the future, our state of mind is just as important.

Let us quit airing our problems in public. This always hurts and certainly does not make for good public relations.

As I have often said in the past, every person who makes a living in this business should be a committee of one to talk well, not only of the future but of the present. We are one of the country's vital industries. Let's not

sell ourselves short. The best is yet to come.

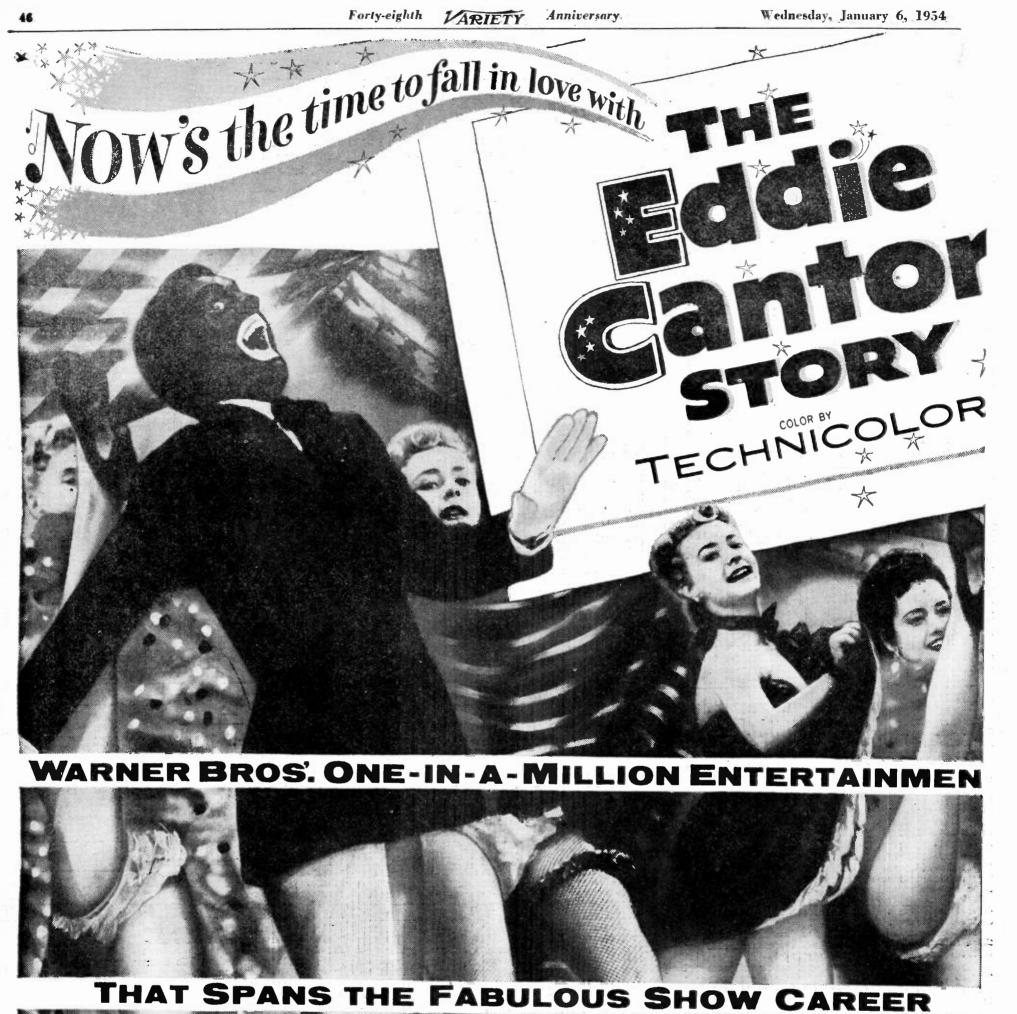
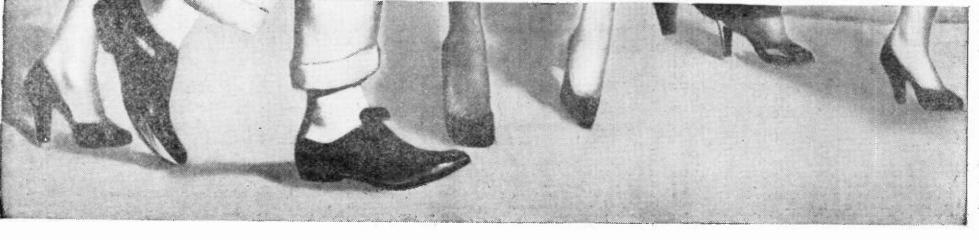


 Image: Strate of and the faborous show career

## OF AMERICA'S ONE-IN-A-MILLION GUY!



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In Addition!

# **Now IN LOS ANGELES, NEW YORK, MIAMI AND PHILLY! NATIONALLY STARTING JAN. 30!**



**ACTUAL RECORD-MAKING** SCHEDULE!

- OCTOBER 18-EDDIE CANTOR COMEDY HOUR With Jack Benny appearing
- 2 NOVEMBER 28-TWENTY QUESTIONS With Keefe Brasselle appearing
- **NOVEMBER 29-EDDIE CANTOR COMEDY HOUR** with Eddle Fisher and Frank Sinatra
- NOVEMBER 30-TWENTY QUESTIONS With Keefe Brasselle appearing
- With Keefe Brasselle appearing 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>1</sub> DECEMBER 3-STRIKE IT RICH
- DECEMBER 4-STRIKE IT RICH With Keefe Brasselle 6!/
- **DECEMBER 15-DINAH SHORE SHOW** With Eddie Cantor appearing
- **DECEMBER 27-EDDIE CANTOR COMEDY HOUR**
- DECEMBER 29-THE EDDIE FISHER SHOW With Eddie Cantor appearing
- 10 /// DECEMBER 30-STRIKE IT RICH With Eddie Cantor appearing
  - With Eddie Cantor JANUARY 5-THE MILTON BERLE SHOW appearing - (NBC-TV) TENTATIVE DATE

With Jimmy Durante, Donald O'Connor and

Personal appearances by Keefe Brasselle on the top local shows (Tex & Jinx, etc., etc.) in In New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, Providence. Addition And more still to come!!!

Newspaper interviews, contests, feature stories, photo layouts, magazine coverage galore ---In plus sock-packed 20-second and 1-minute TV commercials! Addition!

THE CAPITOL RECORD COMPANY BREAKS A RECORD! Even before picture's release all 35,000 albums of Cantor's 15 off-the-sound-track songs sold out in 2 weeks!! New pressing now in distribution!

ALINE MacMAHON and WILL ROGERS, Jr. as his dad He becomes a star of stars – as Eddie Cantor! SCREEN PLAY BY JEROME WEIDMAN, TED SHERDEMAN AND SIDNEY SKOLSKY . PRODUCED BY SIDNEY SKOLSKY . DIRECTED BY ALFRED E. GREEN usical Numbers Staged and Directed by LeRoy Prinz . Musical Direction by Ray

WRH

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## From C'Scope To **Subscription TV**

#### By AL LICHTMAN

(20th-Fox Distribution Director) It has been pretty obvious that only important, exciting pictures can be marketed profitably in the future, and this is true for first run theatres in the metro-

politan situa-

tions as well

as theatres in smaller com-

cluding subse-

quent runs in

the big cities.

them bigger and better

will help

Making

in-

munities,



Al Lichtman

solve the problem of shuttered theatres. Doing away with the admissions tax, particularly on admissions up to \$1, or even as low as 75c gives a chance for survival to a great many houses

Naturally, from our point of view, CinemaScope has served as probably the biggest business stimulant for the past year, and promise of bigger and better pictures seems wrapped up in the schedules of the many companies who are producing in CinemaScope for 1954.

Like subscription TV, Eidophor In its own way combines aspects of television and motion pictures as a direct boon for the theatre. Eidophor currently nearing the completion of its engineering phase, will provide added boxoffice im-petus in the theatre, when its live entertainment will supplement the film fare.

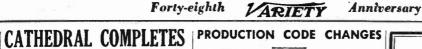
Naturally it will have to be much superior to the brand of entertainment currently beamed into homes under the sponsorship of advertisers, or else the public will not be willing to pay for something they can get for nothing.

On the subject of TV, since it is the chief source of boxoffice ills, there are a few aspects which may serve to explain certain stands taken by the industry or individual companies.

In the case of star appearances on TV, there is little one can do to control stars who are freelancing (and most of the top ones are) from videocasting. Naturally, if they can be seen for free, there is less reason for the public to pay admission at theatres to see them. However, if handled properly, a star's TV appearances may be beneficial in a publicity sense, outweighing the free appearances.

#### **Time Will Tell**

Concerning the extent to which motion picture producers should produce pictures for TV and co-operate on subscription TV, only time and economic necessity can answer. Naturally, the motion picture production company is like any other well-organized business. It is in business to make money for its stockholders, and if and when the TV medium, either through subscription TV or any through subscription TV or any of opinion is that foreign imports other manner, presents a profitable still have extremely limited scope opportunity to produce for that medium in addition to its produc-tion for theatres, or both, it will world of Don Camillo" which got



#### **PRODUCTION CODE CHANGES** Eric Johnston Return to N. Y.

Hollywood. After 15 years of production for exhibition in churches, Cathedral Films has completed its first picture for theatrical release. Film, titled "The Magnificent Adventure" and based on the life of St. Paul, will be released nationally on Jan. 18.

FIRST THEATRICAL PIC

Picture was produced by Rev. James K. Friedrich and directed by John Coyle, with Nelson Leigh, Onslow Stevens and Grandon Rhodes in top roles.

## **Extras' Union Pact**

Hollywood. Agreement for a revision of the basic contract between the Screen Extras Guild and the Assn. of Motion Picture Producers has been reached. Either party may reopen the pact after two years.

According to SEG prexy Richard E. Gordon, the new agreement has been approved by the guild's board and will be submitted to the membership for mail referendum.

Charges involve pay hikes for general extras from the present \$18.50 daily to \$19.43; dress extras, riders and dancers from the current \$25 to \$26.25, and standins from \$17 to \$17.85.

### **Foreign Films** Continued from page 5 =

lack of quality in foreign imports.

ture in French or Italian?". Davis thought dubbed pix were problems for the indies since "they are neither fish nor fowl." In addition, he pointed out, they require more prints and a considerable amount of added accessories.

Downbeat approach isn't shared by all of the importers. George Schwartz of Times Films Corp. said his "Forbidden Games" had lived up to expectations and he expected '54 to be a better year for the indies, partly as a result of the developing product shortage. Also, he said, foreign producers have become more down-to-earth in their demands, a view which finds him in emphatic disagreement with other distribs.

One of the difficulties run into by the indies during the past year, especially in N.Y., was the lack of proper outlets. Town has plenty of firstrun arties, but the major distribs "discovered" them as ideal launching places for their offbeat productions. As a result, Ameri-can releases like "Lili" and "The Actress" tied up houses for months. In addition, some of the circuits themselves began acquiring product which then got preferential treatment in the showcasing.

Terming 1953 a mediocre year but "not a bad one" for foreign films, Richard Brandt, Trans-Lux circuit topper, said the biggest thing that had happened to the field in '53 was the appearance of IFE. "At least exhibitors know they can go to IFE and be backed up with an ad campaign," he ob-served. The coming year would be confusing for foreign producers due to changing projection methods in the U.S., Brandt believes. Apart from dubbing, consensus

do so, as its first duty is that of critical raves but didn't do much business. Pic's offbeat theme pit-Our primary thinking is the ting priest vs. Communist-is partly creation of motion pictures for blamed for the lackadaisical audi-theatres with the hope that ence response. Importers claim ner. haven't been brought here beand the terms they are entitled to.

## Delayed Until Jan. 13

Motion Picture Assn. of America board meeting on revising the Production Code, which had been intended for this week, now is skedded for next week, probably Jan. 14. Eric A. Johnston, MPAA president, has extended his current Coast stay and is now expected in Gotham on the 13th.

Meanwhile, the "Dear Eric-Dear Sam" exchange of letters between Johnston and Samuel Goldwyn continued last Thursday (31). In this round, Goldwyn took issue with Johnston's statement that amendments and changes from time to time had kept the Code up to date. Goldwyn complained that "only a few minor amend-ments" had been made. He declared the Code has ceased to be "a living document."

Also last Thursday, N. Y.'s Herald Tribune became one of the first major dailies to enter the controversy, taking sides with Goldwyn. The producer's pitch for up-dating the Code "was certain to set Hollywood to talking, and perhaps even to thinking," stated the H-T. It added: "Mr. Goldwyn has said in brief that the present film morality code has become outmoded since its imposition in 1930. that a tendency to by-pass it has set in, that movie-makers ought to bring their self-censoring methods up to date. All of this sounds like good common sense . . . Both the industry and audiences are becoming more and more aware that the present code doesn't meet to-"They'd do better forgetting all day's requirements, and that too about the U.S.," he opined. "Who wants a replica of a Hollywood pic- as too little."



ent, most exhibitors have a tendency to resist such attractions with the plaint, "we've got nobody in it to sell."

Hollywod is continually preoccupied with the development of new talent. However, the quest for the elusive elements which go to make up a successful new star not an easy matter. In recent months, Hollywood can point to the ascension of a bright new star in the case of Audrey Hepburn; and, in our own particular company, we have great hopes for Marjie Millar, who we entrusted with the female lead in Martin & Lewis' "Money From Home" and the ingenue lead with Shirley Booth and Robert Ryan in "About Mrs. Leslie."

Player personal appearances certainly are effective. Players prop-edly presented to the public are the best public relations Hollywood can employ. The recent COMPO tours, I think, proved this. The tonic effect of such appearances on the boxoffice in the areas affected certainly establish the wisdom of such tours.

Whether studios are wise in dropping many contract players and depriving themselves of a steady reservoir of experienced talent is a debatable question. The fact that it is being done indicates an attempt to eliminate what may be termed "luxury expenditures." Freelance players of considerable talent are always available and, while it is important for studios to develop young people and give them so-called star buildups, the studios are now considerably more "selective" in accomplishing this aim.

### 'Who's In It?': Exhibs Continued from page 5;

they are to stay at the top.

Generally speaking, there has been more cooperation between change. Hollywood and the rest of the in- In my dustry lately. But there should be even more, now that both exhibition and production are faced with so many mutual problems. With Hollywood pinned down by the creative emergencies which have arisen from various new presentation methods, the burden of maintaining a proper liaison between the showmen and the studios rests more than ever before on the shoulders of distribution.

Wherever it is practicable, think the exhibitor should visit Hollywood regularly to see firsthand what is going on. He should be given the freedom of every lot and efforts should be made to thoroughly indoctrinate him with the production side of the industry The welcome mat is always out at my studio office and I never start preparations for a picture without first trying to evaluate it from the exhibitor's standpoint.

Sales Dept.'s Great Value

I very definitely believe that the sales department should take more active participation in shaping production policy. It is certainly a great advantage to producers to receive the widest possible reports on reactions to his pictures to guide him in planning new films. Box-office figures are a yardstick of success or failure but they don't tell what was wrong or what to do in the future. The sales depart-ment, with its close exhibitor contracts, is in a much better position to give the producer some con-structive help.

I feel that players should be used more for personal appearances, not only in connection with their films but for important charity functions and public affairs at which their attendance will gain respect for the industry. I think b.o. figures will substantiate the value of this in specific instances and, in general, that such appearances contribute greatly toward promoting interest in new personalities.

Although Hollywood's public relations have had numerous setbacks during the past year or so, I sincerely believe that they are now improving. But not as substantially as they could be. COMPO was an excellent idea and I, for one, feel that it did not receive the support that it deserved.

Seriously needed is a vigorous, constructive public relations policy which carries over and beyond the question of censorship. When the industry is stricken with business ills, too much attention is given to groaning and moaning in the public prints and not enough is given to counteracting such downbeat thinking with intelligent institutional publicity. Hollywood has some of the finest public relation minds in the world. They should be used for more than studio-dictated handouts and the fluff and puffs which many executives and stars consider of major importance.

The production economies which have resulted from the "shaking down" process going on within the industry are certainly important to the future of our business. I do not believe they have yet reached the place where they can be cut no further. Constructive thinking always produced something better than that which existed before. and the emergencies we have faced re-cently have inspired some mighty constructive thinking. I don't mean to infer that costly pictures should be dropped from studio schedules any more than I think that every picture should be an epic. Entertainment is the real test of any picture's potential and it takes brains, more than dollars, to insure this. I believe that the studios are wise in cutting their contract lists. Not so much because most contract players were bad investments but also because many talented young people failed to receive the opportunities they actually deserved. These probably will gain success in the theatre, TV and other allied fields and eventually gain screen stardom, thus alleviating the studios from the costly burden of training them.

name cannot carry a bad picture ward the gradual elimination of and even the biggest b.o. names double features. More big pictures, must be buttressed by good stories fewer pictures, longer runs and a and sound production values if more selective audience than ever before in the history of screen entertainment will speed such a

> In my opinion, the greatest current detriment to the motion picture boxoffice is high admission prices. The movies have always rated as family entertainment, but the price scales in the majority of theatres today make movie-going an extreme luxury for the average family. The success of the lowerpriced driveins, and particularly their "all inclusive" family rates, substantiates this. The public has proved that it will pay advanced prices for the really big pictures but today it shops for entertain-ment as carefully as for merchandise bargains.

## **C'Scope Vs. Duals**

Continued from page 8 lionaire" prove that even in the smaller cities, extended runs can be expected.

Shorts Important Too

At 20th Century-Fox we are now giving considerable thought to our short-subject program. These must not be shoddy or lacking in variety, because there is the wide field of music, sporting events, spectacles of all kinds, as well as the lure of travel to draw from.

We have already completed our first short subject, "Vesuvius Ex-press," which shows the wonders of Italy through a break-neck journey aboard the world's fastest train which travels between Milan and Naples at 120-miles an hour. The CinemaScope camera provides a feeling of audience participation during this sight-seeing jaunt. We have sent Bob Snody to film the spectacular shooting of the Nile Rapids, which he will record while making background shots for "The Egyptian." We also plan to show what it's like to spend "A Day on a Jet Carrier," and also will probe the submarine marvels of Florida. Under the guidance of Paul Mantz we are going to show all the thrills of aviation, the Tournament of Roses at Pasadena has been fully recorded, and Robert Webb is heading an expedition to film the jungles of Venezuela. Shown through CinemaScope these things will not merely have the effect of a reproduction, but will give the viewer the effect of actually being there. And there is no limit to the diversity of world wonders waiting to be recorded.

## **Unique Values**

Continued from page 5

production by studio operating costs, which must be written off.

In casting, the independent is not limited to a studio talent roster. This freedom frequently results in dynamic star combinations that would not otherwise be possible. The teaming of Humphrey Bogart and Ava Gardner in "The Barefoot Contessa" is such an example; the pairing of Kirk Doug-las and Dany Robin in "Act of

ing money for its investors.

theatres with the hope that the response, imported the through CinemaScope and other that a number of good European future developments we can create productions, such as "The Wages superior entertainment that will of Fear," the Venice festival winso far excel what can presently be shown on TV through the sponsorshown on TV through the sponsor-ship of advertisers, that we can an exaggerated idea of their worth bring prosperity back to the thea-We are dedicated to that tres. policy to the exclusion of anything else, and we are greatly encouraged by the public's response to our first two CinemaScope pictures

It is our belief that this is only the beginning, since CinemaScope is in its infancy and the engineers and technicians are working constantly to improve the medium in order to enable our production organization under the guidance of eral manager, Yarnell and Rathert Darryl Zanuck to create bigger, will assume added duties. Yarnell better and more exciting entertain- announced that the company's 1954 ment than has heretofore been possible.

## **CCA Re-Elects Yarnell**

Hollywood.

Board of directors of Color Corp. of America re-elected W. R. Yar-nell as president, along with three veepees, Joseph J. Rathert, John Glavin and Paul Fralic, who will also double as treasurer.

Owing to the recent resignation of O. W. Murray, veepee and genpolicy will be the same as last vear's.

Production costs, of course, can be cut further. Whether this is economically feasible or justified is another question. We have al-ways operated under the theory that we want to give the exhibitor the best possible result, commensurate with a cost which will permit a reasonable return. I think, by and large, Hollywood has eradicated many of the unimporant fripperies which acocunted for astronomical budgets without sane reason.

#### Swerdlin Is Circle Pres.

Dr. Nathan Swerdlin, editor of the Jewish Day-Journal, has been elected president of the Foreign Press Film Critics' Circle. This is a N. Y. association which annually bestows pic awards.

Dr. Armando Romano, editor of Il Progresso, was named v.p. and Rebecca Issachar of the National Greek Herald was reelected as treasurer.

Love is another. This same latitude is an asset in the selection of writers, directors and other key artists.

Because independent production is notably free of restraint and interference, it attracts the finest talents in the industry. This was controlling consideration in 1919, when Mary Pickford, Charles Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and D. W. Griffith founded UA to achieve creative liberty. It is an equally compelling advantage today.

In its 35th anniversary year, UA will distribute the product of such craftsmen as Joseph Mankiewicz, John Huston, Anatole Litvak, Stanley Kramer, Robert Rossen and Victor Saville. And stars such as Bogart, Burt Lancaster, Gary Cooper, Jennifer Jones, Gregory Peck, Ginger Rogers and Errol Flynn, who appear in UA releases for 1954, similarly appreciate the wider opportunities of independent films.

Today's trend seems to point to-

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## 'Olympic Games' Fest Idea

**By GEORGE WELTNER** (Pres., Paramount International)

tures get exported that really could participate so brilliantly that shouldn't, but in order to stop the publicity resulting therefore these pictures, we would have to

set up a mechanism that would boom-erang far beyond any constructive value that it might During have. the year, a great man the course of pictures leave our shores that do our



George Weltner

country a great deal of good. They are pictures that bring us prestige, that show in a kindly light the American way of life, our homes, our schoo's and our institutions.

Any good propagandist will tell you that if an output is consistently good, without contrast, it becomes saccharine and loses its propaganda value. A healthy seasoning of rough-and-tumble stuff does not detract from the type of picture aforementioned but enhances and highlights them.

I am sure that it is known to you that occasionally a picture goes out that is very self-critical of our nation or something within it and may be said to show us in a less than good light. Even these pic-tures have their value, because they prove that we still have freedom to criticize ourselves, which is quite in contrast to the film ef-forts with the Red Star trademark.

Yes, I suppose there should be some selectivity in exports but I think that the individual companies should be entrusted with this, perhaps after some indoctrination in the problems involved.

The competition of local production abroad is gradually increasing, although we in our company have not felt this. Italian pictures are increasing their grosses in Italy French pictures in France, and so on amongst the major producing countries of the world. Therefore, while Paramount in particular is not feeling this, it must be coming out of our industry hides some-Most of these centres of where. production, particularly in continental Europe and Asia, have suffered greatly because of the war. should not be surprising to us that they are now catching up. I believe that this is salutary, as it presents a greater challenge to Hollywood. We have never been a nation to be afraid of competition, and I think we can rightly say to the foreign countries "More power to you."

MPEA is not only doing a good job. It is doing a great job. Elected by the Motion Picture Association to be industry chairman in the endeavor to assist Eric Johnston in the various industry agreements that were negotiated this year, I am happy to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Johnston's prestige, astuteness and leadership and to the efficiency of his organization. In all my years of experi-ence of the motion picture business, which are now more than 30, I have never collaborated with a harder worker and a harder hitter or a more intelligent negotiator.

#### Festivals OK-But Too Many

The American industry in my opinion should definitely particiforeign film festival We pate in cannot disregard the fact that our industry is the world's largest producer of films and for us to withhold ourselves from participation in festivals could be mistaken for or even might be in essence a form of industry snobbishness. We must be very careful not to in actuality be or place ourselves in a position of being accused of this fault. We should participate seriously and importantly as befits a great industry in a world market. The great problem of film festivals, however, is their multiplicity. It is almost impossible because of the great number of these festivals to participate properly in all of them. I have long advocated and still do advocate an "Olympic Games" system of festivals, whereby a world festival committee would designate two or three festivals a year, rotating them amongst the countries that have production industries so that there year, but great ones, in which the directing.

It is probably true that some pic- world motion picture industry the publicity resulting therefrom would increase the public interest in motion pictures.

In spite of the unusual difficulties that beset the distributors of American films abroad, such as quotas, licenses, tariffs, exchange restrictions, unusual taxes and other artificial barriers, the desire of foreign publics to see the out-put of Hollywood will continue as long as Hollywood makes fine pictures and as long as this continues our business will be good in spite of the trade barriers that have been set up.



urday Evening Post story. David Weisbart produced for WB, with David Butler directing.

Before the CinemaScope cameras we now have "A Star is Born" (Judy Garland, James Mason, Jack Carson, and Charles Bickford); "The High and the Mighty" (John Wayne); "Lucky Mc" (Doris Day, Robert Cummings and Phil Sil-vers); "The Talisman" (Virginia Mayo, George Sanders, Rex Harrison); "Ring of Fear" (Clyde Beat-ty circus, Mickey Spillane, Pat rison); O'Brien).

#### More CinemaScopers

In preparation and being readied to follow in CinemaScope we have 12 equally important productions; "Battle Cry." to be produced by Henry Blanke and directed by Raoul Walsh; "East of Eden," based on John Steinbeck's current bestseller, produced and directed by Elia Kazan; "Mr. Roberts," one of Broadway's all-time hits, a Joshua Logan-Leland Hayward production based on the play. by Thomas Heggen and Joshua Logan; "Helen of Troy," to be directed by Robert Wise and made in Rome: 'Giant." George Stevens' production of Edna Ferber's bestseller, to be directed and produced by Stevens in association with Henry, Ginsberg; "Land of the Pharaohs," to be produced and directed by Howard Hawks from the story being developed as a novel and screenplay by Nobel Prize winner William Faulkner; "The Silver Chalice," Thomas B. Costain's novel which has been high on the best seller lists throughout the nation for many months, to be pro-duced and directed by Victor Saville; "Daniel and the Voman of Babylon"; "Sea Chase," starring John Wayne; "The Miracle," from the famed Max Reinhardt produc-"Moby Dick," the Herman tion; Melville sea classic to star Gregory Peck and be produced and directed by John Huston; "Trilby," by Ger-ald DuMaurier, to star Kathryn Grayson.

We know there is great enter-tainment appeal in 3-D pictures, properly made, with the right stars and the subjects proper to that medium. Our "House of Wax" and "Charge at Feather River" were successes. As this is written good returns are pouring in for "Hon-do," John Wayne's first 3-D film. Alfred Hitchcock's "Dial M for Murder" starring Ray Milland, Grace Kelly and Robert Cummings, and our soon-to-be released "Phane and our soon-to-be released "Phan-tom of the Rue Morgue," from Edgar Allen Poe's classic thriller, starring Karl Malden, Claude Dauphin, Patricia Medina and Steve Forrest, will again prove the potency of the right 3-D attraction. It is my own conviction that the technical advances achieved during the past year and the further improvements which are being realized will mean a soundly prosperous 1954 for the motion picture industry. I know it will be a great year for the public, which is destined to see pictures of a magnitude and quality never before produced

#### 'Big' Pix Vs. Mass Continued from page 8;

pictures develop, the in-between film may find itself in a tortuous position.

It must be accepted that an exhibitor would prefer a picture of magnitude, still all can't fall in that bracket. However, as the trend moves in the direction of the important category, perhaps there will be fewer pictures. Which will be fewer pictures. brings into the spotlight the sub-ject of double features. Big pictures may take care of this in their own way. At least, in the first run situations anyway. The widescreen, the new mediums, are added inducements and may turn the exhibitor away from the double bill idea.

I imagine all pictures will be shot for widescreen. That doesn't pose a problem. However, selection of the medium is something else. I believe the subject matter must fit the medium. If it adds to the artistic value then perhaps Cinema-Scope is the answer, or Cinerama, or Todd-AO or 3-D, but this cannot be determined before you have a complete shooting script.

My own production plans call for two pictures, the "Maurice Che-valier Story" with Danny Kaye, the other "Dawn in the Sky," with Jimmy Stewart. At this time I wouldn't, I couldn't say just how we'll shoot either or both.

More and more stress will be placed on story. At least, that's my thinking. You don't do any star a favor by giving him a script that doesn't have strong story potentiality. Too much then is expected of him to pull a mediocre picture out of that class and make it a big hit.

That's asking too much. When a picture doesn't live up to boxoffice expectations, there are people in the industry who are quick to jump to the conclusion that the star is losing his boxoffice appeal.

All elements must be right. They better be!



Hollywood. Predictions that 1953 would see Predictions that 1953 would see business in the motion picture in-from both production and theatr dustry fall to a new low did not come to pass, it is clearly appar-

ed through the medium of wide-

screen, and the flurry of 3-D films which proved to be a temporary hypodermic for sated appetites

seeking diverting entertainment.

Then came CinemaScope which

brought phenomenal grosses in the limited number of theatres

which were able to install the new

In respect to the new dimen-sions, Republic has not made a

3-D or CinemaScope picture. We

have stuck to the conventional

type picture, geared to widescreen

because we believe this is the soundest policy for Republic to pursue at the present time.

look forward to in bigger and bet-

ter boxoffice pictures from all companies. This will result in a

substantially increased gross for American theatres for the new year over 1953. I do believe that

I think exhibitors have much to

Herb Yates

equipment.

ent at the close of the year. Many things served to alleviate to conditions which originally pointed to a bad 1953. Included among these were the num-ber of great pictures which were exploit-

to go ahead with a full knowledg standpoint.

Realistically speaking, both the exhibitor and producer must fac the ever-increasing encroachmer of television, this from a stand point of multiple increase of tele vision in key cities and also th ever-expanding of new telestation in sub-key cities and our smalle communities. The growth of tele vision stations and home receiver is on the increase and "around an around it goes and where it stop nobody knows."

I believe that the large majority of motion picture exhibitors shou! follow the example of other lead ing theatremen in America whe have acquired TV station license in their territories. As I've sai before, television is show busine: and show business belongs to th motion picture industry. Why k television go to outsiders? I be lieve from this point on, alert ex hibitors will prevent this from happening in the future.

#### **Production** Outlook

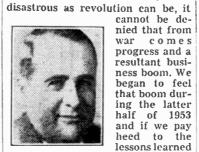
I think all studios in 1954 will produce approximately the sam. number of pictures in variou dimensions as in '53. I don't antic ipate any shrinkage in production What will happen in '55 will be dependent on public reaction to nev super-deluxe pictures which the industry is now trying to produc. in quantity. If boxoffice reaction is good in '55 a greater number • pictures will probably be made The investment of Hollywood pro ducers will be far greater in '5. than in '53.

Most of the marginal houses have closed, and the great majority of theatres now in operation are on a sound financial basis. I: the fine pictures we are currently making find favor with the public, as we anticipate. I look for the most optimistic outlook we've had since 1947 and a great resurgence of production.

#### **Code Enforcement**

I believe that the Motion Picture Producers' Assn., set up by the industry to interpret the re-actions of the public and civic or-ganizations all over the world, has done an excellent job. They have tried in every way to give the producer the maximum latitude making a picture, particularly if it has a controversial theme. I see no reason to adjust the Production Code. Once we start changing it, we could be hit by an avalanche of censorship, not only from states but from towns and villages. A picture could be cut so many times it would look like shredded wheat.

does The industry certainly need a research project, and I be-lieve that we had already begun work on one when the chaos of 3-D hit us. There is every reason to expect this matter to be resumed during 1954. A point not mentioned so far, affecting the producers' playing time, is the fact that there are going to be more foreign pictures coming to the United States than ever betion picture industry, just as every other industry, has an opportunity to serve an additional 20,000,000 more customers than it did in building a market and a million-the only 1010 when picture build building a market and a million-the opportunity to be a demanc next year by many governments to get their pictures into our theatres, and this will cause a very serious situation which must be faced by both the American ex-hibitor and producer. Closed-circuit television for theatres and "pay-as-you-see" televi-sion will not be with us before the latter part of 1955 at the earliest. There are too many problems in-volved, including the FCC, installation of meters and, last but not least, the proper product. I believe that the producer and exhibitor are not so much concerned with them right now as they are with the hundreds of television stations scheduled to open during the next two years in small communities. Out of all this turmoil. however, will come a permanent and much healthier situation. In addition, there are going to be hundreds of new drive-ins built in this country during 1954 and 1955. and drive-ins have proven to be impervious to TV competition.



during the Jimmy Grainger

I predict that the next two or three years will send picture business soaring to a new high.

One of the greatest lessons we learned during the past year wasn't a new lesson. It was merely one that the industry had lost sight of in the mad rush of events. That is, great pictures always do great business regardless of the state of the union.

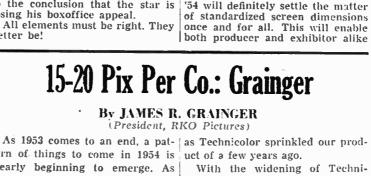
And speaking of the state of the union, it is great. Today the mo-

tern of things to come in 1954 is uct of a few years ago. With the widening of Technicolor laboratory facilities marching along, I feel sure that very few pictures will be made in black and white during the coming years. 1954 will see fewer and better

pictures coming from our studios in Hollywood. No longer will pro-ducers make a film just to be making a picture. When they go to the post they'll have a story and stars and production values set up that offer the greatest b.o. potentia's.

I have the feeling that during the years to come major stu-dios will hold product to from 15 to 20 major productions per com-pany-perhaps even less.

More and more, in talking to picture-making executives, sales managers and exhibitors them-selves, I find the imagined fear of TV lessening and lessening. TV is taking its place in the entertain-ment firmament as naturally as did its predecessor, radio. The pattern in this field is set. True, in the years ahead, TV could be the distribution factor, or projection fore. Reciprocity is necessary i'



clearly beginning to emerge. As cannot be denied that from comes war progress and a

resultant business boom. We began to feel that boom during the latter half of 1953

### Robson's Indie 'Walk'

Hollywood. Mark Robson and Harry Lenart are setting up a new indie production unit to shoot "Walk With the Devil." based on a novel by Elliott Arnold.

Story deals with Italy during World War II. It will be filmed in can be a very few festivals each Rome with Robson producing and

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the early 1940s when picture business was setting new records. Apparently, many in the film business have completely overlooked the fact that today the population of the U.S. has grown to 160 millions against its 140 millions in early war days. These additional 20,000,000 customers alone are enough to keep the theatres of the nation rolling. It is up to us to go out and get them. Showmanship will do it and good pictures will keep them coming.

As the smoke clears during the early months of 1954, I am positive that many of the disturbing elements that kept us fogged up in 1953 will be cleared away. From out of our over-abundance of new developments will emerge one or two new stable, accepted systems. will be used on certain films, just sales or production field.

and-one other problems would have to be faced and solved.

It is my opinion that it would take 20 years to put multi-million dollar, first-run motion pictures into the home via TV. Granted that the TV industry could solve technical problems and place coin-TV sets in every home in America in the next 10 years, there is still the problem of public acceptance to a degree where it could be made a paying proposition.

Regardless, though, any prediction on this subject is strictly looking into the old crystal ball. Numerical cuts in personnel, in the producing and sales organizations, will pace with production cutbacks in pictures for theatres. It follows that there must be a or CinemaScope could become standard with certain pictures which lend themselves to the weak of the we dium. I personally believe that 3-D talent will survive whether in the



Forty-eighth

Anniversary

# THE BIRTHDAY CAKE THAT EVERY EXHIBITOR IN **AMERICA WILL SHARE!**

As our 30th Anniversary commences, we want to thank our exhibitor friends whose mutual confidence and cooperation has made it all possible. We've got countless medals, awards, statuettes. The annals of film business glow with the achievements of M-G-M attractions, M-G-M stars, M-G-M



"Come up

Showmanship. But our celebration is planned with only one thing in mindyour box-office! Let's get the cash and let the credit go! We invite theatre men to join with us in what will be one of the biggest promotions of its kind ever held in the industry, to launch a cavalcade of top entertainments, to stimulate your business.

## TIE-IN YOUR THEATRE WITH THE M-G-M PARADE OF GREAT "JUBILEE" HITS!

M-G-M provides the fireworks nationally and locally! It's going to be the most publicized event of the Year. Get your slice of the Birthday Cake. It's an unparalleled opportunity to give your Box-office a LIFT! Here is a partial list of available M-G-M attractions for your local "JUBILEE." Showmanship accessories available FREE!

#### "KNIGHTS" LEADS THE LINE-UP OF "JUBILEE" RELEASES!

JANUARY

"KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE" (CinemaScope) (In Color Magnificence) . Robert Taylor, Ava Gardner, Mel Ferrer JANUARY

"EASY TO LOVE" (Technicolor) Esther Williams, Van Johnson, Tony Martin

JANUARY

"QUO VADIS" Greater In WIDE-SCREEN • (Technicolor) Robert Taylor, Deborah Kerr, Leo Genn

JANUARY "GIVE A GIRL A BREAK" (Technicolor) Marge and Gower Champion, Debbie Reynolds

JANUARY "THE GREAT DIAMOND ROBBERY" **Red Skelton** 

FEBRUARY "SAADIA" (Technicolor) Cornel Wilde, Mel Ferrer, Rita Gam

"MOGAMBO" (Technicolor)

"TAKE THE HIGH GROUND!"

(Ansco Color) • Richard Widmark, Karl Malden, Elaine Stewart

Spencer Tracy, Jean Simmons, Teresa Wright

Clark Gable, Ava Gardner

**"THE ACTRESS"** 

FEBRUARY

"THE LONG, LONG TRAILER" (Ansco Color) Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz MARCH

"TENNESSEE CHAMP" (Ansco Color) Shelley Winters

MARCH

"ROSE MARIE" (CinemaScope) (In Color Glory) . Ann Blyth, Howard Keel, Fernando Lamas

MARCH "GYPSY COLT" (Ansco Color) Donna Corcoran, Ward Bond, Frances Dee, and Gypsy

MARCH "RHAPSODY" (Technicolor) Elizabeth Taylor, Vittorio Gassman

MARCH "FLAME AND THE FLESH" (Technicolor)

Lana Turner, Pier Angeli

### AND THESE CURRENT PRODUCTIONS!

"KISS ME KATE" (Ansco Color) Kathryn Grayson, Howard Keel, Ann Miller

> "ESCAPE FROM FORT BRAVO" (Ansco Color) . William Holden, Eleanor Parker, John Forsythe

"HALF A HERO" **Red Skelton** 

"ALL THE BROTHERS WERE VALIANT" (Technicolor) Robert Taylor, Stewart Granger, Ann Blyth "TORCH SONG" (Technicolor) Joan Crawford, Michael Wilding "TERROR ON A TRAIN" Glenn Ford, Anne Vernon

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### AND THESE BIG FUTURE M-G-M ATTRACTIONS!

**"EXECUTIVE SUITE"** William Holden, June Allyson, Barbara Stanwyck, Fredric March, Walter Pidgeon, Shelley Winters, Paul Douglas, Louis Calhern

"BETRAYED" (Color) Clark Gable, Lana Turner, Victor Mature

"HER TWELVE MEN" (Color) Greer Garson, Robert Ryan

"JULIUS CAESAR" Marlon Brando, James Mason, John Gielgud, Louis Calhern, Edmond O'Brien, Greer Garson, Deborah Kerr

"BEAU BRUMMELL" (Color) Stewart Granger, Elizabeth Taylor, Peter Ustinov

And Many More BIG ONES Including The Industry's Greatest Line-up Of Short Subjects!

"CREST OF THE WAVE" Gene Kelly, Jeff Richards

"INVITATION TO THE DANCE" (Technicolor) . Gene Kelly, and All-Star Cast

"VALLEY OF THE KINGS" (Color) Robert Taylor, Eleanor Parker

"PANTHER SQUADRON 8" (Ansco Color) . Van Johnson, Walter Pidgeon

The Great **Event That Ushers In** M-G-M's 301

M-G-M's FIRST PRODUCTION IN

NEXT FROM M-G-M IN CINEMASCOPE

"ROSE MARIE" (Color) Ann Blyth, Howard Keel, Fernando Lamas



M-G-M presents in CinemaScope . "KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE" . (In Color Magnificence) . starring Robert Taylor Ava Gardner . Mel Ferrer . with Anne Crawford . Stanley Baker . Screen Play by Talbot Jennings, Jan Lustig and Noel Langley . Based on Sir Thomas Malory's "Le Morte D'Arthur" . Directed by Richard Thorpe . Produced by Pandro S. Berman

#### The French Line (3-D MUSICAL-COLOR)

52

3-D musical with hot possibilities blue-nose controversy and censorably costumed four-minute dance by Jane Russell. Without hotspot, only mild, talky tuner with mostly distaffer appeal.

#### Hollywood.

 Blanc, Robert Weits, 102 MINS.

 33, Running, time, 102 MINS.

 Mary Carson
 Jane Russell

 Pierre
 Gilbert Roland

 "Waco" Mosby
 Arthur Hunnicutt

 Annie Farrell
 Mary McCarty

 Myrtle Brown
 Joyce MacKenzie

 Celeste
 Paula Corday

 Bill Harris
 Scott Elliott

 Phill Barton
 Craig Stevens

 Katherine Hodges
 Laura Elliott

 Francois
 Steven Ceray

 John Wengraf
 George Hodges

 Douna Adams
 Barbara Darrow

 Kitty Lee
 Barbara Dobbins

The censorship controversy stirred up over "The French Line" by its lack of a Production Code seal gives the RKO release a natural edge for ballyhoo and ticket sale possibilities. Actually, except for a four-minute, censorably cos-tumed dance by Jane Russell, it is a rather mild, gabby, fashion parade in 3-D that will appeal mostly to distaffers. Exhibs willing to join Howard Hughes in side-tenning the industry's code rega stepping the industry's code reg-ulations would seem to be in line for a fancy b.o. buck—as long as the controversy continues to be fanned and the aforementioned four-minute scene stays in.

Miss Russell is well equipped by nature to fulfill the demands of the costuming by Michael Woulfe and Howard Greer, and on that count. when seen through the polaroids, eyes will pop as she shakes and quakes to "Looking for Trouble." The outfit she wears has been vari-ously described as a bikini affair, but beech biking roughly have such but beach bikinis rarely have such inquiring camera thrusting inquisitive lenses forward at such strategic angles. The number gives every male a front box seat for a burley show, and they will enjoy it if they have stayed through the 95-minute talkiest that preceeds it.

This concern with the mammary is notable through the film's 102 minutes in the casting of well-chosen femmes and in their costuming. but not to any censorable extreme except in the "Trouble" unmber. Matching, maybe even surpassing. Miss Russell for size is Mary Mc-Carty, who plays the star's chum in the plot, joins her on singing "The Gal From Texas." a lightly costumed production number, and solos "By Madame Firelle," a fash-ion display of Michael Woulfe gowns that provides something for the distaff ticket-buyers to pop their success to Pop their eyes at. It's unfortunate, however, that Miss McCarthy, the only true musical comedy singer in the cast, is used so sparingly.

Outside of these various treats for the eyes in costuming, Techni-color tinis and interesting settings, the picture is not strong on what generally passes for b.o. entertain-ment. The plot is the long-worked one about a rich girt who wants to be loved for herself and goes in-cognito as a working frail to find the right man. It's an okay basis for a musical if ingenuously handled, but there is little of the imaginative displayed in Lloyd Bacon's direction or in the screenplay by Mary Loos and Richard Sale. Once Mary Loos and Richard Sale. Once in a while a snappy quip breaks through the long passages of ver-biage that strain too hard to be smart talk. And in line with the film's principal concern, the e snappy quips are bosom-conse'ous, even to the point of having Miss Russell called "Chesty."

and direction. Roland's suave way with the ladies helps his character of the French lover who pursues oil-rich Miss Russell for herself, not her millions. Arthur Hunnicutt tells tall tales as Miss Russell's oil pertner and guardian Among the partner and guardian. Among the lookers assembled to add bosom emphasis are Joyce MacKenzie. emphasis are Joyce MacKenzie. Paula Corday, Laura Elliott and others who shape up correctly. Scott Elliott. Craig Stevens, Michael St. Angel are among the male casters having little to do.

Edmund Grainger's production guidance is excellent in mustering outstanding physical attractions for the show. His choice of cleffers Myrow, Blane and Wells for the tunes was good, too. However, the listenable songs are rather poorly sung by the principals. Harry J. Wild's 3-D color lensing is top-notch, as are the background music arrangements by Walter Scharf. Brog.

#### The Glenn Miller Story (MUSIC-COLOR)

#### Sentiment and swing keynoting appealing but lengthy bi-opic. James Stewart, June Allyson and hearty boxoffice.

#### Hollywood, Jan. 5.

rec. 10, 53. Rumming times r James Stewart r June Allyson churles Drake acGregor Henry Morgan Genes Lungford Louis Armstrong Gene Kuupa En Pollack The Archie Savage Dancers The Archie Savage Dancers Rving Bacon Kathleen Lockhart nold Barton MpcLane Sig Ruman Phil Garris James Bell r Katherine Warren Glenn Miller Helen Miller Don Haynes i Sebrihman hummy MacGregor lerself limself limself Themselves Themselves Polly Havnes Mr. Miller Mrs. Miller Mrs. Abher General Arnold Mr. Krantz Joe Becker Mr. Burger Mrs. Burger

Sertiment and swing feature this iopic treatment on the life of the late Glenn Miller, and in it Uni-versal has a boxoffice winner. Jomes Stewart and June Allyson is strong marquee combination so their presence with the Miller music and the exploitation push U will give, means hearty ticket sales in the keys and elsewhere.

The Miller music, heard in some 20 tunes throughout the production, is still driving, rhythmic swing at its best. It will be enjoyed, both nostalgically and for its impact in comparison with present-day style. Paradoxically, although day sivle. Paradoxically, although U is tied tight to Decca, the film is getting an advance promotional assist from RCA Victor, which has been pushing a plush, fancy-priced Miller album. Decca is issuing the sound track set.

The Aaron Rosenberg supervi-sion makes excellent use of the music to counterpoint a tenderly projected love story, feelingly played by Stewart and Miss Ally-son. The two stars, who clicked previously as a man-wif, team in "The Stratton Story," have an alfinity for this type of thing. Stewart's acting mannerisms are less in evidence in this than in his usual film roles. Both players have the advantage of sympathetic direction from Anthony Mann, who gives the subject understanding guidance, and a screen story by Valentine Davies and Oscar Brodney that is an expert blend of incidents in the Miller band career with behind-the-baton personal highlights.

With all of its many praise-worthy points, the film has its flaws, too. The principal complaint ress

his own band. The new sound comes at Si Shribman's State Ballroom in Boston, when the trumpet lead accidentally splits his lip at rehearsal and "Moonlight Sereand rehearsal nade" is is played with a clarinet lead.

Remaining 45 minutes covers the Itemaining 45 minutes covers the rocketing Miller fame, his enlist-ment when World War II starts and the service band's playing for overseas troups. The finale is a real tear-jerker that will have every femme, and not a few males, unabashedly drying eyes as the maestro's family listens in at home ic a special Christmas Day broadto a special Christmas Day broad-cast to the States from Paris, 10 days after Miller disappeared on a flight from London to Paris.

Highlighting the romantic swing Highlighting the romantic swing phases of the presentation are such songs identified with Miller as "Serenade." "String of Pearls," "St. Louis Blues March," "In the Mood," "Little Brown Jug." "Pennsylvania 6-5000," "Tuxedo Junction." "American Patrol." "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "I' Know Why," "At Last" and "Na-tional Emblem March." The only new tune in the film is the "Love Theme," composed by Henry Man-cini. It is heard at various times throughout. throughout.

One of the big musical moments One of the big musical moments in the footage has nothing to do with the Miller music. It is a red-hot jam session that has Louis Armstrong, Gene Krupa, Trummy Young, Babe Austin, Cozy Cole, Marty Napoleon, Barney Bigard and Arvell Shaw socking "Basin Street Blues." Sequence is dated 1928 and laid in Harlem's Connie's Inn. Enriching the sound of the Inn. Enriching the sound of the sequence is the Technicolor lens-ing by William Daniels. His photography is noteworthy in all of the footage.

To match the topflight performances of Stewart and Miss Allyson, the picture has some strong thesping by featured and supporting players, as well as guest star appearances. Henry Morgan stands out as Chummy MacGregor, Mil-ler's 88'er. Charles Drake is good as Don Haynes, the band's man-ager, as are James Bell and Kath-erine Warren, and Irving Bacon and Kathleen Lockhart, doing the respective parents of Miss Burger and Miller. George Tozias as Shribman; Barton MacLane as Cen. Hap Arno'd, and the players impersorating band members.

Playing themselves are Pollack Armstrong, Krupa, Babe Russin, the only members of the original Miller band to appear personally, Frances Langford and the Modern-aires. The latter two are spot-lighted in a reenactment of an overseas service show

buman elements, as well as the music, are topnotch technical as-sists from Daniels' lensing, Joseph Careboacia musical divertion and Gershenson's musical direction and the musical adaptation by Henry Manicini, on through the art direc-tion, settings, costumes and editing. Serving as technical con-sultant was Chummy MacGregor. Brog

#### The Long. Long Trailer (SONGS-COLOR)

#### TV's "I Love Lucy" team romps through a gay comedy. Good for plenty of laughs and an exploitation natural.

Metro release of Fandro S. Berman production... Stars Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz; features Marjorie Main. Keenan Wynn. Gladys Hurlburt, Moroni Olsen. Bert Freed, Madge Blake. Walter Bald-win, Oliver Blake, Perry Sheehan. Di-rected by Vincente Minnelli. Screenplay. Albert Hackett, Frances Goodrich; based on Clinton Twiss novel; camera (Ansco color). Robert Surtees: editor. Ferris Webster: music, Adolph Deutsch. Pre-viewed Dec. 31, '53, in N.Y. Running time, 96 MINS. Tacy Collini .......... Lucille Ball

Tacy Collini Tacy Collini Micholas Collini Mrs. Hittaway Policeman Mrs. Bolton Mr. Tewitt Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Marjorie Main Keenan Wynn Gladys Huribut Worni Olean

The new sound advantage. There are few places in the country where the Ball-Arnaz combination isn't known, and the picture's theme will intrigue the audience as to its comedy potential. Nor will they be disappointed.

Not a trick has been missed in squeezing the laughs from every conceivable situation. In fact, the picture takes the couple from the moment they see the trailer they want — it costs them about five times as much as they intended to spend - through a series of adventures and misadventures to the point where Miss Ball is ready to sell their "house" and leave Arnaz in the process.

Like the "I Love Lucy" TV show. "The Long, Long Trailer" strings' together situation comedy without a letup, barely giving the audience a chance to catch its breath. After a somewhat slow start, the team really bits its page Some of their really hits its pace. Some of their antics involving the trailer are priceless.

Both Miss Ball and Arnaz deliver sock performances. Their timing is perfect and the dialog provided by Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich is clever. Miss Ball occasional-ly gives in to the temptation of being overly cute but, judging again by TV, this shouldn't bother the by and incee. Arnaz has a sure touch and provides a perfect balance to his wife's antics. His brief delivery of "Breezin' Along with the Breeze" with Miss Ball, and of a short comedy number with a Latin touch, is pleasing and well integrated.

Rest of the cast easily gets into the spirit of the thing. Keenan Wynn has an all-too-brief part as a policeman and Marjorie Main gets laughs as the eager-beaver trailerite. Vincente Minnelli's direction accentuates the nonsensical aspect of the story. At the same time, he wisely lets the camera roam through Yosemite National Park for some pretty exciting views.

Ansco color is good in the outdoor settings but doesn't give true reproduction in the fleshtones and reproduction in the neshtones and in some of the interior shots. Pandro S. Berman endowed the film with his usual production values. Music by Adolf Deutsch provides a good background and Robert Surtees' camera handling has real merit Hit has real merit. Hijt.

#### **Border River** (COLOR)

Generally-marketable escapist fare. Well-made actioner, starring Joel McCrea and Yvonne De Carlo, has good b.o. outlook.

Universal-International release of Al-bert J. Cohen production. Stars Joel McGrea and Yvonne De Carlo. Directed by George Sherman. Screenplary, William Sackheim and Louis Stevens from a story by Stevens; camera (Technicolor), Irving Glassberg: editor. Frank Gross. Pre-viewed in N.Y., Dec. 30, '52. Running time, 80 MINS.

Clete 3	Ia	ιt	t	ŝ	0	n											Joel McCrea
Carmel	it	a		(	24	а	ri	ia	15	\$	,				1	٧	vonne De Carlo
General			2	al	u	e	j	a		,					P	•	dro Armendariz
Newlun	١d	Ł			•								•				Howard Petrie
Annina					,	.,											. Erika Nordin
Captair			V	'n	ır	٠£	ta	15	3								Altonso Bedoya
Baron	v	'ų	1	۱	]	FI	0	1	10	ł	6	n					Ivan Triesault
Sanche	Z																. George Lewis
Fletche	1			,													George Wallace
Anders	0	n															Lane Chandler
Crowe																	Charles Horvath
Lopez	•			•	•	•							•			•	Nacho Galindo

This is generally - marketable. staple escapist fare, handsomely photographed in Technicolor and mounted with the proper action ingredients. Universal is an acknowledged master in turning out this type of picture. and "Border River" is one of the company's better efforts. As a result, satisfactory returns are to be anticipated. U's cameras move south of the

number of interesting situations, well stacked with the necessary fisticuffs and romance. Director George Sherman carries out his assignment with precision and Alassignment with precision and Al-bert J. Cohen's overall production supervision is a definite asset. This isn't the kind of picture that will make any "10 Best" list, but it's a throughly professional job, loaded with the values product-hungry exhibs are clamoring for. With the South's plight growing more desperate at the closing stages of the Civil War, McCrea and a band of cohorts steal \$2,000,-

nexing the gold for their own use. These include a renegace Mexican general, the general's double-crossing German advisor, a couple of ordinary crooks, and a private eye in the employ of the union forces.

Miss De Carlo is seen as the general's girl friend and co-owner of the local cafe. McCrea's ideal-ism restores her own sense of justice, which had given way to cynicism brought about by the death of hur father and burthou death of her father and brother in political skirmishes. Pedro Armendariz is effective as the cruel and sinister general and Ivan Triesault is fine in the role of the smooth-talking double-dealing German. Alfonso Bedoya scores as one of the general's aides although the part is a familiar one. Irving Glassberg's camera work is first-rate, capturing some lush scenic views which is bound to receive some "oh" and "ah" re-sponses from audiences. Holl.

> Femmes De Paris (Women of Paris) (FRENCH)

Paris.

Corona release of Hoche production. Stars Michel Simon. Directed by Jean Boyer, Screenplay, Alex Joffe, Ray Ven-tura, Boyer: dialog, Jean Marsan: camera, Charles Suin; editor, Robert Giordoni; music, Paul Misraki, At Olympia, Paris, Running time, 90 MINS. Chorles Michel Simon

Charles Michel Simon Ciselle Brigitte Auber Lucien Henri Genes Inspector Bernard Lajarrige Wife Germaine Kerjean

Film uses the gimmick of a staid astronomer turned loose in a lusin nitery to work in a flock of acts, guest stars as well as unfold a simguest stars as well as unfold a sim-ple story of the professor at odds with nature in the raw in night-life. Film emerges as pleasant fare for the local trade with the Michel Simon name for pull. For the U. S. this gives nothing as a musical or as a straight pic because of its forced premise. It might do in special situations, the plethora of uncided lovelies providing an exunclad lovelies providing an ex-

ploitation peg. A famed astronomer discovers an exploding star in his telescope, and while trying to phone his col-leagues overhears a girl's voice say-ing she will kill herself if her lover doesn't show up at a nightclub that night. The kindly professor is upset and when a series of calls to the club and police is of ro avail, he goes himself to try to save the un-known femme. He gets mixed up in dope smuggling racket, a flock of predatory nitery gals. This gives a means of unloading num-crous acts. It also brings in Patachou for a neat song stint and lo-cal comedian, Robert Lamoureux. There are plenty of the bare breasts on view plus some comic moments.

Director Jean Boyer has given this the bread-and-butter treat-ment, lacking verve and invention for the musical bits.

Michel Simon does well by his professor role. B igitte Auber is cute as the suicidal dame and Henri Genes gets Lughs as the har-rassed club owner. Lensing and editing are standard as is Paul Mis-Mosk. raki's music.

#### Ansiedad (Anxiety) (MEXICAN; SONGS)

Mexico City, Dec. 29.

Mexico City, Dec. 29. Distribuidora Mexicana de Peliculas release of a Producciones Zacarias pro-duction. Stars Libertad Lamarque and Pedro Infante; features Irma Doranles and Arturo Soto Rangel. Directed by Miguel Zacarias. Screenplay, Miguel Zacarias and Edmundo Baes: comera. Gabriel Figureros. Music. Manuel Es-peron. At Cine Mexico, Mexico City. Run-ning time, 101 MINS.

Co-starring of two warblers, Lib-U's cameras move south of the border to record an incident tied in with the U.S. Civil War. It in-volves the purchase of arms and ammunition for the Confederacy. Joel McCrea, as a Confederate major on the purchasing mission, and Yvonne De Carlo, as a Mexi-can beauty, satisfactorily fulfill the demands of the William Sack-heim and Louis Stevens screen-play. Writers have provided a number of interesting situations. rias does well as producer, writer and director. Same is true of In-fante as an impractical trouper but self-made pro entertainer and glassy aristocrat. Miss Lamarque increases her popularity as a singer and thespian. This tale about a tango singer, violently widowed to face a seeming deadead with a young son, who inherits the family yen for trouping, is nicely unfolded. Then there is the other scion who inclines to commerce with quick coin a posi-tive yen. The clashes of the trio a Kiss." done. naturally, to a room-ful of girls: "Comment Alles Vous." a lesson in good neighborliness, and "Wait 'Til You See Paris." The minth tune is 'Poor Andre." serv-numbers. Miss Russell is an eye-pleaser. And she can be a good musical fer Blondes") when given material

The score has nine tunes. The 10th song was the title number but it has been clipped. Miss Russell starts the song session on the numbers by Joseph Myrow, Ralph Blane and Robert Wells by singing "Well, I'll Be Switched" while taking a bath. Later in the footage she does "What Is This That I Feel?" while intoxicated on Black Velvets, and then joins Miss McCarthy on

and then joins Miss McCarthy on "Texas" before warming up to the hot finale "Trouble." Gilbert Roland, who plays a French lover with verve, has "With a Kiss." done, naturally, to a room-ful of girls: "Comment Alles Vous."

	heard voiced at the special press
•	premiere staged by U was against
5	the picture's length, which is a
	long one hour and 55 minutes. This
. 1	running time results from cram-

amming too much into the show and from dwelling too long on some sections that could have been speeded up by a montage treat-ment. Also commented on by press preem guests was the odd absence of Tex Beneke, who gained band fame with Miller and led the outfit for several years after the mae-stro's death. There is no hint of stro's death. There Beneke in the film.

The first 70 minutes of the picture is given over to Miller's search for a sound in music arrangement that would be his trademark and

								Moroni Olsen
Foreman					 			Bert Freed
Aunt Anasta	cia	L			 	2		Madge Blake
Uncle Edgar								Walter Baldwin
Mr. Judloy			J.	 				Oliver Ellake
								Perry Sheehan

For those itching to explore the wideopen spaces in a trailer, as well as those who've been hoping TV's toprated "I Love Lucy" team, to be transported to a larger screen. Metro has concocted this merry little ditty that ought to go over big at the b.o. It's a lighthearted, genuinely funny comedy that lapses into slapstick at the drop of a hat and shows both stars to

best advantage. In a way, "The Long, Long Trailer" is an apt title. The trailer is one of the stars of the picture, and it's well cast at that. At the

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

**PICTURES** 

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## **Opportunity Unlimited**, Especially for the Indie

## By ELLIS ARNALL (Pres., Society of Independent M.P. Producers)

The motion picture industry continues to be the greatest

entertainment business the world has ever known Recently there have been some interesting, perhaps important, experiments, innovations and developments that are worth considering: such things as

TV, 3-D and the various widescreen systems.

TV is listed because more and more it is relying upon film. The novelty phase has worn off. People will not spend their time before their sets un-less TV tells a good story, or brings a public event of exceptional interest. 3-D may be an important motion picture medium of the future, or it may fade away. About such things,

Ellis Arnall

no one can ever be certain. Momen-tarily, it is principally a novelty. The public enjoys novelty; but it soon may tire of having things thrown at them, fall upon them, and reach out for them.

The widescreen systems, with various trade names, make possible new and, in some cases, vastly improved techniques. They offer a challenge to producers, actors, directors, and, most of all, to the technical staffs. All that is fine. These events indicate that movie-

making is alive and alert, ready to experiment.

Independent producers have been in the vanguard of those producers experimenting with the new systems and techniques. The independent producer by nature is adventurous and is always ready to try new ideas and new approaches.

Another indication of aliveness is the foreign market for American films. It is estimated that about 40% of the gross now comes from foreign showings. In spite of various restrictions, incidental to the world's financial and currency problems, people abroad like Hollywood motion pictures

They like them so well, that it is evident that we have not done more than touch the fringes of this available market. There are a good many people strung out be-tween the Pampas and British Columbia, from Oslo to lichon from Construction to Super Orbug contaction Lisbon, from Capetown to Suez. They enjoy entertain-ment and they will go to see American motion pictures.

Cognizant of the increasing attractiveness of the foreign market, the Society of Independent Motion Picture Pro-ducers has recently created the Independent Motion Pic-ture Export Assn. to more fully exploit the possibilities offered independent product abroad.

#### No Embargo on Product

There are foreign imports for the American market, of course. Not those fuzzy and murky ones that occupy the late hours on some TV stations, of course. There are good foreign pictures. These are not bad for American producers any more than good books by Britons or Frenchmen or South Americans are bad for American writers and publishers. There ought always to be free trade in the field of ideas. Everybody benefits.

3-D and the widescreen may be important, but for just one reason. They may offer to the motion pictures new technical devices with which to go about their basic business. Both tastes and techniques change, in every division of the field of ideas. In verse, it might be a triffe annoying to authentic poets to be limited to the rhymed couplet; nor does every poet wish to write an ode, some preferring sonnets or what-have-you. The adaptation of material to the appropriate technique, or vice versa if you prefer it that way, is the problem of all art.

The widescreen offers some possibilities for story-telling that are not to be found in the present flat screen; it offers, quite probably, some restrictions, as well as some obvious technical complexities. But it is good for the industry, because it will be used for the purpose for which the motion picture exists.

And that is to tell a story.

Nothing else is really important. There have been successes, both artistically and at the boxoffice, that were marred by obvious crudities in production, by bad camera work, by occasional inane performances by the players, who mouthed their words instead of speaking them trippingly from the tongue. These pictures were successful, not because of their defects, as an occasional critic appears to suppose in mistaking inept-ness for art, but in spite of those defects and because they did the two things that every good picture must do. They told a good story and they were sincere. That means that they said something that the people who pay money to go to motion picture theatres wanted to hear

Most American motion pictures are well made, in the production sense. The technical work is perfect, almost always. The costumes and the sets reflect the careful, painstaking research. The casts are better than adequate; there is a minimum of careless. sloppy performances.

## HOW TO MAKE MONEY AND KEEP IT TOO

By JULIAN S. H. WEINER

(Of Anchin, Block & Anchin, New York)

Once upon a time, a very long time ago, we were mainly concerned about how to earn money. Today, in this age of fabulous tax rates, the big problem is how to hold on to it. In fact, the Treasury Department appears to have

undertaken a crusade to change the old adage "You Can't Take It With You" to read "You Can't Keep It With You."

In line with the Treasury's policy, recent tax legislation has added two new statutory weapons to the Tax Commissioner's already formidable arsenal. These legislative provisions were aimed at removing film produc-ers and authors from the privileged capital gain class. Under present law (collapsible corporation statute) pro-ducers can no longer liquidate a cor-

J. S. H. Weiner poration upon the completion of a picture and have the difference between the realizable value and cost of the film taxed at capital gain rates. Nor can literary products be marketed through a fruitful capital gains transaction since such works are now ex-cluded from the capital asset category. Undoubtedly, should Congressional sniping continue in the same direction, capital gain benefits may become as extinct as our American Buffalo.

#### **Reinstatement** of the Author

Fortunately, however, despite their apparent effective-ness, it is still possible to hurdle these new capital gain barriers. For instance, the author's plight may be relieved by taking an old-fashioned remedy labeled "partnership." The instructions for using this prescription are as follows:

Team up with a partner who would be helpful in the writing of the book or manuscript, say, in the capacity of co-author, editor, illustrator and the like. Upon its completion, arrange for the sale of partnership interests, and not of the manuscript itself.

Since the profit on the sale of a partnership interest is generally treated as a capital gain, the author's earnings, in effect, would be taxed as such rather than as ordinary income. Incidentally, although the author may own the lion's share of the partnership, the profit on the sale is nevertheless deemed a capital gain.

Naturally, in view of the complexities of the applicable tax law, the recommended venture should not be undertaken without first consulting your tax adviser.

Now to doctor (or nurse, if you prefer) our other harassed invalid, the film industry. First, however, let's delve into the patient's background.

Did you know that a profitable liquidation could have been saved from the collapsible corporation law merely by officially consenting to terminate your business under a specific section of the Internal Revenue Code? Sounds unbelievable, doesn't it? Yet, it's true, and here's the reason why.

The collapsible corporation provision was designed to convert certain capital gains into ordinary income. Accord-ingly, its application was confined only to those transacwhich would have otherwise (but for this statute) tions been treated as a capital gain. Now comes the gimmick. Congress, in order to free small and closely held corporations from the yoke of the excess profits tax, passed a temporary statute which permitted tax-free liquidations under conditions which would normally have qualified a company as a collapsible corporation. Stockholders could, therefore, effect a nontaxable liquidation by officially electing to dissolve the business under the special relief provision. Since no capital gain was involved, the Tax Commissioner could not assault the tax-exempt liquidation

by way of the collapsible corporation law. This gap in the Commissioner's line of attack was origi-nally closed by the expiration of the temporary loophole section on Dec. 31, 1952. The law, however, was recently amended to extend this section, but only through 1953. Therefore, it is still necessary to seek another avenue of escape.

#### **Overseas Productions**

The industry itself has conveniently spotlighted the right direction by a marked trend of filming pictures abroad for consumption by television and the cinema. This pattern of overseas production was undoubtedly inspired by expected tax benefits. Generally, such savings are reaped only by those individuals who spend the prescribed 18 months abroad. But what about the companies —making the foreign films? If produced by a domestic corporation (formed in the U. S.) no tax advantage would result, since its foreign as well as domestic income would be taxable by the United States. On the other hand, if the producing company was organized in the country in which the picture was filmed, the only advantage gained would be the trading of U. S. Income Tax Brackets for the possible lower rates prevailing in the foreign countries. Despite the cloudy outlook, however, a Shangri-La does exist for corporate producers, which, incidentally, is more accessible than its fictional namesake. Therefore, follow these simple directions and you'll be On The Road to Utopia.

that country. Accordingly, no taxes would be payable to Liberia on films produced and sold outside of that republic. However, profits stemming from the sales of such film within the United States would be taxable, but not in their entirety. According to a special formula prescribed by the Commissioner, only about 50% of the profits earned from films produced without and sold within the U. S. by a foreign corporation would be taxable by the United This tempting morsel should be enough to satiate most any appetite. However, bowing to human frailty, why be satisfied with less than the whole? By arranging for the sale and transfer of title to take place out of the United States, the entire income might possibly elude the Tax Commissioner's grasp.

Now to take care of corporations which retain residual Now to take care of corporations which retain residual rights and only license the exhibition of film within specific areas, say, the U. S. Such an arrangement can never constitute a sale without the United States and hence would be taxable. This stumbling block may be overcome by organizing a distributing company in another foreign country possessing an income tax pattern similar to Liberia such as Panama. The Liberian corporation would be reduce a picture perhaps in France and there call to the Produce a picture, perhaps in France, and then sell it to the Panamanian company. The resultant profit would escape the Liberian tax since it was derived from without that country. Nor should it be taxable by the U. S. since the sale was between two foreign corporations without the United States United States.

The Panamanian company can then license the exhibi-tion of the film within the U.S. The Panamanian corpo-ration would be allowed a reasonable margin of profit, as a distributor, which would be subject to U.S. the bulk distributor, which would be subject to U.S. tax. The bulk of the income, however, will have been retained tax-free by the Liberian corporation.

Ultimately, the earnings of the Liberian company can be distributed to its stockholders via a corporate liquidation taxable at capital gain, and not ordinary income rates. Incidentally, domestic film producers need not be down-

cast at the tax windfall pictured for foreign productions. Some measure of relief can be obtained for U.S. producers by drinking out of the same bottle recommended for ailing authors, that is, the one labeled, "Partnership." In other words, capital gains treatment was denied to collapsible corporations but not to so-called "collapsible partner-ships." To be more specific, the picture should be filmed by a limited martnership (offers limited liability to nonby a limited partnership (offers limited liability to non-active financing partners) instead of by a corporate producer. The subsequent sale of a partnership interest will achieve the desired capital gain result. By the way, the proposed form of financing and tax saving (limited part-nerships) can and has been used effectively in connection with theatrical productions.

Obviously, my illustrations were oversimplified for this article. In actual practice, however, skillful maneuvering would be required to iron out the accompanying technical ruffles.

#### **Foreign Residence**

The physical presence rule (18 months out of the U.S.) was recently amended so as to exempt only \$20,000 of earnings from U. S. Income Taxes. Undoubtedly, there-fore, many more entertainers, abroad, will try to lean on the one-year foreign residence provision as a crutch for exempting foreign income. This rule compels the tax-payer to prove his foreign residence, as contrasted to the exemption granted automatically under the 18 months' rule. However, reasonable visits to the U. S., which are permissible under the residence provision, would interrupt the 18 months' sequence required to satisfy the physical presence condition.

Another point to remember is that the validity of your foreign residence is not dependent upon whether income taxes were paid to the foreign government. For instance, David E. Rose, managing director of Paramount's sub-sidiaries in the United Kingdom, was able to qualify under the residence rule during the years 1943 to 1946, although he paid no income taxes to Great Britain. By the way, this herculean feat of avoiding both British and U. S. income taxes was accomplished by a simple maneu-U. S. income taxes was accomplished by a simple manu-ver. Mr. Rose's employment contract, drawn in the United States, provided for the deposit of his salary weaks in a New York bank. No part of this salary was remitted to him in England. His living expenses were paid directly by one of the subsidiaries. Under this set of facts no income tax was payable to Great Britain. And, as a foreign resident, his earnings were excluded from U. S. taxes.

Accordingly, the necessity of seeking a tax haven under the shelter of foreign residence, due to the amendment of the 18 months' rule, may yet prove to be a blessing in disguise.

Here's one last bit of practical advice. Don't embark upon a tax venture without first balancing the risks against the rewards. For example, in the case of our Liberian



#### **Greater Horizons**

To all these things, the new developments may offer greater opportunity, just as changes in physical arrangements and props have provided more opportunity from time to time to the state. They will make it easier for good story-tellers to tell the story.

That will be true of the motion picture industry whether there are more theatres in the country or fewer. There may be fewer, for a time at least, because of elements removed from theatre business itself. Many neighborhood houses, for example, are no longer in profitable locations. Transit and parking problems must be taken into account in determining sites for new theatres. The drive-ins are in their childhood, not too far removed from infancy.

But it does not matter whether the filmgoer is an American or a Frenchman or a Norwegian. It does not matter whether the picture is on TV, or in a first run house downtown, or playing a neighborhood house or a drive-in. It does not matter whether it is 3-D or widescreen. It will have an audience if it is a good picture, and it will be a good picture, nine times out of ten, if it tells a good story. Every producer and every exhibitor knows that to be

true. Every scriptwriter knows it, as does every author in every field as everyone has known it for a good many thousand years. Novelty diverts, but only for a little while. That which is strictly topical pulls a crowd, for a few days, until the topic is replaced in thought and con-

Form the foreign company in a country such as Liberia which does not tax corporate income derived from without

versation by another. That which is nothing more than timely, subjects its producers to the painful discovery that time not only must, but does, have a stop.

That is why American producers, while introducing every technical improvement that offers possibilities, will stick fundamentally to the story line. They will use every skill at their command to tell the story well. But it has to be a good story.

The good stories will make good motion pictures which will bring people into theatres. They always have.

There has never been a greater awareness of opportunity on the part of the independent producers than there is today. Opportunity is unlimited. Not since the change over to sound have producers been given over so thoroughly to self-examination and intelligent reappraisal. That means that the motion picture industry is "on the ball" and will continue to be the world's greatest entertainment business.

corporation, failure to file a U.S. Income Tax Return may invite either the 25% penalty for wilful neglect or the 50% fraud penalty. In addition a deficiency assessment can carry an interest load of as much as 18% (6% a year for a maximum three-year period under the Statute of Limitations).

At first blush, the percentages appear to be most formidable. Viewed from another angle, however, the illusion is soon dispelled.

The courts have generally refused to impose either of the above penalties where failure to file a return is based upon the advice of CPA's or legal counsel. As for the interest expense, since it is tax deductible, the Government shares this cost in an amount equal to the taxpayer's top bracket. For instance, assuming the Liberian company is subject to a 52% tax rate, the corporation would bear only 48% of the 18% figure, or 8.64% for a three-year period. The average interest cost per year would then be 2.88%. Let's not forget, however, that the corporation has had the use of the money in the period it did not pay any tax. Surely, this benefit should be worth at least 2.88% per year. Accordingly, the actual interest cost would be negligible, if not nil.

Apparently, therefore, provided the tax plan is based upon competent professional advice the taxpayer would have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Incidentally, as if you didn't already know, the moray of this story is "It Pays To Be Taxwise Than Otherwise."

K.C. Into High Gear For

opening stanza at Vogue.

more weeks.

**Estimates for Last Week** 

Midland (Loew's) (3,500; \$1-\$1,24) --"Knights of Round Table" (M-G)

Missouri (RKO) (2,650; 60-85)-"Paratrooper" (Col) and "Glass Wall" (Col), Opened Dec. 30. Last week, "Sabre Jet" (UA) and "China

Venture" (Col), mild \$6,500. Orpheum (Fox Midwest) (1.913; \$1-\$1.50)—"The Robe" (20th) (13th

wk-6 days). Satisfactory \$7,500 in final week. "Khyiber Rifles" (20th)

Paramount (Tri-States) (1,900; 65-

"Here Come the Girls" (Par)
(2d wk). Last week, smash \$14,000.
Tower, Uptown, Fairway, Granada (Fox Midwest) (2,100; 2,043;
700; 1,217; 65-85)— "Border River"
(U) and "Clipped Wings" (AA).
NSG \$10,000. "Walking My Baby
Back Home" (U) opened Dec. 31.
Warm (Coldar) (550. 75 cm)

Vogue (Golden) (550; 75-\$1)-Captain's Paradise'' (UA) (2d wk).

Broke all records under art-film policy with wow \$4,500 opening stanza, over hopes.

**Holiday Upbeat** 

Musicals proved themselves stout holiday fare as four out of five

tuners racked up whopping figures.

Other bills were helped as usual by the holiday hypo with afternoon traffic accounting for much of the

The Chicago garnered a hefty \$58,000 for "Kiss Me Kate" with Hilltoppers topping the vaude bill opening round. "Here Come Girls" brought a boffo \$35,000 to Mc-Vickers while "Walking Baby Back Home" hit a hot \$25,000 at United Actiets Grand baggad for \$18,000

Artists. Grand bagged fine \$18,000 with "Easy to Love." However, the Monroe got only a slim \$6,000 for "Cruising Down River" and "Pri-soners of Casbah." All were in their first weeks.

Other new entries were "Living Desert," big \$22,000 at the Loop; "Julius Caesar," neat \$17,000 at the Selwyn on roadshow basis; "Annapurna," fancy \$6,300 at the Surf; and "Little Fugitive," sturdy \$5,000 at the World.

Estimates for Last Week Chicago (B&K) (3.900; 98-\$1.25) —"Kiss Me Kate" (M-G) (3-D) with Hilltoppers topping stageshow.

help.

**Musicals Top Chi** 

-"Here Come the Girls"

came in Dec. 30 at \$1 top.

before or soon after Xmas Day to take advantage of the year-end up-surge. This upbeat prior to New Year's Day was bigger than an-ticipated by even the most opti-mistic managers. Favorable weath-er and strong fare spelled the higher results.

54

Odd part of the Christmas week boom is that it did not include New Year's Eve, as in 1952, at most houses. Despite this, last week's total soared to \$960,700, consider-

by ever expectancy. Even without New Year's Eve onanza trade, the Music Hall, ith "Easy To Love" and annual bonanza WIN. Xmas stageshow soared to terrific \$134,000 in its fourth stanza ended \$134,000 in its fourth stanza ended Wednesday (30), just \$2,000 below the Hall's all-time mark of \$186,-060, made in comparable week of 1952. The extra midnight show with tilled scale a year ago made the higher total possible. Another amazing figure was the one racked up by "12-Mile Reef" of the Revy in second round. Go-

one racked up by 12-whe keel at the Roxy in second round. Go-ing far ahead of hopes, it hit a territic \$135,000 or \$47,000 better than opening week's total. Overflow Hall naturally helped as it from

from Hall naturally helped as it did other nearby theatres. "Eddie Cantor Story" made the best showing opening week with a great \$90,000 at the Paramount. "Sadie Thompson" at the larger Capitol hit a smash \$93,000. "Khy-ber Rifles" was socko \$74,000 open-ing round at the Rivoli. Both the Cap and Riv were over hopes. "The Bigamist." another new entry, pushed considerably over expectancy to get a big \$27,000 in first week at the Astor. Upsurge New Year's Eve contributed to this naturally. "Lure of Sila," also new, hit a smash \$12,500 opening round at the New York.

round at the New York. "Here Comes the Girls" also topped expectations by going to lofty \$43,000 in initial session at

the Maylair. Estimates for Last Week Astor (City Inv.) (1.300; 80-51.80) —"The Bigamist" (FR) (2d wk). -"The Bigamist" (FR) (2d wk). Started initial holdover round Fri-

Started initial holdover round Fri-day (1) after fine \$27,000 opening week. over hopes. First session took in New Year's eve. **Bijou** (City Inv.) (589; \$1.80-\$2.40)—"Gilbert & Sullivan" (UA) (10th wk), The 10th frame opened Wednesday (30) after ninth week landed fancy \$11,000. Burgat (Reade) (430: 90-\$1.50)

Baronet (Reade) (430; 90-\$1.50) — "Three Forbidden Stories" (In-die) (8th wk). The eighth session began Monday (4) after okay \$5,-

200 for scventh week. Capitol (Loew's) (4,820; 70-82.20) —"Sadie Thompson" (Col) (2d wk). Current week started Thursday (31)

Current week started Thursday (31) after initial stanza soared to smash \$93,000, over expectations. Criterion (Moss) (1,700 85-\$2.20) —"Paratrooper" (Col). Started out nicely in first few days after being launched Wednesday (30). Opening Week has advantage of New Year's Eve and holiday weekend trade. In ahead, "Cease Fire" (Par) (5th wk), climbed surprisingly to \$11,000 in the start of the st final session after doing great on initial three weeks.

Come Giris" in second week at the Paramount likewise is very big. List of newcomers includes "Para-trooper" which opened Dec. 30 at the Missouri, "Khyber Rifles" in CinemaScope at the Orpheum. and "Walking My Baby Back Home" in four Fox Midwest theatres. "Cap-tain's Paradise" hit a new record opening stanza at Vogue

"Wild One" (Col) with 8 acts of vaude. Opened Wednesday (30). In ahead, "Bad For Each Other" (Col) and vaude, smash \$26,000.

And value, smash \$20,000. Paramount (Par) (3,664; 70-\$1.80)—"Eddie Cantor Story" (WB) (2d wk). Current round started New Year's Day (1). Initial week soared to great \$90,000. Continues indef indef.

(2d wk). Initial CinemaScope at this big house and got money from start. Smash \$29,000 for first round. Due to hold for several Paris (Indie) (568; 90-\$1.80)— "Captain's Paradise" (UA) (14th wk). The 14th week started Mon-day (28) with indications that it would top the 13th stanza which was socko \$15,300.

Rialto (Mage) (600; 50-98)— "Striporama" (Indie (14th wk). The 14th frame began Friday (1) after this exploitation pic climbed to \$7,200 in 13th week. Continues. **Rivoli** (UAT) (2,092; 95-\$2)— "Khyber Rifles" (20th) (2d wk). First holdover session opened Wednesday (30) after initial week soared ahead to smash \$74,000. This fourth C-Scoper to be re-leased in N.Y. looks in for longrun.

Radio City Music Hall (Rockefellers) (6,200; 90-\$2.40)—"Easy To Love" (M-G) with annual Christ-mas stageshow and "Nativity" pag-eant (5th-final wk). Current seseant (5th-final wk). Current ses-sion opened Thursday (31) after fourth week soared to terrific \$184.000, over expectancy. Long lines daily here enabled rearby theatres to get plenty "overflow" from prospective patrons who did not want to wait. This was \$2,000 from record made in comparable week of 1952 but that took in New week of 1952, but that took in New Year's Eve. "Knights of Round Year's Eve. "Knights of Table" (M-G) opens Jan. 7.

Roxy (Nat'l. Th.) (5,717; 65-\$2.50) —"12-Mile Reef" (20th) (3d wk). Third stanza started Thursday (31). Second week soared way ahead of opening week to hit smash \$135,-000, much over hopes. Pic climbed strongly after Monday (28) despite

strongly after Monday (28) despite terrific weekend take. State (Loew's) (3,450; 85-\$1.80) -- "All Brothers Valiant" (M-G). First week started Monday (28) and is heading for good \$38,000 or thereabouts. In ahead, "Million-aire" (20th) (7th wk-6 days), big \$22,000 \$22,000.

S22.000. Sutton (R&B) (561; 90-\$1.50)— "Living Desert" (Disney) (8th wk). This round started Tuesday (29) after racking up fine \$9,000 in seventh week. Trans-Lux 60th St. (T-L) 90-S1.50)—"Annapurna" (Indie) (4th wk). Fourth round started Satur-day (2) after third frame reg-istered nice \$6.200. Trans-Lux 52nd St. (T-L) (540:

istered nice \$6,200. Trans-Lux 52nd St. (T-L) (540; 90-\$1.50)---"Lili" (M-G) (43d wk). The 43d week started Tuesday (29) after soaring to an amazing \$7.500 in 42d round. Victoria (City Inv) (1.060; 95-\$1.80)---"Man Between" (UA) (7th wk). Seventh session opened Wed-pender (20) after graphing fancy

### PORT. PERKS; 'BABY,' 'LOVE,' 'PLAINS' STRONG Portland, Ore.

## It's 3-D, CinemaScope Holiday Week 1954; 'Rifles,' 'My Baby,' In L.A.; 'Kate,' 'Sadie,' 'Hondo,' 'Reef,' 'Girls,' 'Knights' Bright Kansas City, Theatres went into 1954 with strong bills generally, leader being "Knights of Round Table" in its second week at the Midland. "Here Come Girls" in second week at the Paramount likewise is your big 'Knights' Hit Fast Boxoffice Pace

### New Films Hypo Philly; 'My Baby,' 'Girls,' 'Cantor' Head List, 'Rifles' Wow Philadelphia.

Clear weather over the holiday week plus new bills in a majority of the first-runs gave the midtown a seasonal spurt of activity. Late shows and double features marked the New Year's Eve biz, with the three Goldman houses (Randolph. Midtown and Goldman) remaining open all night.

CinemaScope continued fast pace, with "Khyber Rifles" at the Fox, and "12-Mile Reef" both getrox, and 12-Mile Reef both get-ting heavy play. The Goldman brought in "Sadie Thompson" (3-D) for one-day stand (31). Nice weather helped over Jan. 1. with annual Mummers Parade bringing customary big throngs into mid-town

**Boyd** (SW) (1.459; \$1.30-82.80)— 'Cinerama'' (Indie) (13th wk). Last week, holiday helped to socko week \$21,000.

Fox (20th) (2,250; 99-\$1.50)-"Khyber Rifles" (20th) (2d wk).

"Khyber Rifles" (20th) (2d wk). Last week, terrific \$54,000. Goldman (Goldman) (1.200; 50-99)--"Here Come Girls" (Par). Last week, "Appointment in Hon-duras" (RKO), oke \$13,000. Mastbaum (SW) (4,360; 99-\$1.30) "Easy to Love" (M-G) (2d wk). Opening week was only okay \$20,000. Midtawa (Cold.)

Midtown (Goldman) (1.000: 74-\$1.30) — "Walking Baby Back
 Home" (U). Last week, "Bad For Each Other" (Col), strong \$10,000.
 Randolph (Goldman) (2,500; 74-\$1.30) — "Beyond 12-Mile Reef" (20th) (2d wk). Initial week was

(20th) (2d wk). Initial week was boffo \$26,000. Stanley (SW) (2,900; 85-\$1.25)— "Eddie Cantor Story" (WB). Last week, "Three Sailors and Girl" (WB), lean \$13,000. Stanton (SW) (1,473; 50-99)— "War Paint" (AA) and "Jack Slade" (AA). Last week, "Gun Belt" (UA) and "Sabre Jet" (UA), oke \$8,000. Studio (Goldberg) (500; 85-\$1.25)

oke \$8,000. Studio (Goldberg) (500; 85-\$1.25) —"Captain's Paradise" (UA) (2d wk). Last week, great \$7.000. Trans-Lux (T-L) (500; 99-\$1.50) —"Moon Is Blue" (UA) (10th wk). Last week, tasty \$8,200. World (T-L) (500; 76-\$1.30)— "Louis Story" (UA) (2d wk). Last week, sock \$9,000.

## More Big Product Lifts Cincy B.O.

Boxoffice stimulation which fol-

lowed the end of the pre-Yule shopping period and opening of a brace of strong, new films boosted grosses here generally to the best Christmas week level since 1948. Pacing the new bills is the 3-D "Knights of Round Table," which is going great guns in second frame, after record \$40,200 initial week at the Egyptian. "12-Mile Reef" also is proving a money-maker. It's a C'Scoper.

Holding up the 3-D'ers is "Hon-do," still hearty in two theatres, after a socko first round. "Sadie Thompson," also a 3-D pic, started its first holdover frame Jan. 1 after fancy opening week. How-ever, "Kiss Me Kate," which was rated neat in initial session at the State is going flat widescreen State, is going flat, widescreen after using 3-D version opening stanza.

Among conventionally - lensed productions, standouts continue to be "Living Desert" and "Wild One."

#### Estimates for Last Week

Palace, Wiltern, Fox Hollywood (Metropolitan-SW-FWC) (1,212; 2,-(Aletropolitan-SW-FWC) (1,212; 2,-344; 753; 70-51.10)—"Walking Baby Back Home" (U) and "Glass Web" (U) (2-D). Teed off Dec. 30 as part of area day-date holiday run in 18 situations. Last week, Palace, "Mogambo" (M-G) and "Calamity Jane" (WB), mild \$9,000; Wiltern, "Quo Vadis" (M-G) (2d wk-6 days), only \$4,000; Hollywood sub-run only \$4.000; Hollywood, sub-run.

Egyptian (UATC) (1.538; \$1-\$1.80) — "Knights Round Table" (M-G) (2d wk). Launched second week Dec. 30 after record \$40,200, last week.

Los Angeles, Chinese (FWC) (2,-097; 1.905; \$1-\$1.80) — "12-Mile Reef" (20th) (2d wk). Into second week Jan. 1 following brisk \$49,-000 last week.

Loew's State (UATC) (2,404; 90-\$1.20)—"Kiss Me Kate" (M-G) (3-D) (2d wk), Started second, Jan. 1 after neat \$16,000 last week.

Hillstreet, Pantages (RKO) (2.-752; 2.812; 95-\$1.50) — "Sadie Thompson" (Col) (3-D) (2d wk). Started first holdover frame Jan. 1. First session was fancy \$37,000.

Los Angeles, Hollywood Para-mounts (ABPT-F&M) (3.300; 1.-430; 85-\$1.35)—"Hondo" (WB) (3-D) (2d wk). Into second week Jan. after smash \$53,000 last week.

Ritz, Rialto (FWC-Metropolitan) (1.363; 839; 90-S1.50)—"Act of Love" (UA) (2d wk). Went into second week Dec. 31. First round was fine \$13,300.

**Orpheum** (Metropolitan) (2.213; 51)—"Wild One" (Col) and "Tope-ka" (AA) (2d wk). Launched second frame New Year's day (1) after bangup \$19,000 last week.

Vogue (FWC) (885; 90-\$1.20)— "Conquest Everest" (UA) (2d wk). Rolled into second week Friday (1) following okay \$4,500 last week.

- "Paratrooper" (Col), Starled out		Hilltoppers topping stageshow.		Rolled into second week Friday
nicely in first few days after being	Warner (Cinerama Prod.) (1,600;	Posted a fine \$58,000 but not up to	Cincinnati.	(1) following okay \$4,500 last week.
launched Wednesday (30). Opening	\$1.20-\$3.60) "Cinerama" (Indie)	expectancy with matinee upbeat.	Downtown houses are greeting	United Artists, Hawaii (UATC-
week has advantage of New Year's	(31st wk). Present round started	Grand (RKO) (1,200; 55-98)-	1054 with swell lineup of nix All	G&S) (2,100; 980; 70-\$1.10)—"Here
Eve and holiday weekend trade. In	Friday (1) after soaring to giant		RKO houses upped New Year's Eve	Come Girls" (Par). Started second
ahead, "Cease Fire" (Par) (5th wk),	\$65.000, over expectancy, in 30th	Diamond Robbery" (Col) Led off	scale to \$1.25 and the Keith's added	week Friday (1). First week was
climbed surprisingly to \$11,000 in	week.	five-week stand with fat \$18,000.	25c to its \$1.25 regular top for	
final session after doing great on		Loop (Telem't) (600; 98-\$1.25)	"How Marry Millionaire." which	
initial three weeks.	PORT. PERKS; 'BABY,'	"Living Desert" (Disney). Great	How Marry Minionaire, which	Globe, Iris, Uptown (FWC) (782;
Fine Arts (Davis) (468; 90-\$1.80)	TUNI. I ENNO, DADI,	\$22,000 on initial session. breaking	set modern house record in kickoff	814; 1,715; 70-\$1.10) Captain s
-"Conquest of Everest" (UA) (4th	(LOVE ) (DE AINC CTDONC	previous kickoff record of "Martin	frame. Albee has "Sadie Thomp-	Paradise" (UA) and "Song of
wk). Began fourth week Wednes-	'LOVE,' 'PLAINS' STRONG	Luther" (Indie).	son" and the Palace has "Hondo"	Land" (UA) (2d wk). Began second
day (30) after great \$20.000 in			for 3-D embellishment. Grand	frame Dec. 30 following moderate
third round.	Portland, Ore.	McVickers (JL&S) (2,200; 65-90)	opens "Only Brothers Were Vali-	\$9,500 last week.
Globe (Brandt) (1,500; \$1-\$1.80)	Three ace musicals dominated	-"Redheads from Seattle" (Par)	ant" next.	Fine Arts (FWC) (631; 70-\$1.50)
-"Millionaire" (20th) 8th wk).	last week's trade. "Walking Baby"	and "Here Come Girls" (Par).	Estimates for Last Week	-"Living Desert" (Disney) (3d wk).
Present round started Dec. 29 after	was the loudest boxoffice bet, with	Chalked up sockeroo \$35.000.	Albee (RKO) (3.100; 75-\$1)—	Into third stanza Dec. 31 after
smash \$22,000 for seventh frame.	enough to hold at Broadway. "Cap-	Oriental (Indie) (3,400; 98-\$1.25)	"Sadie Thompson" (3-D) (Col). Last	socko \$11,500 last week.
This second C'Scoper to be re-	tain Paradise" had the SRO signs	"Millionaire" (20th) (5th wk).	week. "Easy to Love" (M-G), good	
leased in N.Y. looks good for sev-	out at the Guild Art Theater. "Easy	Sock \$38,000, with afternoon biz		El Rey (FWC) (861; 70-\$1.10)
eral more weeks.	To Love' was big opening stanza	helping.	Capitol (RKO) (2.000; 55-85)	"Little Fugitive" (Indie) (3d wk).
Guild (Guild) (450; \$1-\$1.80)	at the United Artists. Biz is on the	Palace (Eitel) (1,484; \$1.20-\$3.60)	"Here Come Girls" (Par). New	Started third week New Year's
"Times Gone By" (IFE), Launched	upgrade after pre-holiday slump.		Year's Eve only, followed by Fri-	Day (1) after okay \$4,000 last
here Tuesday (29). In ahead, "Mar-	Estimates for Last Week	Nine added shows for holiday week	day (1) opening on "Jack Slade"	week.
tin Luther" (Indie) (16th wk).	Broadway (Parker), (1.890; 65-90)	broke all previous records at smash	(AA). Last week, "Peter Pan"	Warner Beverly (SW) (1,612; 90-
wound up terrific longrun with	- Walking My Baby Back Home"	\$43.000.	(RKO), dull \$5.000.	\$1.50) — "Cantor Story" (WB).
fine \$10,000, over hopes, nearby	(U) (2d wk). Last week, great	Reosevelt (B&K) (1.500; 55-98)-	Grand (RKO) (1,400; 55-85)-	Opened run Dec. 30 after plush
proximity of Music Hall not hurt-		"Thunder Over Plains" (WB) and	"Brothers Valiant" (M-G) and	preem Tuesday (29). Last week,
ing any.	Guild (Foster) (400: \$1)—Last	"Steel Lady" (UA) (2d) wk). Fast	"Paris Model" (Indie), Last week,	"Torch Song" (M-G) (6th wk-5
Holiday (Rose) (950; 95-\$1.80)-		\$16.500 on holdover round.	"Appointment in Honduras" (RKO)	days), slight \$2,600.
"Public Enemy No. 1" (WB) and		Selwyn (Shubert) (1,000; \$1.25-	and "Marry Me Again" (RKO),	Four Star (UATC) (900; \$1.50-
"Little Caesar" (WB) (reissues)	Liberty (Hamrick), (1,875; 65-90)	\$2.40) — "Julius Caesar" (M-G).	fancy \$8.000.	32.40)—"Julius Caesar" (M-G) (8th
(4th wk). Present stanza started	-Last week, "Thunder Over		Hyde Park Art (Schwartz) (600:	wk). Started eighth round Dec. 30.
Tuesday (29) after getting great		State-Lake (B&K) (2.700; 98-	\$1-\$2.20)-"Julius Caesar" (M-G)	
\$24,000 in third week. May wind	Oriental (Evergreen) (2,000;	\$1.80)-"Robe" (20th) (14th wk).	(2d wk). Holiday help was below	Opener was good \$6,800.
up run this week because WB	\$1.25-\$1.75)—"Robe" (20th) (m.o.).	Smash \$38,500.	expectations in opening stanza, but	Fox Wilshire, Warner Downtown
wants to get combo into N.Y. cir-	Big \$6,400 for 12 week downtown.	United Artists (B&K) (1,700; 55-	big \$8.500 anyway.	(FWC-SW) (2,296; 1,757; \$1-\$2.20)
cuit release.	Orpheum (Evergreen) (1.600; \$1-	93'-"Walking Baby Back Home"	Keith's (Shor) (1,500; 85-\$1.25)-	-"Millionaire" (20th) (9th wk Wil-
	\$1.50)—Last week, 'Millionaire'	(U) and "Veils of Bagdad" (U).	"Millionaire" (3-D) (20th) (2d wk).	shire, 8th wk Downtown). Into
-"Here Come Girls" (Par) (2d wk).		Heity \$25,000 on preem week.	Shaping for strong encore after	current frame Dec. 31 after brisk
Initial ho'dover stanza opened Fri-		Wood (Essaness) (1.198; 98-\$1.25)	S24,000 last week, which set house	\$22 000 last week.
day (1) after sock \$43,000 for open-				Warner Hollywood (SW) (1.364;
ing week. In for run.	(Par), oke \$7.400.	Buoyant \$15,000.		\$1.20-\$2.80) "Cinerama" (Indie)
	United Artists (Parker) (890: 65-		"Hondo" (3-D) (WB). Last week,	
	90)-Last week. "Easy To Love"	Fugitive" (Burstyn). Grabbed lofty	"3 Sailors and Girl" (WB), at 55-	following terrific \$39,600 last week
tive" (Burstyn) (13th wk). Current			85c scale, oke \$9,000.	on 20-performance stanza.
the thursday (10th way, Current	(int. or, big woji vo.	poloo itom are bet.	1000 Scare, oke 40,000.	in a faration beauties

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

#### Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

## IS A LUSTY, THRILLING DAME! YOU SHOULD MEET HER! THERE'S NO ONE LIKE HER!"

-N.Y. Mirror

55

IN 3-D

"Jubilant . . . raucous . . . flamboyant! Provocative dances. Rita's a boxoffice dynamo!" –N.Y. World-Telegram

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## "Super-charged excitement! It's apt to be one of the biggest grossers Rita ever made!" —Los Angeles Herald and Express

"Rip-roaring and roistering! The picture makes much of its lively situations!"

-Los Angeles Times

COLUMBIA PICTURES presents

## RITA HAYWORTH



## jose FERRER

# Miss Sadie Momphone Miss Sadie Mith ALDO RAY OLOGOR TECHNICOLOR

Screen Play by HARRY KLEINER • Based on a story by W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM Directed by CURTIS BERNHARDT A JERRY WALD PRODUCTION • A BECKWORTH CORPORATION Picture

### **History Is Made At Nite** Continued from page 4

However, I doubt that Benjamin Better figured he was blessing the Franklin brought on our Revolutionary War just so he could say after the signing of the Declaration: "We must now all hang together. or hang separately." Even Milton Berle wouldn't have a water-scene set built, just so he can say to a bald-headed man in the water: "Go down again and come up the right way!"

The credo of the comic is "Wait for your laugh, but not more than an hour." Some candidates, with "special" material wouldn't get a haugh if they remained on the rostrum all night—and often do. Best description of a "prepared sveech." at a public gathering: "Like the fellow who worked for six months forging a check, only to have it come back 'insufficient funds'." But there is no discouraging them.

Franklin D. Roosevelt often asked for situation gags to fit certain eventful speeches. One he received and used much in his campaigns was the "Hillbilly calling on a girl for a year. Finally her father said to him: 'Are your intentions to my daughter honor-able or dishonorable?" "You mean I got a choice?"

I'll vouch for this. At a big dinner, and already he was then President, F.D.R. in the ante-room before the event asked for an appropriate yarn. Rehearsed it right there and then. Went on for his speech and though he finished to tumultuous applause, he seemed upset because he forgot to inject the gag. He never forgot it after that and used it in his major campaign meetings. The one of the fellows who complained that he could not hear or see well. When the doctor found out he was a drinker, warned him that his sight and hearing was bing caused by that drinking. Patient promised to stop it. Two months later, the doctor ran into this patient again, this time really blotto. "Didn't I tell you to stop that liquor was hurting your sight and hearing?" "Yes, doc, but what Five been drinking is so much better than what I've been hear-ing and seeing lately, I decided to continue it."

Nobody has to supply the best political yarn-spieler of them all-Alben Barkley. In fact, gag-writers steal from him. Always a question as to who gets it from who? and don't pay. In fact, I've heard the same joke used by different candidates, on opposition tickets. on the same night, in different halls.

Occasionally you get a candidate doing an ad lib better than he Such as the time I said "May the best man win." knows. to one. 'Oh, so you're against me, too?'

Ever since the publicized humor of Adlai Stevenson, the fun-fac-tories are flooded with demands from all grades of office-seekers, for apropos nifties. What they think is a privately-owned yarn ends up like the three fellows sitting together in a train. Right opposite, was a lone gentleman with a diamond pin in his tie. As the train entered a dark tunnel. here was the conversation between the three fellows: "I'd like to have that diamond pin"—I got it"—"You had it.

Who Said It and When? Currently, every stateman is

to fit their prepared "impromptus." | talking to horse before the race. nag and put \$200 down on him: The horse finished last. He looked up the clergyman and cried, "On account of you blessing that horse, I bet on him and lost \$200." "Blessing him? — I was giving him the last rites." Halley used that yarn during the recent Mayoralty cam-paign, but called the horse "Tam-many Hall."

The voter in a campaign is the chief joker. More uncomplimen-tary gags were tossed around in this last Presidential shindig than in all campaigns combined. The public deosn't like catchphrases such as "He called me Jack." That ruined the chances of John Purroy Mitchell as a political force in New York — it didn't sit well with hoi-polloi, when Mitchell the boasted that Vanderbilt called him by his first name. "Cocktail by his first name. Charlie'' killed Vice Vice - President Charlie'' killed Vice - President Charles Fairbanks' chances for the Presidency, when he took the blame for serving the cocktails, that were really ordered by Theodore Roosevelt. To this day nobody really knows what was meant by it, when the whole country was saying: "You can't kick my dog around," that both made and broke Champ Clark. History will give more space political punchlines of Harry Truman, than any recorded of even rugged "Old Hickory."

#### The World Laughs With You

The saying goes. "That which will not bend, will break." America is the most pliable of nations. It will laugh at the drop of a hat especially if the guy is still in it. There isn't an event, political or natural, that fails to elicit a gag, or wisecrack. So much so, pun that it was only natural to develop actual organizations of rib and roast. The Circus Saints & Sinners — Gridiron — Inner Circle-Correspondents Dinner — Anvil Chorus and growing groups all over the land, to spoof the mighty and to sit with them. The targets of these barb-bandits are afraid to stay away from the events and have to "laugh it up." to show they can "take it." Or as one mean said. "Politics not only makes strange bedfellow, but that's how learning to sleep with one eye open was invented." It's traditional for even the White House, to per-sonally invite leading comedians, such as Will Rogers and Bob Hope,

"tell it" to the President himto self, who occasionally looks over the material, before the other guests arrive. Only President Hoover forget to edit Al Jolson, at a Command Performance, but of that at another time.

But as it all now stands, hiredhumor is playing a growing part in national and international life. The "jokes" often matching the same, in politics. The "laugh" is now used to get work—and Uncle Sam isn't a bad sponsor.

### **TELENEWS TAKEOVER** BY NEWS OF DAY

Deal has been set for News of the Day, newsreel jointly owned by Metro and the Hearst Corp., to take over Telenews. national newsreel service for TV stations. Connected with the transaction is International News Service, the Hearst press association which

## **Advocates New Incentive Deal** For Manpower

By WALTER READE JR.

The past year has brought us new dimensions in production and exhibition, and in policies of theatre operation, resulting in a rebirth of public enthusiasm and acceptance of motion picture entertainment, but apparently lacking has been the introduction of new blood and the proper use of the young blood in our industry.

In order to encourage those at the bottom of the ladder and those who had come from the outside to make their careers in our great industry, there must be incentivenot just glamor, not just a titlebut in the pocketbook, and in the encouragement and praise where it has been earned.

Further, it is essential that we create intelligent and constructive training programs. Considering the need and the great scope, very little has been done in the past in proper training, and certainly there has been little continuity to what little has been done. It is gratifying to note that the last few months have seen some activity in this field.

There is great need for nationwide clinics, on the local level, for managers and other members of the theatre staff in theatre operation, advertising, exploitation, community service, public relations, Many of our circuits have etc. been doing this for years, but such clinics could be of inestimable value to the majority of exhibitors, the independents.

These "back to school" sessions could be not only instructive, but also stimulating to the newcomers to our business—proving grounds for the recruits and stepping stones to careers of solid foundation.

Another basic fault in our handling of personnel is the lack of placing responsibility where it belongs and allowing the many capable young persons and executives to follow through on their own merits. Unfortunately, be-cause of the pressure of time, the fear of mistakes and the heavy thumb of the old order, the imagination and initiative that have been so apparent on all sides have not been adequately encouraged.

We have failed, I believe, by allowing too few members of the many millions associated with showmanship to have a sense of participation-a sense of helping to create. Too often the "top brass" has hogged the credit lines; too often have the profit-participation plans been confined to the higher echelon.

#### **Profit-Participation**

Frankly, I feel that one of the best ways of helping ourselves on this whole subject is to make broader and broader profit-participation plans in all facets of the industry. These can and must be logically and thoroughly nated.

#### Filmites Communion Jan. 31

Fourth annual Communion breakfast for Catholic filmites is set for Jan. 31 at the Waldorf As-toria, N. Y., following 9 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

First such Communion get-together was held four years ago and since has spread to New Orleans L. A., Detroit and Toronto.

#### **Fewer But Better Pix** Continued from page 31 =

lieve our engagement was the outstanding one for the 3-D engage-ments. We have followed that up with an exciting and successful engagement of John Wayne in "Hondo" in our four large Texas cities, which convinces me that 3-D has a great chance and opportunity, and I must admit that since we have "Bwana Devil" proached third-dimension a little bit differently. We, ourselves, put a paper brad which formed a hinge in the first fragile paper glasses that were used. We now use a Steriloptics plastic frame with polaroid centres, which are sterilized after each use, and which are just as firm as the eyeglasses you wear every day.

We have been in a position to watch closely our 3-D presenta-tions and have received great cooperation from our booths. How-ever, there is no doubt in my mind that the single projector 3-D, such as Moroptican or Nord, will eliminate many of the ills, guarantee synchronization, and most important, in our situation, would eliminate three operators a week at a cost, in downtown Dallas, of \$315 due to the synchronization of two machines, which would be eliminated.

In my opinion, the most archaic part of the motion picture distribution system is the present plan of individual branch operations. The greatest progress in the world could be made by a combination in the 31 exchange areas.

So far, 3-D has been very successful for us, although I must advise you that we have not played in any important theatres the so-called lesser 3-D pictures, and I believe that by selling only what we con-strued the top A pictures, follow-ing "Bwana Devil," we have maining "Bwana Devil," we have main-tained our market. As you can gather from the above, we think stereophonic sound is a great asset and, despite its costs, should be used where practical, taking into consideration that there are unquestionably thousands of small theatres that should be furnished product with a single track sound. eliminating stereophonic sound in the later runs.

#### CinemaScope

Something must be done as to duplicate versions of CinemaScope films, and I believe that shortly you will find they will be able to be presented with single track, but its great value is the method of presentation and should be maintained in that scope until at least 75% or 80% of the business has been gained.

In my opinion, theatres that do not convert to the new modern method of presentation will be obsolete and out of date. Regardless of the argument of the tax reduction campaign, there will be many thousands of fringe, or almost obsolete, theatres eliminated

#### Flatties Too

Spectacles such as "Quo Vadis" and "The Robe" are great widescreen attractions, but certainly our success with "Shane" leads us to believe that there can be some fantastic results there also, "How to Marry A Millionaire" indicated again that CinemaScope is a big asset. As to "production letting down exhibition" on 3-D,—it is my opin-ion that some of these pictures which were rushed through in third-dimension should have "stood in bed." There certainly was an attempt to get on the bandwagon with inferior product, and this is the product I referred to as not playing our better theatres. One thing I would like to add: I find that in the motion picture exhibition it's the only industry in America that has a tendency to low-rate or belittle its own merchandise. By that I mean most of the knocking has been done about our attractions from within our own ranks—and it is time we got on a soapbox and shouted to the housetops that nowhere in the world can they get so much for so little as in the motion picture theatres of the country.

### Show Tunes

Continued from page 4

magic be Mary Martin, with whom we've been going steady for years; or Lee Wiley, with whom we've also been going steady; or Lenman En-gel, who does the magnificient musical comedy sets for Columbia: or Jack Cassidy, whose Victor of "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World" contains the tune's rarely heard verse; or the pages of Jack Bur-ton's indispensable "Blue Book of Broadway Musicals"; or Hugh Shannon, who is the saddest of all the sad young men; of Atlantic, the label that issues so many records to our taste; or Ted Straeter; or George Byron; or Dorothy Carless.

All of this may strike some of you as a little silly, a little adoles-cent, a little department-of-inconsequential-information, as it were. But since when has it been a felony to be a little silly; since when a Federal offense to want to turn back the clock and let the past assail your heart and perhaps even break it a little; since when has it been actionable to delight in the possession of the odd fact? man be arrested for being prideful of his knowledge that Lois Moran, who was in the original "Of Thee I Sing," was the inspiration for Rosemary Hoyt in Scott Fitzgerald's "Tender Is the Night?" Well, can he? Because if he can, then I should have taken it on the lam many years ago. Me, I am the sort of man who loves the odd fact and I occupy my time not only with the memory of valiant Art Acord, but of Eddie Polo as well. The things I worry about! What two baseball players were voted World's Series shares when their respective teams won the pennant but never received them? And why? Who was the Sweetwater Who was the Sweetwater Cyclone? And if those are beyond you, name the movie that uses the title of Cole Porter's "Bad for Me" in a discussion of man's moral decay.

And while you are about it. teil me if you can-because I wish I knew the answer-why it is that all of us, all of us lovers of old and neglected show tunes who are incessantly bemoaning the fact that they *ore* neglected . . . Why is it that we'd be simply livia if any of these tunes should ever make The Hit Parade.

### Shuberts

Continued from page 4 = emerges as the dominant figure or group in the revised Shubert setup. Lacking definite word about the Government's plans, it's assumed that Federal Justice John C. Knox's dismissal of the monopoly suit will be appealed to the Court of Appeals. Argument would pre-sumably be that the case is not similar to the Supreme Court's ruling in the big league baseball suit. High tribunal decided in the latter instance that baseball is a sport and thus not within the scope of

the antitrust laws. In tossing out the Shubert suit, Knox said, "In principle, I can see no valid distinction between the facts of this case and those which were before the Supreme Court in the case of Federal Baseball Club of Baltimore vs. New York Yan-kees, et al., decided by the Su-preme Court verdict, the judge had said he would entertain a dismissal motion.

Ironically, dismissal of the suit came just five days after the death of Lee Shubert, generally regarded as the dominant figure in the Shubert empire and, as such, the principal target of the Govern-ment action. Also, according to well-informed quarters, the Shuberts had tentatively decided last summer to accept a consent decree in the case, but finally balked over actual terms. Specifically, Lee Shubert refused to divest some of the more valuable Broadway theatres, the Imperial in particular. The suit, which had been slated for trial next month, was originally filed Feb. 21, 1950. It named as defendants Lee and Jacob J. Shu-bert, Marcus Heiman and the United Booking Office, which he heads, and also the Select Thea-tres Corp. and L. A. B. Amusement Corp., Shubert subsidiaries. Complaint charged the defendants with violation of the anti-trust laws in conspiring to monopolize inter-state trade and commerce in the booking of legit attractions throughout the U.S.

getting credit for the line, "When you throw mud, you lose ground." I heard the unforgettable Jimmy Walker phrase it a bit differently, "Let them throw mud at you: wait till it 'cakes' and then throw it back." "An Englishman is the same the more he changes," is another standard.

Our barbs at Presidential candidates vary little, except to change the name of the candidate. Used against Thomas E. Dewey was the yarn of the farmer who always was going to vote for Dewey, for President, because he noticed "we always have good times right after." For the record, that was also first against a Democrat. William Jennings Bryan the same gag.

Once in awhile you get an "adopter" candidate, like Rudolph ("Kefauver") Halley, who cops the thunder of a telling gag. In his late and lamented campaign, he listened to a yarn being told at a banquet. Concerned the novice bettor, watching a clergyman 11, at Nassau.

served as representatives and distributors for Telenews.

New arrangement between INS and News of the Day will be much the same as that between 20th-Fox's Movietone News and the United Press for a special video newsreel. Telenews previously serviced CBS, but at present its only network client is ABC in addition to many individual stations. CBS dropped the service when it established its own reel.

Peter Lorre to Hollywood

Hollywood. Peter Lorre, absent from Hollywood for four years, returns to take a leading role in Walt Disney's CinemaScoped "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," filmization of the Jules Verne classic.

Lorre will depart from his usual villainy to portray the scientist Conseil in the color pic. Kirk Douglas stars. Lensing starts Jan.

In order to weld an effective nucleus of personnel in any com-pany, it is essential that these per-

sons have a sense of being a vital member of the whole team—a feel-ing this is their career—and a sense of permanency, with a high regard and devotion for their chosen work.

Pride of ownership is a basic characteristic of every good citi-zen, and this applies also to the ownership of a job—of the work he does and the position he occupies in his community.

Pride must come from within the individual, and he is unlikely to attain it without a sincere belief that his work is all-important not only to himself, but also to his fellow-man.

Therefore, to the new dimensions and the new policies, we must add new blood and new methods to stimulate the inherent ability of our personnel.



#### Forty-eighth VARIETY

Anniversary

### Show Biz '53–Wotta Year! - Continued from page 3

the year's "sex-foot shelf" best- other highlight show biz event.

"Dragnet" (dum-da-da-dum) takeoffs were as numerous as the new wave of bop jokes. Red Buttons and Wally Cox's upsurged. Ava and Sinatra (again); Aly and Gene Tierrey, Rita and Dick Haymes were conversational twosomes. Dave Garroway and Steve Allen were the Harold Lloyds of the iconoscopes. Ike's golf displaced Harry's piano. Gwen Verdon's "Can-Can" and the N.Y. cops' raids on 52d St. clip-and-gyp joints made news. Ditto Eartha Kitt's earthy "Santa Baby" with or without Greek royalty. Julius LaRosa was fired in public and became a national hero because of it.

#### 'Grandma, What Big Eyes You Have!'-A la Dietrich

The 53-year-old glamorous grandmother, Marlene Dietrich, made the wire services not only as "the highest-priced saloon act in the world" (reportedly \$30,000 a week for three weeks; actually \$20,000 a week), but because of her daring striptease gown — nude, under gossamer lace, from the waist up.

Las Vegas enjoyed "New Year's Eve in July" business as stars from concert and Hollywood, legit and the Met hit the Nevada saloons. among them Tallulah Bankhead, Lauritz Melchior, Ezio Pinza, Nel-son Eddy, Helen Traubel, Jeanette MacDonald, the Gabors (ZaZa has displaced Faye Emerson and Dagmar in the public prints), among others. Said Tallu, "We're the greatest shills for the gambling joints. Why do we do it? For the loot. dahlings, the loot! It's wonderfl loot!"

Nitery showmen like Lou Walters counseled that it was better for certain names to work for "sensible" salaries of \$5,000 and \$7,500 a week in the niteries, getting 30, 40 and even 50 weeks a year's contracts, than aim for those impossible 20G and 25G figures at Las Vegas, where they can only achieve it once-around—or maybe twice, but never within the same year. "But," says Walters. "they (the stars) like it better because it gives 'em something to ham about at Hillcrest (the Beverly Hills country club) or Romanoff's."

The Palace again made an abortive attempt to revive two-a-day vaudeville and Betty Hutton's six weeks were good but not great. Danny Kaye ended a 14-week smash run early in '53 with gross takings of \$744,692. at \$4.80 and \$6 top (which is a Broadway legit show scale), of which he netted \$456,036, or an average of \$32,574 per week for 14 weeks.

#### Vaudeville Mostly Just a Word Signifying Nothing

Vaudeville, per se, despite the occasional sentimental journeys back to the Palace two-a-day is now virtually an academic term. With the passing of the bandshow policy from the Broadway Paramount, which went 100% pix and the Roxy with CinemaScope only Radio City Music Hall stageshows remain in the Broadway sector. The Apollo, in New York's Harlem, with its dominantly Negro talent, plus the occasional Latin variety acts at the Hispano in "Spanish Harlem" and the converted Brookfield politan New York

Sloan Simpson O'Dwyer came back from Spain to a WOR radio and TV contract, and Gene Kelly came back from a tax holiday of 19 months with \$280,000, of the \$390,-000 he earned abroad which he could keep.

Guy Mitchell, Abbott & Costello and Frankie Laine's big clicks at the London Palladium further proved the British love for American acts, despite the Martin & Lewis contretempts with the British critics.

#### Legit Jackpot Hit By Russell, Kerr and Wayne

In legit, 1953 was a jackpot year for Rosalind Russell in "Wonderful Town"; Deborah Kerr in "Tea and Sympathy"; David Wayne "The Teahouse of the August in Moon." It took Josephine Hull 50 years to become a fullfledged Broadway star in "Solid Gold Cadillac," the Howard Teichmann-George S. Kaufman play. The fall was also marked by the return of Katharine Cornell in "The Pres-cott Proposals"; the click of "Me and Juliet"; the newst Rodgers & Hammerstein musical despite the mixed notices; Mary Martin and Charles Boyer in Norman Krasna's 'Kind Sir," with its \$600,000 advance sale as offset to the poor press; the critical break for met," because of the press Kis because of the press blackout due to the newspaper strike; Margaret Sullavan and Joseph Cot-ten in "Sabrina Fair"; and "Oh Men, Oh Women," a December hit entry with Franchot Tone. Betty von Furstenberg and Gig Young in the Edward Choderov comedy.

A new crop of Broadway "play' boys cropped up, i.e., earnest workers in the theatre despite their wealth and prominence. This was in contrast to the yesteryear playboy, symbolized by the "stagedoor johnny." Among "sincere" theare Walter P atre enthusiasts Chrysler Jr., Anthony B. Farrell, Michael Grace (shipping line family), George Nicholas 3d. Hunt-ington Hartford 2d, T. Edward Hambleton, Roger L. Stevens. Blevins Davis. The only winner thus far is Davis who, with Robert Breen, has clicked with the revival of "Porgy and Bess."

Older serious-minded investorsimpresarios of the past have in-cluded John Hay (Jock) Whitney. Joseph Verner Reed (who "talked back" to Broadway in a book of his experience titled "The Curtain Falls"), Edgar F. Luckenbach (another scion of a shipping family). Rowland Stebbins who, as "Law-rence Rivers," produced "Green Pastures." Then there was Edgar B. Davis (of the renowned if not "The Ladder." Alfred de famed Liagre Jr., and the late Dwight Deere Wiman were both alumni of the Yale Drama School. Dorothy Willard and the Rockefellers also bankrolled some of Max Gordon's yesteryear plays at the Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center, now a television playhouse and soon to be demolished to make room for a 19-story office building to house the U. S. Rubber Co.

### **Readings and Small Cast**

Earlier in the year, after a 12week warmup in six cities coverlyn Strand, represent what's left of "round" actors in the metro-ances, Paul Gregory brought ers. This time group of songwritances, Paul Gregory brought ers. This time group of songwrit-Stephen Vincent Benet's "John ers (purposely excluding publish-Robert M. Weitman, longtime Brown's Body," with Judith Ander- ers) sued the radio-television-phoson, Tyrone Power and Raymond Massey, to Broadway; staged by spiracy" to keep down the com-Massey, to Broadway; staged by Charles Laughton. The critics raved excepting the News' John Chapman, who opined it was great "for those who are looking for a nap," and business was only so-so. Last year Laughton's "Don Juan in Hell," which he directed for Gregory, with himself, Charles Boyer. Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Agnes Moorehead in the cast, was in the same idiom. Beatrice Lillie's one-star show started a cycle but none as resoundingly as her, with the exception of Cornelia Otis Skinner in "Paris, '90" and Victor Borge's oneman divertissement. Emlyn Williams toured in Dickensonian readings; and Anna Russell and Ethel Waters had short-lived Broadway runs this fall with their one-woman recitals.

cording to Broadway palaver, with an eye to setting up estate values. So you remember 1953 for c Thus, they gained complete con-trol of "Oklahoma," paying the trol of "Oklahoma," paying the Theatre Guild over \$800,000 for all future rights, and turned around and sold the property to the Joe Schenck-George Skouras (now the late) Lee Shubert-Mike Todd syndicate, to be filmed in the new 65 millimeter Todd-AO process, which the American Optical Co. developed.

On the subject of "estates." Irving Berlin again nixed a biopic deal during his lifetime. A picture based on his songs and career will be something his survivors will have to decide. Meantime, he put together two packages, the first for Paramount in a three-way partnership with Bing Crosby himself and Par on "White Christmas." The other is next year's package for Ethel Merman at 20th-Fox called "There's No Business Like Show Business," the evolution of the song excerpt from Miss Merman's original "Annie Get Merman's original "Annie Get Your Gun," as done on Broadway several seasons back. Her impact in "Call Me Madam," also for 20th-Fox, resulted in "Show Business," but she decided against any work for a year, preferring to do occa-sional guesters, but chiefly to take easy following her marriage to Bob Stix.

Berlin still has hopes for a Music Box Revue, on Broadway, but chances are that a "Cheek to Cheek" film package for Fred Astaire will intervene. Donald O'Connor, who was forced out of White Christmas" by illness, will "Show Business." Danny be in Kaye, who was added to the Clooney - Vera Crosby - Rosemary Ellen cast, was given 10% of the picture, with all three previous partners ceding 313% ages to him, plus his \$200,000 fee.

Bette Davis' \$320,000 flop as the star of "Two's Company," an abor-tive legit musical, was another 1953 highlight, along with Mary Pickford, admitting to 60, reprising her World War I tour on behalf of Liberty Bonds, getting a sendoff from President Eisenhower to spark a U. S. Savings Bond drive.

There were unusual "oppositions" on Broadway such as Danny Kaye in person at the Palace and his "Hans Christian Andersen" concurrently in movies. Rosalind Rosalind Russell, marking her Broadway musical comedy stardom in "Won-derful Town" (originally "My Sis-ter Eileen"), "opposed" herself in Never Wave At A Wac." Arthur Kennedy starred in Arthur Mil-ler's play, "The Crucible" and a 42d St. "shooting gallery" sensa-tionalized bins in the direction tionalized him in the film, "Lusty Men."

(Incidentally the American Bar Assn. attacked "The Crucible" for its aspersions on the legal profession but Miller ignored their invitation to rewrite or tone down. It was a pressagent's stunt that the "Chambermaid's Union" picketed the play, "Midsummer." because of its invidious references to of slovenly maids.")

#### Songwriters Sue, Charging **Broadcasters'** Conspiracy

Continuing a trend marked for many years, entertainment became more and more mechanized. With centralized control of media, came Novelties Vary in Impact floods of antitrust suits. Something new for 1953 was a revival. after 13 years, of litigation be-"Hondo," etc. A pensation paid to songwriters for the "basic raw material" of mechanical entertainment. Interestingly, it was argued that only one set of film tunes-from a Mario Lanza picture-could make the Hit Parade against the alleged conspiracy. (Songwriter action will probably not come to trial before 1955.) Lanza, as "Caruso," was, incidentally, one of the most successful examples of a film "biography" along with Larry Parks click as Jolson. Currently, newcomer Keefe Brasselle is impersonating the still-very-much-alive Eddie Cantor in a biopic and Sidney Soklsky is plotting still another biopic—the lotting still another biopic—the fe of Jimmy Durante. Mario Lanza's display of old-desert resort where normal video life of Jimmy Durante. fashioned temperament saw himbiog, "The Public's Never Wrong" In 1953. Rodgers & Hammerstein self washed out of the motion pic-(as told to Dale Kramer). Sophie concluded deals for control of their ture industry after a sensational. Mountains. Paramount Pictures Tucker's Golden Jubilee was an- properties, where possible. It's if short, upsurge. The singer (not the theatre company) owns

their "personal Fort Knox," ac- wobbled back to the concert stage, 50% of the Telemeter system So you remember 1953 for crazy

mixed-up kids, and bop jokes and Anne Baxter smoking cigars, and New York's hot weather campaign to put over Bermuda shorts for male comfort. (Traditionally, boxoffice treasurers in those Broadway houses remaining open wear only their dinner jackets and are more comfortably attired below the cageline of vision. And you remem-ber 1953 for a \$3.500-a-week 20th Century-Fox film star. June Haver, returning from the Sisters of Charity nunnery and for important executive exits, as per L. B. Mayer out of Cinerama and William Goetz out as Universal's production topper and the Wallis-Hazen's blowoff at Paramount.

Gregory Peck may have made one of the sagest cracks of 1953 when he declared, "There are only two \$1,000.000 actors in the business today-Crosby and Hope. After that you gotta go back to Harold Lloyd and Mary Pickford."

Peck was among the many Hollywood players doing films in Europe and Africa. Others absent from the States most of 1953 were Clark Gable, Ava Gardner, Gene Kelly, Erroll Flynn, Claudette Colbert, John Huston, William Wyler, Kirk Douglas, Gary Cooper. Orson Welles. Martin & Lewis made cable news by attack on the critics of London.

High on the list of significant developments of the year were (1) David Sarnoff's demonstration of television sound-on-tape; (2) the definitive settlement of the color standards issue by the FCC; (3) the growth of the vidpix industry as a bridge between Hollywood, that was, and television. that will be; (4) sundry innovations and dreams in the area of home-toll and closed-circuit video.

#### **Technological Innovations Confusingly Numerous**

So numerous were moving picture technological innovations during 1953 that it is a task to keep the very names straight. Cinerama rode out its first full year as the catalystic agent that produced a new era of experiment in production and projection methods. For a time Cinerama was in the peculiar predicament of being a boxoffice wow that could not obtain Wall Street financing. But Cinerama's troubles were happily solved at last by the deal with Stanley Warner Theatres.

In the fall, CinemaScope came rolling in on a wave of oldfashioned Barnumesque exploitation. In the perspective of show biz history it is likely that Spyros Skouras and Daryl Zanuck made and won one of the greatest all-out bets.

Invidious comparison or not, the combined impact of Cinerama and threw 3-D into CinemaScope eclipse. Depthies palled because of the sameness of "scaring" the customers with animals or projectiles leaping from the screen. "Do you want a lion in your lap or a good show?" the late Joe Burstyn advertised. Polaroid and other manufacturers of prism glasses struggled to solve the practical problems (including fears of eye infection due to re-used specs) Toward year end, the drooping prestige of 3-D was showing signs of reviving under the hypo of improved product, notably Metro's e." Hal Wallis' John Wayne's "Kiss Me. Kate." "Cease Fire," J

former radio writer. Arch

which is, as the name implies, a coin-meter attachment to any tele set which unscrambles specialclose-circulated events (motion pictures, sports, and the like) for given fee, aimed at \$1 average.

A feast or famine fate doesn't rest well with the film biz gen-Despite the 5.000 theatre erally. closings in recent years, these have been replaced by almost as many drive-ins, "ozoners" as VARIETY calls 'em. There still are more than 15,000 screens of assorted sizes yawning for celluloid. They all can't be widescreens, or "big" projections.

Spokesmen for rank-and-file theatreowners are very vocal in de-manding that Hollywood keep their screens supplied with every of picture-not just the type supers, the Scopes, and the widescreen epics. Universal, for one, went about fulfilling that market and has hit peak grosses. The exhibs contend going-to-the-movies is a mass habit, and it's suicide to risk losing that long-established family habit.

Summing up 1953 was a situation in Buffalo. The Century The-atre ballyhooed, "First Time In bragged, "Giant New Magniglow-Astrolite Screen." The Parameter benefit Buffalo, Giant Magic Mirror Pano-Astrolite Screen." The Paramount Theatre heralded. "First in Ameri-ca—Dynoptic 3-D." The Buffalo proclaimed "CinemaScope—With-out Glasses." Only the Cent-was just show was just showing pictures.

The opinion crystalized as the year wore on that the film house of the future will probably have all-purpose equipment in order to accommodate widescreen stereophonics, 3-D, 2-D, closed-circuit spots, and younameit.

Of the top grossers on Broadway cne week in late fall, all were flat-ties---"Mogambo" (Gable-Gardner), "Gilbert & Sullivan" (British), "The Little Fugitive," an indiemade picture costing about \$125. 000 and which may gross \$500.000, "The Actress" (Tracy-Jean Sim-mons), "Murder on Broadway" and "So Big."

#### Many See Theatres-to-Com 'Equipped for Everything'

The Hollywood producers recognize that while the jury is still out on the sundry scopes, 3-D, 2-D, the upcoming Todd-AO (for American Optical, which is a 65mm system), and Cinerama, their production decisions will be geared to plot needs. A spectacle of size natu-rally lends itself to CinemaScope, although there are diehards who persist that "The Robe" in old-fashioned Technicolor and 2-D would still have been a big grossing picture. Barging into 1954. Hollywood

seems intent on a nothing-but-'big"-pictures. Against this drift theatretowners protest that their screens may become empty maws hungry for features to fill playing time and further philosophize that "going-to-the-movies traditionally has been a mass family habit, and don't let's 'class' ourselves out of business.

So, the pictures business weathered the technological upheaval of 1953, just as it rode out the television threat. There remains the cleavage into two camps among major producers and theatreowners. The producers are committed to nothing but "big" pictures, counting on extended runs, like a click legit show on Broadway, which runs one or two seasons. The exhibitors, on the other hand, argue that "going to the movies tradition famil "which must not be broken in the neighborhoods and small towns needing 3-4-5 weekly changes. They point to the driveins as evidence how a family wil motor, en masse, to the outdoor cinemas. There is threat again of exhibitors going into production. Meantime, the situation has opened more playing time for foreign imports, with result that Italy today is producing as many pix as Hollywood,

variety

managing director of the Broadway Paramount Theatre, who had pioneered the bandshow policy there, meantime segued into the production veepee spot at the just merged American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres. an important mating between the American Broadcasting Corp. and the United Paramount Theatres, which brought together Leonard H. Gold enson and Edward J. Noble (he also owns Life Savers), and put "the three Bobs"—Robert E. Kint-ner, prez of ABC, Robert M. Weitman and Robert H. O'Brien, veeps of Par UPT - into the combined broadcasting - and - theatres operation.

Among other personality high-lights of the year were Adolph Zukor's 80th birthday and the celebration of his 50th anniversary as a showman, capped by his auto-biog, "The Public's Never Wrong"

Oboler, started the whole 3-D thing with his 'Bwana Devil," made for small dough but a big mopup despite its mediocrity. Oboler it was who years ago wrote the "Adam and Eve" skit which Mae West played on the Chase & Sanborn hour one Sunday evening to the discomfiture of NBC and J. Walter Thompson. In passing, it was Bryan Foy who directed Warners' it was first 3-D film, "House of Wax" and the same Bryan Foy pioneered, over a quarter-of-a-century earlier,

when he produced Warners first all-talkie, "Lights of New York."

The mating of electronics with the boxoffice continued apace with closed-circuit pickups of top fights, football games and kindred events. A culminating event was the Telereception is difficult because of

#### **CinemaScope Started A** Flood of Widescreen Pix

CinemaScope resulted in the Screen Producers' Guild present-ing its "Milestone Award" to Darry F. Zanuck for his productions of "The Robe" and "How to Marry a Millionaire." Jack L. Warner, with whom Zanuck first started as studio production head (Hal Wallis is another WB studio alumnus), saluted Zanuck and Spyros Skouras for their courage in pioneering

(Continued on page 59)

**PICTURES** 

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### Show Biz '53-Wotta Year! Continued from page 58

pictures in that medium, and Metro Ed Muhl, became the studio head. wil make several in CS. The in-dusry has earmarked 50-65 productions in 1954 in the anamorphic lens system.

"The Robe" may be heading for a \$20,000,000 (or bigger) domestic (U.S. and Canada) gross which, if achieved, would match or better "Gone With the Wind." the record-holder with \$26,000.000. Cecil B. DeMille's "The Greatest Show On Earth" (1952) is credited with a \$12,800,000 take. Metro's "Quo Earth" (1952) IS Greaters \$12,800,000 take. Metro's "Quo "10 500.000, "Best Vadis' with \$10.500,000, "Best Years of Our Lives" with 10.-400,000, and "Duel in the Sun" with \$10.000.000. (D. W. Griffith's "Birth of a Nation." because of its original states' rights seling and diversified exhibition, is unoffi-cialy credited with being perhaps No. 1 alltime grosser, with a \$40,-000.000 take).

Current product shortage has prompted Samuel Goldwyn reissu-ing "Best Years" in 1954 and Metro's reviving "Gone With the Wind," and others. Goldwyn ar-gues that if all major distributors reissue but one or two of their top pictures over the past 20 years, this would resolve film shortage in short order.

"The Robe" on its first week at the Roxy, N.Y., established a world record gross for a film with \$267,-000 net. The theatre's previous top was with "Forever Amber" in 1947, at \$1.80 top and a stageshow, doing \$180,000. "The Robe" dropped its stage show and played seven or more showings per day at \$2.50 and \$3 top.

As evidence that there is no ceil-ing on strong pictures was the gross of "From Here to Eternity," which played almost concurrently with "The Robe" at the nearby Capitol Theatre on Broadway, and which garnered \$172,000 on its first The peak mark at Radio week. City Music Hall is held by Metro's "Ivanhoe" with \$177,000 for the week ending Aug. 6, 1952. Among the Hollywood giants, Paramount and Columbia appear to

be most actively grinding out films. With CinemaScope calling for fewer but costlier pix. Darryl F. Zanuck's 20th Century-Fox production line is limited to this type of picture, and the new keeper of the B's for the company is a separate setup with Leonard Goldstein and Zanuck's son-in-law, Robert F. Jacks, operating Panoramic Pictures. Metro plans 18 supers: the Warner Bros. lot increasingly is adding important units, in the United Art-ists manner. UA, of course, has had a banner year with its flock of indie releases, and is expanding its production bankrolling for newer independents. Samuel Goldwyn is concentrating on a reissue of "Best Years of Our Lives," along with a skillful merchandising job on "Hans Christian Andersen," the Danny Kaye starrer.

#### Howard Hughes Is Hit

By Repeated Litigation Howard Hughes continues to be beset with periodic dissident stockholders' suits. even after the Arholders' suits. even after the Ar-nold Grant-Ralph Stolkin snafu which placed Ned Depinet in an emeritus "consultant" position and brought in James R. Grainger, ex-ecutive sales veepee of Republic. into the RKO presidency. David J. Greene and a syndicate headed by Albert A List hought out Albert A.

List bought out off, there is a good chance that thinking in relation to tollvision.

#### C'Scope. Incidentally, WB plans 16 their exchequer his longtime aide, Goetz, now in independent produc-tion, has long been the top-salaried studio executive and refused to take a cut. This figure tops even Harry Cohn, the lone company president who is also a production chief, at Columbia; Metro's Dore Schary; 20th's Darryl Zanuck; or

the Warner Bros.' Jack L. Warner. After WB's abortive move to sell out its control to Louis R. Lurie two years ago, Jack Warner two years ago, Jack Warner jumped quickly on the 3-D (Natu-Vision) bandwagon ral with "House of Wax"; then engaged in his own concept of the Warner-Scope (nee Warner-SuperScope), and finally decided to utilize the Skouras-Zanuck CinemaScope.

#### The Rise of Hi-Fi As

#### **Phonograph Refinement**

After the recording industry celebrated its 75th anniversary (since Thomas A. Edison first spoke "Mary had a little lamb" on a piece of tinfoil) RCA Victor celebrated the golden jubilee of the founding of the Victor Talking Machine Co. by Eldridge R. Johnson, successor to Emile Berliner. Capitol Records' 10th Anniversary witnessed a new peak in earnings.

High-fidelity became a new excitement in the industry, for which television gets credit. Television (F-M) sound is superior

In recent semesters the record business had been stimulated by the battle of the speeds, and as the industry seems settled down to LPs (33rpm) and the 45 rpm pops (and also Extended Playing-EPrecords, with the same large spindle hole), it is just a matter of time until 78 rpm speeds become obsolescent. However, there are obsolescent. However, there are still 16,000,000 record players with the 78 turntable to be serviced; but the 8,000,000 new players, with "all three speeds," account for the bulk of the new record sales.

With television, the public be-came sound conscious. The 45s and LPs have it "in the groove" but the average machine didn't bring it out to its fullest 12,000-15.000 megacycle performance. The hi-fi addict started building his own equipment, whereupon the industry decided to mass-market already assembled hi-fi machines.

#### **Tomorrow's Shape Seen**

In Sarnoff's Color-on-Tape

High on the technological hit parade is the miraculous-on-tape, both in color and black-and-white. Bing Crosby's research enterprise on the Coast, along with the Minnesota Mining & Mfg. Co. and others, has been experimenting with video tape, akin to ordinary sound recording on tape. Finally, David Sarnoff, board chairman of RCA and NBC startled Hollywood --film, radio and video showmen alike--with RCA's new colored TV on tape. When refined, its poten-tials for home and theatre and film production usages are stagger-ing in their horizons. The cost factor saving may even prove a boon to the picture business. It could cut costs for film production, and thus permit cutting admission

Hughes in RKO Theatres, and man-agement will continue under prespricing itself out of business. **Television Film Industry** Surged Ahead in 1953 Meantime, the television film aspects are on the march. Vidpix (films for video) loom as a developing potential as more TV sta-tions open. There are 134 on the air as of now; the horizons are for 2,000 licensees. Television film development may determine Hollywood's future as the production capital of TV. Currently New York remains important as the program origination point, just as it is the economic capital. Latter has always been true, because the money is in the east-the agencies, sponsors, management.

## TRAILERIZING ON HOME TV PAYS BUT **RELEASE PROTECTION WEAKENS IMPACT**

the times I have noticed in the past year is that, with every announcement from the film companies, re their forth-coming prod-

uct, there is

tion." A year ago such state-

ments would have been strictly taboo, and, such an attitude at this date reveals the fact that even the infrequent application of television and radio as an aid to ticket selling in motion picture theatres has been effective and is being recognized.

After working in this direction for four major companies during the past year, I have found the results to have been most decisive in the majority of cases, and spotty This depends solely in others. upon the pictures selected and the amount of saturation given them.

I think the great majority of exhibitors have found that a television campaign ahead of their playdate has materially boosted boxoffice receipts. Needless to say they like that kind of a campaign and many of the distributors have actively used the campaign to secure a large number of dates in the given area. But, alas and alack, it is here that the cooperation between the distributor and exhibitor ends. The exhibitor ex-pects the distributor to carry the full load. If results are big but not record-breaking the distributor in turn cries, "Too expensive."

I sometimes wonder when and if ever the distributor and exhibitor will get together and say, "We have a good thing here. The results are not blurbs and tear sheets, but positive and direct cash sales at our

out of business has some agencies doing some wishful-thinking that "tollvision may also bail out the sponsors." This is a vacuous philosphy because nobody will pay a fee for a commercially sponsored show. People like RCA's David Sarnoff and Frank M. Folsom are skeptical because (1), the public's purchase of a TV set is tantamount to a franchise for 'free' entertainment; and costs too much in this day and age to collect. Furthermore, Sarnoff's basic contention has been that it's too easy to gimmick the scrambled pictures at home, and thus a freeloading audience with some savvy electronic bootlegger in each household would be unscrambling the pictures and getting a free ride.

Closed-circuit theatre television of sports events have created a certain amount of excitement. A proposal by a Miami Beach circuit of 10 hotels for a TV pickup to show first run pictures on the premises is part of the general

CBS board chairman William S.

### **By TERRY TURNER**

both. Let's get down to a sharing open. Brother, they ain't growing, basis and use this medium for all they're breeding. It is worth."

**Protection Obstacle** It might even continue to be said that "this business of 14 and 28-day protection clauses in playing a

picture under the TV plan belongs to the silent picture era. What is the sense of a smash TV campaign for a lone, first run in the downtown area of a city when 40 good grossing keys are right within the primary orbit of that TV station and get the campaign with just as strong an impact as the lone downtown theatre? Isn't it foolish for us to suppose that you get a customer living 50 miles away from the downtown theatre, to rush out of his house, drive his family those 50 miles, put up cash for parking downtown (if he can find it) and perhaps get a baby sitter and run up a little more expense? Isn't it more reasonable for us to suppose that the same customer will get off of his beam to go two blocks, and take his entire family to see the picture, because it is the same picture that is being shown 50 miles away? Why waste a cammiles away? paign, because people forget all too quickly, and in 14 or 28 days your campaign is just a wisp of a memory?"

Television, it must be admitted, has changed our ways of life and I think anyone would be a dunce to deny that it is in more direct competition with the motion picture business than any other form of amusement. If it has changed our news-getting habits, as newspapers will admit, our styles and even our thinking, why can't we in our business change some of our method, which seemed to be outmoded when we attempt to use television to our advantage.

I happen to know that the majors have changed their course of thinking over the past year. There were mistakes. Let's list some of these mistakes than can minimize the effectiveness of television to boost sales in motion picture theatres.

1. Pick the wrong picture.

2. Pick the right picture and make the wrong material to exploit it.

3. Pick the right picture, have the right material, and then buy insufficient time to get your story over to the public.

4. Pick the right picture, have the right material and sufficient money for an adequate campaign, and end up with only a few dates. Then the expense argument comes

in. 5. Pick the right picture, have the right material, the right amount of money, and then allow your 14 and 28 day protection clauses to murder you. They cry the inevitable, "We did good in first run and died in the subse-quent runs." The truth would be "I'm doing good and running well ahead of the pack, but cut my throat at the finish line."

6. Pick a picture that already has a tremendous production cost on it, and try to do the job for peanuts.

7. Pick a picture because you know it will be hard to sell straight, and bemoan the fact that the customers, despite your many

One of the healthiest signs of mutual boxoffice, which feeds us or 20 more stations are ready to

I am more convinced than ever before that television (as a solid sales instrument and not as an exploitation gimmick) is here to stay. Most of the majors are thinking along the same lines and Goodness knows, the tops in the advertising departments,-Howard Dietz, Charlie Einfeld, Mort Blum-enstock and Jerry Pickman have been wide open for a "look see" and their executives, Bill Brumberg, Rodney Bush and John Norcap and Sid Blumenstock, Sid Mesibov, Bob Montgomery and all their assistants, have aided me in every possible way to get the most out of it. It sure has been a great experience working with men who in the past have only been a "Hello" name to me and I hope they'll want me back sometime. I'il be in there pitching, anyway.

I estimate you can run two campaigns a month or 24 a year pro-viding the companies pick their pictures and release dates so as

not to be fighting each other. One last thought, but it is highly important. You cannot buy TV time for pictures as you would buy it for cigarettes, beer or cosmetics. I am of the opinion that you must buy across the board and as often as you possibly can within a period of 10 days prior to your opening date. Where cigarettes, beer and cosmetics are destined for a very definite market, pic-tures are for the entire family from Junior to Grandpop. Now to explain how this televi-sion fachnicute gate them out of

sion technique gets them out of the living room, let's take the classic reply made by one of the baseball immortals, Willie Keeler, who when asked to explain his terwhich asked to explain his ter-rific batting average replied, "I hit 'em where they ain't." Well, if Willie had to explain some of the terrific grosses where the television technique was used, he would undoubtedly reply: "It hits 'em where they is."

#### There's No Sub Continued from page 12 ;

parage CinemaScope or any of the other innovations that are injecting new life into the business. We, all of us, are deeply indebted to those who developed CinemaScope and they have, or should have, the best wishes of the exhibitors. It is apparent that the companies producing the CinemaScope are striving to find subject-matter worthy of the medium. The others are planning pictures that will hold their own in competition with CinemaScope productions. The product announcements for 1954, The while disappointing in quantity, hold promise of a number of out-

standing productions. If only I had assurance that this improved product would be made available to all theatres in all parts of the country for exhibition in whatever medium they are equipped for and on whatever equipment they can afford, I would face the new year not only with hope but with confidence. 6

The big "if" for 1954 is whether these new devices, especially CinemaScope, are going to be used for the benefit of the entire industry or whether they will be employed as weapons for the destruction of the smaller exhibitors. Although the film companies are maintaining silence, I still feel that good sense will prevail and that the doubts and anxieties that assail us will be banished when the responsible heads of the industry come to realize the enormity of the havoc which present policies would wreak. With the fine new product made available to all, with the encouragement of the reduction in the admissions tax which the President has promised and which daily grows more certain, it seems to me that the industry should not only recover, but should surge forward in 1954. Economic compatibility between the several industry branches can be achieved when present anxieties are dissipated. confidence is restored and all join together in a grand crusade bring the people back into the



always a mention that. "With the forthcoming new product. there will be a heavier emphasis on television and radio exploita-tion." A year

agement will continue under pres-ent prexy Sol A. Schwartz.

Another Green — first name Charles—in an abortive attempt to upset 20th-Fox's incumbent management under Spyros Skouras, Zanuck, et al., was bested legally. And of course, with the resounding click of CinemaScope there isn't much area for aggravation.

With the advent of Jerry Wald Into Columbia Pictures as produc-tion veepee, that lot's activity zoomed, capped by the smash of "From Here to Eternity" and the just-released "Sadie Thompson," plus the Judy Holliday-Peter Law-ford starrer, "It Should Happen to You.

With Decca Records' Milton R. Rackmil moving into the Universal Pictures presidency, N. J. (Nate) Blumberg took the board chairmanship. Worldwide sales topper Alfred E. Daff became executive vice-president. When the company felt that William Goetz's \$5,000 a week was too rich for

'Subscription' Television **Occupies Trade Attention** Subscription TV is the new intra-trade conversation piece.

The threat of TV pricing itself

Paley, when receiving the annual Poor Richard Club award in Philadelphia, said among other things that TV already has long proved that long election campaigns are outmoded. Traditional stump-speeching is a thing of the past. One giant hookup gets to more people than weeks of junketing from town to town, state to state. Death Closes Out Careers **Of Showbiz Personages** 

Picture business show biz deaths of 1953 included Louis D. Frohlick (Schwartz &), Robert G. Vignola, Herman J. Mankiewicz, Lewis Stone, A. Pam Blumenthal, Arthur Caesar, William Farnum, Albert Fennyvessy, Francis Ford, Michael Fennyvessy, Francis Ford, Michael Gore, M. A. Schlesinger, M. B. Shanberg, Harry Sherman, Jacob H. Lubin, Chick Lewis, Henry Herzbrun, Herbert Rawlinson, David Palfreyman, Harry L. Nace, Relard Young Twing Beis and Roland Young, Irving Reis and Gus Schaefer—and on Christmas Day, Lee Shubert.

dates, think the same as you do about the picture, to wit: "It stinks."

I have found that exhibitors are more willing to pull out and rearrange dates with an eye on a proposed television campaign that a distributor. With a major, it is definitely true that it does disrupt the regular flow of his product, but that difficulty could be wiped out by planning the year before.

#### **Cost Sharing**

And when I say the exhibitor should share with the distributor I don't mean equal dollar for dollar, but a proportionate share just as he might share co-operative newspaper advertising.

Now let's look on the other side of the fence, the Television side, where I have been hibernating the past year and liking it. I have been arranging time for four majors all over the U.S.A. and it together seems before I finish one chart en-bring th compassing the entire country, 10 theatres. Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary





3

# Step ahead with Your ALLIED ARTISTS Branch Manager Now!

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## Feels H'wood Will Step Up Prod.

#### By EDWARD L. HYMAN

of picture production has been decreasing. During this last year in many areas of the country and producers adopted a "wait and see" policy because of the new techniques in projection and sound caters to the masses. However, it and, as a result, the general decrease in production appeared to be many areas that have held the accelerated. However, many of the problems faced by producers have been clarified recently and some of those who have been waiting have announced some increase in their production plans. We are urging producers and distributors to hesitate no longer and step up their production plans substantially.

When it comes to a choice between quantity of product and quality of product, we must choose quality and it is our firm belief that the addition of substantial star value and product quality will result in more playing time for pictures. As we said above, the past five years has seen a steady decrease in production and our complaint as to the shortages has been directed mostly to the shortage of quality.

Whether or not CinemaScope is applicable to all pictures has been a subject for debate for some time now. Our feeling is that Cinema-Scope should be used only for our spectacle productions. In opinion, aspect ratio (CinemaScope or any other) is only a frame for any picture, and each picture should be given a frame most suited to its story and locale.

There is no question but that the all-purpose screens and ste-reophonic sound installations are very costly, although, in the case of many theatres, it may be justi-fied by the hypoed business potential. However, there are many other theatres about which this may not be true, because of local preferences, inability to equip or for other good reasons. However, one thing is clear and that is that the decision as to whether the increased business potential would justify these expensive installations must be made by theatre and each theatre must stand on its own factors. We have urged and are continuing to urge producers and distributors to release duplicate versions of their CinemaScope films so that the du-plicate can be shown in any aspect ratio and with or without stereophonic sound. If this is not done, we will find a substantial number of theatres faced with an acute shortage of product. Of course, theatres which cannot convert will not have the appeal of the theatres which do convert, but certainly that is not reason enough to deny such theatres an even flow of product.

There is a school of thought in our industry with the theory that the new developments which have come upon us will result in a "smaller industry," i.e., fewer theatres. We do not subscribe to this theory and we feel that the public will be the final judge of this.

There are some who say that the widescreen era will result in a lopsided accent on spectacle. do not, for one moment, believe this. We feel that our producers will continue, as they have always, to correctly judge what the public wants.

3-D Not Dead

The subject of 3-D

For the past five years the rate | scales have had. It is true that admission prices have been increased some have said that, because of this, the motion picture no longer must be remembered that there are same admission prices through the years and that if the increases that have been invoked are studied, it will be found that the ratio of increase is far less than the increases that have been invoked on any Furthermore, other commodity. we are convinced that the in-creased admission price does not keep audiences away. Our patrons will pay for what they want to see and will not attend, no matter how low the admission price, if the at-traction is not to their liking.

### Par Theatres Prez For **Dupe Versions of CS Pix** By L. H. GOLDENSON

One of the most serious problems facing exhibition today is the unmistakeable signs of decrease in production which, if continued, can slow the flow of product to a dangerous point. I agree that it is correct to sacrifice quantity for hoped-for quality and of course, it is possible that fewer pictures, but bigger ones, could keep theatres going via extended runs. But we do also need a steadier flow of product.

Another serious problem is the equipment problem. While it is true that the large investment required by an all-purpose screen and stereo sound installation may be justified by the hypoed business potential in the case of many theatres, this may not be true with respect to many others and it is now clear that the determination as to whether these installations be made must be considered theatre by theatre, each one standing on its own.

There are still differences of opinion as to whether CinemaScope is applicable to all pictures. In my opinion it is not. I feel that CinemaScope will be out of proportion if used as the medium for the intimate type of story.

We believe and have urged that distributors should release duplicate versions of their CinemaScope films so that the duplicate can be shown in any aspect ratio other than CinemaScope, and with or without stereophonic sound. Only in this way can we hope to keep in business those theatres which cannot, because of economic inability, local taste and other good reasons. convert completely to Cinema-Scope. These theatres which cannot convert may not have the appeal of the more fortunate theatres which do convert, but the flow of product should definitely not be denied to them.

3-D opened on a tremendous popularity wave which waned as the number of poor pictures in 3-D appeared. These poor pictures prac-tically killed 3-D and those who made and released them were responsible for the near death. However, it is encouraging to note the results being obtained by the better 3-D productions like "Kiss Me Kate" and "Hondo" and, no doubt, these good results will be repeated with "Sadie Thompson," "Money From Home" and "Dial M for Murder." It appears therefore that

## The Lost Audience Is Still Lost

**By ALFRED STARR** 

Nashville, Tenn. tem of adequate community has been estimated that the with its potential audience. tem of adequate communication

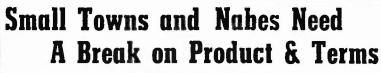
maximum domestic audience for a Hollywood has' not only underpopular film numbers about 25,estimated the intelligence of the 000,000 people. By popular film I general population by aiming at this lowest level, presumably on mean any picthe theory that it embraces the largest numerical group in the total population, but what is worse, it consistently underestimates the inand which has telligence of its own established no particular audience The inevitable result has been (1), a shocking lack of development in the techniques of motion picture art; and (2) an almost complete alienation of the people who are most capable of appreciating those techniques.

The art of the motion picture is first of all a visual art. The audience must have eyes and must be able to use them. If a picture is at all worth looking at, then the eyes of the audience must be alert to absorb not only its pictorial values and color or lighting values, but also the story line as it is expressed in visual terms. It might be presumed that the audience, after three decades of picturegoing, is trained in seeing pictures, but it is obvious that most filmmakers take nothing of the sort for granted. It is only a mild exaggeration to say that the average film is aimed at an audience presumably blind.

The Foreign Idea

An episode in the Italian picture "Shoe Shine" is a case in point. One important sequence shows a gang of urban ragamuffins setting out to acquire a broken down drayhorse. No attempt is made to explain just why a group of city boys want a horse, because no explanation is necessary. Yet it is easy to imagine a Hollywood director inserting a long scene at this point showing the natural love of a boy for a horse (or for any other animal) and the natural desire of a city-bound boy for rural surroundings. Such an interpolation, in the hands of a Hollywood director, might easily be as long and as tenderly sentimental as the entire film of "The Yearling." And all of it

would be superfluous. But it is too easy to cite examples of the kind of film making that drove the lost audience out of the theatre and that keeps them out. This is merely destructive criticism at its worst. The writer, being an exhibitor, has no quarrel whatever with the quality of pictures that capture the attention of the great mass of people who still regularly attend the movies. The question under consideration here is whether or not it is possible for the motion picture industry to recapture and bring back into theatres that lost audience of millions



#### **By ROBERT L. LIPPERT**

Hollywood. realize they must adopt a separate sales policy to cover the small town and neighborhood theatres, whose problems are vastly different from those of the key cities.

In fact it's past time, for many small operators whose houses are already dark. But it is not too late for the industry to help keep ands of ma town exhibitors who are sure to disappear-unless the sales de- policy. partments do something about them.

Sure, it's good to see great pic-It's about time the producers tures doing business at the big and distributors of this business houses-that's healthy for everybody. But it also means that the lesser feature, which might have got by nervously as an "A" one year ago, falls off to nothing today. Already shortage of product has hit the neighborhood theatre man hardest, because he has been compelled to book two "A" pictures together, and there just isn't

Since this problem is of more vital importance to exhibitors than it is to producers, it is fundamentally a problem for the exhibitor to solve. And solve it he must if he is to remain in the picture business. While his audience seems to be more steady and dependable than the lost audience could ever be, they are actually more fickle and more easily won over to new entertainment vehicles like television. They will in fact desert the theatre for any novelty. And many of them will never come back.

The exhibitor should never cease his efforts to bring back and develop the lost audience. He should constantly try to bring adult entertainment to adults. He might even arrange special showings for small groups as a public service. If he is too busy or if he is unable to decide which pictures should be shown in such a series he can always find a member of the local intelligentsia whose advice can be safely followed. Such a public service can easily develop into personal benefit. A very effective device is the acquisition of a list of possible patrons who can be cir-cularized by postcard announcement of each picture.

#### Showmanship

Another solution lies in the high-successful "Curtain at 8:40" lv series which Walter Reade Jr. has pioneered in several of his theatres. This series is aimed at bringing the lost audience into a conventional theatre on one night each week for a carefully selected series of pictures that have special appeal. This sort of experiment reaches the height of success when large numbers of the special audi-ence, whether through habit or through renewed pleasure on seeing a fine motion picture, come back as regular patrons to see the many excellent pictures that arc constantly available, if they will only take the trouble to identify them.

In all fairness it must be admitted that the distributors do make serious attempts to reach the lost audience whenever they are confronted with the problem of marketing a special picture. Their chief complaint, not without some justification, is that the average ex-hibitor presents a picture like "Ro-man Holiday" or "Lili" to his audi-ence in exactly the same manner that he presents a Roy Rogers pic-ture. But much can be done by the distributor and more notion ture. But much can be done by the distributor, and more particularly by the producer.

He can first of all credit his audience with more subtlety and sensivity than he has heretofore assumed. He can help people appreciate good pictures by making them in such a way as to compel those people to be alert and watchful while looking at them. He can design his product so as to appeal to the millions of people everywhere in this country who love the theatre in any form, who support countless little theatres, who flock **•** to concerts and to ballet and to opera and to lectures of all kinds. That audience need not be permanently lost to motion picture

### 'KATE' IN 3-D RETAINS EDGE OVER STANDARD

Continuing analysis of 3-D versus 2-D in relation to Metro's "Kiss Kate



Alfred Starr

capture a larger audience. A few notable exceptions may be "Samson and Delilah," "Quo Vadis," and "The Robe," which appeal not only to the average theatregoer, but also to church groups and others who rarely go to the theatre. That particular group is not the "lost" audience we have heard so much about. Those additional people who go to see these special pictures were never regular theatregoers and never will be.

The lost audience is that audience of mature, adult, sophisti-cated people who read good books and magazines, who attend lectures and concerts, who are politically and socially aware and alert. They are not readers of the pulp magazines, they are not avid radio or television fans, and they do not see motion pictures very often. They do not go to the movies because their experience has been largely unhappy. They do not read the motion picture fan magazines and they have little time or opportunfor reading intelligent film ity reviews. They have no way of knowing, for example, that "High Noon" and "Shane" are not just ordinary westerns. Hence on those rare occasions when they decide to take in a picture they turn in a sort of desperation to the amusement page of the newspaper for a suggestion. And what they see there is usually so stereotyped or so reminiscent of the last dull picture they saw that in the end they decide to call on a neighbor instead.

#### Another 25,000,000 Lost

What is the size of this lost audience? It is a safe guess to say that it consists of another 25,000,000 people! They are 25,000.000 people who like and need entertainment and who, by and large, are well able to pay for it. These people have been literally driven out of the motion picture theatre by the industry's insistence on aiming most of its product at the lowest level, and by its failure to devise a sys- of people.

hold interest. The public flocked to the first 3-D pictures to show their interest in this new medium. However, this interest waned when several poor pictures were rushed into release in order to cash in on this popularity quickly. In effect, this almost killed "the goose that laid the golden egg." Fortunatelaid the golden egg." Fortunate-ly, the results we have seen with "Kiss Me Kate" and "Hondo" and will see, no doubt, with "Sadie Thompson," "Money From Home" and "Dial M for Murder," makes it appear that 3-D still has a chance, if we can get good pictures in that medium. The market for 3-D pictures will resolve itself into an availability of perhaps a halfan availability of perhaps a halfdozen quality 3-D pictures per year. We do not mean that the demand could not accommodate a dozen if they are good pictures, but we do mean that there is no room whatsoever for poor ones.

Another controversy in our industry is the question of the effect percentage of increase with respect that increases in admission price to most commodities.

3-D still has a chance, if the pictures made in that medium are good ones. Certainly a good single rojection 3-D system would help further and, of course, elimination of the necessity for glasses would clinch the comeback.

Many people have claimed that the motion picture is no longer entertainment for the masses in view of boosts in admission scales in some areas. I disagree with this most strongly. In the first place, experience has taught us that the increased admission price is not what deters theatre attendance. If the attraction is a good one, the theatre can be filled regardless of the increase. Furthermore, despite the increase in admission price, the motion picture still stands as the "mass entertainment." A study of the general increase in admission prices in motion picture theatres should show that the percentage of this increase is far less than the

Today's sales pattern as created by the various major companies is keyed exclusively to the first-runs and lacks consideration for the smaller situations.

Take CinemaScope, for example. Costs of installation are beyond the means of the average small operator at this time, and while it's true that this expense is bound to be reduced, many small theatres can go out of business in the interim.

And when a CinemaScope pro-uction or a "From Here to duction or a "From Here to Eternity" hits the smaller towns, the distributor's demands for lengthy playing time and advanced books at the end of the month.

enough production to carry on this

Obviously the small town exhibitor does not compete with the metropolitan houses, and he's pleased to see holdouts at the deluxers. He does not ask any change in the big cities, but he does ask fair chance to get his share of the returns on a boxoffice attraction. This means that some of the top-level sales thinking must be devoted to understanding and helping to solve the small operator's difficulties.

It must be remembered that the neighborhood and small town theatres cannot hope to approach the tremendous grosses that larger houses can roll up in the heavy metropolitan areas. Also, the uneven ratio of overhead works to prices will drain the town of all its money on these engagements, with theatres. Despite all his problems, the exhibitor paying such fancy the small town exhibitor has served film rentals that he winds up with little or nothing to show on his books at the end of the month. And it's time to give him the break pic, the preem production being "The Robe" (20th).

gives the depth version the edge at the b.o.

With boxoffice figures available from 44 2-D situations and 93 3-D engagements, M-G reports that 3-D is ahead by 11.9%. Eastern fans, according to Metro, are prime 3-D addicts, with playdates in that area putting the depth version 19%ahead. In the south-southeastern division, 3-D is ahead 16.9%. In the central midwest, and west coast territories, the difference is 9% in favor of 3-D.

#### C'Sope Arrives in Singapore Singapore.

CinemaScope came to Singapore this month when a demonstration was held at the new air-conditioned cinema, the Odeon. Nearly 800 officials attended the demonstration. The CinemaScope screen was specially flown out to Singapore from New York. C'Scope will be introduced to the public at the Odeon as a year-end



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## **FP-Can. Topper's \$64 Question By JOHN J. FITZGIBBONS**

Toronto.

Proper playing time for quality product will encourage production that should ensure a steady flow of product. This effort will bring

product also that will help to fill the playing time needed by the :heatres located in the suburban and smaller towns. There is no good sound reason why theatre men should not re-

J. J. Fitzgibbons the

activate ideas that were successful in the promotion of First National and undertake to have product made that would give them a steadier supply.

I just don't believe the literal statement that "fewer pictures but bigger ones" can keep theatres going by extended runs. It may keep certain limited number of theatres going but the business as we know it today would disappear. The success of this business is fundamentally dependent upon mass entertainment at admission prices that can be patterned to fit any pocketbook. I mean pocketbook literally-cash on hand.

Undoubtedly if there is a sufficient demand there will be a sufficient supply of the various types of equipment for screen and sound installation that will be produced at a cost within the range of the smaller theatre and small town exhibitor. Obviously, not to take advantage of the potential in stereophonic sound as we know it is to reduce an important factor in the improvement of the type of entertainment we are selling.

The ambition of every exhibitor is like the fellow who lived on the wrong side of the tracks, he wants to live on the hill in the big house and perhaps, because of this, we have neglected to recognize the importance of continuing to make the type of entertainment we style "poor man's entertainment." Both classes are needed to ensure and encourage production and continue the interest in our business. Just as there are variations in the quality of practically every other com-modity or service that we buy, there are still more people with less to spend than there are with more to spend for any service or commodity.

Standards can be flexible, not necessarily static and a variation of processes of product is desir-able. 3D still has the objections of the additional cost for glasses and the inconvenience of wearing glasses to overcome. However, special and unusual 3D pictures will unquestionably prove to be box-office successes. A single-projector 3D system is not enough to revive 3D even though it does improve projection and lessens the problems of both the distributor and the exhibitor in handling.

I do not think anyone can honestly or rightfully answer the question as to whether or not an industry is right in sacrificing quantity for hoped-for quality. Quantity can still have elements of value. In producing quantity, supply is provided for the smaller and suburban run theatre and has merit sufficient to satisfy a very large audi-ence who should be able to buy at prices within their budget. In the selves-by trial and error-and a production of this comes the de-velopment of the personnel and needed personalities for the so-called "top quality" we hope for, to make possible the bigger and more expensive operations, and to continue the interest in our industry that is needed if we are to get our share of the time and money available for people seeking mass entertainment Stereophonic sound is generally necessary. There may be pictures on which stereophonic sound is not required. There are certainly others that it can improve when properly applied. To release duplicate versions of CinemaScope for at least a year would destroy the lift the interest in CinemaScope has given our boxoffice and it is quite possible there will be other processes equally as effective as CinemaScope in the not too distant future. But Cinema-Scope is not applicable to all pix. The failure of 3D was a combination of irresponsible produc- and marvelous" way out. Or is it tion and just as irresponsible ex- to be just out?

hibitor merchandising efforts to get a quick busk, completely ignoring the fact the motion picture theatre patron of today is selective and has many other choices of entertainment to select from as compared to the days when we could throw anything on the screen and just sell tickets.

I do not favor a smaller industry; we favor a larger industry with more theatres.

### **Don't Kill Off Biz** Continued from page 7

own-likewise it's new and embryonic in its uncertainty as to the future.

Some have suggested that theatre men should undertake production. In our opinion, this can only succeed on a franchise basis with fixed assurance of income to maintain a supply.

Where's That Mass 'Appeal'

At least two producers are campaigning for fewer and better pictures, in fewer houses. To this idea comes the challenge of the basic ingredient of the most profitable period of our existence—that time when the very "mass appeal" of programs made customers our programs made customers stand in line to see our offerings. Those days are gone. Producers have vied with each other either to copy or to outdo their competitors-and even though wages have mounted, other increasing costs have limited customer amusement budget in proportion. In the meanwhile the cost to the theatres catapulted and the scramble for prio-rity led to neglect of independent product. Successful westerns, the backbone of weekend programs, became deluxers. Gradually the trend practically forced abandonment of these low-budget, profitproducing popular pictures — with its consequent loss of devoted, low-- with er-income-bracket followers. This was a tragedy.

While ours is an artistry approach to favor, we have failed to keep ourselves mindful of our obligation to the varied tastes represented by a public which cannot be segregated but rather demands that its individual tastes be catered to.

To lose sight of this obligation can only spell danger to our fu-ture. The closing of the small theatres will shrink a vast business into a decreasing entity of limited appeal which, no matter how important to a few, cannot replace the pleasurable hours that perhaps lesser art would offer the multitudes. It made possible those theatres that reach into the farthest recesses of our world, with their messages of cheer, culture and education, that never before had existed for these people-and at a price they could afford to pay, twice a week, instead of on occasion, as many still do-and I fear with diminishing desire.

It is only natural that in time of distress men become jittery and over-anxious to solve a resurgent situation. The strain and uncer-tainty often prods men to find the answer by inventive exertion.

The weird throes of picturedom with its 3D, CinemaScope, Ciner-ama, Stereophonic Sound-and all their digressions-seem to indicate the definite need for standardization of our new ideas. When and if these diversions prove themstandard is accor hon the ray and file will be back in business again. There must come a composite from this confusion. Dwelling for a moment on 3D. one of the most prominent "novelappeals, which originated untv" der handicap but which is showing signs of improvement, still must overcome the need for wearing of Entertainment comes glasses. through relaxation.

## Can't Write Off 3-D 100%; Makes Good Pix Better **Bv HENRY BRANDT**

The day will never come when 3-D will make a bad picture good but it will make good pictures better. Originally, three-dimensional films captured the fancy of the public because of their novelty. With lack of quality films and public discomfort because of uncomfortable viewers, the popularity was, of necessity, shortlived. How long can an audience duck arrows or other missiles and be expected to come back to the theatre? Our presentations sacrificed film content to squeeze the gimmick of 3-D -for more than it was worth. The industry did not clothe 3-D with proper values for public acceptance in its haste to take advantage of the dimensional furore. And the less we say about the early glasses, the better. Our patrons let us know about that in no uncertain terms. In spite of all these handicaps,

real progress is being made on all fronts. Double projection is giving way to single film strip projection, eliminating the serious objection to which I referred. Third-dimension had taken such a nosedive that one does not hear of added rental terms solely because a film is produced in 3-D. Better glasses are eliminating many, but not all, complaints; and better quality films may yet win back an audience.

It is a struggle which we have created for ourselves. The public in many sections of the country already has been conditioned against 3-D. So much so, that many theatres believe they increase their boxoffice potential by advertising the playdate of a film in 2-D.

It should be noted here that it is still unresolved in trade circles as to whether the public will ulti-mately accept the proposition of viewing stereoscopic films through polarized glasses . . even though the films and glasses are better. The proponents of 3-D, with glasses, are making a valiant effort to revive its waning popularity. They have a tough uphill battle against overwhelming odds.

It appeared for a while that 3-D was definitely on the way out until some surprising grosses were racked up by some of the more recent films in 3-D. I don't think that seasoned showmen will overlook these figures no matter what their personal judgment may be on the subject.



Sam Rinzler

FEWER PRODUCTIONS DON'T **INSURE 'BETTER' PIX** 

By SAMUEL RINZLER (Randforce Theatres),

Brooklyn, N. Y. By all means I think that theatre en everywhere should do all in commodities and services which men everywhere should do all in their power to encourage a flow of good pictures.

> Naturally, bigger and more important pictures h a v e always been a boon to exhibitors. As a matter of fact it is this type of prod-uct that has kept the thea-tres in business. However,

> > extended runs.

have increased so very, very much over the period of the past 10 years. It is too early to make any defi-

apparent that movies have gone up

nite statement, but certainly there is the possibility that CinemaScope may be applicable to all pictures. Standardization, of course, is always a desirable achievement, but it should not be accomplished at the expense of continued experimentation with new forms of entertainment media that will attract more patrons to our theatres.

It is not necessary to have fewer pictures in order to make good pictures. The history of the industry will show that the greatest number of good pictures were made when the maximum number of pictures were being produced by the studios. No one can tell posi-tively at the starting of a picture, whether it will eventually turn out to be a smash hit or not.

#### Stereophonic Sound

Stereophonic sound is certainly something to be desired and a goal for exhibitors to reach in the future. The present cost and state of technical improvement make its widespread installation in all theatres a question to be answered very carefully in each individual situation, dependent upon eco-nomic and competitive conditions existing. It is impossible to generalize on

the release policies of distributors because each company has its own approach, and in many instances the sales policy varies in any given company with each particular picture.

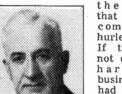
In our circuit we have all types of physical structures, and so far we have not found one in which wide screens cannot be installed. I think that the problem of this type of installation is more imaginary than real. Even a small theatre can have a widescreen which, though not as large as the one in a Broadway house, will, nevertheless, be in proportion to its own dimensions and number of seats.

#### **Exhibs Should Insure Steady Flow of Product** By L. R. GOLDING

(Fabian Theatres)

New York. Without production, you can't have exhibition, so it seems exhibition should take all steps possible to insure a steady flow of product either by actively entering production or financing production. To me, it seems that the financing of product, leaving the actual work to men who are familiar and can be hired tor this purpose, is the simplest and fastest way to assure a flow of product. I believe it important that this product should be controlled by exhibitors so that it cannot be diverted to other channels until it has served the purpose for which it was produced -that of augmenting the theatre supply. Bigger and better pictures will more than make up for quantity production and maintain a quality that will stimulate public appreciation.

The technological changes in our industry, while costly, are something with which the exhibitor must cope, as they present a new aspect that has a definite im-pact on public interest, as well as technical improvement in presentation. Over the period, I think these changes will be beneficial and are necessary to compete with the other mediums of entertainment that are continually changing and trying to create added public receptiveness. I feel the different processes employed should be valued according to the size of the theatre and type of pictures to be projected. Stereophonic sound is completely unnecessary for the small theatre, and I don't feel that it has real commercial value in a large theatre, except for a truer and more di-rect application of sound. In regard to duplicate versions of CinemaScope films, I believe, if feasible, they should also be produced in standard methods, but should not be released as such until the original presentation in CinemaScope has been exhausted.



that competition hurled at us. If that were not enough to harass our business, had an indifferent. terested lic predicting our early de-

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Harry B. French

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mise. Then boom! Third dimension! CinemaScope! Stereophonic sound! Panoramic screens! And the movies are bursting out all over! New life -new interest-new enthusiasmlong lines at the boxoffice-and the public does an about-face: praises the new process, has kind

trons' standpoint, 3-D has been a ness is sound and its future secure. It was a struggle through 1952, but survived

CinemaScope has given a good account of itself to date, but con-fusion still exists in the minds of exhibitors as to the proper aspect ratio of the screen. I am not con-vinced that  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -to-1 is right, alwe though it is possible it will be accepted universally. My personal opinion is that a ratio of about 2-to-1 is more practical and will be more applicable to a greater number of theatres, both large and

The full impact of stereophonic sound has not registered as yet, provements, it will play an im-portant part in the new process of presentation. But with all the new

Plenty of B.O. Life Still In Pix Biz **By HARRY B. FRENCH** Minneapolis. theatres from a boxoffice and pa-The year 1953 has proven without question that the picture busi-

disappointment, but I have confidence the illusion of third dimen-sion will be developed and that it will be accomplished with simplified projection and without the use of glasses.

blasting outside uninpub-

small. but with newer technique and im-

must have a steady flow of product because there are so many of these theatres, and since the patronage comes from a limited area, the most they can extend a run for is a day or two. It has been the experience of our industry that whenever technical improvements have come about,

while a possible solution for the

key downtown and first run situa-

tions are not necessarily the answer

for neighborhood theatres which

within a short period of time the equipment has been greatly im-proved and the cost to exhibitors greatly decreased. Therefore, in the present situation, I think that the key runs and first runs, who are in a financial position to do so, should install both all-purpose screens and stereophonic sound. The subsequent-run exhibitor, however, who cannot afford to gamble his small amount of capital on the present high cost of stereophonic sound should have the product available to him with his present type of screen and sound system until such time in the near future when the drop in cost will enable even the subsequent-run exhibitor to install this kind of equipment.

I still think that motion pictures

are the "poor man's entertainment"

despite some rises in admission

scales in certain localities. When the average admission price of

theatres in this country is com-pared to the price of any other commodity or service, it is quickly

Stereophonic sound, in some cases, may add to enjoyment and widescreen is strictly a matter of choice to an audience, but in itself does not have the ingredient to restore our prosperity.

CinemaScope is too demanding. To those who deal in millions a few thousand seem inconsequential, but to a poor exhibitor's widow, spending her husband's life insurance to keep her theatre open, there must be a more practical solution, than risking her all on an, as yet, unproven "stupendous

words for the industry, and they

all want to get into the act! They applaud "The Robe" and "How To Marry A Millionaire"

and the wide panoramic screen, and express keen interest in com-ing attractions. They demonstrate a willingness to accept the new processes—perhaps more willing than exhibitors are to give it to them. I think the theatre-going public is entitled to all that is new in our business, and we better give to them, particularly because they back up their enthusiasm by placing their good old coin of the realm on the b.o. counters. Adolph Zukor says, "The Public Is Never Wrong," and I don't think Mr. Zukor is wrong either, but right

or wrong, we can't survive without

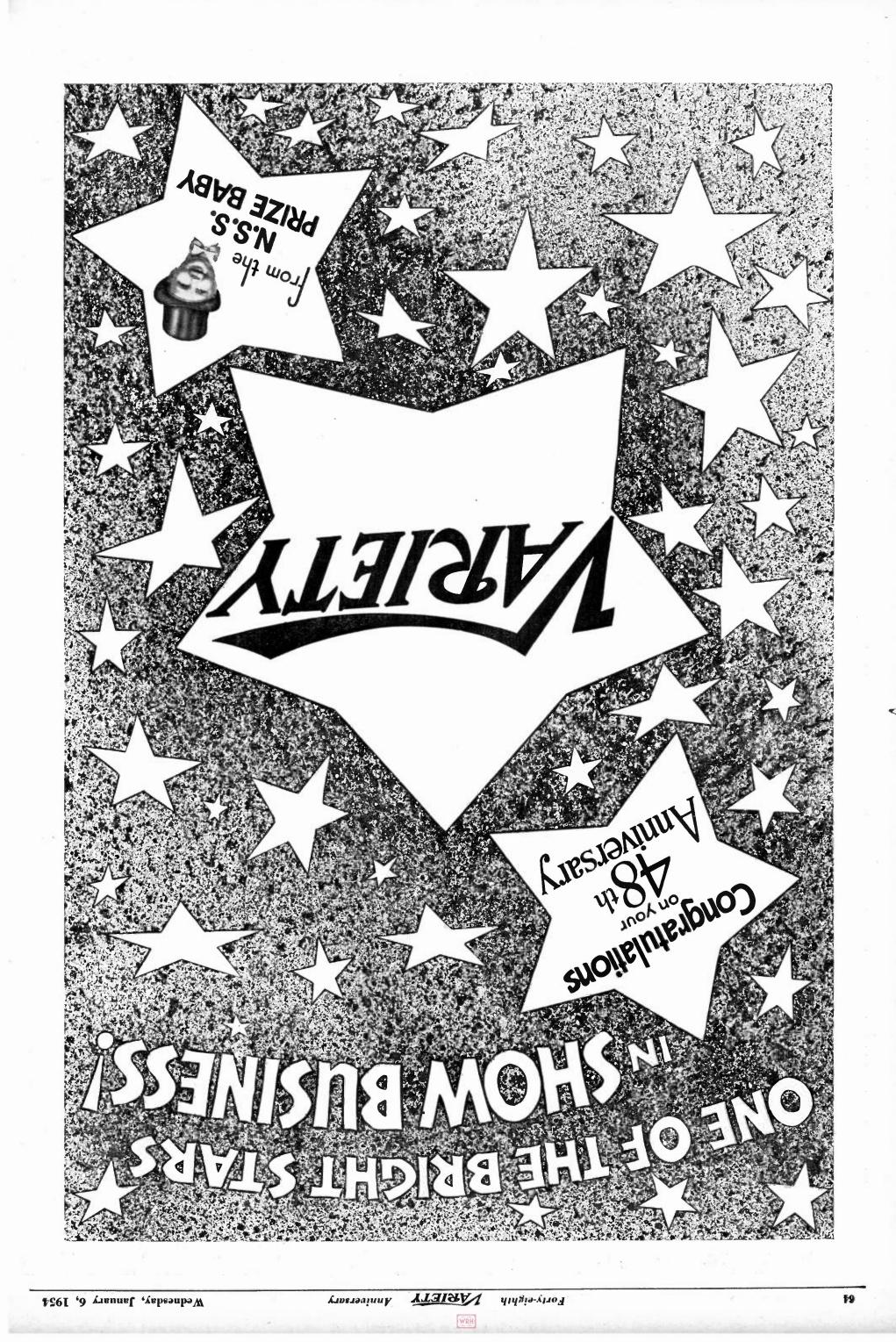
the public. We have seen the pattern change for the better with innovations that have startled the country. Third dimension was the opening gun that revived movie interest in a lethargic public. In our effort.

electronic devices, technical equipment, panoramic screen, etc., the picture-the story and script-still is the fourth and most important dimension.

The movie business has been built on the theory it is entertainment for the masses. History has definitely proved that theory is sound. Admission prices are an important factor. Nothing in the entertainment field offers so much for the admission price as the motion-picture theatre, and this is as true today as it was 50 years ago. Admission prices must be flexible to meet various occasions, but never to a point where the price is not within the reach of every one

The campaign to eliminate the Federal admission tax, which got rolling in 1952 and zoomed into

high speed in 1953, indicated what can be accomplished by unity and concerted action on the part of every one in this industry. 1954 should see the realization of that



SAN ANTONIO GRABS PRINT

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## **Change Always Hypos Biz** ; Continued from page 5

phasize too strongly my own be- in producing CinemaScope piclief, based upon my experience as tures, having made this process a showman, that the public will for quality pictures and more than \*abandon us and our industry will 50 CinemaScope pictures already perish if we allow other forms of have been announced for the comentertainment to take our audi-ences by default. ences by default.

This is the plain significance of our experience in this industry in the last six years. The present Landlord Charges Plot form of motion entertainment, with many fine pictures being offered to the public, simply has not met the exacting attitude of people who live in a dynamic period of change and have found home television to be a convenient and inexpensive against Warner Bros. Theatres way of occupying their leisure time even though they must take mediocre materials.

It has often been pointed out that more than 6,000 theatres have, been closed and the livelihoods of many people destroyed during the many people destroyed during the to slice their own grosses and last few years because we have thereby defraud her of cash colnot risen to the challenge that con- lectible under lease agreement. fronts us.

One of the contributory causes of this disaster in all truth was the totally unfair and inequitable Federal tax upon motion picture theatre admissions. The fight for repeal of that tax during the year averaged below \$8,500 per month. 1953 provided another historic example of the ability of this indus- of intentionally booking poor films try, when it makes up its mind, to into its theatre and giving pre-unite and act for its own welfare | ferred pix to the competing houses, in a time of crisis.

The campaign to bring about repeal has been called one of the most remarkable feats in legislative history because within a few short months, under the leadership of men like Al Lichtman, Truman Rembusch, Sam Pinanski, Abram Myers, Col. H. A. Cole, and Bob Coyne, an overwhelming majority of the Senate and House voted to repeal the bill. Unfortunately, the measure was vetoed. Yet, great progress was made in that country's attention was unmistakably called to a grave injustice affecting this one industry and the way was prepared for future action which may be beneficial. Besides, we demonstrated our ability to unite and fight.

#### Unity of Purpose

Therefore, does it not follow that the same energy and unity of purpose can achieve undreamed of benefits if it is concentrated on the supreme need of our industry today—that of giving to the public the finer quality of entertainment that it has so plainly shown that it must have?

Can we ignore the instantaneous impact of Cinerama when that new form of entertainment was introduced and brought a response from the public that showed beyond question its craving for some-thing new and different?

Naturally, we of 20th Century-Fox are convinced that Cinema-Scope has demonstrated that it is equal to the high challenge of the day and can successfully cope with our deadly competition.

We recognize the difficulties of many exhibitors who, plagued by immediate problems, feel that it is a hardship to convert their theatres to all of the elements required for best CinemaScope presentation of fine pictures — stereophonic sound, suitable screens, anamorphic lenses and in some cases theatre alterations. We are doing our utmost to help them first of all determine in their own minds that infinitely better artistic and technical presentations are demanded by the public; and second, to ease their problems in connection with the installation of new equipment if they decide upon CinemaScope.

new medium.

## To Discourage Business And Evade Rentals Chicago.

Suit for \$2,500,000 has been filed here by Mrs. Blanche Sarasin, who additionally asked for an injunc-tion compelling the company to re-open the Grove Theatre, which building she owns. According to Mrs. Sarasin, the Warner chain pulled a switch from normal practice by bolstering the competition

Warner Bros. chain had leased the theatre until 1960 with provisions that the landowner receive \$2,000 monthly and a percentage of the gross over \$140,000 annual-The theatre would be permitted to close and stop payments only if the gross in a single year

Mrs. Sarasin accused the circuit the Capitol and the Rhodes, to promote downgrade grosses at the Grove. When revenue dropped under \$8,500 per month, the house shuttered in 1951.

Case is being heard by Judge George Fisher in U. S. Superior Court.

## **RKO Product Lineup**

Hollywood. "Jet Pilot" and Samuel Gold-wyn's "Best Years of Our Lives" are conspicuously missing in the list of 10 RKO releases set for the January to June period.

According to RKO prexy James R. Grainger, RKO will have 10 pix during the first six months of 1954, eight in color and three in 3-D. "Jet Pilot" has been on the shelf since its completion in 1950. "Best Years," being reissued by Goldwyn, originally was an "KO release. RKO sked does, however, list 11 rereleases between Febru-

of the new pix, only January entry is W. Lee Wilder's indie pro-duction, "Killers From Space." Set for February are "The French Line" (3-D), and "She Couldn't Say No." Walt Disney's "Rob Roy" goes in March, and "Dangerous Mission" (3-D) and "The Carnival Story" are skedded for April, "Son of Sinbad" in 3-D is set for May. Slated for June are "Susan Slept Here," "Desperate Men" and "The Big Rainbow."

L. A. to N. Y. David O. Alber Mel Allen Lauren Bacall Humphrey Bogart Charles Brackett William Dozier **Ross** Martin Mitch Miller Norman Moray Edmond O'Brien Stuart Reynolds Thelma Ritter Cesar Romero Olga San Juan Joseph M. Schenck Spyros P. Skouras

Swedish Prize Film Called Sex-Obsessed

San Antonio.

Local police vice squad temporarily impounded the motion pic-ture "One Summer of Happiness" ture which was scheduled for a threeday showing at the Arts Theatre. It's a Swedish Film Academy award-winning film.

Nude swimming scene and the preoccupation" of the entire pic with sex was given as the objections.

Eph Charninsky, operator of the theatre, faces legal charge of "showing and exhibiting a lewd and lascivious motion picture." Charge could carry fine of \$1,000 and sentence of six months in jail.

Charninsky told the district at-torney's office that he would delete the objectional portions of the film if the print were returned to him. This was done and the nude footage cut.

Film is now being held over be-cause of the publicity.

### Cantor Lifetime MOD'er

Eddie Cantor has been named lifetime chairman of the March of Dimes of the Air, it was an-nounced by Basil O'Connor, presi-dent of the National Foundation

efforts in behalf of the polio campaign.

## **New Acts**

SONNY MOORE'S ROUST-**ABOUTS (2)** Animal

Mins.

Palace, N. Y.

Sonny Moore's Roustabouts comsonny moore's noustabouts com-prise an entertaining animal act, with Moore pacing the pack in a schoolboy costume. A femme as-sists him. Moore concentrates on comedy effects, but at various times shows some excellent tricks in the serioso vein.

ous breeds. The nags do some standup tricks and offer a vehicle for the dogs. The hounds obey instructions for some good effects, one of the best tricks being a sup-port on a rone held by Moore and port on a rope held by Moore and assistant.

things going on the boards. The dogs perform various antics on various parts of the stage. There's a lot of business going on and the general effect is one of a lot of accomplishment. Jose.

Negro family, comprising parents and teenage son and daughter. They're all fairly good hoofers, with the boy showing fine possi-bilities in the song department.

Parents open the session with a spot of fast terping. The lad takes over and is joined by his sister. All their efforts go over nicely. The boy's voice, at present, hasn't settled down, but it seems to be working itself into a good place-ment and he looks like a percivility able to knock off a good song, and she also shows superiority in the

## **American Male Columnist Is Seldom Unfriendly to Females in Bathing Suits**

#### **By DAN TERRELL**

(Eastern Publicity Director, Metro)

best ways to get interviews and pictures in the papers. And if you ever feel that stars have lost any of their appeal, visit the hinterlands with one and watch the excitement.

For example, Bunny Allen. Bunny is an Englishman, transplanted at an early age to Africa, and now one of the most famous of the white hunters, although he never met Bob Ruark. Bunny and his wife handled the details for the "Mogambo" safari, the biggest such expedition ever mounted. When we released the picture, they came to America and went on a safari engineered by MGM field men.

The results were very pleasant. It isn't every day a newspaperman can interview a person who not only knows a lot about Gable and Gardner, but can also advise you the best way to shoot an elephant. It seems an elephant has a brain no bigger than a man's hand, but for Infantile Paralysis. Cantor is the first performer to who has just made Lars contained be given such recognition for his you shoot from the front, you face a lot of territory that's tougher

Zsa are nice for prolonged and low

bows, but Madga eschews the ob-vious for a more professional ap-

with each contestant's

opinion of the opposite sex. Dur-ing this talk-song, called (natch) "Men." there is much lyrical scorn

for bumbling mates. Background

music to this is paced at a crawl, however, interim gaps are filled by two-way stares. After the last sti-letto finds its mark, the Gabor exit

is mancuvered. But bowoff ap-plause scarcely endures long enough to bridge last glimpse of a Gabor gown behind the silken

Will.

curtain.

Juggling

8 Mins.

PAYO & MAI

Palace, N. Y.

the spot, followed by Eva, and the capricious Zsa Zsa much later. Cleavaged gowns of Eva and Zsa

The best way to get to know a of Nome. If you shoot from the film star is to accompany him (or side, about where the ear joins on, her) on tour. It is also one of the best ways to got intornious and the this kind of information is very useful for critics, even if they usually aim at producers rather than elephants.

Some time ago, when we had a picture called "Lovely to Look At," we organized a tour by six Adrian models, modeling some of the fabulous Adrian-designed wardrobe. This developed some rather staggering problems, for the Adrian gowns took up much more space than the Adrian models. In fact, in Norfolk, the only hotel room available for the model was not big enough t<sub>j</sub> hold both girl and gowns at the same time. Until a larger room was finally vacated, the modei had to step out in the hall when she opened her suitcases and liberated those yards and yards of overskirts, underskirts, hoop skirts and tulle. (How she dressed has never been explained satisfactorily.)

Trips like this give ample evidence that the demise of vaudeville did not mean the end of troupers with the old vaudeville spirit. Last winter, to promote "Million Dollar Mermaid," we sent six Million Dol-lar Mermaids—swimmers who had dunked in the same pool with Esther Williams—through the na-tion, completely outfitted with bathing suits. Only problem was that "Mermaid" was a Christmas-New Year's release, and we had a cold snap just about the time the girls left the orange groves.

However, as the saying goes, a girl in a bathing suit in Ju'y is no novelty; in Minneapolis in December, she can be a sensation, even if slightly blue. Being humane, despite our calling, we booked the bathing beauties at indoor pools, where we invited local columnists to do the first "underwater inter-view." This worked pretty well, view." This worked pretty well, for it gave us an excuse to get the girl (and a reporter) into bathing suits. Whatever Kinsey says, he cannot dispute the old rule of nature that the average American male will not be too unfriendly during an interview with a wellbuilt American female in a bathing suit.

One of the larger-scale junkets of the past year was the Texas ex-pedition of "Take the High Ground" when it opened in El Paso. San Antonio, Houston. Fort Worth and Dallas. In addition to Richard Widmark, the fair Elaine Stewart and Rusty Tamblyn of the cast, the company included Dore Schary, MGM's v.p. in charge of production, and George Murphy, Hollywood's ambassador of good will. It was hot and dusty in Texas, which is a mighty big state if you are covering it by train from one personal appearance town to another.

#### Wrong Symbol

However, one of the laughs of the expedition was the moment when Dore Schary was presented Payo & Mai, European imports, comprises a good opening turn suitable for that spot in vauders and one which can play the out-door field with ease. Act has the boy working atop a unicycle and the Stetson and two Texans dropped their hours object. The girl juggling various objects. The girl their bourbon glasses in shock. It acts as assistant.

The lad has some excellent jug-gling patterns. He manipulates hoops, balls, hats and other ob-jects, many of them simultane-ously. His strongmoint country are many of them simultanepopular in cattle country as wearing an orange tie in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day.

THE COLEMANS Dance, Songs 10 Mins.

The Colemans are a likeable

ment and he looks like a possibility in a few years. The girl is simi-larly a promising performer, being

proach to comedy. A sort of verbal tic-tac-toe takes place culminating in a sisterly truce, after which the In a sisterly truce, after which the ga's souare off for darts. In Baker's satire of a Paul Gregory reading, "First Hun-garian Drama Quartet with Three Hungarians," Eva. Magda, and Zsa Zea on lined courses to be bind Zsa are lined across stage behind glittering heart-shaped stands inscribed name. Reading from script pre-sents femmes' life or lives, sup-

He carries a pair of Shetland ponies and a pack of dogs of varisents remnes me or nves, sup-posedly, from sweet Budapest childbood to sweeter profits ac-quired after Mama Gabor taught her little chick-a-dees the facts of life and finance. Naturally, the reading stresses each Gabor's opinion of the opposite av

Most of the time, there are many

Palace, N. Y.

We shall continue to do everything feasible and humanly prac-tical to aid anyone who applies for such aid.

But the fact remains that CinemaScope has established itself as the only system of motion picture entertainment up to now capable of drawing mass audiences to theatres, large and small, and that nothing else has yet appeared on the scene to fulfill this necessity.

However, 20th-Fox is not alone

#### N. Y. to L. A.

Henry Ginsberg Abel Green Morgan Hudgins Kurt Kasznar Eleanor Parker Robert Taylor Carlos Thompson

#### Europe to N. Y.

Taina Elg Robert Pirosh

#### N. Y. to Europe

Kirk Douglas Paul Gallico Buster Keaton terp division.

#### Jose.

#### GABOR SISTERS (3) Talk-Songs 15 Mins.

Last Frontier, Las Vegas

Last Frontier, Las Vegas Shades of Willie Hammerstein! This low-cut, highstyle sideshow act will probably pull in enough patronage to give to the Last Fron-tier casino bosses a new upward tilt of their cigars. But the Gabor goulash on "merit" could scarcely be booked elsewhere. Talent-wise, these are hungry Hungarians—Zsa Zsa, Eva, and Magda. As once-around shills for the tables their points are their current notoriety,

tilt of their cigars. But the Gabor goulash on "merit" could scarcely be booked elsewhere. Talent-wise, these are hungry Hungarians—Zsa tross. Eva. and Magda. As once-around shills for the tables their points are their current notoriety, and thereby their lure in the battle for sucker supremacy. The Gabors are no better than they should be as a unit. Their brief "act," scripted by Herb Baker, is clever and sophisticated in the main, but as delivered most of it is completely garbled. Opening gimmick, offstage fussing as to which sister will appear first, is de-cided when Magda undulates into

His strongpoint comes at ously the finale, when he drapes virtually every part of his body with hoops and they turn in every direction. He's off to a good mitt. Jose.

#### STAN HARPER Harmonica 9 Mins. Palace, N. Y.

Moving in before a single flashbulb could pop, a cattleman quick-ly re-crushed the hat, so that Schary was able to pose properly. The new crush identified him as the owner of a large ranch, well-stocked with cattle.

In just a couple weeks, we break the champagne bottle over a replica of "The Long, Long Trailer" (from the picture of the same name) with two starlets touring key cities and entertaining press and public in their New Moon mobile home. There's a picture called "Gypsy Colt" on its way, and they tell us the horse who plays the title role is terrifically photogenic, so it looks like there might be a four-legged star in our future.

I wonder if we can import a camel from "Valley of the Kings?"

66

### **Radio-TV Fluffs Salter** Continued from page 5

have sounded to the pure in spirit come historios, young and old, will as "Aw, shucks," but to the raffish in spirit it was something decided of the Lambs and the Friars and in spirit it was something decidedly different. The fact that the word was wafted across the airwaves of the land during Lewis' appeal for contributions to restore the bombed churches of Germany made matters considerably more distressing for all concerned. Management quickly canned the an-nouncer who made the remark near a mike he thought was dead.

This choice four-letter word also played a return engagement on the "Crime Syndicated" television program when the highly polished an-nouncer went to work on the Schick commercial. Another dandy booboo was the introduction given to a model agency head who ordi-narily is known as "The Merchant Arthur Godfrey's anof Venus." nouncer declared that "Congress packed an ass" instead of "Con-The redgress passed an act." announcer tried to squirm faced out of this by saying rather lame-ly, "Fifteen years in radio and I had to make a fluff like this.

Slight'y reminiscent of the old radio Bond Bread fluff ("for the breast in hed try, Bronze bed, etc. etc.) was the one that on the tele-vision channels when the emcee asked his female guest interviewee: "Is it true you were chosen one of the 10 best-breasted women in the country?

#### **Biological** Candor Candor of a biological nature

abounded on the television audience participation shows during the past 12 months. Here the award should go to "Strike It Rich" which featured some of the best straight-from-the-shoulder conversation of pure-eved eight-year old moppet. Warren Hull greeted the child con-testant, "Why do you want to strike it rich?", he asked. "Bestrike it rich?", he asked. "Be-cause I reed a bed," she smiled at him. "Why do you need a bed?", he pressed gantly. "Well." the child cooed, "daddy is in the army and I sleep with mommy but on Saturday Uncle Charlie comes and I have to sleep in the kitchen." The result was bed-lam.

Sports fans are tittering at the manner in which the television sportscaster described the ladies present at a Madison Square Carden fight. "Several are quite dressed up." he reported. "There are a number, in fact, in gownless evening straps.'

Many of the guests on air shows pros and non-pros, are not endowed with excessive intelligence and this is quite evident from eavesdronping on their verbal jousts with emcees and night owl jabberjockles. Herb Shriner asked a cor-testant on his "Two for the Money" program: "Are you a natural born citizen of the United States?" "Oh, no," the woman assured him. "I was a Caesarean."

Followers of the after-midnight disk jockey pundit circuit teehee when they recall Henry Morgan's interview with a widely known fe-male pop singer over WMGM. She outmalaproped the original Mrs. Malaprop. This vocalist's misuse of words was exactly what Massa' Morgan needed to start the satirical ball rolling down memory lane. At one point in the interview she told Morgan he was a "well-read courtestan." This observation left Morgan speechless, but only for 45 seconds

**Dead**pan Commercials

the unprecedented berecount havior of a certain thespian work-ing on the "Broadway TV Theatre" who suddenly cast aside the commercial he was due to read and instead decided to satisfy a lifelong ambition by giving the sponsor's product one terrific verbal razoo. He made several derisive cracks about the sponsor and then. it is reported, he thumbed his nose at both the program producer and the product. All this happened in plain view of the television audi-

It was a magnificent perence. formance and, as Jack O'Brian, the television and radio critic of the N. Y. Journal-American put it: "It was a climax seldom witnessed in any branch of showbusiness . . .

stricken stagehand said he one never had observed so magnificent a snub to the conventions in all his years of ministering to the guys and ropes of backstage theatricals ranging back to the Barrymores-all of them." Station execs were up in arms about the actor's behavior and had him brought up on charges. The local board of AFTRA slapped him down with a 90-day suspension for his unflattering oncamera cracks.

Merry Hades also broke loose on recent television program sponsored by a beer concern. On this malty occasion an announcer with considerable joy in his eyes and foaming glass of beer to his lips just finished expressing his had undying gratitude to the sponsor for brewing one of the finest quench thirsters in America when a roving camera caught the spieler in the highly undignified act of spitting the beautiful light lager into a tin can. This announcer was certainly no beer fancier nor did he subscribe to the old Teutonic saying that "Die Brauerei is die beste apotheke" or "the brewery is the best drugstore."

#### Looking Where They Ain't

Roving cameras have snafued many a good program. They have brought guffaws to viewers in the home and terrible embarrassment concerned in the studio. Stagehands have been caught in the darndest positions and films have been bawled up; food props intended for upcoming commercials, have been consumed by hungry acand electric refrigerators. tors safety razors and countless other gadgets have refused to function properly when the camera focused on them.

Clinical research reveals many air slips and snafus worthy of inclusion in a year-end catalog and in the interests of higher trade journalism this fluff pathologist herewith offers you: "Try Betty Crocker's green split

poo seep." 'Keep a stuff ipper lup."

"Good ladies, evening and gen-tlemen of the audio radiancy."

Introducing Walter Pidgeon, an ncee said: "Mr. Privilege, this is emcee said: indeed a Pidgeon" and immediately followed this up with "our sponsor is the biggest manufacturer of magnocsium, aleeminum and stool.

The Louisville, Kentucky, an-nouncer who said: "The Stork Club on Seventh Street has had its leer and bicker license revoked." Helen Hayes' fluff on Omnibus: And so the princess and her fairy

price celibated their wedding." The huckster who was pitching a



JOEY BISHOP Season's Best to All!

dramatic scenes who ate heavy meals and walked out of the restaurants without bothering to pay heir checks.

The female anouncers on the television cooking programs who opened gas ranges and pulled out sizzling hot dishes without the aid of gloves or pot holders.

The youngster on television who boasted: "I have been using Pepsodent toothpaste since I was a little boy and my mother and father have been using Pepsodent since they were little boys."

The sportscaster who thought the mike was dead and uttered the sage remark: "Wow, what a stinking ballgame!"

#### No Liquid Courage Here

The performer, who while plugging his sponsor's dry-wine, tried to open a bottle and splashed the entire contents over the rest of the cast. "This was awfully wet stuff for a dry wine," he said lamely. A cancellation order came through the following day.

The female performers on television programs who said such things as "I wouldn't dare meet These clothes I'm wearing is sure awiul." And at the end of the promy boy friend the way I'm dressed. And at the end of the program there were screen credits for the swank shops that supplied the ardrobes

The night Marilyn Maxwell guested on "What's My Line?" and one of the panelists asked her: "Are you female?" "Yes," she cracked, "the last time I looked."

No account of the year's mishaps would be complete without calling attention to the young man who walked into a New York City telephone booth and when he picked up the receiver he heard voices and music. For a while he thought he had intruded in a private party but in a moment or two he heard a voice say: "This is Johnny Olsen's Rumpus Room, WABD, Channel 5. A television show on a public telephone puzzled htm no end, and he asked the telephone company to explain. They mumbled something about a cross-connection of TV and telephone wires in the main office.

Later in the season baseball fans watching the Giants-Dodger game over WPIX were treated to voices on the soundtrack of an English film placed over Russ Hodges' voice What's going on theah?" a British voice wanted to know as Dem Bums filled all the bases. A few moments later when one of the Brooklyn Superbas reached home plate, a supercilious British voice sniffed: "What rot!" Despite the disdainful British cracks, the Dodgers won. No one, however, was able to give tching a a satisfactory explanation for the product sudden visit from our English

## Top Grossers by Companies

Company-by-company rundown of films sent into circulation in 1953, promising to gross \$1,000,000 or over in domestic (U. S. and Canadian) distribution rentals.

		No. of Films Over \$1,000,000	Totał Rentals
1.	20th-Fox	21	\$ 60.550,000
2.	Metro	28	52,775,000
3.	Paramount	18	50,500,000
4.	Warners	21	47,625.000
5.	Universal	22	32.300.000
6.	Columbia	8	26,650,000
7.	<b>RKO</b>	10	24,850,000
8.	United Artists	5	14,400,000
9.	Republic	2	2,300.000
	TOTALS	135	\$311,950,000

### 135 Blockbusters: \$311,950,000 Continued from page 5

in black-and-white, "Eternity" is no longer the names that count at tion coin. This one pic has been a sponsible for rise in the company's tock to new highs in trading quotations.

Third is Paramount's "Shane," now shaping as the biggest west-ern on the books. Photographed in the standard aspect ratio but shown on many widened screens in its early playoff. "Shane" appears a cinch to reach \$8,000.000 Par's collections from homein market exhibs.

#### 'Cinerama' Standout

Cinerama must be included in. if not at the head of, any list of pic greats. It has been an incredible coin collector, but also an unique one. "This Is Cinerama" is now playing in only seven thea-tres, and S. H. Fabian, who's at the helm, claims a total theatre gross already of over \$6,500.000.

This obviously is insufficient to ustify any longrange crystal-balling on what amount of money eventually will be brought in. Big questions center on how many houses can and will be equipped for it, and whether it can spread out into more than one theatre in a single area. (It opened its solo run Sept. 30, 1952, and is continuing at an amazingly steady pace.) Further, since Cinerama is an integrated outfit, there's no breakdown on exhib-distrib money as obtains with other product.

#### 'Bwana' Started It

The year's b.o. excitement (some uplifting, some downbeat) had another contributing factor in 3-D. The medium got off like a house on fire with Arch Oboler's "Bwana Devil" and reached its highpoint with Warners' "House of Wax." "Bwana," released (and later bought contribut from Oboler) by

bought outright from Oboler) by United Artists, because of its startling grosses at the beginning, set Hollywood off on a 3-D binge. On the basis of early dates, the freak production looked heading for a gross of well over \$5,000,000. But the public wised up and the quickie is winding up with \$2.700-000, still a handsome profit for a 300G investment.

"Wax" was one of the later starters in the dimensional sweepstakes and tops the extra-Dee ros-ter for 1953. It figures to conclude its full playoff, mostly 3-D and some 2-D, with \$5,500,000. Like Par with "Shane," other

companies were feeling their oaters. These outdoor actioners were found somewhat similar to spectathat they're nicely ble to widescreening or 3-D. WB's "Charge At Feather River," a 3-D'er, is unusually big for a sagebrush entry, at \$3,650.000.

the aded for \$12,500,000 in distribu-tion coin. This one pic has been a tegrity of production and depth of tremendous bolstering factor in story. Jean Simmons would ap-Col's finances and was largely re- pear to rate as first actress because 000). But with "Robe" it was pro-duction that starred, with an immense ad-pub campaign featured, at least.

Also, the valid batting average is one based on at least several trips to the plate. But, for the record, and because it reflects to what extent the femmes will be in nictorial circulation here's the ineup of number of films in which they appeared in the total gross:

#### No. of

Player	Pix	Gross
1. Jean Simmons	2	\$21,850,000
2. Deborah Kerr	4	18,450,000
3. Marilyn Monro	e 3	14,950,000
4. Betty Grable	2	8,650,000
5. Jean Arthur .	1	8,000,000

With those same qualifying comments equally applicable, here's how the male stars came through: 1. Richard Burton .. 2 \$21,100,000 2. Victor Mature ...1 20,000,000 3. B. Lancaster ... 3 18,000,000 4. Mont. Clift ....2 14,500,000 5. Alan Ladd .... 4 13,550,000

For purposes of compilation, 'Robe'' is being regarded as a is being regarded as a \$20.000,000 grosser although, previously stated, it could go high-er. Also, only top-line stars are considered in the VARIETY listing. For example, Lancaster, Clift and Miss Kerr are credited for "Eter-nity" while Frank Sinatra and Donna Reed are not.

#### A Kerr-Load of Deborah

Miss Kerr competed via "Eter-nity," "Prisoner of Zenda," "Bess" nity," "Prisoner of Zenda," "Bess" and "Thunder in the East"; Miss Monroe, "Millionaire,' "Niagara" and "Blondes"; Miss Grable, "Mil-lionaire" and "Farmer Takes a Wife"; and Miss Arthur, "Shane." Burton, "Robe" and "Desert Rats"; Mature, "Robe"; Lancaster, "Eternity," "Come Back, Little Sheba" and "South Sea Woman"; Clift, "Eternity" and "I Confess; and Ladd, "Thunder in the East"; "Shane"; "Botany Bay" and "Des-ert Legion." ert Legion."

Good eample of where the stars, themselves, shine consistently is the team of Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis. Comics have three films in the 1953 lineup — "Stooge," "Scared Stiff" and "Caddy"—and each of them is listed at the same \$3,500,000.

Before old Doc Vladimir Kosma Zworykin got around to inventing the iconoscope, which almost knocked radio for a loop-the-loop. almost any actor in the privacy of a studio could read a commercial while on the air and at the same time make any number of grimaces. As a rule. there was no one to take him to task if during the reading of the line, "Blotz's Bubble Guin Is Ect-ter Than Butter in the Belly." he screwed up his proboseis. In the solemn sanctity of a radio studio he could thus show his displeasure with the prose fashioned in the copywriting mills on Madison Avenue. It was usually safe enough for him to make all the furny faces he wanted provided the sponsor was not present in the goldfish bowl.

But 'tis not so in the field of audio-visual entertainment. Televi-sion calls for a great deal nore care and devotion to details that would ordinarily be overlooked in M constrainment. The work to the show barker on "The Web" and who kept shouting: "Come on, folks, only 20 cents—one-tenth of a dollar!" AM entertainment. In years to

.

reducing weight pill. is best for woosing leight," he shouted.

Abe Massey In AFTRA

The extra on the television pro-duction of "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" starring Raymond Massey who muffed his line during a crowd scene showing the departure of the Great Emancipator. At the top of his lungs the extra yelled: "Good bye Mr. Massey." This time they assassinated the extra.

The night Robert Montgomery kept referring to the guest star on his dramatic program, Teresa Wright, as Martha Scott.

Judge Heffelfinger's interview on Mel Allen's White Owl show. "They make me sick," was Pudge's judgment of the stogies.

The actors in a flock of television owners of the show.

cousins.

Walter Winchell has maintained that "if you don't fluff at least once, nobody knows you're human. "Human, shmooman." performers say, "it should happen only to a dog!

## Wallis-Par Co-Production Deal on M&L 'Big Top'

Hollywood. Hal Wallis and Joseph Hazen signed a new joint production deal with Paramount for the filming of "The Big Top," a circus story starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. Film will be made in Phoenix, using facilities, performers and ani-mals of the Clyde Beatty Circus. Shooting starts Feb. 15.

Lewis will be cast as a clown with ambitions to become a lion tamer. Martin will play one of the

#### Did Over \$4,000,000

Eleven pix in all climbed into VARIETY's list of outstanding product of all time, that is, with in-dicated domestic grosses of \$4.alcated domestic grosses of \$4.-000,000 or over. In addition to those already mentioned are 20th's "How to Marry a Millionaire" (also in C'Scope), \$7,500,000; RKO-Disney's "Peter Pan," \$7,000,000; RKO-Goldwyn's "Hans Christian Andersen," \$6,000,000; Metro's "Mogambo," \$5,200,000; 20th's "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" \$5. "Mogambo," \$5,200,000; 20th's "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," \$5,-100,000; UA's "Moulin Rouge," \$5,000,000, and Col's "Salome," \$4,750,000.

#### Some Lucky Stars Due

lucky stars. For in some cases it's '52.

The lead position among the film companies was taken by 20th with 21 films and total rentals of \$60.550.000 (including "Robe" \$20,000.000). M-G follows with 28 pix at \$52,775,000. Same two outfits were at the top last year but in reverse order.

Par continued in show position but marking impressive improvement over last year. Par's '53 tally is 18 pix with total rentals of \$50,-500,000; in '52, it was 15 productions at \$42,360,000.

Frank Ross, of course, tops individual producers in money count with "Robe," his only time out. Last year's filmmaking topper was Leonard Goldstein, who won over such competitors as Cecil B De Mille, Sam Zimbalist, Hal Wallis For Wide Circulation and Darryl F. Zanuck. Goldstein had only four entries this year. As for the talent, some were though, compared with eight in

## Total destruction...to order

Much as the director might like to, he cannot destroy a city for the sake of his motion picture. Nor can he sit and wait for a holocaust.

Instead—he creates models of incredible ingenuity; couples them with consummate artistry in photography and processing; produces scenes of awe-inspiring reality.

To aid producer and director in projects such as this; to assist in matching film and mood; to co-operate with processor, exchange, and exhibitor; Kodak maintains the Eastman Technical Service for Motion Picture Film with branches at strategic centers. Inquiries invited from all members of the industry.

Address: Motion Picture Film Department EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY, Rochester 4, N. Y.

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## 'You Don't Know Me, But-'

=3y MILT JOSEFSBERG

Hollywood.

About 15 years ago when I forsook the field of press agentry and New York to follow Mr. Greeley's advice I knew not a soul in my newly chosen line of script writing. Although I hadn't a friend in Hollywood. I was consoled by the realization that once I reached this famed nevernever land. I would make friends rapidly because writers are such congenial, witty people.

Although I knew no one when I arrived I did, however have the name of a successful Hollywood writer whom I was to call. I didn't know him personally, but a mutual friend suggested I call this writer who went under, and still goes under, the highly improbably name of Snag Werris.

Upon arriving in Hollwood I purchased a sport shirt and a pair of dark glasses; then feeling I had something in common with all writers, I dialed Mr. Werris' number. The phone hadn't completed its second ring when I heard a click and a masculine voice said. "Hello?" "Hello," I quickly ad libbed back, "Is this Snag Wer-

ris?"

"Yes." answered the voice. "This is Snag Werris." "Well. Snag," I said in my best buddy-buddy tones, "you don't know me, but a mutual friend in Brooklyn suggested that I call you and \_\_\_\_\_"

"Wait a minute," Snag interrupted. "I have no friends

in Brooklyn." "But Snag," I persisted, "This friend of yours lived next door to you practically all his life. He said he was even born in the same house you were in Brooklyn." "I wasn't born in Brooklyn," snapped Snag. "I was

born on an Indian reservation near Burnt Almonds, Nevada."

"But," I butted-

"I'm sorry," said Snag, "there's some mistake. You must be looking for another Snag Werris." And with that he hung up.

I brooded a bit about this, especially after a careful search of all the local phone books revealed no other Snag Werris. The nearest name I found to it was a Snagproof Hosiery, but a telephone call to that number informed me

that Mister Hosiery wasn't born in Brooklyn either. Soon I forgot about this incident because I plunged into my work on the Bob Hope show. It was the start of his series for Pepsodent, and those were hectic days in-deed, but in a few weeks, several months passed. One night I went to a party, and there I met Mr. Werris in person.

I was introduced to him, and must admit I was pre-pared to hate him for that first rebuff. Much to my surprise I found him a charming chap and we became quite friendly. So friendly in fact that I eventually recalled the telephone incident and asked him how come. He apologized profusely. Then he explained that when

ever he gets a call from someone who have been told to call him by a relative or a mutual friend, he shies away imme-diately because it inevitably leads to trouble. I smilingly accepted his rather lame explanation, but inwardly I realized that this was a foolish man lacking in the milk of human kindness and understanding.

Fiften years have passed since then, and here and now, in these public prints I wish to make my apologies to Mr. Werris. Had I, during the decade and a half just past, observed his rules and avoided meeting strangers who were told to call me by mutual friends. I would be a hap-pier man today. Time and space preclude my mentioning all the sadness brought to me by these disembodied voices, but permit me to list a few of the many incidents that have caused me to see things Mr. Werris' way.

#### Case No. 1

The first one I recall was Larry. Larry phoned me one morning in May telling me that I didn't know him but he was one of my brother's clients. My brother Irving is a lawyer, quite prominent in Brooklyn legal circles, and has his offices at 130 Clinton Street. There, that plug ought to even up the 80 bucks I owe him for making out my will.)

Not only did Larry use my brother's name, but he said he was also sent out to see me by a judge I had met through my brother, Judge Smith. I greeted Larry as a friend, and suggested casually that he might drop out to my house soon. "Soon," to Larry, was 18 minutes and 11 seconds, setting a new speed record between the Union Station and North Hollywood.

Larry stayed for dinner that night, and I thought it was quite nice of my wife to invite him to stay. Later my wife told me she thought it was sweet of me to ask him to stay. I would have accused our maid of asking him to stay except in those days we didn't have any maid. After dinner neither my wife nor I invited him to spend the night with us, nor did we expect him to. but as he pointed

out, hotels are such formal places. He stayed. He stayed with us for nine mysterious days. I never asked him what business he was in. nor did he ever talk shop. However, he did occasionally use such quaint phrases as "casing the joint," "hot ice." and "copping a Before I could find out what his line was plea He left suddenly one Sunday morning when I casually mentioned I was going to phone my family in Brooklyn to see how things were going there. An hour after Larry left I called my brother Irving and was surprised to find that much of what Larry told me was the truth. He was my brother's client, and he did know Judge Smith. However, I must have misunderstood. Larry hadn't been sent out by Judge Smith, he had been sent up by him. In retrospect I realize I was duped. Yet, despite it all I must admit that to this day thinking of Larry is always pleasantly puzzling. You see, he was only five foot, one inch tall, and I'm nearly six foot, two. How Larry ever fit himself into those three suits of mine that left with him.I 'll never know.

I received an occasional note from her. She followed my writing career via credits on the Bob Hope and Jack Benny shows, and she was proud of me, boy, proud of me. Now her boy friend, Wilbur, wanted to become a writer, too, so what was more natural than for her to tell him to look me up in the West Coast.

VARIETY

Anniversary

Forty-eighth

When I met Wilbur in person I advised him as simply as I could. I told him that the best way to become a writer was to write. I should have suspected his ability and integrity when he asked me what the second best way was. I convinced him there were no substitutes, and should he care to write a sample script, I would critcize it and help him as much as possible. Reluctantly he agreed and went off to write a sketch for the Jack Benny program.

When he handed me his initial effort several days later I was amazed at how much surefire material his script contained. I knew it was surefire material because every line had been done by Jack on past programs. Wilbur not only pilfered the best boffs of Perrin. Balzer, Tackaberry and myself, but he had also skimmed the cream of Morrow and Beloin and had even reached way back for some gems of Harry Conn. Patiently I informed Wilbur that while his material was funny, it was also aged. He smiled know-ingly, saying that naturally I would remember it because I wrote for Jack, but it wouldn't be familiar to the average listener. He insisted I submit his sample script to Mr. Benny, which I refused to do. He looked at me, sneered, and by way of goodbye said. "Well, you're not as stupid as I thought—afraid of losing your job to me, huh!" I started to answer in anger, but didn't. Now I am glad I curbed my temper because today Wilbur is executive producer, and head writer on a prominent show.

#### And Comes Mike

Then there was Mike. Mike was worse than a mutual friend—he was married to one of my distant relatives. Mike's story is a long one, so maybe I had best give the highlights. Like the \$5,000 I posted as his bail. Or being awakened at four one morning by the police who told me he had skipped the country. Or the vists of the detective who was positive I was the brains of some local gang. He suspected I was a "fence" until I explained that it was per-fectly logical for a radio writer to have four brand new Mixmasters. (I told him three of them belonged to Perrin. Balzer, and Tackaberry, and he said he'd have to check their files and fingerprints, too.)  $% \left( \left( {{{\mathbf{x}}_{i}}^{2}}\right) \right) =\left( {{{\mathbf{x}}_{i}}^{2}}\right) \left( {{{\mathbf{x}}^{2}}}\right) \left( {{{\mathbf{x}}_{i}}^{2}}\right) \left( {{{\mathbf{x}}_{i}}^{2}}\right)$ 

I haven't heard from Mike in nine years now, although the detective visits and questions me semi-annually. However, last summer I did see his wife. Expecting a warm welcome in memory of the money I forfeited through her husband's hurried departure. I was surprised at her coldness. It seems that after keeping in touch with her via the mails for some months. Mike suddenly dropped completely out of sight and deserted her. It was all my fault, she pointed out. If I hadn't put up the bail, he still would have been her loyal husband. Incarcerated, but loyal!

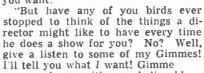
Mike, Wilbur and Larry are just three of the reasons why I now hang up on distant relatives and mutual friends whose opening gambit on the phone is, "You don't know me, but---" Please understand, my curtness with callers is not because I've gone Hollywood. It's just that I'm belatedly following Mr. Werris' advice-the caller must be looking for another Milt Josefsberg.



#### By ALAN M. FISHBURN= Chicago.

A few assorted thoughts pervading a director's mind while he goes about his task of satisfying his many lords and masters as they chant their monotonous refrain: "Now this is what we want. . . . " "O.K., O.K., you'll get what

you want!"



show with a believable -a premise, one that has an honestto-goodness reason for being; writers who provide their ideas and shows with impact, original-

ity and expression, and who are agreeable to nuances in interpre-Alan M. Fishburn tation;

-a script that gives me a "point of departure" and scope for treatment;

-a budget with a two-way stretch, so that stars and sets don't get all the gravy;

-performers with integrity, ability and some degree,

however minute, of the Divine Spark; ---adequate rehearsal, so that I may plan every moment of preparation for maximum results in performance:

-opportunity to bring my point of view to the show

## **Dragnet Out of Shakespeare**

🗏 By H. I. PHILLIPS 🚟

It was a day in March. "The Ides are here," the Inspector said. I knew what he meant. I was about to make check with the homicide bureau when I got the news. There had been a stabbing. Victim was somebody whose first name was Julius.

I didn't catch the last name at the time. It turned out to be Caesar . . . Julius Caesar . . . No middle initial . . . I got into the squad car and hurried to the Roman Forum. The gang was still there. I told nobody to leave the scene. "What's the story?

"They drew a knife on him."

"Is he hurt much?"

"Dead."

"Let's have a look at the body. Looks like a gang murder."

"You said it." "Who did it?"

Eye witness pointed to a group of prominent Romans. All VIP's. I rounded them up and got their names. They all clammed up. One exception. A fellow named Mark Anthony. I found him making a speech. I decided to check.

"What're you doing?"

"I'm making a funeral oration."

"I'd like a few words with you."

"Some other time."

"This guy Caesar was your pal, was he not, and you were an eye witness." "Yeah."

"Then you'd better pin his murder on the guilty parties."

"I can't talk until after my funeral oration. Anyhow the script will give all the data."

"Okay, I'll listen. But don't bug out on me."

Anthony got into his act. He was borrowing ears. The loan was a success. Had every ear in the place in no time. I even lent him mine. Boy, what an actor! He had what it takes. Got right down to cases. Held up the cloak worn by the victim. What a speech! ... "Look! In this place ran Cassius' dagger thtrough;

'See what a rent the envious Casca made.

He was naming names. I made some notes and gave him the nod to go on. "Through this the well belov'd Brutus stabb'd,

"And, as he plucked his cursed steel away,

"Mark how the blood of Caesar followed,

"As rushing out of doors to be resolved "If Brutus so unkindly knocked or no."

This was putting the finger on this guy Brutus as one of Julius's closest buddies. It showed that, no matter how he felt about the others, Julius had never suspected Brutus could do him dirt. It was a great oration. This man Anthony buttered 'em up while at the same time putting the blast on 'em. He didn't leave out a name. He whipped out a last will and testament showing the victim of the gang murder had left everything to the people. I was about to close in on the killers when the mob rioted. My squad car was overturned. I was struck by a blunt instrument and trampled on.

A week later I came to in a hospital. I sent for Mark Anthony. He came late that night. I double-checked on the facts in his oration. Mark looked all in. Said he had been working day and night ever since the speech to give people their ears back. Some people didn't even know they had lent them. He still had 40 or 50 pairs of ears and wanted to know if any of them were mine. I told him I had got mine back right after the speech.

"Anthony. I've got to get those killers." "I wouldn't be in a hurry."

"This Julius Caesar crime can't go unpunished. People are talking. The papers are on my neck. I think you can help me round up the killers."

"No dice."

"I can lock you up for protecting criminals." "Take it easy. The killers won't go free. Wait for Philippi."

"Who's this Philippi?"

"You'll find out."

He seemed to know what he was talking about. I decided to wait. I found Philippi was a field of battle. An old map threw me off the track and I was late getting there. When I arrived the killers were running onto their own swords. Hari-kari. Roman style. Mark Anthony showed up while I was checking. I couldn't dig the guy. He was telling the boys that Brutus, one of the killers, was the noblest Roman of them all. Said all the elements were so mixed in him the world could look and say "This was a man!" Said Brutus killed Julius Caesar out of a good heart and noble purposes. He could be right. There was no previous police record. I'd been on a lot of homicide cases but this one left me limp. Every killer dead and I hadn't laid a hand on one of 'em! Still it wiped



#### Next . . . L'Affaire Wilbur

A couple of years after the Larry incident, the Wilbur espisode occurred. I was awakened one morning by the shrilling of the phone. A strange voice told me I didn't know him but his name was Wilbur and he was calling at the instigation of a mutual New York friend named Dorothy. I thought for a moment and recalled Dorothy with some warmth. Dorothy wasn't exactly a friend of mine but we had frequently shared the same seat or strap on the BMT-West End Express during rush hour, a relationship somewhat more intimate than marriage.

Although I never saw Dorothy after leaving New York

so that it isn't merely a museum piece or a carbon

copy of something else; —a happy crew, happy because they're proud to carry out the authority and tastes I delegate to their hands, eyes and ears;

-credit for being a psychologist as I attempt to plumb the unfathomed depths of a writer's mind, of a performer's ego, or of our ultimate audience;

--credit for a sense of humor, without which I could well louse up a show or fall prey to occupational ulcers;

-people who listen, whether the occasion is rehearsal, pre-production conference, or actual performance; and who, listening, react instead of act;

-full opportunity to motivate every aspect of the show; to utilize composition, picturization, and move-ment to best advantage; to spice the resulting piece de resistance with just the right amount of style, Freshness and Imagination;

-a cast that is responsive to rhythm, tempo and mood, all of which must be administered in controlled doseage, and which are the undercurrent, the tide, even the sex of the show (Dr. Kinsey, please take note!); —enough music, so I can use it, not as a crutch, but to make my audience laugh, cry or thrill in unison;

-a client who appreciates me when I do my job well and thoroughly;

-commercials that are believable and honest, be-

the slate clean. Rome was a safer place to live in. I never heard how those people mentioned in the will came out. There hasn't been a Forum murder since.

cause they are the selling stories I can bring to life just as I bring the show to life;

-the acid test of performance, the brief moment when I wield almost as much crystallized power as a God, and where I must be able to anticipate and meet the fatal flaws in all the mechanical, electronic and human elements at my command;

-air credit, because when I'm willing to take the rap, I ought to be entitled to the credit that may be my due;

-critics with points of view of their own; knowing what they are. I can usually arrange for them to find something to like about my show;

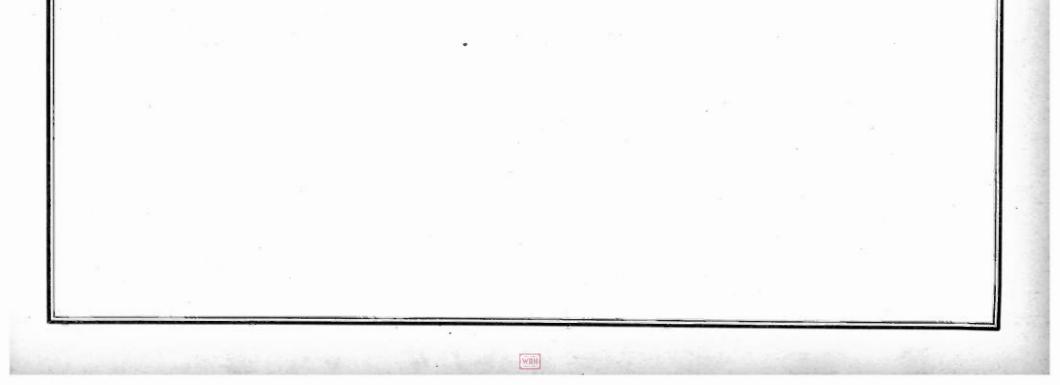
-ratings that agree about something, be it percentage, share of audience, or entertainment value; how nice to find the show's Nielsen beating at the same rate as the same show's Pulse;

-and having given me all that I ask above, please don't forget to

Gimme . . . gimme . . . gimme a renewal, with a raise! I've just finished building you a solid gold Cadillac!"

**BEST WISHES** 

Berlin



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

# **PINE-THOMAS PRODUCTIONS**



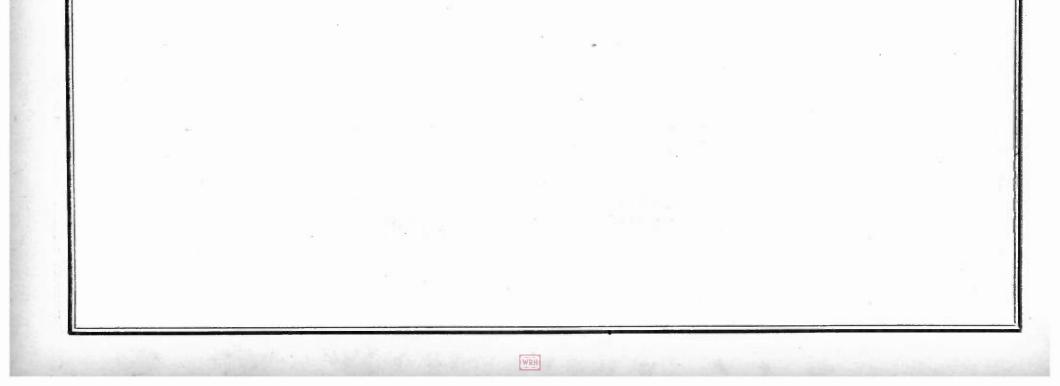


## WILLIAM H. PINE

## WILLIAM C. THOMAS

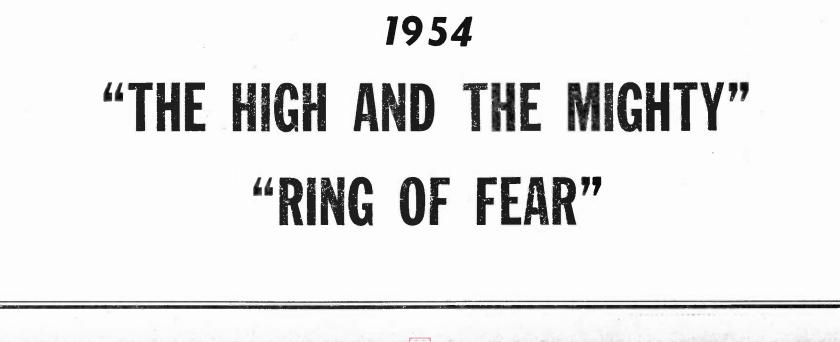
DOROTHY McGUIRE

And Base

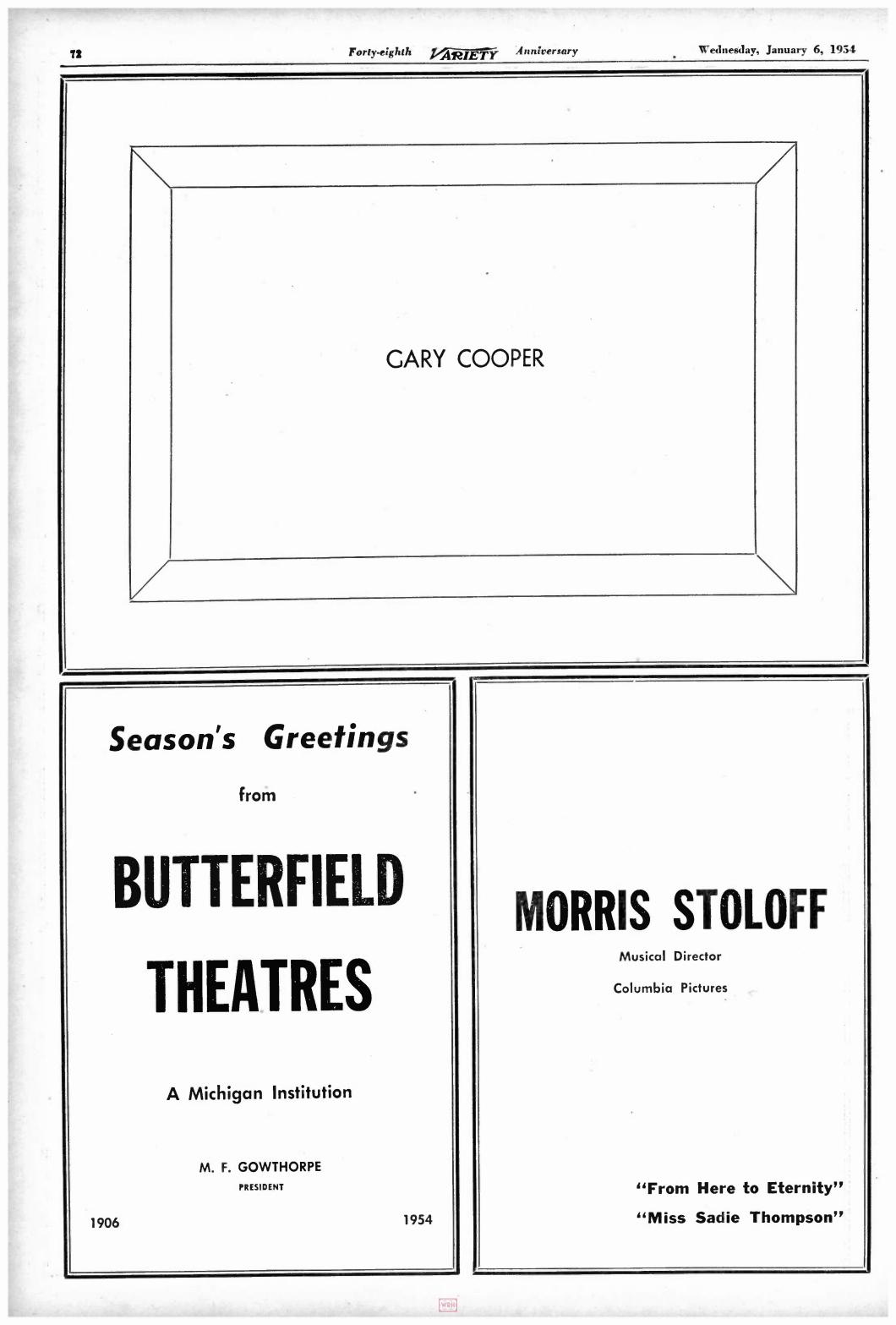


# 1953 "PLUNDER OF THE SUN" "ISLAND IN THE SKY" 44HONDO"





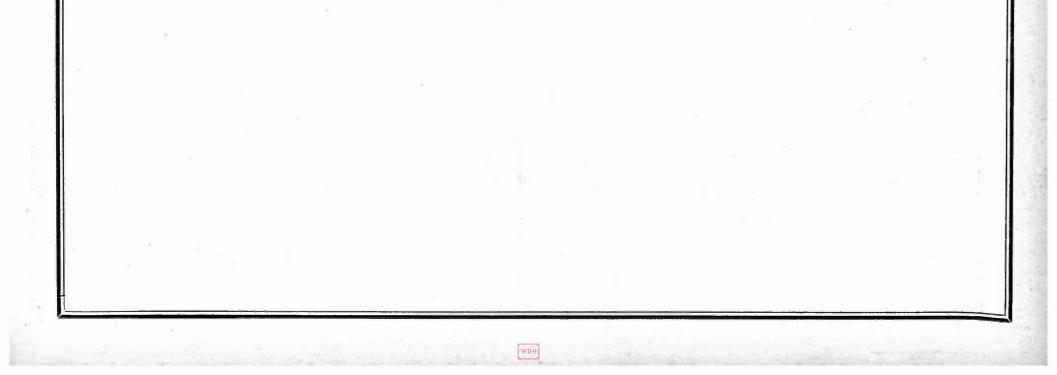
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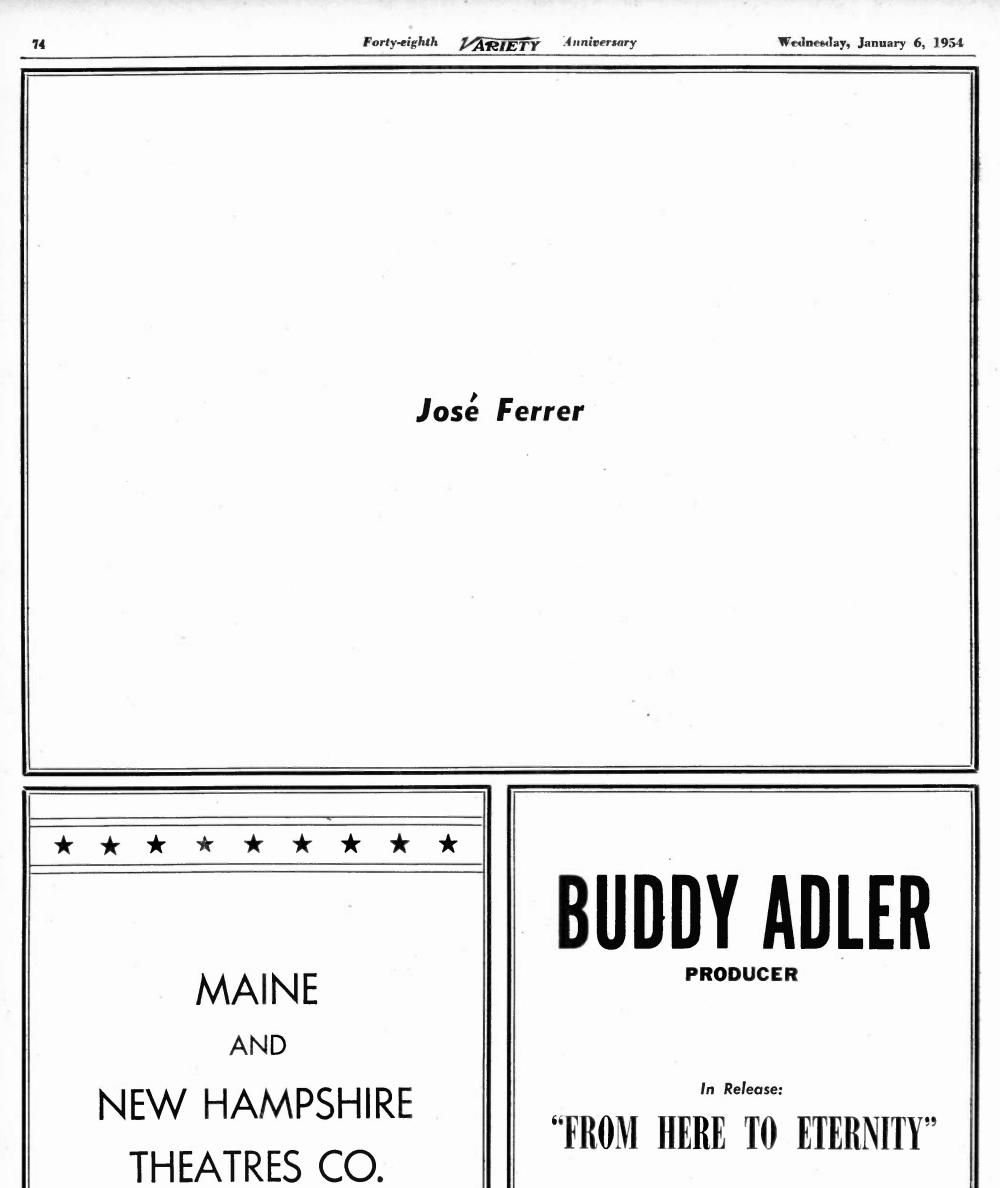


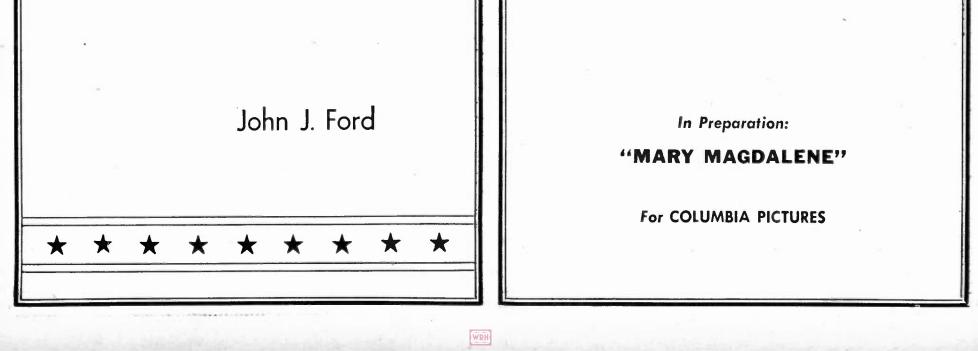
To SIDNEY SKOLSKY, who gave birth to the whole idea; the WARNER BROTHERS, who went through with it; ALFRED E. GREEN, who directed it; RAY HEINDORF, for his music; KEEFE BRASSELLE, who plays Eddie Cantor; MARILYN ERSKINE, who is Ida; ALINE MacMAHON, the beloved Grandma Esther; the rest of the excellent cast and crew, and to everyone else who contributed their efforts to the making of

# "THE EDDIE CANTOR STORY"

Thanks,







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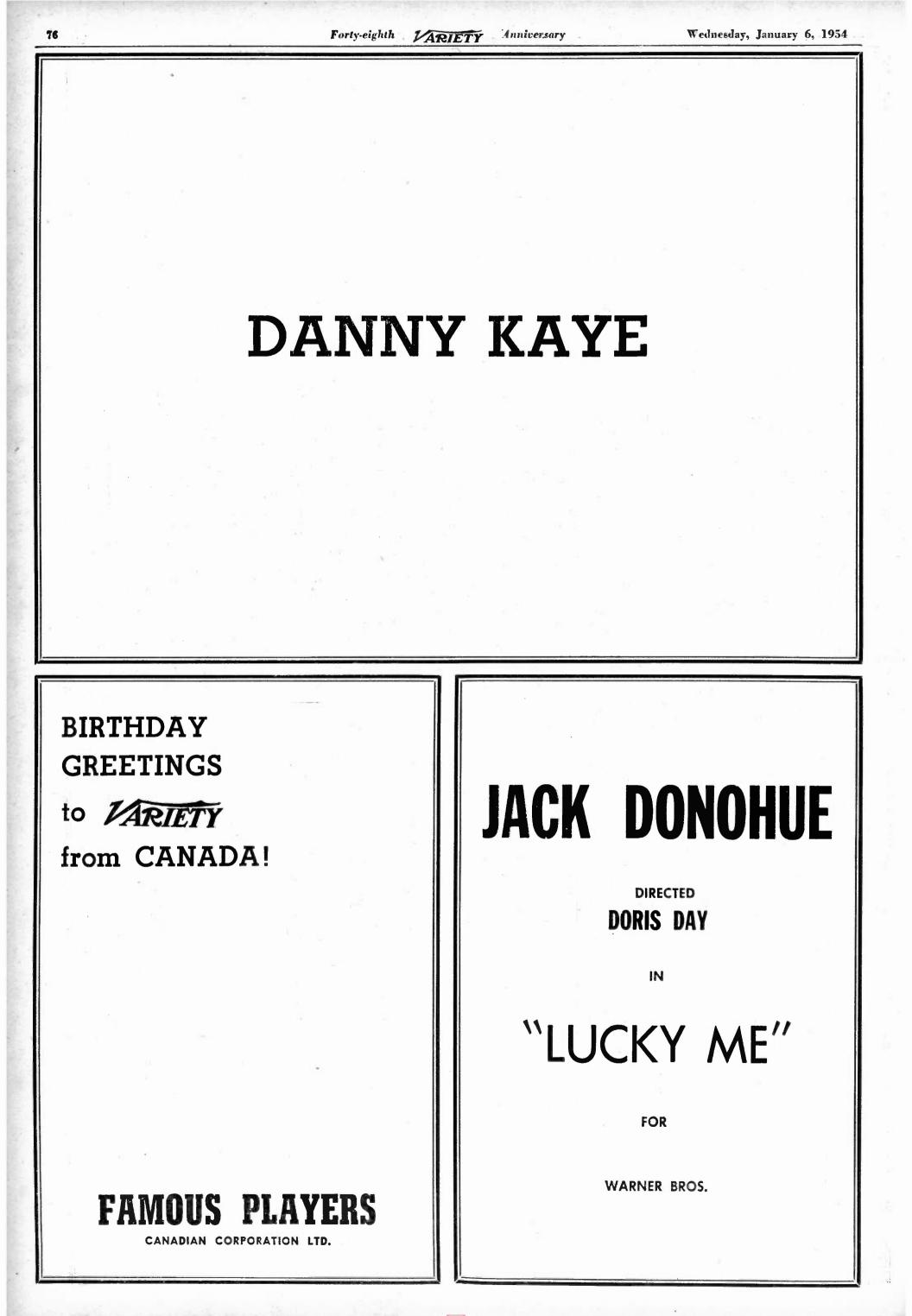
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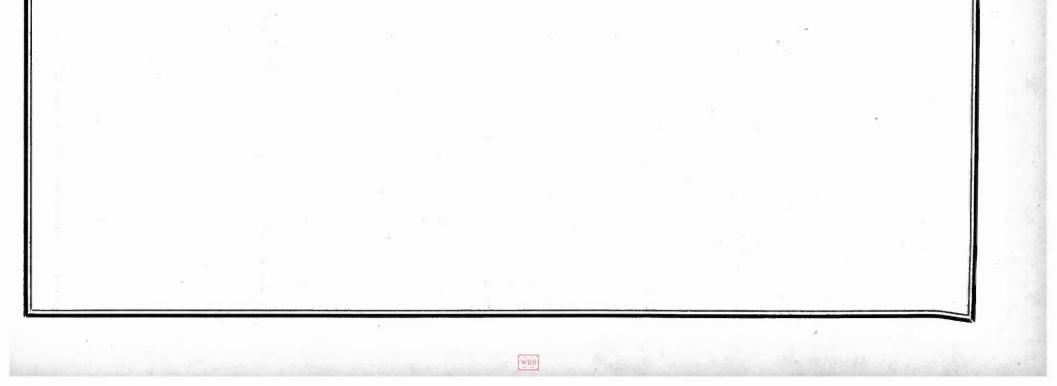
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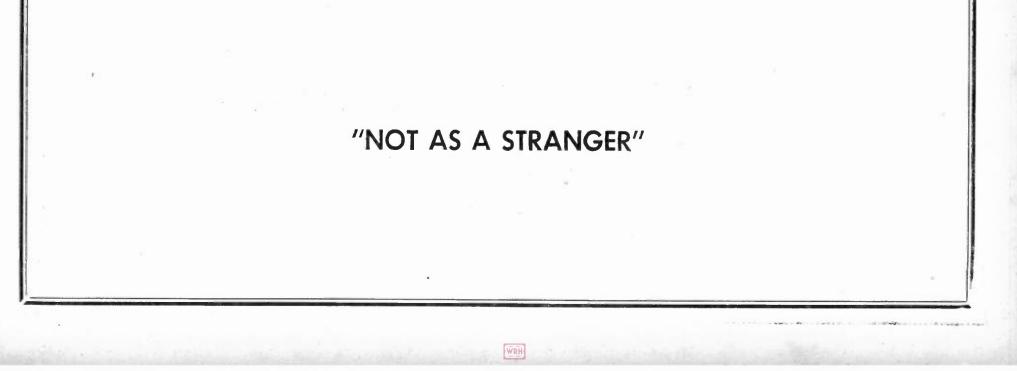
# **"THE CAINE MUTINY"**

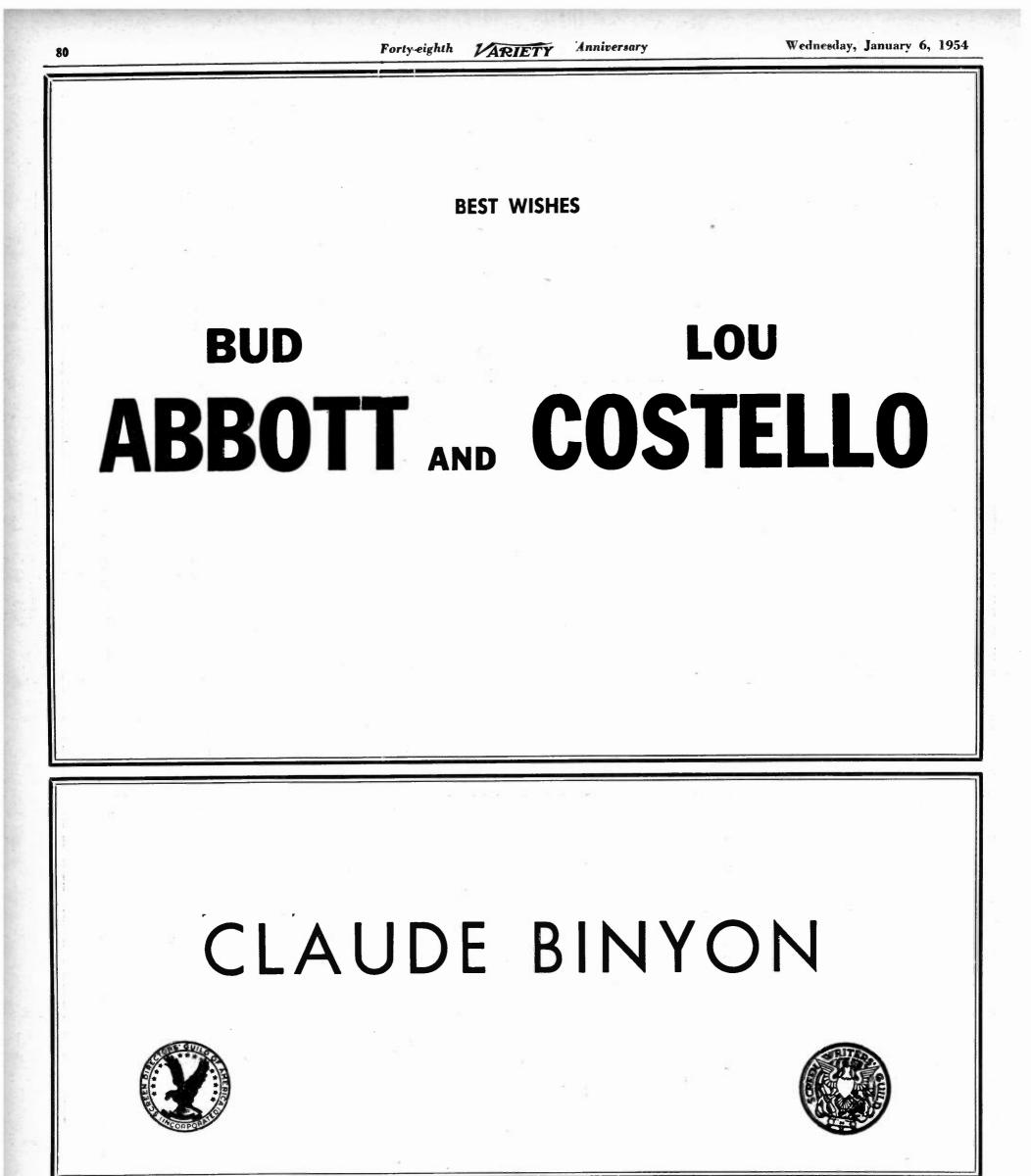
# A STANLEY KRAMER PRODUCTION

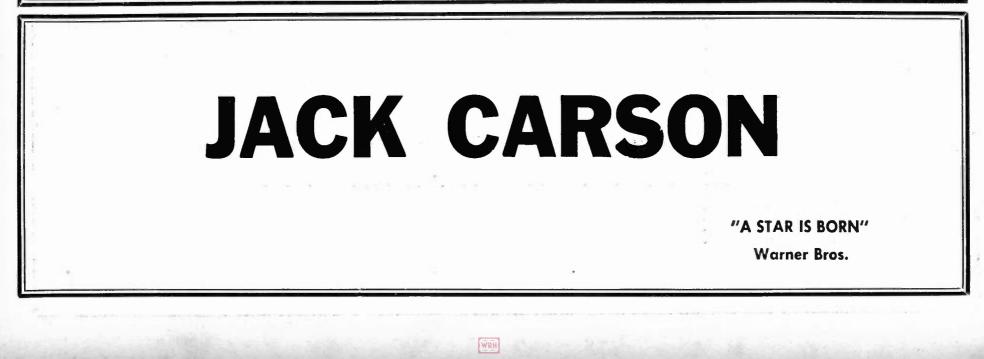
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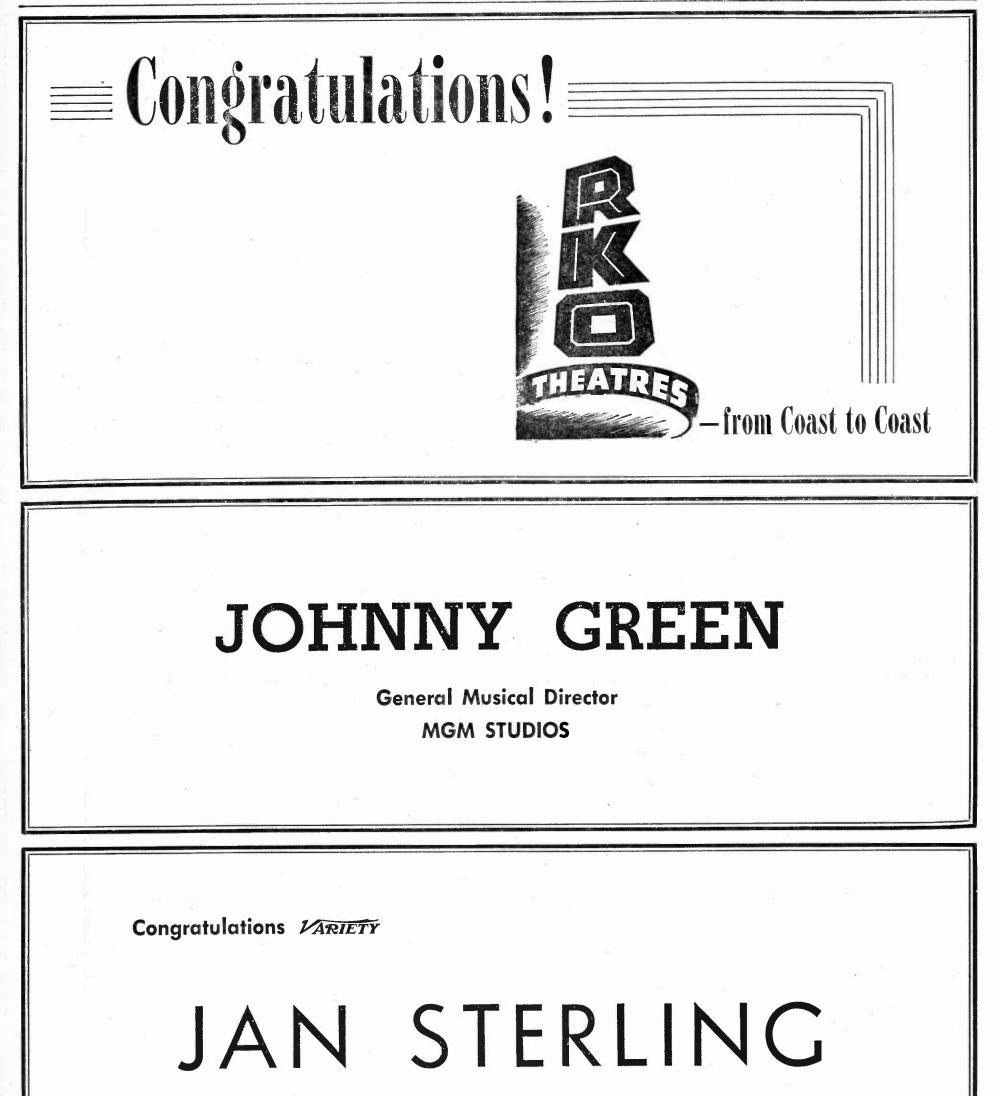






## American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres, Inc.

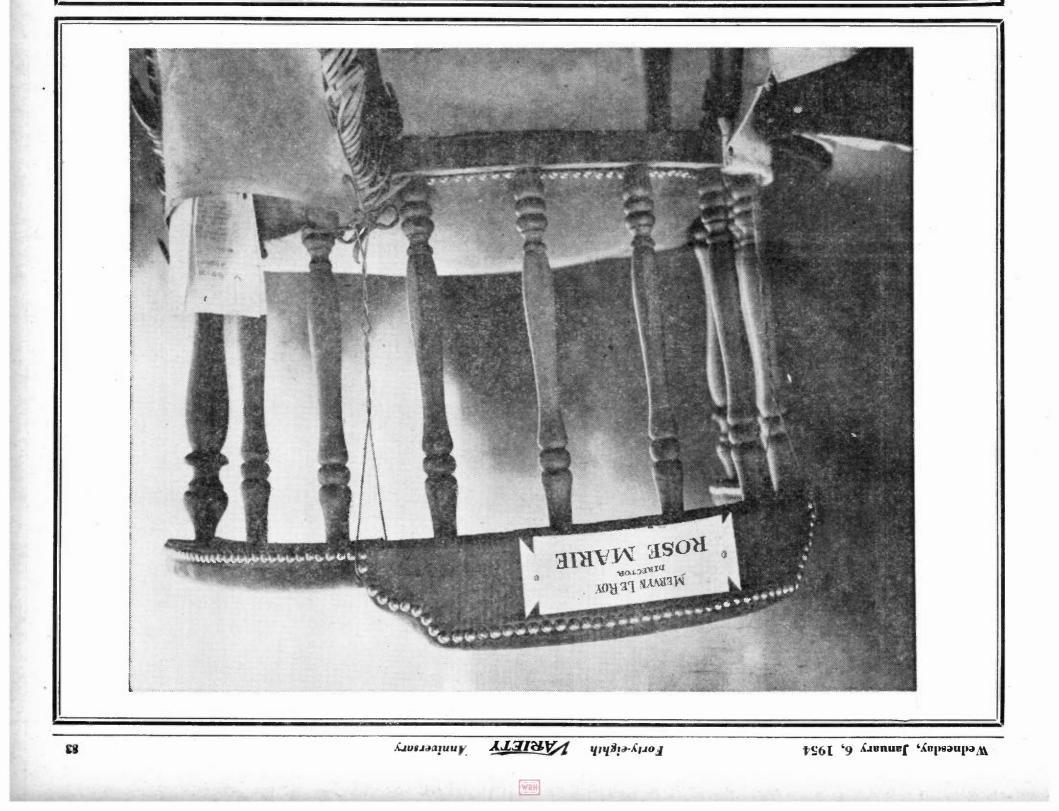
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Fitch. Henry Miller and Victor Herbert.

George M. Cohan was the Abbott in 1912. They gave dinners to A. L. Erlanger, John Drew, Lee Shu-bert, Oscar Hammerstein, Cohan, Belasco, William Harris. De Wolfe Hopper, Sam H. Harris, David Warfield, Jerry J. Cohan. Mayor John P. Mitchell, Irving Berlin, John Ringling, William A. Brady, Enrico Caruso and Jimmy Walker.

During the depression no dinners were given although some of the sticklers for tradition thought they should hold them as usual at Kellog's Cafeteria.

The "modern" dinners began with the Joe E. Lewis banquet Nov. 3, 1950—one of the most memorable salutes to anybody in the last quarter of a century.

It required no toastmaster, as it was done on the stage, via a series of sketches, and at its peak Toots Shor was given "the pie-in-the-face" bit. Toots has thought of himself as an actor, without inter-ruption. since.

On Nov. 9, 1951. Jack Benny was given the Friars' treatment. CBS boss Bill Paley's eulogy was one of the most outstanding. "We said to Jack when he came

to work for us, 'You can have any-thing we have,'" said Paley. "To his everlasting credit, he hasn't taken advantage of us. We still have our building at 485 Madison Ave.

Fred Allen commented upon Jack's fiddling.

"He's the only violinist who makes you feel that the strings would sound better back in the cat." said Fred.

Recalling their earlier days, Fred said:

"I first met him in vaudeville in Centralia, Ill. I was playing the big house and Mr. Benny was playing a suburb. The theatre was so far back in the woods, the man-ager was a bear. He used to pay

the acts off in honey. "Jack was in the war, and was the first sailor in history to get seasick in the recruiting office. He had to take drammamine to look at the Yacht Club Boys. About this dinner, there is only one Friar who would travel 6,000 miles to get a free meal-that's Jack Benny."

This year he's traveling 3,000 miles to get another one—to be toastmaster for the salute to Georgie. I hope I get a good seat. want to be close enough to watch Georgie listen in frustrated silence for two or three hours-unable to talk until the very end. I wonder if they won't have to change the procedure and let the guest of honor speak first?

#### New Religioso Mag

"Have You Buried Your Tal-cnts?." an interview with Mary Martin, leads off the first issue of Faith Today, new inspirational, of Faith Today, new inspirational, non-sectarian religious mag which went on the stands yesterday (Tues.). Other show biz names in the preem issue are Marion Mill Preminger, who writes on Albert Schweitzer under the title. "The Greatest Man Living." and William Saroyan with an excerpt from "The Human Comedy." Publisher and editor is Peter V. K. Funk, third generation of the publishing family and formerly an editor with Wilfred Funk, Inc. Current issue is dated Feb.-Mar.

"Press Agents Association." That was in 1904. Charles Emerson Cooke, publicist for David Belasco, was the first head of the group. Channing Pollock, then p.a., for the Shuberts, was another founder, and so was John W. Rumsey, who

# EDMUND GRAINGER PRODUCTIONS

Now in Release

# "SPLIT SECOND"

# "SECOND CHANCE" "DEVILS CANYON"

**Just Completed For Release** 

"THE FRENCH LINE"

with

# JANE RUSSELL

Technicolor



## FRIARS' BANQUET TECHNIQUE: **BOOK JESSEL FIRST**

#### By EARL WILSON

Next year-1954-it's going to Georgie Jessel. be different.

84

(It's always going to be different next year it's really going to be O.K.?) next year, and it never is, but this

(Sure, you already heard it. But did you hear anybody take so long

telling it?) How fitting that "the Toastmaster General" should be guest of honor at the Waldorf-Astoria Feb.

h. Milton Berle was then the Abbott of the Friars. "I appear before you tonight with, mixed emotions," Fred said.

"The Friars is a most unusual fraternal organization. "Some weeks ago. I was sitting at home...when the phone rang.

It was Jesse Block asking me to speak at this dinner.

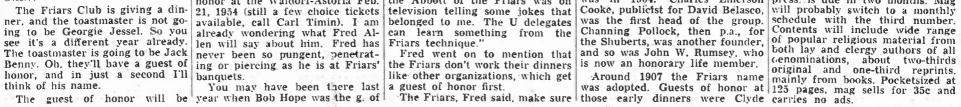
"At the very instant that Jesse, the head of the entertainment committee of the Friars, was asking me to do the Friars a favor. the Abbott of the Friars was on

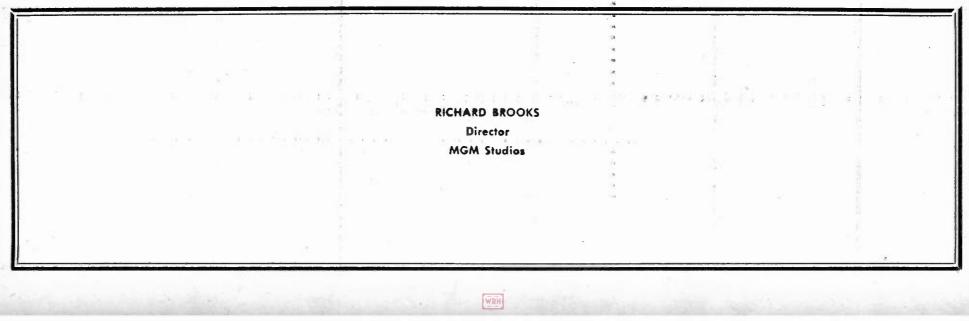
Jessel's available to be toastmaster. Then they send out to Hollywood for a guest of honor.

"They have to send out to Holly-wood," Fred explained. "Most of the New York Friars are out of work."

#### **50th Anniversary**

I have been doing some research about these dinners and found out





# Bob Hope

# NAT HOLT and Company PICTURES

Announce the purchase of Horace McCoy's exciting and daring new novel

# **LOUISIANA**

Preparing for production in early 1954



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# ROY ROWLAND

# **Playwrights Need Boost Too**

perimentation or his freshness of point of view, he is ill-fitted to cope. Thus it is that the new writer and the experimental play cope. must try to find a more hospitable birthplace than among the trade winds of Broadway

Imbued with a desire to make it possible to try out the plays of the young author. The Theatre Guild and the Westport (Conn.) Country Playhouse have for a number of years been hospitable to young writers with varying results. One of these authors. Robert McEnroe, wrote "The Silver Whistle," which was produced in the bucolic atmosphere of the summer of 1948 with Jose Ferrer in the lead and afterwards played a season on Broadway and another season on the road. "Come Back, Little Sheba," by a new writer, William Inge, road.

cause of his inexperience, his ex- produced in Westport in 1950, achieved a similar success on Broadway and the road and also made one of the best motion pictures of its year. This past summer a number of new plays by new American authors were tried out, and one of the best of these. "The Trip to Bountiful," by Horton Foote, was also brought to Broadv.ay.

#### No Big Welcome

Were these last two plays, both of them indicating writing of a firstclass order, welcon.ed with open arms? Not a bit of it. While some of the discerning had the ability to see in them the existence of firstclass theatrical writers with much to contribute to the future of the American theatre, curiously enough the majority of the accolades were heaped, not upon the heads of the authors, but upon the

which the authors had written. Thus it was that in "Sheba," Shirley Booth and Sidney Blackmer received the topmost praise in their careers and generously shared their acclaim with William Inge. The same thing happened with Lillian Gish and Jo Van Fleet in the case of "Bountiful."

Continuing her success in the part of Lola in motion pictures. Shirley Booth not only won the Academy Award for the best ac-tress of the year, but also won practically every theatre award for the best acting and the award at Cannes for one of the best actresses in the world of motion pictures.

But what of the playwrights themselves-the men who wrote the plays in which these actors and such high actresses won laurels? One would almost be forced to believe that these performers had in some miraculous way written their own parts and had ad libbed them all through the play, for seldom did one find any recognition that a fine writer had written a great part which had been greatly acted. Yet we who Yet we who put on plays in the theatre, including the actors and actresses who appear in them, know that no performer can give a great performance unless the writer has written a great part. Although we give the fullest credit to those magnificent actors and actresses, Shirley Booth and Sidney Blackmer in "Sheba." and Lillian Gish, Jo Van Fleet, Eva Marie Saint and the rest of the cast in "Bountiful," we take our hats off to the authors of these plays, William Inge and Horton Foote, and cry "Salute" to them. For it was their talent as writers which made this great acting possible.

#### **Memory Is Short**

Our memory in the theatre is short. Many of us today are un-der the impression that "Sheba" was a great success and won splendid acclaim which recognized the introduction of a new and impor-Nothing could be tant writer. the truth. The play further from

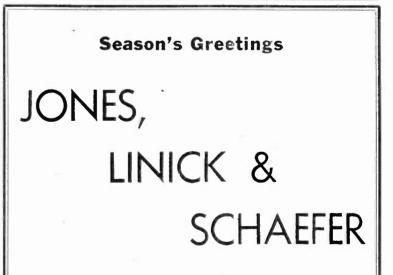
always loves works of art in the theatre and, but for its sale and tremendous success as a motion picture, would have passed into obivion. The same was true of 'Bountiful," which was cheered by livion. Theatre Guild audiences night after night. There was this differ-ence between "Sheba" and "Bountiful." however-"Sheba" had one set and could survive on a boxoffice business of \$13,000 to \$14,000 a week. "Bountiful," with three sets calling for over 15 stagehands. could not survive on this kind of business. Thus, the greatest performance in Lillian Gish's career and the advent of a brilliant ac-tress, Jo Van Fleet, as well as one of the season's best plays, passed into the limbo of the missing.

One of the signs of a new and important author is his ability to create magnificent acting parts. When we think of O'Neill, we remember Anna Christie, the Em-peror Jones, Nina Leeds of "Strange Interlude" and a dozen other parts. Similarly, we recall the part of Amanda played by Laurette Taylor in "The Glass Menagerie," the part of Blanche played by Jessica Tandy in "A teryear.

actors who portrayed the roles by that band of enthusiasts which Streetcar Named Desire" by Tennessee Wiliams. The manager who cherishes a young author will not attempt to present his plays with actors incapable of portraying the parts. Thus it is that there are a number of plays now "going the rounds" written by new authors with splendid acting parts which momentarily lack the actors to play them.

> Walter Kerr recently wrote that we may be approaching the end of one of the greatest eras of the theatre. However, "this ain't necessarily so." We can certainly postpone the end of the era by the way we welcome new writers, both as managers who are willing to experiment with new authors, authors who are willing to support such an institution as the New Dramatists Committee, and our critics who are ever on the lookout for the new and worthwhile writer.

Let it be remembered by those who mutter in their beards against the present idiosyncrasies 0 George Jean Nathan, that it was he in the days of his youth who shouted to the housetops hosannas of welcome to Eugene O'Neillthe young American writer of yes-





**Composer-Conductor** 

for

"ESCAPE FROM FORT BRAVO" "AFFAIRS OF DOBIE GILLIS" "REMAINS TO BE SEEN"

(All For MGM)

and

MUSIC FOR AMOS 'N' ANDY (RADIO) was hardly welcomed at all or. if Chicago, Illinois so, only grudgingly. It was loved **7TH SEASON** New York Theatres RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL CONGRATULATIONS Season's Greetings Rockefeller Center "EASY TO LOVE" sterring ESTHER WILLIAMS Alliance Theatres VAN JOHNSON . TONY MARTIN **ESSANESS** color by TECHNICOLOR . In M-G-M Picture and The Music Hell's Great Christmas Stage Show WOODS Corp., Chicago \* \* THE STORY CHICAGO S. J. GREGORY, General Manager CALOR INTECHNICOLOR A PARAMOUNT

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

# **Best** Wishes

# JERRY WALD

#### **Come To Britain In '54** = Continued from page 3 =

Edna Best. To disguise it still summer. One of their most popfurther, they omit the rhyme and their worst—the late Peter Cheycall it an Edna. This often leads ney, got his reputation by attemptto utter confusion in the studios ing to use the American idiom. It and explains in part why it sometimes takes 20 weeks to make a British picture.

#### Poetic Or Gibberish

nately poetic or gibberish. To "bowl a maiden over" does not tween two wickets. A pitcher is a tween two wickets. A pitcher is a spoken. Irish Gaelic is, however, bowler, but a bowler is a derby. more alive than Scottish Gaelic. The Derby is a race, and it is pronounced darby.

of American slang but even the as many accents as there are coun-cleverest of them cannot imitate it ties. Yorkshire is different from

screen test, for instance, is an | "Guys and Dolls" three times last was terrible, full of reckons and gats and molls and get this, see?

But some English slang is as terse and as effective as American equivalents. I like their words "smashing" and "smasher." "Grav-Cricket lingo is either inordi-ately poetic or gibberish. To "Come off it" equals "be your age." Cockney slang is even richer and

As for Gaelic and Welsh, they are distinct languages, still widely Cornish has almost disappeared; it is not Gaelic, and it can be understood across the Channel by the The English are great admirers French. As for English, there are

Everybody here seems to have had either gout or jaundice. A chill is the most common trouble. You can have a chill on your big toe, your liver, your nose, your lung, or all over. This doesn't necessarily mean that you or your particular organ quake from frigidity. What it does mean exactly I have never been able to find out. Some people go to bed when they have it, others don't. When members of the Royal Family are indisposed they are usually said to be suffer-ing from a slight chill. This alarms no one.

#### Beer What Ain't Beer

To the British, all American beer tastes the same, and it's not mean anything like what it appears to mean. Few things in England do. A wicket is three sticks with to be the other hand, the structure of the other hand, the struct pub, you'll get bitter. And if you want it cold, they'll put the ice into it, if they have any ice.

British money seems to be hopelessly confusing to the American visitor, although really it is quite simple. A pound is a quid. A guinea is a pound plus a shilling. There is no such thing as a guinea,

simpler than American illnesses. A sovereign is a pound in the form Everybody here seems to have had of gold. It is worth more on the Continent than you can get for it in England, consequently there is a brisk manufacture of same in various cellars of France, and Italy. Any old gold will do, but the expert will always demand unalloyed sovereigns. They are legal tender in England, but if you try to pass one they will ask you where you got it and how come. This is dangerous.

> A penny is a large copper cartwheel which wears holes in pockets. Hence, British pockets are made of better material than American pockets. Twelve pennies make a shilling. A shilling is a bob. Two bobs make a florin. but you never say florin and you never say bobs. You say two bob. Two and a half of these bobs make a half crown. But there is no such thing as a crown in everyday use. If you had a pocketful of crowns, if there were any crowns, your pants would fall off.

The British are very polite. They express their thanks on the slightest provocation and in a dozen dif-rent ways. A few of them say thank you, quite clearly and unmistakably. But the rest of them say: kew, think yow, thankenee, thankee, nkyew, kuesir, kewsa, kewmum, kewmiss or ta.

#### PORTLAND A CITY OF **MANY CHANGES IN '53**

Portland, Ore.

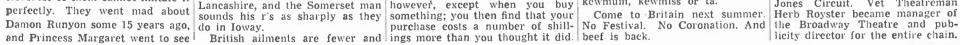
Theatre row here has seen a number of major changes this past year. The 3,400 seat Paramount Theatre was taken over by the Portland Paramount Corp., with M. M. Mesher as president. Ever green's 1,500 seat Mayfair legit-pic house was completely gutted with only four walls standing and next March will reopen as The Fox and the first theatre ever built actually for CinemaScope and stereophonic sound.

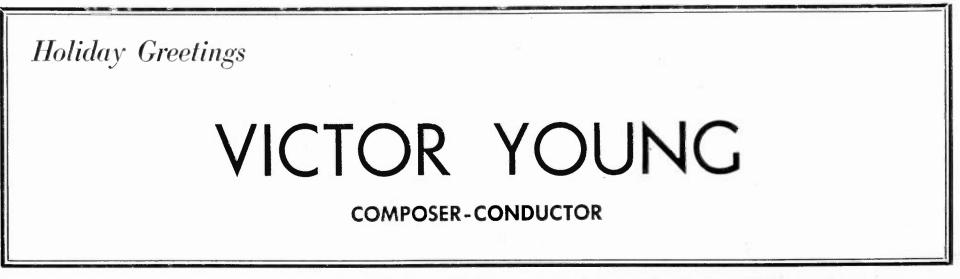
J. J. Parker's United Artists Theatre was shuttered for the summer but is now relit. Ever-green's Orpheum installed the first local CinemaScope followed by its Oriental. The Broadway is now also C'Scope and Hamrick's Liberty follows this week.

Hamrick's Roxy was re-opened with a 25c policy. The Capitol, closed for several years, is now operated by John Becker with a glorified burlesk policy plus transient performers.

Keith Petzold took over the General Managers post at Jesse lireuit. Vet Theatreman

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#### = By H. ALLEN SMITH =

During the period when Fred Allen was making his most ambitious attempt to conquer television, I was invited to be a guest on his show. It was a full-scale, one-hour production and my role was an extremely minor one-



that of an author in one of the skits. I had approximately the same number of lines that I normally use in ordering a piece of pie in the Automat. I was told to report for rehearsals

eight days before the show was to go on the air. There would be, I was informed, eight solid days of rehearsals and my presence would be re-quired at each of them.

The first couple of days were easy. The company was broken up into it-tle groups and assigned to different

H. Allen Smith around. for the most part, and smoked and gossiped and occasionally we'd bunch up around a table and play our scenes by reading from the script.

Along about the middle of the week everyone assembled in the hotel ballroom, which was to be the scene of the remaining rehearsals. I'll never forget that ballroom.

Madness reigned in that big room. There were actors and announcers, agency men and agents, friends and relatives of the sponsor, production men, directors, cam-eramen, engineers, stagehands, prop men, girls taking notes, script writers, guys with "releases" for people to sign, hows running coffee in paper containers, several notes, script writers, guys with "releases" for people to sign, boys running coffee in paper containers, several men I judged to be psychoanalysts, singers, musicians, acrobats, a sports announcer, chorus boys, set-dressers and one small dog belonging to an actress. Oh yes, and chorus girls—a couple of dozen of them. They wore leotards and while I noticed that nobody else seemed to pay much attention to them, they served me as a constant source of distraction. They stood around kicking at things or standing on their toes, or suddenly leaping into nuch attention to them, they served me as a constant source of distraction. They stood around kicking at things, or standing on their toes, or suddenly leaping into the air. Those leotards looked quite fragile, but appar-ently they are made of strong stuff, for not a one of them ever split. I know. I was watching for it.

In the ballroom there were actually moments of com-In the ballroom there were actually moments of com-parative quiet, when a scene was being rehearsed, but for the most part the place was a confusion of noises. People screamed in anger quite a bit. There were several near-fights. In an adjoining room the orchestra was boom-ing and blaring away most of the time.

On the day before the show was to go on the air, all of us spent a good eight hours in that ballroom. By middle of the afternoon the confusion and tumult resembled one of those Union Square riots we used to have back in the early 1930s.

#### **Vesuvius Erupts**

The director and his assistants finally got everyone quieted down and Mr. Allen took the floor with a couple of actors. They began playing their skit, perhaps the 20th time they had done it. They seemed to be doing all right, time they had done it. They seened to to using pooped, considering the fact that they were all colosally pooped. Then one of the actors faltered on a line, and the director spoke sharply to him about it. The actor's nerves cracked. He began screeching at the director. He used language that ain't fitten. He said that the director was persecut-ing him. He said that the deen in show business when ing him. He said that he had been in show business when the director was studying short division in grade school. He said he had not only his agent but his lawyer in the room and dod-lam it, he wasn't going to put up with this abuse one minute more. The agent and the lawyer came dashing into the scene. Uproar is hardly the word.

"Now just a moment!" howled the producer. "Let's not lose our heads!" He got the combatants settled down and began an impromptu peace conference in the middle of the floor.

Fred Allen wandered over to the side of the hall where I was sitting. He looked haggard from loss of sleep, ner-vous tension and a sore throat.

"What do you think of all this?" he asked me.

"Very interesting," I said. "After yesterday's session I went home and kicked my dog." "You've only been through seven days of it," he said. "Wait till tomorrow. We start early tomorrow morning in the said. the theatre and rehearse all day. About the time you usually have your dinner, we'll be doing the dress. And then we go on the air and really bollix it up.

then we go on the air and really bollix it up. "Do you think it's worth it?" "Certainly it's worth it. We've got to think of the pub-lic. Tomorrow night we go on the air with all this won-derful, sparkling entertainment. Know what happens then? Out in Bucyrus, Ohio, a bald-headed little man wearing carpet slippers sits and stares at the screen for about five minutes, and then he says. "That stinks!" and gets up and flips the dial and spends the rest of the eve-ing looking at a 12-war-old English movie. Chin up. old ning looking at a 12-year-old English movie. Chin up, old television! This is

# What Good Is a Rating If You Don't Sell Product?

#### By GEORGE JESSEL

For what purpose TV? Like all new vogues, the business of TV suffers from the fact that it wanders off in all directions. When I use the word "suffer," I mean that only for the people who work in it, certainly not for



audiences, as they get all the best of it, for they can sit home with or without clothes, dependent upon the weather, do anything they like and fcr relaxation. fool around, switching programs until they get something that appeals to them, and the price is right. But the people who work in TV find that there is a great lackwhat is the meaning of this medici-nal? I, at the moment, am being sponnal? scred by four products and have entered the television business exclu-

sively for this year with this set idea-to sell the products that are paying me, for I believe that is what I am supposed to do. When the sponsor asks me to personally deliver the commercial. I do it. When the sponsor tells me to take out some dialog or a song to make room for the commercial, I do it. I also have no interference as far as entertainment is concerned, for my clients believe that I should know something about that part of it, having acted, produced and spoken publicly for more than 40 years, rather successfully.

The average TV show doesn't have that kind of mutual cooperation. The sponsor's idea is the same, to sell his wares. Most of the actors continuously worry about the criticisms of their close friends who watch them weekly. This brings intimacy to such a high point that people who like you personally and are close to you find it hard to laugh at your jokes every week and are bound to find fault with you. Then the actor and director worry about the weekly press, for every show is an open-ing night and most of the press treat a TV show in the same manner as they do a play, forgetting completely that there is about two days of rehearsal and four days of writing, whereas the average playwright may take two years to write his play, then re-write it for six months, then rehearse it for more than a month. For example, Robert Anderson is having a deserved great success with his play "Tea and Sympathy." I am told it is his 12th This is the first one that ever got to first base. play. Both TV, radio and particularly motion pictures have been hurt by the press who, for years, have been taking the average picture apart, expecting to find the same kind of entertainment that is created for the \$4 literate theatre-goer to be presented for the average motion picture price of about 45 cents. The advertising agencies have only one idea in mind, the ratings and the surveys.

#### Inadequate Sample

In my more than 40 years as a public entertainer, serving in practically every capacity except in the circus and burlesque, I have never known anything as inaccurate or completely cockeyed as those so-called popularity polls. These are based on a few phone calls in a few cities, never taking into consideration that there are thousands of people who can well afford to buy any product advertised and who, for one reason or another, have unlisted tele-phones. Thus, their opinions on what they like or dislike don't seem to count. In addition, there are many people who have no phones and whose opinions and preferences should also be polled. And the number of phone calls made by these pulse takers is ridiculously small. They ring up a few people and then multiply their answers by something like 1.378.811. The result, they have you be-lieve, reflects the popularity of TV shows throughout the country.

This is as if I were to ask three guys in New York's garment center what they had for lunch that day. If two of them should answer, "we had chopped liver and onions." the survey then would prove "that two men out of three in the U.S. eat chopped liver and onions for lunch!"

But don't get me wrong: I have no personal beef in that respect. TV has been wonderful to me. I have a longterm contract with ABC, and have many other irons in the fire. I go into towns I haven't been in for ages, and little boys and girls come up to me and ask me to call my momma. These kids certainly must be watching me on TV—it just can't be that they remember me from "The Jazz Singer" 30 years ago! To show to what absurd degree this rating business can go to, the following story is the absolute truth. Some years ago I was engaged to do a weekly program, a commentary. The product was a beer called VX. The money was put up by the beer company, given to an agency, the agency bought the time and my services for 13 weeks and I went on, but the beer was never made. Not one bottle was ever brewed. I went on every week and there were long arguments about the commercial. One day the agency almost came to blows over the following. Why say "Go to your nearest tavern for VX beer." Change it to "Run to your nearest tavern." Another day there was almost blood spilled over this— Why should we say "This is as good as any Canadian Ale," it's better. We then added to the commercial that people should send in bottle tops and they would win a prize. All this for a product that was non-existent, but the rating was good and to this day that particular advertising agency gets calls for VX beer and are still fighting with me about some of the commercials.



#### Hollywood.

Robert E. Lee Proveit changed outfits. He was transferred from the New York office of the advertising agency to the Hollywood post. He had heard it was tough duty: you had to check in at 11:30 in the morning, you weren't





Lawrence

Lee

he would take none of their lip. Walking down the hallway of the Equitable Bldg., he saw a scrubwoman who looked exactly like Frank Sinatra. He smiled to himself. It was impossible, of course. Yet, this was Hollywood—and anything might happen.

He reported to the man who was second in command, a sergeant to the West Coast Vice-President. The man looked exactly like Burt Lancaster. Of course, he was short and bald and fat and he wore thick glasses and had a little mustache and a pot belly—but otherwise, he was a dead-ringer for Burt Lancaster. This was Hollywood and anything could happen.

"Proveit," he barked, "the Head-Man wants to see you right away. He wants to know just why you requested a transfer."

"Easy," Proveit answered. "I was assigned to the Arthur Godfrey Show. Seven days a week. Eight hours a day. All that time I was being upstaged by a ukulele! It's more than a man can take."

"Godfrey takes it!" snapped the No. 2 man.

"Like heck, he does!" Proveit retorted. "Do you know what he's listening to on those headphones? NBC! He's got too much humility to listen to himself!"

A buzzer sounded and Proveit was escorted into the Head-Man's office.

"Guess you're wondering why we asked for you here when you requested a transfer. Proveit. Well, I'll tell you. We found out that you're a writer. And I've sworn that we're going to out-write every other agency in the business.

Proveit stood his ground.

"I'm never going to write again." he said.

"Oh, yes, you are, Proveit! Of course, our executives and sponsors know all about writing. Except how to put

the words on the paper." "I'm never going to write again," Proveit repeated doggedly.

"Then we'll give you the treatment." "Oh, no. you don't!" Proveit said. "No treatments, no synopses, no plot-lines. I've turned in my stripes at the Radio Writers' Guild." "We'll see about that." the Head-Man leered. "Now

report to the supply room for a ream of carbon paper and don't try to pad your expense account while you're in my bailiwick! Dismissed!"

As he walked down the hall. Proveit was sure that the girls who smiled at him were Deborah Kerr and Donna Reed. But he knew they were just stenographers. Yetthis was Hollywood and anything could happen.

The next day all the writers in the outfit ganged up on him. They moved their typewriters into his office and started throwing punchlines at him. It was almost more

than he could take. One of the writers was working on a new panel show for TV: "Hubby Lobby," in which you meet the husbands of women you've never heard of.

Another writer was concocting a homey situation com-"The Jukes Family," the story of some healthy, noredy: mal American morons.

A jocular chap they all laughingly called "Shakespeare" was writing the story of a typical teen-ager, "A Date With Juliet."

Juliet." It was a million laughs. Proveit squirmed. He longed to spring to a typewriter and show them all what he could do. If he couldn't come up with a bellylaugh, he was sure he could belt out a few belly tears.

He glanced toward a mirror. It was remarkable: he was beginning to look more and more like Montgomery Clift. He shrugged. Well, this was Hollywood-and anything could happen.

That night, at the New Senate Hotel, he told a girl the

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#### The Way You Look at It

A group of young actors were discussing TV in the Lambs Club. They were panning the new medium. its demands were so exacting, not time to properly prepare and study a part, so many things in the studio to distract you, cameras continually moving from one end of the studio to the other, props being rushed from set to set. All this while you may be playing a difficult, emotional scene. I said, "Fellas, I agree with you on every count.

But two of you boys have been made stars in less than a year. You have played to more people in a few weeks than Booth, Warfield, Sothern and Marlowe combined did in their entire lives. You can be up in the money in this medium in months, instead of years. The going has to be a bit tough. The law of compensation demands that. Let me quote from P. T. Bar-num. He engaged a young giant for a sideshow. The boy was over eight feet in height and Barnum said, "Son, you are going to be mighty uncomfortable trying to sleep in a Pullman berth. But when we play a big city for a week and live in a hotel, you'll have a lot of fun walking along the hall looking into people's transoms." Bert Lytell.

Another thing that minds have to be made up about is the fact that TV is not the theatre or motion pictures and is not related to these other forms in any way and I think that this is a fact that must be definitely saluted because the greatest success on TV is Arthur Godfrey who. I understand, has only been on the stage once, and I am told on good authority that he very seldom goes to the theatre.

To sum it up, my solution is watch the cash register. If they are buying the stuff, they are watching you. That's how the story is told, with cash on the counter not the fluctuating up a point or down a point in the so-called ratings.

entire story

"I'll tell you, baby. I'll tell you why I won't write again. I was scripting this show, see? It was a great show. The words came from my insides. Tough, real talk. Man talk. Hard-bitten Anglo-Saxon words—like 'the' and 'if' and 'but.' Four-letter words. Like 'what' and 'then.' I was living! "You ought to get out of advertising, honey," the girl

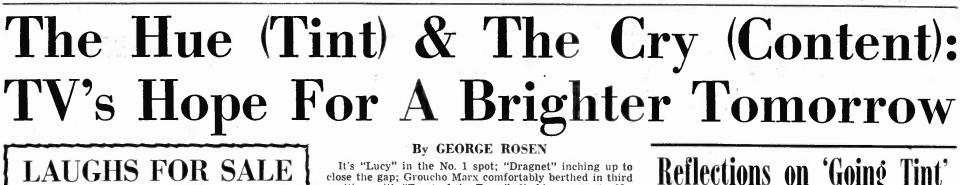
said.

"I'm a 30-year man," Proveit said. "And I love it." "Well, it doesn't love you," she said. "This show," he said. "It was like my baby. But then we got the first rating. It was the lowest rating in the history of radio or television. When we saw that rating, everybody in the agency went to Toots Shor's and got blind."

"I understand, honey," she said, snuggling up to him. "You don't have to write another line as long as you live. Just hold me close and ad-lib. Ad-lib!"

There is a lovely legend in this city of magic, mystery and ever-widening screens, in this city where anything can happen. You take a bar of lvory Soap and you drop it in the bed of the Los Angeles River, which is completely dry 10 months of the year. If the bar of soap floats away from you, you'll come back to Los Angeles some day. If it floats toward you, you'll never come back. If it sinks, you gotta start thinking up a whole new advertising campaign. Anniversary

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Hollywood.

Once upon a time there was a writer in TV by the name Any resemblance between Sam and any other of Sam. writer in TV is not purely coincidental. Sam was a \$100-a-week writer on a comedy show called "A Date With Selma." After four weeks' work, which is really a "run" for the average pigeon, Sam was fired, Sam, being sen-sitive, planted an item in the trade papers that he had temporarily retired from the show, despite the anguish of the producer, to write and produce his own TV package. His dignity was even more appeased when a few con-temporaries called to congratulate him. "Plug" salesmen started sending him their lists and Harvey Doolittle, his agent, whom he couldn't contact by radar, called and invited him to lunch. These incidents and the passage of time caused Sam to completely forget that he himself had planted the item and soon he began to believe it. In fact he wondered who had tipped the papers off to this top secret that he had even hesitated to discuss with his wife. So Sam got busy on the pilot.

By ALAN LIPSCOTT-

After much rewriting and polishing, Sam completed the pilot. He called it "I Crave Selma." It had a situation, domestic, comedy format, loaded with heart tugs that could be milked for laughs. Selma was a teenager, the oldest in a family of six brothers, two sisters and an adopted Korean war orphan. Her mommy was a school-teacher and her daddy was a Judge who played a mean guitar. Selma was charming, wholesome, loveable, naive, and when the occasion arose, she could also be sophisti-cated and human. For a getaway bomb, Sam wrote her pregnant. Let's face it! Sam had agency know-how.

Sam, first released a few teasers to the press and then placed an ad in the newspapers under "Business Oppor-tunities" for a backer. Mr. Humphrey can't give "E" bonds away, but eight normal business men answered Sam's ads. After checking their financial statements and examining their personal references, he gave the nod to Mr. Kittywake, a retired shoelace manufacturer. I'll jump the gun to say that Mr. Kittywake lost his money so fast, Sam never got to know his first name. When the package folded, Mr. Kittywake was left with enough money to buy a pair of shoelaces and a vial of adrenalin.

Harvey Doolittle, agent for \$100 Sam the Writer was also agent for Sam the \$40,000 package producer. He approached Sam the Writer with eyes blazing and fists clenched. Before Sam could open his mouth, Harvey screamed, "So you want to hold us up!" Sam parted his lips to breathe and Harvey added, "You won't get it!" When Sam finally opened his mouth, he said, "I want 400 a week and 50% of all rights."

"Over our dead bodies," boomed Harvey. He smiled as he huddled with Sam the Producer.

He spoke softly. "Sam the Writer wants 300 a week and 25% of all rights."

"Offer him 200 a week and 2% of all rights," countered Sam the Producer.

Mr. Kittywake had just seen the completed pilot of "I Crave Selma" for the first time and he was disturbed.

"If this is supposed to be a comedy," he asked, "then why aren't there any laughs?"

Sam, a bit annoved, replied, "this isn't a comedy until the laughs are dubbed in."

"Dubbed in? What's that?"

"Oh," leered Sam in disgust, "Mr. Kittywake, you should never have left the shoelace business." For the first time Mr. Kittywake agreed with Sam.

Luther Peabody of Laughs, Incorporated, sold laughs like Mr. Fulton of the fish market sold halibut. The bigger the halibut, the bigger the price. Luther was once a janitor in NBC, who had more than 20-20 tele-vision. While janitoring, he retrieved all the discarded recordings of boff radio comics that were dumped daily into the trash cans. These records he stashed away in the attic of his home and when TV came into being, he resigned as janitor and started transferring the laughs from the records to tape. These rolls of laughter he called "laugh tracks." For commercial purposes he classified his tracks." For commercial purposes he classified his laughs under yocks (grade A and B), laughs (hysterical, sustaining and ordinary), laughs combined with applause,

shrieks, guffaws, giggles and titters. Sam It's "Lucy" in the No. 1 spot; "Dragnet" inching up to close the gap; Groucho Marx comfortably berthed in third position, with "Toast of the Town" climbing up to the No. 4 spot as Colgate "Comedy Hour" is alternately up and down, depending on which comic goes into which segment. And keeping them steady—or fairly steady—company in the Ton 10 brocket are such items as Wilton Back. the Top 10 bracket are such items as Milton Berle, Jackie Gleason, Arthur Godfrey, What's My Line? Red Buttons, Bob Hope.

Sounds familiar? You can bet your bottom Nielsen it does. It's the TV story, with but minor variations, of '51, and again of '52, that carboned its way into the '53 spectrum and bids fair to plow uninterruptedly through '54 as an ever-hopeful, patient public and TV industry search in vain for even the slightest suggestion of an offbeat re-sponse to the inevitable "So-what-else-is-new?" query.

What was new in '53, unfortunately, wasn't sufficiently exciting or imaginative in large enough doses to balance the scales in TV's favor. Not one new trend or pattern has emerged to warrant shouting from the antenna-congested rooftops. Particularly on the NBC or CBS video front, not a single new and vital personality has been projected to differentiate '53 from '52. Only the "New ABC," revitalized by a \$30,000,000 hotfoot stemming from the merger with United Paramount Theatres, embarked, after years of desperation and playing the fringe circuits, on a carefully-plotted formula designed to bring some fresh programming elements into the video picture. This they did, as witness the emergence of Danny Thomas, Ray Bol-ger, Paul Hartman in freshly-tailored vidpix adornment; a major stake in the drama sweepstakes with the alternating U. S. Steel and Motorola Tuesday night showcases, plus the all-cable Kraft Television Theatre (as distinct from the entirely separate NBC live-and-kine Kraft dramatics) giving ABC access to properties banned on the NBC kinnies. Again it was ABC that put its best foot forward in the quest for "tomorrow's TV headliners" with its already-auditioned Joel Gray, Sammy Davis Jr. entries,

But if, at the new year, there were still apprehensions as to whether ABC would make it as a Big Three contender in the highly-competitive video field long conditioned to an acceptance of two—and only two—major networks, it was still too early to tell. A lot depends on overcoming two major hurdles (1) "habit" (which has given the ABC comics much the worst of it thus far in the ratings returns) and (2) "facilities" (which inevitably translates itself into an acceptance of ultra high frequency character or which an acceptance of ultra high frequency channels, on which ABC is, of necessity, so dependent as the network aligned, for the most part, with the third station in cities along the cable routes). Fortunately, the sponsors, with an the cable routes). Fortunately, the sponsors, with an awareness that the ABC obstacles can't be licked in 13 or 26 weeks, are playing ball with the web.

#### 'Abuses' of 1953

TV put on an extra-curricular show-"Abuses of '53"which didn't particularly do credit to the medium and which now threatens to invite repercussions from the Federal Communications Commission, the National Assn. of Radio-Television Broadcasters and other "watchdog" elements.

Major "falling from grace" has been the wholesale disregard for NARTB-promulgated Code in regard to commercials. The double and triple spotting not only fore and aft but at the midway mark became so abusive that the NARTB was forced to incept policing precautions before the squawks got out of hand. What the Code boys finally decide to do about it still remains one of the unanswered questions of '54.

Similarly, the indiscriminate use of major stars to plug the client's product, with practically everybody on the video spectrum shilling for the sponsor, has hit a new high in questionable taste; certainly a practice not con-ducive to elevating either the medium's or the personality's the plug belonged to the announcer and the personality's stature. It's a far cry indeed, from radio's heyday when the plug belonged to the announcer and the program to the star. The "hitch your package to a star" formula may be selling the goods, but it's a body blow to TV's prestige and the star's dignity.

#### Gen. Sarnoff & Bill Paley

It's become almost axiomatic in the trade that when broadcasting excitement and enthusiasm are at a low ebb "you can count on Gen. Sarnoff or Bill Paley" to come through. It was the electronic-minded Sarnoff's "go TV" eight years ago that sparked the change of an industry's entire future and incubated a whole new school of millionaires among broadcasters, just as it was "Paley's Comet" a few years back that changed the entire intraindustry network picture and projected Columbia into a new sphere of importance. Thus it remained for RCA's razzle-dazzle generalissimo, when everything in television looked just about as it did in '51 and '52, to shove the industry into the rainbow spectrum and officially inaugurate the era of color TV. won't be realized in '54 (those \$800-\$1,000 price tags per TV receiver will obviously restrict output for at least 18 months or two years) but there's no denying that an industry hemmed in by a long-existing status quo has once more been super-charged with an electric excitement over the tinted prospects of tomorrow. Not that color, as such, will be the sesame to perfec-on. There have been sufficient "screenings" of tinted tion. shows todate to demonstrate that, no matter how brilliant or subdued the shading, it's the program content (and notably the scripting) that counts in the long run. Here, indeed, was the major lack in a lustreless '53 semester which plunged some of TV's top comics into pedestrian channels (with but a few notable exceptions such as Nat Hiken's scripting contrib for Martha Ray, Goodman Ace for Milton Berle, Sol Sacks for "Favorite Husband" and Alan Lipscott for Danny Thomas' "Make Room for Daddy." Perhaps of all the TV program categories, it was the dramatic presentation in its hour form that made the greatest strides toward maturity in '53. It was particularly evident in the Philco-Goodyear Sunday night "Television

# **Reflections on 'Going Tint'**

#### By MAX LIEBMAN

(Producer-Director, "Show of Shows") The screen grew radiant with color. There was Broadway in the rain, a sublime Broadway, a street of rich and romantic color tones, buildings to comfort and enravish the eye and seen in lovelier perspective through the shimmer of silver rain. Here was a

picture for Renoir, an inspiration to Keats, an occasion for strings. Broadway in the rain? Whereabouts

on Broadway? Let's cut back a few minutes to 5 o'clock on Dec. 5 and listen to Faye Emerson speaking from



the stage of the Colonial Theatre: "This is a historic occasion and we are all excited about it. This is the first time "Your Show of Shows" is being received in color as well as

Max Liebman Max L pedestrians joyous figures of carnival.

#### 'Who Needs Color?'

Now the screen dims and the last darts of color creep off beyond the border and the rectangle is bright and empty. The dress rehearsal is over. The demonstration was a smashing success. Engineers, executives, writers, actors, producers, directors are dancing and cheering. Suddenly a voice comes over the loudspeaker. "Ready for cleanup notes for the show!" The elation is gone, and dread falls on the control room. The show ahead, the big show, the real show is two hours off. What a letdown! The millions in the boundless out there, they won't see it in its rich dress of color. What will happen to us then? Thought: "Well, who needs color? The scenery de-mands more considered planning lest it war upon costumes; and costumes must not offend makeup or props. Camera rehearsals are endless. Four times as much as in black and white. Actors must arrive three hours before camera rehearsal to be made up. The playing area is cramped. Half as much space as before. No wide angle lens on the camera turret. Singers and dancers must shrink with horror from contact with the scenery. At least a six-foot breathing space should exist between the actors and the sets."

"And the tempers, ah, the tempers. 'I can't wear green. You saw me in green, Mr. Liebman, and gallant as you are, you couldn't control that look of utter revulsion. Now you's asking me to wear green, it only means that you are sublimating your own taste to the caprices of a colorspewing monster which has no means of knowing how awful I look in green.'

"What new kinks will fret our rehearsals? What mad disorder of clashing hues will we find there? Is this progress worth the weariness, the fever, and the fret here, where men sit and hear each other groan?"

You recall the first exhilaration of Broadway in the rain. The show-long elation. Color, we like you. Yes, we like you very much. You're worth it. You're beautiful; black and white—you're drab.

Now it nears nine, and on leaden feet you go into the control room for that pre-ordained letdown, till 10:30. The show is on!

The monitor fills with dancers. Here are Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca, in black and white, divested of their splendid raiment.

But here is a new splendor, the audience's laughter. Applause. Cheers. It swells and the black-and-white fig-ures need no other adornment. Into the control room you suddenly know a sense of group enjoyment out there that is something beyond color's capture, beyond color's power to help or harm.

Give them a show in black or white or sepia or stripe it with the whole chromatic scale, make it entertainment. Then you will have reaffirmation that not color, but your show is the thing, as always.

A good show produces a device for color which needs no authorization of the FCC. A device called rose-colored glasses.

Playhouse" productions on NBC-TV, with producer Fred Coe's stable of gifted writers achieving a consistently quali-

offered eima Luther Jackage deal of seven boffs, 40 assorted laughs and a "shriek" before the closing commercial for 150. Sam hesitated. Luther steamed him.

"That's all I deliver each week to sweeten 'I Married Selma' and look at its rating."

Sam nixed the package deal and bought piecemeal. He made up a track of 5 "Bob Hope hystericals," 6 "Red Skelton sustainers," 3 "Willie Howard French Lesson shrieks," 4 "Jack Benny opening the vault bellies," Skelton sustainers," 3 "Willie Howard French Lesson shrieks," 4 "Jack Benny opening the vault bellies," 8 "Digger O'Dell explosives," 20 assorted "Allen's Al-ley guffaws," and 50 miscellaneous "Pick and Pat," "Finnegan," "Groucho Marx" and "Judy Canova" sure-fires. He added a smattering of giggles and titters to punctuate the straight lines. For this special, Luther asked for 250. Sam offered him an equal partnership in the package. Luther turned down Sam's offer. This was the cue for Mr. Kittwaka to sign his last abek

was the cue for Mr. Kittywake to sign his last check. The critics who saw "I Crave Selma" in the projection room said, "The laughs were so loud, we couldn't hear the distance" the dialog.

Sam planted the following item in the trades: "Net-works and agencies are bidding lively for 'I Crave Selma,' but it looks like the Ford Foundation will wrap it up for 'Omnibus'." \*

\* The next day, Harvey Doolittle called Sam and offered him his old job back at \$90 a week. Sam took it.

tative level on a par with (and frequently topping) the contributions from other media.

If, too, there existed some isolated instances to prove TV's potency as an exacting, exciting and enlightening facet of show business, one need only recall the memorable Ford 50th anniversary telecast; at least two "See It Now" offerings in which Edward R. Murrow distinguished both himself and TV in presenting the case of the Air Force vs. Lt. Radulovich, and the American Legion vs. the American Civil Liberties Union; the return of George Axelrod to TV with his delightful "Confessions of a Nervous Man" on "Studio One," the Orson Welles-sparked production of "King Lear" on "Omnibus," U. S. Steel's initial "P. O. W." entry of the season, etc.

From a quantitative standpoint, there's no denying the major role and stake of vidpix in the TV scheme as more and more sponsors embrace the celluloid formula and the Hollywood TV film studios corner a sizable chunk of the overall program schedules (both for syndication and network release). But judged on the basis of quality content, vidpix as such poses no major threat to live programming. Most of them have been disappointing. True, such sponsor-happy entries as "Lucy," Groucho Marx, "Dragnet," Burns & Allen, "Our Miss Brooks," etc., are major exhibits in the "spool school" of programming, but, unlike the bulk of celluloid product, represent a combination of basic production-direction-writing-performing values completely divorced from the filming aspect.

#### RADIO-TELEVISION

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The phone rang, jarring me out of a deep snoring sleep. I propped myself up on one elbow, rubbed my eyes, and I propped myself up on one elbow, rubbed my eyes, and stopped snoring. I lifted the receiver off the hook. "Mike Mallet?" a voice whispered. "Yeah," I growled. "Trouble, Mike, bad trouble. Rusty Dails' apartment, 260 West End Avenue." It was a beautiful, soothing voice caressing my ear like a soft wind. "Is this Rusty?" I snapped. "No," the voice purred smoothly, "this is her brother." I snapped at the phone again, biting off part of the receiver and severing the connection. I swore and hung up, then grabbed some clothes out of the closet. grabbed some clothes out of the closet.

I bolted down the stairs eight steps at a time and slammed the door behind me. It was one of those crisp October days with the tang of danger in the air. I ducked instinctively as the first shot buzzed past my ear and grabbed my Browning 50-calibre, water-cooled machinegun out of my shoulder holster. Another shot hit behind me, snapping a lamppost in two, and then I grinned. That cranky landlord of mine. He always gets mad when I slam the door.

I got into my battered Chevvy and did 245 mph all the way over to the West Side. It was one of those souped-up jobs and I got 15 miles to a gallon of Heinz. I saw 260 West End Avenue on the corner of 83d Street and slammed on the brakes. The Chevvy shuddered to a stop on 95th Street, and I walked back.

I rang the bell at apartment 5A for 10 minutes and got no answer. The door was made of steel three inches thick, but I kicked it in with one blow of my souped-up Florsheims. What I saw inside made my stomach boil angrily. A good-looking hunk of blonde lying there in a pool of blood. I walked around to the shallow end and took a closer look. There were three bullet holes and a why the heck would a pretty kid like Rusty want to commit suicide?

I dug a crumpled pack of Luckies out of my pocket and carefully tore the paper down one seam, noting the perfect cylinder of firm fresh tobacco. I chewed thoughtfully and stood looking down at the blonde. Her blouse was torn and two of her ribs peeked out coyly. I pulled the knife out of her back and examined it closely. Whoever knocked her off had certainly left a clue on the knife. All I had to do was find a guy named Tiffany. I didn't want to louse up the Police investigation, so I shoved the knife back in almost the exact spot I found it. Poor kid. I put a pillow under her head and scrammed out of there.

#### **Short Rations**

I drove downtown slowly this time, keeping the speedometer at an even 125. I parked in front of Police Headquarters and walked past the poolroom and horse parlor to Pete's Bar. I called Homicide and told my pal Captain O'Shea to come on down for breakfast. James Aloysious Patrick O'Shea, a Hungarian who had changed his name for professional reasons, bulled his way into the joint a minute later and sat down beside me. I wasn't really hungry but I ordered breakfast anyway. A dozen eggs and a loaf of toast later I spilled the whole story to O'Shea.

"Darn it anyway," he growled, "that's the 15th killing this week. If it doesn't stop, those darn muckraking news-papers are gonna start hollering." I got some information from him but it wasn't much. Rusty Rails had been a model and hadn't been working at it very long because she'd only been arrested three times. The agency she worked for was owned by an ex-racketeer named Lewellyn Van Farnsworth. I thanked O'Shea, shoved a handful of toothpicks in my mouth, and walked him outside. O'Shea was one of those old-fashioned honest cops and

I could see that he was visibly upset by this latest killing, "What was that West End address again?" he growled. I told him. "I'll send someone around later," he said, helping himself to three apples and a watermelon from a fruit stand. "See ya around. Mike," he growled, affec-tionately rabbit purphing me I grinted and aloufilly tionately rabbit punching me. I grinned and playfully kneed him in the groin.

I piled into the Chevvy and pointed it uptown towards the Van Farnsworth residence. I'd get to the bottom of this or my name wasn't Mike Mallet. I just didn't like the murderers, especially those that went around killing people. I parked in front of a big apartment house on upper Park Avenue and rode the elevator to the penthouse. I rapped my knuckles on the door, just splintering enough wood to attract attention. An English butler opened the door in the middle of my rapping and got a busted monocle for his trouble.

I was informed in a clipped Oxford accent that Mr. Van Farnsworth was not at home but that Miss Fanny Van Farnsworth would see me in the library. It was quite a layout. I wandered off towards the library, at tim ing knee deep in the carpet. Moroccan bound classics from Vina Delmar to Jack Woodford lined three walls. The fourth wall contained trophies, an elk's head flanked by a detective named Clancy and a young Assistant D. A. whose name I couldn't remember. I turned around to find a breathtakingly beautiful brunet standing next to me. She was wearing a skin tight dress with a Saks 5th Avenue label. I wouldn't have noticed the label except she was wearing the dress inside out. This dame had CLASS written all over her—twice on her forehead and six times on her body. the butler to stop it but he waved me in again. I threw two short combinations and she went down hard. Luckily her fall was broken by a coffee table. I headed towards a neutral exit. for affection." "More, more," she murmured, "I'm starved

When I left the very efficient butler was tidying up the debris. I didn't wait for the elevator this time. I just plunged down the shaft and hobbled into my Chevvy. headed across town impatiently leap-frogging over the snarled traffic. There was a little Irish model I wanted to see who might be able to give out with some information. I found the name on the mailbox. Dusty Colleen. It wasn't much of a building; she lived in a fourth flocr walk-down.

I slid down the bannister until I found her apartment-Minus 4H. I rang the bell and walked in. I just stood there and gaped. Dusty was at the door to the bedroom looking lusciously beautiful. She was Irish all right, with bright green hair and large red eyes. It was a combination that you don't see much of these days. She was wearing one of those short, low cut, backless things they call a G-string. I could see she had nothing on under-neath it. I crushed her against my chest, feeling the excitement mount in me with the sound of her soft moaning and the crack of her ribs.

I picked her up and threw her on the bed, watching her voluptuous body gracefully flying the 20 feet through the air. Suddenly she screamed. I whirled around, my .45 twisting and bucking in my fist. Nothing else happened though, because I'd forgotten to load it. A gun exploded three times in the darkness, a door slammed, and then it was quiet again. Dusty's large red eyes stared vacantly up at me from the bed. There were two neat little holes over her heart. I put on my jacket and headed for the door. She probably wasn't in the mood any more. My head ached dully where the third bullet had hit me in the temple. I was boiling mad. A second killing and still no clue to the murderer. Then I saw a strange object lying on the floor near the sofa. I picked it up and shoved it into my pocket. Suddenly all the pieces seemed to fit to-

gether and I had a pretty good idea who the killer was. I got the Chevvy started and jammed my foot hard on the accelerator. The car took off like a frightened rabbit and minutes later I glided in for a landing and taxied to a stop. I shoved past the Van Farnsworth butler, sneering at his new monocle shattered on the floor. The girl's room was empty but there was a steady bubbling sound coming from the bath. I pushed open the door. Poor little rich girl was floating face down in her champagne bath.

I grabbed the smooth English butler just as he was going out the door with his umbrella. I laid the barrel of my .45 across his jaw and he fell heavily.

"OK, you murdering rat, start talking," I snarled. He was dazed but still conscious.

"The Van Farnsworth residence, whom did you wish to see?" he mumbled.

I kicked him in the stomach. I should have suspected he butler all along. "You might have gotten away with it the butler all along. "You might have gotten away with it except you dropped this when you shot Dusty Colleen." I dug into my pocket and took out a half-eaten crumpet. I threw it down beside him and sneered when he tried to crawl over and bite it.

"Mike Mallet is sentencing you to death for murder," I snarled. The .45 roared once as I shot him in the middle of his cravat. He was the perfect butler to the last, blotting with his handkerchief to keep his blood from soiling the rug.

"Will that be all, sir?" he asked I shot him again as he hummed a chorus of the "White Cliffs of Dover."

It was a cold Saturday night and I hunched my powerful shoulders against the wind. I was sure going to sleep all day tomorrow. Back in my apartment I pushed open the door to my bedroom and stopped dead in my tracks. There was a tall curving blonde. "Dang it all," I shouted, "There goes my Sunday."



I've been "in person" most everywhere but in my own home. My entire career has consisted of personal appear-An entertainer's lot can sometimes be an awful ances. lot to bear when it comes to living that happily married

life, bringing up children, and trying

to play the role of husband and father. But that is show business. A life you can't call your own. A series of night club dates, theatre engagements and charity benefits that seem to be trying their best to keep an entertainer tied up in knots when he tries to mentally argue the point of career versus family.

With me it was no different from the rest. We all yearn for that stay-at-home booking. The one that sets you up as a Hollywood film star liv-

# COMEDIAN LIT

By AL SCHWARTZ & SHERWOOD SCHWARTZ

Hollywood.

Once upon a time there was a happy little comic who was always afraid that his rating would fall. Each month when rating day rolled around he became more nervous than ever. Then one day it happened. He was out at Lakeside playing golf when he heard a voice shout, "Fore!" Comedian Little gasped. Four! They must be talking about my rating, he said to himself in a panic. Four! The golf clubs dropped from his numbed fingers. He must see his agent at once!

Twenty minutes later he parked his car in Beverly Hills, stalked into his agent's office and yelled, "The rating is falling!"

His agent wagent looked at him aghast. He could see his 10% slowly sinking behind the Bank of America. you sure?" cried agent wagent.

Comedian Little sobbed. "It's all over town. I just heard it on the golf course. What should I do?"

"What should you do?" echoed agent wagent. "Do what everybody does. Fire your writers."

"But I like my writers. They give me good scripts."

"That's no excuse," shouted agent wagent. "When the rating drops, the writers have got to go. Thus it has always been, and thus it shall always be."

Comedian Little and his agent wagent rushed over to talk to the writer whiters. The writer whiters were stand-ing around the room writing next week's script on the wall. There was plenty of paper, but they liked to confuse the minesement department. the mimeograph department.

"Stop," commanded Comedian Little. "Stop at once. The rating is falling!"

The writer whiters saw the accusing looks in the eyes of Comedian Little and agent wagent. "It's not our fault," they answered. "It's our director wector. He couldn't direct Milt Josefsberg to a bottle of ketchop. It's his fault that the rating is falling!"

Comedian Little, agent wagent, and writers whiters rushed over to talk to director weetor. Director weetor was busy casting. So they pulled the fishing rod out of his hands, and exclaimed, "The rating is falling!"

"Don't blame it on me." replied director wector. "It's producer wooser. It's his fault. He couldn't produce a smile on Liberace."

Comedian Little, agent wagent, writers whiters, and director wector rushed over to talk to producer wooser. Producer wooser was busy trying to cut down expenses. He was emptying his fountain pen into his water cooler. On a close shot, this would be the Blue Danube.

"The rating is falling," belowed Comedian Little. "Don't look at me." yelled back producer wooser. It's the advertising wadvertising agency wagency."

Comedian Little, agent wagent, writers whiters, director wector, producer wooser rushed over to the advertising wadvertising agency wagency-Dancer Wanser, Fitzgerald Witgerald, Sample Wample.

"The rating is falling," they all screamed.

advertising wadvertising agency wagency was thunderstruck. This was only natural for they handled the thunder account for the weather bureau.

"Speaking off the top of our heads," they answered, There's only one thing to do. We've got to pay a visit to

"The Wise Old Owl." the others all echoed in unison. Of course. That was it. She would know what to do when the rating was falling.

Comedian Little, agent wagent, writer whiters, director wector, producer wooser, advertising wadvertising agency wagency all rushed over to the Wise Old Owl.

The Wise Old Owl was sitting in a wise old tree by the wise old brook with a wise old look on her wise old face. "The rating is falling," they wept. "What shall we do?"

The Wise Old Owl sat for a moment in deep thought. She looked down at them, and asked, "Is your rating falling on Nielsen?"

They nodded grimly. "Is your rating falling on Trendex?"

They nodded again.

"Is your rating falling on Tri-City?"

Once more they nodded. "Aren't you high on any rating?" Comedian Little replied, "There is one rating on which we're No. 1. It's called, the Cemetery Rating Service in Death Valley. They contact two spirits each week by crystal ball." The Wise Old Owl seemed loct in thought once again

The Wise Old Owl seemed lost in thought once again, and then suddenly she pulled an egg out from under her and held it before them. "There's your answer, boys," and then suddenly she parted an egg out answer, boys," and held it before them. "There's your answer, boys," she said. She noticed the puzzled looks on their faces, and added, "Not one of you saw me lay this egg. Right?"



I let my breath out slowly, blowing the drapes off one indow. "My name is . . ." window.

#### H'ya, Tootsie!

"I don't care," she whispered fiercely, "take me." "I'm here on business," I scowled. She thrust her curves towards me. I dodged nimbly. Her firm, young, curving, jutting, soft body melted against mine, searing my new tweed suit. My hands gripped her bare shoulders and I kissed her hard. Her lips were moist and sweet and working hungrily. I pulled away and backhanded her across the jaw. "That'll teach you to chew Tootsie Rolls when I'm kissing you," I snarled.

She glued herself against me, her body hot, pulsating and sticky. I left-hooked her and she fell back, knocking over a sofa and two easy chairs. She got up at nine and came towards me, feinting with her hips. I appealed to

Danny Thomas ing in Beverly Hills where driving to the studio compares with the executive making the trip from home to office.

Or it could be that two-year run on Broadway in a hit show that allows for a season ticket to commute on the Long Island Railroad.

This year, that great playdate came to me in the mechan-ical medium of television. It's a show called "Make Room for Daddy" which got its title from my own wife, Rosemary.

As is probably the case in many families where the father travels on the road-selling buttons, girdles, dresses or, as in my case, humor-the child, or one of the children moves in with mother while daddy is away. In my case, the kids not only moved in with Rosemary, but they took over my dresser drawers and clothes closet.

Then, when I would phone home from the east coast to say I was flying in that night, Rosemary would round up the kids, point to the dresser drawers and closets and say:

"Make room for Daddy. He's arriving tonight." And that, too, was the true basis for the creation of my television show "Make Room for Daddy" which ABC-TV bought and immediately sold to American Tobacco and Speidel Watch Bands.

Now I can have dinner at home every night and breakfast with my children in the morning; and for 30 weeks, at least, I can brag about being a family man, a homebody, a father, and a husband. It was show business that took me away from my home—but not for too long.

they agreed. Right,

"I kept it pretty well hidden, and out of sight. That's what you've got to do. If you've laid eggs with Nielsen, Trendex, and Tri-City keep it a secret. In the words of my great-great-grandfather, Omar Owl, the sage of Griffith Park, 'Post Sequitus omnibus ex laxitellus.'" They gasped, "You mean—?" "Exactly," chuckled the Wise Old Owl. "Do what all

the other shows do. Only talk about the rating that favors you the most, and ignore all others."

#### Plenty In the Red

Two Commies run into each other on Broadway. One Two Commies run into each other on Broadway. One Commie says. "Where are you going with the suitcase?" Boris says: "Going to Russia. It's wonderful there. You get anything you want—wine, women. Why don't you go with me?" The other guy says: "America is the best place. However, write me. If it's good, I'll come over, if it's bad, I won't." So Boris says, "How can I write if it's bad? The Russians will kill me." So Igor says: "If it's good, write me in black ink. If it's bad, write me in red ink."

Weeks go by and finally Igor receives a letter from Boris: "Russia is the greatest place on earth. Here you can get anything you want. You can get vodka, you can get caviar, you can get women. You can get everything, but you can't get red ink." Joe E. Lewis.

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

**RADIO-TELEVISION** 

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**Credo In Broadcasting's Tomorrow** 

# **XYLOGIST, ANYONE?**

**By LESTER GOTTLIEB** (CBS Radio Program V.P.)

Situation comedy, according to such eminent research authorities as Oscar Katz and Harper Carraine, has always been the ingredient most likely to capture the maximum audience. Ever since Jack Benny launched his Maxwell and revealed himself as a penny-

pinching pixie, the comic who developed a running character and story has outlasted the lesssturdy monolo-

gist or revue-type entertainer. But in 20 years of broadcasting, this grim business of finding situations for

our high-priced performers has reached the danger point, hastened by the devouring casualty lists of TV. I don't know if Messrs. Robinson,

Weaver, and Weitman have had time to explore this problem but they may face 1954 without any "on-the-air" work for their new crop of funny

men and women.

Les Gottlieb To help them, I have had a pleasant but unrewarding chat with the U. S. Employment Service, renewed my subscription to The Chief, and even sped through the Sunday book supplement of the Times in order to devote

more time to perusing the situations wanted section. From A to Z, I have assiduously combed the various trades and crafts of our modern day world to find just one or two new jobs a comic might essay in situation comedy. The cupboard is bare.

Just to underscore this frightening problem let us take a brief, alphabetical look at all the occupations already accounted for:

Antiques: Although, the late, lamented Luigi sold art objects, he also covored all the jokes on immigrants, school teachers, Chicago, retail stores.

Bartender: Ed Gardner mopped up with this one from Palm Springs to Puerto Rico, but not enough to discour-age Jackie Gleason. I would say this field is definitely overcrowded.

overcrowded. Bus Driver: The aforementioned Jackie Gleason uses this job for the "Honeymooners" sketch. Comedian: Jack Benny clinched this one years ago, bût Danny Thomas hasn't let this bother him. Dancer: Ray Bolger. Dance Instructor: Kathryn Murray has a hammerlock hold here although there are some who will contend this

hold here, although there are some who will contend this is not "situation comedy." Ectoplasm: The Leo G. Carroll-Ann Jeffreys-Bob Sterling "Topper" series indicate they have a ghost of a chance with this one.

Fighters: Buttons, Skelton, Peter Lind Hayes have, from time to time, played this type, but can now expect pro-fessional competition from Rocky Graziano. Garment Biz: Jake Goldberg has this field all to himself.

Housewife: Jean Carroll, Harriet Hilliard, Gracie Allen,

Housewife: Jean Carroli, harriet filmate, Gracte Alen, all play the better halfs.
Investments: This was nice, virgin territory until Clarence Day's "Life With Father" preemed on CBS.
Judge: Joan Davis' breadwinner wears the black robe.
Kitchen Help: Unlikely anyone is going to dream up a better demestic them Baulab.

better domestic than Beulah.

Lawyer: Sam Aldrich is a lawyer and an expert on plagiarism. So be careful.

- Medicine: Dr. Christian and Dr. Kildare are not exactly comics, but they'll have you in surgery if you start
- muscling in. Nursing: See above and to make it more difficult, rumor hath it that since nurses on this planet have been ex-hausted, one network is busy developing a Space Nurse, an atomic Florence Nightingale.

Opera: Pinza tried this as Bonino. Anybody want to try again?

Publicist: Colonel Flack has staked this one out all for himself.

Professor: Mr. McNutley (Ray Milland) and Ronald Col-man (Halls of Ivy) go for academic laughs here.

Money Can Be Fun

Quizzes: Not necessarily situations but see Todman and Goodson under M for Millionaires.

Rhumba Band: Desi Arnaz conga'd this one into the upper brackets.

Secretary: My Friend Irma, Meet Millie, Private Secre-

tary. Teacher: Our Miss Brooks, Mr. Peepers.

Unstated: This is wide open. There are certain situation comedies where the audience is never told just what in hell the star does to earn his keep. (My Favorite HusThe Task Ahead: Making TV The 'Shining Center of the Home' And Helping Create A New Society of Adults

#### By SYLVESTER L. (PAT) WEAVER (NBC President)

I believe broadcasting, that is, radio and television, will prove to be the most important communications development in human history, after the development of lan-guage. I formerly believed that the invention of print was comparable in importance, but as time

Pat Weaver

evaluation. When broadcasting is examined by people who generally make little use of it, it runs into violent handling.

Nonetheless, if those critics of the service live in multiple-channel and multiple-station markets, like New

York, then selective choosing of radio and television serv-ice, almost around the clock, will give any individual a more complete and more valuable aggregate of information, insight, cultural opportunity, and entertainment than is available in any other phase of communications—printed media, theatre, motion pictures. In New York, of course, we have fine music available almost continuously. have coverage of the UN in session, and other services not normally available. The full output of four television and four radio networks complement the local product, and in those schedules there is far more than escape and diversion. And even in the escape and diversion, at NBC in any event, the producers of most programs suitable for the purpose, are constantly vigilant to choose those subjects and those characters which will serve to illuminate the problems of our times, and the character of our fundamental beliefs. In enterainment, they are alert to the opportunity ever to broaden the appeal of the theatre arts, the fine arts, and the arts of living itself. Nothing is easier than to quote our aspirations and direc-

tions in this area and review the latest slapstick comedy simultanneously, to indicate a lack of integration between purpose and program. But in our records we are demonstrating that our shows can serve purposes beyond diversion, and that gradually we are gaining a deeper feeling of obligation on the part of the elements in the industry for the tremendous influence we know we have on viewers and listeners.

#### World One Small Town

Basic to the reasons why we believe in broadcasting's impact, is the knowledge that we are making the entire world into a small town, instantly available, with the leading actors on the world stage known on sight or by voice to all within it. This creates a situation new in human his-tory in that children can no longer be raised within a family or group belief that narrows the horizons of the child to any belief pattern. There can no longer be a We-Group, They-Group, under this condition. Children cannot be brought up to laugh at strangers, to hate foreigners, to live as man has always lived before.

And this points the way to the opportunity of television to create a world of adults, instead of bigger children. Our world in electronics is extremely small, and the knowledge that all children will be citizens of it does not disturb most of us, even though we recognize that change will be necessary.

This, of course, makes it most important for us in our stewardship of broadcasting to remain within the "area of American agreement," with all the implications of that statement, including however some acknowledgment in our programming of the American heritage of dissent. Be-cause we in broadcasting generally operate as communica-tors, we have not been as perployed by the problems that tors, we have not been as perplexed by the problems that this situation creates as we may be in the future. We are newsmen, information relayers, the presenters of people of all kinds who have all kinds of opinions on all kinds of things. Our use of the medium to attempt to influence opinion, as newspapers do in their editorial columns, has been sparing. We recognize of course that selection is itself a responsibility, but generally the record of broad-casting has been excellent in this respect.

This fact also points the moral to those American fami-



I don't recall what the occasion was but somebody sent us a bouquet of flowers. Mama gasped when we opened the long box. There, wrapped in green waxed paper, were two dozen roses in a forest of ferns.

**By SAM LEVENSON** 

There were tears in her eyes as she placed the roses one at a time into a water pitcher with a slightly chipped handle. She smelled each flower individually, inhaled the perfume deeply, and held her breath for a moment in order to saturate her senses.

Then, as one under a spell, she walked slowly into her bedroom. When she came out again her hair was combed and she had on a new dress. The tone of her voice was subdued. She even asked me to please run down to the grocery store for an eighth-of-a-pound of pot cheese "from today."

The thrill of live roses in the house was too much for one person to bear. Mama picked out three of the long stemmed beauties, added a few ferns, and sent them to the next door neighbor.

As each one of the children came home from work the same scene was enacted over and over again: "Hey, where did these come from? Ain't they gorgeous?" "Don't touch," mama said, "just smell."

And smell we did. All evening long we kept pushing our noses into the flowers until we smelled like roses and the roses smelled like us.

As the days passed the flowers began to fade and mama began to philosophize on how human beings were like roses, and how soon we all wither away and die.

Finally each kid folded a rose between the pages of a book

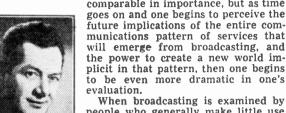
Mama went back to chopping liver, and she stopped saying "please."

Even today the support of the great companies that basic-ally financed the radio networks would give only a fraction of the resources necessary to network operation in television. Thus NBC-TV has from the beginning made efforts to broaden the base of support and get the resources on which to build the great network service.

But there was another phase of planning for the new patterns in television (and which is just as necessary in radio), that became apparent some years ago. Broadcasting has built its success in many ways, but the measurement of circulation in radio got into certain ruts, notably concentrating on per program ratings which influenced the development of radio use without most advertising people fully understanding what was happening. Because most agencies were run by men brought up on printed media during the 30's and even the 40's, radio had a bitter fight at the agency level for equal treatment with print. Media and research activity was directed largely by men not entirely sympathetic to radio, or so it always seemed to me

It is human, I suppose, to concentrate on what you have and how to improve that, instead of thinking about what you really want, and how to get it. Now most radio opera-tions were built up with certain habits of use and pro-cedures that the agencies and clients finally got comfortable with, and when television came along, they wanted those same known values because that seemed the way least likely to shake their known security. It was and is hard to get a fresh approach, to sell goods and services on

the most efficient basis possible. But in our NBC-TV planning we recognized that what-ever the wishes of the individuals and companies trained in radio, that great network service television could only be offered under a new plan, and that well-spent adver-tising dollars should not be focused by single companies against single audiences. There are the great hit excep-tions of course, but this brought up another point. A Col-gate Comedy Hour (originally co-sponsored with Frigidaire), was great value for the several products that could reach big weekly, huge monthly, and unbelievable seasonal audiences (99% cumulative Nielsen last season), and therefore it made sense to allocate the time among an advertiser's own products if it could be afforded. But this also means that several independently-owned products can and will pay far more for the opportunity to reach the same audience than would a single company, because it is actually more valuable to the smaller companies. Small companies never had exposure to the great nighttime, allset, all-family circulation of the radio hits, and they got their first opportunity in television on NBC. What happens when the tremendous audiences are given the word on a product that has real appeal in "nightime attraction" television is known to most of my readers. The values explode the business. And once we have taken the impliand organi for it hat all national advertisers are consistently called on with a consistent message of how broadcasting is best used by any group of products, within the fantastic mosaic of usages on a well-planned broadcasting service, we will have support for our industry that beggars the past.



Ozzie Nelson, etc.) George Burns, Ventriloquist: Jimmy Nelson, Edgar Bergen, Paul Win-chell. Also puppets like Kukla and Ollie, the Bairds. Woodwork: The papa on "Mama" is a carpenter. Youth: Junior Miss, Corliss Archer, My Little Margie. Zoology: Zoo Parade has a corner on all our furred and feathered friends.

As you will note only one letter in the alphabet-Xremains wide open. A check of Webster's finds six occupations under this classification:

Xaverian: Jesuit missionary priest; X-Ray technician: one skilled in the use of X-Rays; Xylophonist: one who plays the xylophone; Xylographer: wood engraver; Xylologist: expert in woods; Xylotomist: one who prepares wood for examination by microscope.

Slim pickings? Well, frankly, I just can't picture Jerry Lester or Jan Murray as Xaverians, but how about a story about an xylologist? Who's available? Morey Amster-dam Al Bernia? Weit a minute Who's available? dam, Al Bernie? Wait a minute. What about Jack Carter? He's young, he's talented, he projects. Listen to this, guys

Jack is a young xylologist (that's a wood expert, schmo). His boss gets a big order from a ventriloquist to make dumnies for the Christmas season. Jack has to work overtime. His wife wants Jack to ask the boss for a raise. They decide to have the boss over to dinner. But they get the dates mixed up, then the wood for the dummies is 

lies who do not wish to participate fully in the general area of American agreement, for they must designate broadcasting use to their children, even as they now do book selection, picture going, theatre going, and other experiences.

The great network operation that can help create a new society of adults over the decades ahead must do so with tremendous resources. It must not allow a degeneration of its service so that the television-radio set becomes an amusement box. To us at NBC, the set must become "the shining center of the home." And this it can be, with color and magnetic tape, with world wide news service, symphony orchestra and opera companies, with telementaries of still undreamed magnitude, with entertainment that in part becomes highly literate, that serves every segment of our population with programming that is valuable and rewarding.

#### It Takes Vast Resources

This means building a business with a very high gross income, and a high profit potential. For it is only when one has a rich, prosperous business that one can afford to expand the elements of public service, and that one can afford general activity for program improvement not immediately indispensable to commercial success.

To be able to afford the great network service, and realize the potentials of television, calls for building an operation that differs from the former radio network operation.

#### **Buying Frequency**

When buyers of "impulse" products with low brand loyalty can buy frequency and repetition across the week; when small products can combine in related product advertisements to be placed against proper audiences; when research profiles audiences at given periods, with audience composition and definition analysis; when no campaign breaks without special broadcasting campaigns that go into selling-in-depth and other modern marketing concepts-when these and many other planned steps are taken in network broadcasting, then we will have a healthier business that delivers more effective circulation at lower cost, a wider range of uses to meet a wider range of advertiser needs; and resting on our prosperity will be a pro-gram service that fulfills the potentials of broadcasting as a civilizer as well as an entertainer and as a salesman.

Because the need of the nation is for the great network service, it will be a cause for real concern to opinion makers in this country if the short-range objectives of any group force television into a fragmentized service. Pres-

(Continued on page 104)

# Life With Father - - TV Style - - Greatest Libel Ever Committed On Man

#### By CARROLL CARROLL

Hollywood. This may be taken as a solid effort to register a very strong beef against the way any number of and the result of this watching would seem to indicate that pertelevision shows, of the type known as "family"



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per-porin sist traying а who group who comprise the very spine of our society, a group that is the corps of our culture. a group without

Carroll Carroll

whom even Motherhood would vanish from the wholesome American scene. That group is The American Father.

There is no real reason why I should appoint myself the defend-er of The American Father and ambitiously, graciously and selflessly assume the dangers, fears and panoply of a warrior in his behalf. Yet, in the absence of any other volunteers, willing to do battle in defense of this obviously set-up Neb, I'm moved to rivet on my battered old college armor. rummage through the hall closet for the engraved mace I used so successfully in the varsity jousts. and enter The Lists for the Little Man who goes to work everyday-iaden with errands, and a slight cold-earns a living, buys a home. dresses his wife and children, and, himself, wears his old suit two years too long in order to provide some insurance as a hedge against his sudden withdrawal from this veil of smog. I'd do as much for a dog. But dogs don't need me. Dogs have the ASPCA. The American Father has no such sturdy backing. He is a "loner." a solibacking. He is a "ioner." a soli-tary little under-stander in an acrobatic act called "The Family." bearing on his patient shoulders not only the pyramided dead-weight of innumerable top-mount-ing "dear ones." but, also, the salty irritation of national ridicule.

To take it from the top, the national attitude toward Dad today is as different as that taken toward his opposite number, Mom, as Winston Churchill's speech, country, appearance and politics contrast with those of Georgi Malenkov. In case this fails to make my point, there is as much difference in the way Mother is portrayed before the bar of American justice, and the treatment accorded to Father, as there is-to quote a score of bores—between day and night, black and white, wrong and right or Amos and Andy.

Mom is the all-knowing purveyor of good-counsel, the magnificent solver of the insoluble. the benevolent dictator—interested only in the greatest good for the greatest number, the supreme arbitrator, the grand jury, the box-ing commission, the FCC and Marilyn Monroe all rolled into one. While, Dad? Well, Dad is just rolled. Generally by Mom.

#### Dad a Real Gone Dummy

Dad is the know-nothing, who supplies the loot that buys the gro-ceries. Dad is the Dunderhead who

the hearthstone, the Gallup of su-+ burban domestic relations. This is by no means the case. watched television for a few nights. haps Christine Jorgenson, nee George, was doing some pilot-thinking when he abdicated from The Masculine Sex.

Clearly men are going downhill to nowhere; at least nowhere that looks like any desirable place to a dispassionate, impartial watcher of television families in action. TV's tawdry little evaluations of solid the family-life that is the backbone of any nation; TV's dreary little skirls on the doodlesack of domesticity; TV's weekly sackings of the sacred sanctuary of tomorrow—the American home—can lead only to one rational conclusion. The rule of The Amazon is nearer than we think

#### Man's Inhumanity

It's hard to understand why this is, in view of the fact that most of the television material is written by men. It's difficult to explain their mass masochistic attack on their own gender. True, the writers of every television family series are, theoretically, appealing to the vanity and cupidity of the distaff division of our civilization. But how long will it be before all women rise up in resentment against the implication that they have been foolish enough, or bat-eyed enough. to accept as their life's companions creatures of as little wisdom, skill. wit or talent as the ones they see depicted to be the typical speciefather on our country's television screens?

Is it not possible that the spurious characterization of Father as The Eternal Knucklehead by almost all the Family-Type shows on TV could be, in a subtle way, undermining the basic social structure? For this treatment tends to build up in men a resentment against women that-if carried to its ultimate possibility—could re-sult in race suicide, while, at the same time undermining women's own confidence in themselves by showing them in close alliancenot to say in love—with the variety of Kronk-Konk the average man turns out to be on TV when he enters his home and answers to the name of Father.

In great concern I view this parade of farces that depicts the breadwinner as merely a crumb, the medicine man of the family as a little pill, the family's big wheel as a flat tire.

The nation has survived its epi-



SHIRLEY EGGLESTON RADIO • TELEVISION BROADWAY • SCREEN LExington 2-1100

demic of Gracie Allens. It is re-covering from a bad attack of Corliss Archers and a severe case of Henry Aldriches. But can it fight off the psychiatric dangers inherent in the premise that every American Father is a Pea-Brained Booby the moment he leaves the mysterious fastness of his office and enters his home, the edifice in which he should be master of all he surveys? How can a man be a successful comedian and a cornball father? How can a man be a wise and reputable judge and a jerkhusband? You can go right down the line of trades. professions, skills and arts and in each find some TV father who earns enough to keep a pleasant roof over his brood, but hasn't enough stuff between his ears to help his kids with their home-work, solve some minor problem for his wife, turn on the electric light, use the telephone, make a simple logical de-duction, ask a sensible question or perform any variety of casual domestic task without causing flood, fire, disaster and frequently threat of divorce?

I predict that the first good, solid domestic or family-type situationcomedy show that hits the TV network, in which the father, as well as the mother, are depicted as possessing all their marbles; and in which the progeny behave as intelligent off-spring of this happy association of two rational people,

### HOW TO FAIL IN By DR. ALFRED N. GOLDSMITH

There may be people afraid of succeeding in UHF television. They needn't be. Here are some simple rules which should positively ensure failure. They're as reliable as the usual methods of making enemies and annoying people.

Of course, to succeed in UHF-TV disregard these rules. In fact, the opposite should be done. But there are the rules for making a mess of a UHF-TV venture.

First locate your station in very mountainous ountry. Place the station down in a valley country. around the corner from any populated area so that it is thoroughly shielded. Never place the station in generally flat country, or in a high spot overlooking such country.

Select a locality in which there are many high steel buildings crowded together around the sta-tion in locations which will shield the waves from all the homes in that neighborhood. Avoid



Dr. A. N. Goldsmith placing the station in a town mainly having

wooden frame buildings. Put the station to one side of the cluster of homes to be served. And preferably locate it at a low point from which none of the receiving aerials can be seen. Avoid a good central location in the middle of the residential area. And be sure not to place the transmitter aerial on the top of a high tower overlooking that area.

Be thoroughly penny-wise. Select the lowest power transmitter which any manufacturer can provide. In this way you can be sure that only weak signals will be received with considerable noise and blurring of the picture. High power transmiters which will produce strong signals and clear pictures should of course never be selected.

In picking a town and a location, select one where the population is scattered over an ernormous area with only one or two houses per square mile. Further, pick a place for the transmitter where the houses are farthest apart and far away from the transmitter. **Concentrated** population near the transmitting station is very objectionable, and might even lead to financial success.

Also, select a city which already has a number of well established VHF stations and a powerful competing UHF station as well. Above all, never go into a town where there are no stations or only UHF sta-tions. Serious competition can thus be ensured.

#### V-HF: Have Fun

Of course poverty-stricken localities with few people and little purchasing power are always desirable as UHF location. Since advertis-ing in such a neighborhood cannot bring results, the advertisers will avoid your new station and thus ensure failure.

Network affiliation should be definitely avoided. If it is available in the town you have selected, better try another place. The outstanding network programs might please your audience, build up your business, and force success on you.

In going into any neighborhood, be sure that no one of your staff or management is known to any of the local people. By forcing strangers on the population and by keeping aloof from them, dependable antagonisms can be created. This is always helpful in leading to failure.

It is of course important not to have sufficient funds available even to complete the station. But if this cannot be done, at least avoid having any surplus funds to carry the station over the initial buildup period and to provide for unforeseen emergencies. Since emergencies gen-erally arise, lack of reserves is a dependable way of achieving bankruptcy.

By following all of these rules completely and faithfully, failure is TV stations are cautioned accordingly.

will get such a high rating the show will have to go off the air either because the sponsor won't SRA to Step Up will get such a high rating the dare monkey with the format for fear of spoiling the rating, or because the rating is so high the show sells so much merchandise the factory can't fill the orders.

# 'Spot Crusade'

A station advisory board to help set policy on a strengthened "Crusade for Spot Radio" has been established by John Blair, prexy of the Station Reps Assn. At the first meeting of the new board skedded for Jan. 12, a key item on the agenda will be a proposition that the "Crusade"—aimed at upin which case the advisory group will become part of the corpora-tion's board of directors along with the present directors of SRA. Advisory board consists of Harry Burke, KFAB. Omaha; Robert B. Jones Jr., WFBR, Baltimore: Les-lie L. Kennon, KWTO, Spring-field, Mo.; Richard H. Mason, WPTF, Raleigh; Philip Merryman, WICC, Bridgeport; William B. DH. Boston F. Phillips, WFBL, Syracuse; Odin S. Ramsland, KDAL, Duluth, and Ben Strouse, WWDC, Washington, D. C.



monthly meets the payments the first and second mortgages. Dad is the Dope who does the dishes in the evening because all he does all day is sit in a quiet office. Pop is the mental-pauper whose every gibbering effort to make sense at family discussions meets with hoots of derision from the newest and tiniest member of the domestic circle. There is little that this poor "noodnick" can un-derstand. He can easily be made a dupe by either of his teen-aged children; and his wife, in con-spiracy with the merest pre-pubes-cent toddler, can best him at any battle of wits. In fact, Mom is always blueprinting some cul-de-sec into which poor old Pane can sac into which poor old Papa can topple to his embarrassment-generally financial. Pop. in short, is always "Target for Tonight."

Anyone interested in my authority for these sweeping statements might assume that I had just completed an elaborate survey of the American home; that I had, in effect, become the Dr. Kinsey of



DINAH SHORE

WRH

#### Fremantle's Chiller For Spanish Markets

With Spanish language a grow-ing factor in American broadcast-ing, Fremantle Overseas Radio, which produces a Spanish version of "Superman" for American and Spanish markets, has come out with a half-hour mystery series starring Arturo de Cordova. Series, "Los Perseguidos" ("The Persecuted"), consists of 13 open-end half-hour shows adapted from scripts by Lawrence Klee, and stars de Cordova as player and

host. Fremantle's soaper series based on Mexican films. "Cinta de Plata" ("Silver Screen"), has already been sold to WHOM, N. Y.

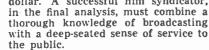
Syndication Biz Poses Multiple Problems But Vidpix Impresarios Are Confident That Out of '54 Will Come Some Clear-Cut Patterns And A Plushy Future

#### **By ROBERT W. SARNOFF**

(Editor's Note: The following article was contributed by Mr. Sarnoff while he was serving as NBC vice presi-dent in charge of the Film Division. He has since been elected executive V.P. of the network.)

Just is in the early days of motion picture industry, a few major distributors and producers arose from the con-fusion to give it stability, so in the present early period of film syndication stability is coming from organizations which are willing and able to assume responsibility for programming of quality, and to meet the complete needs of broadcasters, advertisers and the public.

A successful syndicator will be one to whom local stations and advertisers can turn for a variety of program needs and the multiple services that have become an integral part of programming supported by the advertising dollar. A successful film syndicator, in the final analysis, must combine a



A year ago there were 110 TV sta-tions in 64 cities. Today there are more than 300 stations in over 200 cities. Syndicated film programs are filling a large part of these new pro-gramming hours which cannot be filled by network originated shows.

Robt. Sarnoff

It is this demand which film producers and distributors—large and small alike—are now seeking to meet,

and from which a pattern is beginning to develop. This emerging pattern of the industry has already made it ap-parent that enormous advantages accrue to the public, the television station, and the advertiser through the use of good syndicated film programs. The growing television public is given an opportunity to see the fine first-run pro-grams (like "Douglas Fairbanks Presents" and "Inner Sanctum"), as well as repeats of success series like "Vic-tory at Sea" and "Badge 714" (formerly "Dragnet") which ran originally on the TV networks. Syndicated film en-ables the TV station to fill its local program hours with entertainment and information of a kind not available through local origination. As a result, the whole quality level of TV programming throughout the nation is being raised.

#### **Catering to Local Clients**

The local advertiser, with a limited budget, has now found a way to use the TV medium, which he can no longer afford not to use. Syndicated film makes it possible for him to buy programming to fit his pocketbook and sales needs. A regional advertiser or multiple-market sponsor, can through syndicated film, concentrate his advertising dollars in the areas where the largest proportion of his sales are made. A national advertiser can supple-ment his basic TV coverage by means of syndicated film series.

It has also become evident that there is more to syndicating a film program than for a salesman to go out into the field with a can of film under his arm. The true syndi-cator's task and responsibility begins with the sale and continues long after. It takes substantial financial and physical resources, as well as advertising know-how, to convert a film series into an effective advertising and sell-ing tool. The costs of selling, printing, shipping, advertising and merchandising a TV film series add up to a considerable sum.

#### **Cornerstone for Stability**

Despite the laments of certain self-appointed critics, network programming has raised the quality of television as a national medium to a relatively high level—one which certainly compares favorably with magazines, newspapers, books, and other mass media. Syndicated films have the potential to raise the remaining available program time to an equally high level.

With the need for quality film programming so appar-ent, it is obvious that one of the cornerstones for stability in the industry is the rerun, which makes possible the local showing-at a local cost-of programs of the highest qual-Although film syndication is already a multimillion itv. dollar business, much of this investment remains to be recovered. Few film series made specifically for syndication can recover all their costs on their initial run. It is ble for a really fine series—which may cost as much as \$1,000,000 to do so. The rerun, therefore, becomes economically important.

stability in the syndication industry in pricing. A few syndicators feel that the sale is the thing—at any price. Some film organizations, upon entering a market, quote varying prices to stations and to agencies for the same program, often resulting in bargains and deals. Unless these tactics are eliminated, the public and the industry will suffer. The greatest threat facing the syndication business today is price cutting by producers and distribu-tors in an effort to salvage unsuccessful film properties or to raise needed cash. For this reason the NBC Film Division has dedicated itself to the maintenance of a stable price structure for all its properties and thereby provide sound business practices for the industry.

It is no secret that quality and commercial success often go hand-in-hand. Hollywood took a long step toward lessening its recent travails by producing excellent movies which turned out to be boxoffice successes. The future of film syndication depends upon this same kind of winnowing process. The slipshod production, thrown together by a short-term promoter who gets out with a few fast dollars, will eventually gather dust in a film-storage vault. The future of the industry depends on those organizations which can combine the best in showbusiness with an honest fulfillment of obligation to the advertiser and the public.

#### **By EDWARD D. MADDEN**

#### (V.P., General Manager, MPTV's Film Syndication Div.)

A year ago, at VARIETY'S Anniversary time, heated discussions had been raging between vocal groups, as to whether the preponderance of future TV broadcasting would be on film or done "live" within the four walls of a

studio or stage. The basic point both groups were missing was that the viewing public wasn't particularly interested in the mechanical means used to bring their favorite shows to them on their home screens. Researchers International Answer and StatementsImage: Statement and Statement an

house." The tabulated ARB score 12 months ago stood at 8-to-2 in favor of "live" programs.

Now, a year later, the ratio is 6-to-4 in the Top 10 roster, with the first three shows, topping the list, representing the TV-film industry—"I Love Lucy," "Dragnet" and "You Bet Your Life." "Our Miss Brooks" garnered eighth position in the poll and every indication has it this show will continue to build in audience appeal and imwould not know the difference most of the time, were it not for the usual film credits, the public's choice in the matter of film vs. "live" continues to prove the Show's the Thing.

The output of all TV programming on film during 1953 was, of course, substantially larger than in the previous 12-month period. During 1954, about 45% of all TV programming will be made on film. Filmmakers will be turning out 120 hours per month of completed TV films. The crying need for good stories will continue and some of the public's favorite TV talent will constantly be on the lookout for new material for films to be made in the immeforce of the second sec

#### \$30,000,000 Program

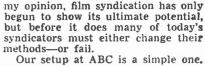
This puts the problem squarely up to the film syndica-tion business to bring network calibre shows to the film syndication field. We at MPTV are doing this through a three-year \$30,000,000 production program. For example, this winter, one of radio's perennial favorites, Ed Gard-ner, is bringing "Duffy's Tavern" to TV via films. "Flash Gordon," the 20-year-old King Features Syndicate charac-ter, makes his debut on TV, filmed expressly for video ter, makes his debut on TV, filmed expressly for video audiences. Ella Raines, starring as "Janet Dean, Registered Nurse," offers a dramatic series on film, and Drew Pearson's "Washington Merry-Go-Round" brings the world famous Washington reporter to TV in weekly, 15-minute telefilms. "Paris Precinct," costarring Louis Jourdan and Claude Dauphin, based on true stories of the French police, will be filmed on actual locations throughout France.

programs will be remembered as the "Crystal Set Era of TV"—it had its place, but aren't the improvements spec-tacular?

**RADIO-TELEVISION** 

#### **By GEORGE T. SHUPERT** (V.P. In Charge of ABC Film Syndication)

Film Syndication is today a multi-million dollar business. It is the means whereby the local sponsor can buy a television program of a quality equal to that of the top spending national advertiser at a price he can afford. In



The Flm Syndication Division is treated seriously and given equal status with the other four major divisions of the network. We have been granted our independence from the other network divisions in order that we will not end up as a dumping grounds for unsuccessful network film programs. Nor must we favor

Geo. Shupert

either our five owned television stations or our affiliateswe pursue a strictly first come, first serve policy. This is very important if we are to successfully compete with other syndicators.

We are fully cognizant of the fact that television has up to now known nothing but a sellers market, and that this is going to change one of these days—perhaps soon. We believe that in the ensuing battle for the advertiser's dollar we will need quality product, fairly priced, offered to stations and advertisers by a quality sales force which is both able and willing to render intelligent service to the film buyer.

Our two initial offerings—"Racket Squad" and "The layhouse"—are each tops in their class. They have al-Playhouse"ready proved their worth on a network basis and can be performed several more times on a local basis before they will have played to their ultimate audience. We will have other top quality film shows available—some of them first runs and others which have been top rated network programs.

To offer these on a local and regional basis, we have already built the nucleus of a top quality sales organiza-tion These men have been chosen because they know both the local advertiser's problems and the local station's problems. They are not order takers nor are they ordinary film salesmen. Each man is expected to know all there is to know about his product. In addition he must possess ex-pert knowledge of the television film business—its new developments and its various problems. Thus he can offer his alignets much more than culity product along. We can his clients much more than quality product alone. He can render a much needed counseling service.

We feel that our price structure must be realistic both to the buyer and the seller. The buyer must get more than his money's worth. The seller must get enough to allow for a fair profit and a continuance of his operation on a quality level. Certainly no useful purpose will be served by the film syndicator cutting prices so low as to operate at a loss. We do not subscribe to the policy of selling at a loss now in the hopes that some day we may be able to get what our product is worth. We think we are entitled to a profit now. We also know that no business will last long with shoddy product and we want none of it.

We are extremely bullish in the future of films for television. We feel that one day the profit from film syndi-cation operation will represent a pretty healthy slice of ABC's overall profit.

#### By FRANK WISBAR

Hollywood. It is a truism, but it is good to restate it once more: There is no difference between the horde of cavemen listening to a gossip-carrier with news of the neighboring tribe, or the masses in the streets of Athens entranced by the stage plays or their Greek masters of the drama, or ladies sitting on the balconies of royal courts enchanted by the tales of wandering minnesingers, or our theatre-



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The television audience, furthermore, is growing at the rate of 500,000 homes a month (or about 1,300,000 viewers). Reruns are actually first runs to these viewers. Statistics show that there are literally millions who miss even the highest rated episodes of the highest rated series the first time around. Reruns are first runs to these viewers, too.

When popular TV film shows are repeated, they almost invariably reach a larger audience than they did on the first run. A six-city ARB survey shows the "Victory at Sea" is currently reaching more than twice as many homes on its second run as it did on its first.

From the advertiser's point of view, a rerun is desirable because he gets a program that is a proved success, and one whose sales-effectiveness is a matter of record. And he buys it at a price that makes it a particularly good advertising investment.

The validity of reruns does not mean, however, that every film program should necessarily continue to be shown just because it was produced. By exercising careful discrimination, by selecting only the best programs for syndication, TV film distributors can perhaps do more than anyone else to enhance the quality of TV programming on a national scale.

A further and extremely important factor for achieving

Advertisers who spend tremendous amounts of money to bring news, information, education and entertainment to the consumer public, are conscious of the latter's preferences for filmed programs. They are realizing more and more, day by day, that by filming a program, giving the producers a less limited area in which to film their shows, as against the confinement of four walls of a studio or theatre, they can attain higher ratings at a lower cost in Research has proven this just as surely as the long run. it has classified the selections of favorite shows in the more than 25,000,000 out of 47,000,000 homes that have sets.

A year from now, at VARIETY'S 49th Anniversary time, the old, film vs. "live" argument may give every indication of becoming a thing of the past. The ratio of the Top 10 Shows of 1954 may well stand at 8-to-2 in favor of filmstranger things have happened! For its 50th, or Golden Anniversary, VARIETY'S TV-Film muggs can look to a clean sweep in the video field-it'll be 10-to-0 and "live"

going audiences, or our radio listeners or our television viewers, when it comes to a story. They have listened and they will listen, as long as it is a good story.

From Euripides to Fred Coe, from Mozart to Felix Jackson and from Shakespeare to Robert Montgomery, one eternal truth prevails: the story is the thing!

What makes a good story?

The answer is difficult.

Every human being has the irresistible desire to belong. He is gregarious and interested in his neighbors because, deep in his heart, he feels insecure. Since he does not know from where he comes and where his destiny will force him to go, he is insecure as a matter of course. With insatiable curiosity, he will listen to the tales about people and their experiences, always hoping that maybe, one day, they will give him a hint about the true purpose and the impenetrable mystery of his life. If he hears that tragedy befell a neighbor, he crosses himself, grateful that he was spared this time; if he learns about the jackpot luck of the man next door, his desire is aroused to equal the other's success. It gives him courage to go on. The ex-periences others make and talk about (by way of stories) influence his outlook on life, and influence his decisions.

Therefore: A good story is one which gives the largest mass of people the strongest feeling of security within the sector of their own existence, within the orbit of their

(Continued on page 104)

# **How To Make Wince-Meat Out of a TV News Show**

#### By JOHN DALY

When VARIETY asked me to write a piece for its 48th anniversary issue on how to put on a good TV news show I heartily agreed, as I have some rather definite ideas on the subject. But when the suggested length for the article



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was mentioned I quickly cast about for a new subject, one that could be treated adequately within the space limitation.

Hence the above title. For when a television newsman is pleased with a show he has just done-or seen, he would have to go to great length and detail to explain exactly why it was a good show, since so many factors enter into achieving a happy blend of the right words and the right pic-But when a news programtures. his own or somebody else's-makes him wince, it is easy to tell why. Here

John Daly are a few examples.

One of the gentlemen who can make wince-meat out of a TV news show is the gimmick-crazy editor or TV expert. He sits in his office with his shoulders hunched expert. He sits in his office with his shoulder's hunched watching the show and says it hasn't got any movement. "We have to put movement into it. Why don't we have our boy sit on the corner of the desk? Then he can say, "Good evening. How are you?" and he can walk around the desk, sit down, and he can do the news. It gives it pace: it gives it movement." The fact that the move-ment is meaningless doesn't bother him at all. This addies ment is meaningless doesn't bother him at all. This addiction to movement for movement's sake alone is some-thing that those of us who appear before the cameras and who have editorial supervision in some degree over television news programs have to fight.

There is another device the gimmick-lovers like even There is another device the gimmlcK-lovers like even better. The TV reporter is sitting down at a desk and working very hard; trying to make sense out of a compli-cated story. Now he must get up and walk across what seems like several hundred yards of studio to some carts or maps, talking as he walks. He hasn't been making things very clear anyway, but with the chart—and the hike—he can confuse the audience so completely it won't here what he is talking about know what he is talking about.

#### Still-Very Still

One of the initial mistakes made in television news was One of the initial mistakes made in television news was the still. When you were given a TV news program to do, you looked at the film material that was available, and then before you reached for a gun, you remembered there were still pictures. So you reached for them instead. After you had used them, you sometimes wished you had there is such reached for the gun. As a rule of thumb, there is such static quality to a still picture on television that you do harm by its use, unless it is of transcendental importance. If it is the only available depiction of a great disaster, and you use it with a frank admission that it is there because you have not yet got the film which you hope to have in a few hours, and "this story is so big that we thought you would like to see in this still picture what the scene looks like," then you have a valid reason for using it. But just to put a still picture on, especially if it is the face of one of our national leaders with his mouth open and one eye half shut, does neither your show nor his career any good.

There is another obsession which is sometimes found among producers and managers-mostly among those whose mothers went to see "The Front Page." They will move onto a television news set and say, "The trouble with this is it doesn't look like a city room. Take off your with this is it doesn't look like a city room. Take on your coats, roll up your sleeves, open your neckties. Then, it will look like a newsroom." Unhappily, the victims who have been so instructed, particularly if they happen to be conservative and neat in their dress, will feel silly and act that way when they get on the television screen.

There is another aspect of gimmickry that really is not a gimmick, but it is something that can cause trouble. That is the interview. If you are searching, as you often have to do, rather frantically for material to cover the period of a TV news program, you will turn to the inter-Now, the interview requires the most rigid self-ine. An interview properly used and given a proper discipline. amount of time can become a very useful ingredient in television news coverage. But an interview used to no other purpose than to fill three minutes, or to no other purpose than to put on the screen the physical person of somebody whose name happens to be in the news, does no good to the program or to the person who is put on. It is a reasonably good concept. I think, that interviews in television news presentation very properly belong on the half hour or hour weekly review. There an interviewee can be used to support the basic ingredients of a story which have been previously drawn together and developed.

That Change of Pace

leagues and I owe a large vote of thanks to these intrepid and quick-witted lensmen.

In the infant days of TV news reporting, the cameraman was often an old newsreel man whose only concern was the picture. Sound to him was an abhorrent thing which, with its ugly microphones and wires, only made it harder to get the pretty picture he wanted to take. He always looked for action, whether or not it was newsworthy or even made sense. The water skier was to him the superb story, because it was the superb picture. The fact that he had shot it every March 12 since he was old enough to hold a camera did not detract in any way from its excellence in his mind.

On the other hand, a Congressman announcing a resolution to impeach the President was, in the mind of the transplanted newsreel man, a big bore, because it was a bad picture. And in the early days, before cameramen learned the requirements of the new medium, there were several incidents comparable to the classic tale of the cub reporter sent to cover a ball game who returned with no story. His explanation was that the stands had collapsed, killing several hundred people, and the game had been called off-therefore he had no story. Today, fortu-nately, with cameramen trained to recognize what is news and what is not, and with cameramen and reporters working together as teams, there is little danger of their returning from an assignment with their film unexposed because the event they were sent to cover was cancelled by a cataclysm.

Yes, there have been, and still are, a lot of problems, and a lot of egregious errors have been committed. But TV news is hardly out of the crawling stage as yet. We who are in it are growing up with it and learning our lessons the hard way, because there is no school to go to. The reason it has matured as fast as it has, and is getting better all the time, is that it is highly competitive. Each network strives to get the news on first, and always to show picture. This sometimes leads to half-baked coverage, but as technical problems are overcome one by one, as the period between the time something happens and the time it can be put on the air grows continually shorter, and as the people engaged in TV news reporting, spurred by the healthy competitive urge to "get there fustest with the bestest," constantly find new and better ways of doing their jobs, television comes closer and closer to realizing its full potential as a news medium.

## **Getting To Know You**

#### -By MAGGI MCNELLIS:

"Getting to know you, getting to know all about you ... getting to like you" . . . these words by Rodgers & Hammerstein accurately describe the feeling of the TV viewer regarding the most fascinating personalities of the day. Years ago, film press agents desper-

ately tried to keep a star's happy marriage a secret from the public. A wedding ring, it was believed, de-tracted from the glamour of the idol of the people. It was standard pro-cedure for a star to be mysterious, wear dark glasses and issue statements through the publicity departments of the studios . . . carefully worded statements that had the approval of the big boss.

Television has changed all that.

Maggi McNellis Each time a viewer switches on his TV set, a personal invitation is ex-tended to him to get to know his favorite film star, baseball player or symphony conductor. On any number of programs he can see and hear these people sitting around, answering questions and giving their personal opinions on a variety of subjects.

I was amazed to discover that several hundred traffic policemen were delighted when it was brought out on "Leave It to the Girls" that Aldo Ray is a former cop. The Aldo Ray of the film, "Miss Sadie Thompson," is quite different from Aldo Ray, the traffic cop. Here was regular guy with whom these boys in blue could identify themselves and they liked it!

When Robert Wagner revealed on my WABC-TV show that for the picture "Beneath The 12 Mile Reef" he had to dye his hair and get a permanent, a score of male viewers wrote, "I guess I shouldn't complain just because my wife wants me to get a haircut every week. Look at that poor Wagner guy . . . a permanent." Bob had established a rapport with these fellows. From now on, they will be sympathetic towards him instead of resenting his good looks. Interview programs tend to humanize stars and that seems to be the order of the day.

Radio also plays a great role along these lines. I interviewed Deborah Kerr on radio and she spoke charmingly of her 20-month-old daughter who is the same age as my Meg. Listening to her you realized that she is truly a devoted mother. And what an effect this had on other mothers who sometimes take a dim view of "actresses." They wrote, "I saw Deborah Kerr as that unfaithful wife in 'From Here to Eternity' and I sure was surprised to hear her talk about her own little girl. I got quite a dif-ferent idea of her." Another letter contained about the same words but this mother mentioned "Tea and Sym-pathy," the Broadway play in which Deborah is Because of her frank answers to questions every lising. tener would like to ask, these women were getting to know Miss Kerr as a friend. Most men know what Roy Campanella can do when he is catching for the Brooklyn Dodgers. But it probably wasn't until Ed Murrow took a camera into the Campanella home that they knew that the first mitt Roy ever used is prominently displayed in his basement rumpus room. And, although most people would imagine that Leopold Stokowski has a magnificent grand piano in his penthouse, few of them knew that he cherished a large and not very musical Chinese gong until Mr. Murrow gave them an intimate glimpse of the Stokowski apartment. TV shows these fabulous personalities as they are. What they say is what they think . . . not what someone else wrote for them. What they wear is their personal choice . not what was designed for a fictitious screen character. And, as we are all loyal to what is familiar to us, so does the viewer become more loyal the better he gets to know a star. Television is the greatest Friendship Club ever found!

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

#### You Ain't a Pro **By JOHN CAMERON SWAYZE**

I have, I suppose, a zany twist to my mind that sparks an interest in the darndest things, among them that monumental bogey of show business, stage fright. I am something of a student of this particular form of jitters. And since the old saw, "misery loves com-



pany," has the ring of sterling, I have found one comforting facet to the malady. Even those you don't sus-pect suffer from it. The only excep-tions I ever heard of are Ethel Merman and Lilli Palmer. Miss Mer-man's, "Why should I be scared, I know my lines, don't I?" is an all-time classic.

One evening during the period I was on the Sunday Goodyear Play-house a member of the stage crew summed up with accuracy during rehearsal:

"Before I was in this business I used to wonder how all those people on my TV screen could be so calm. don't wonder anymore, I know. They're all just scared to death."

There is one comforting school of thought made up of those who say the only time you need to worry is when you don't have stage fright. It was Jimmy Durante who said: "When you get that nervous feeling, then you know you're going to be good."

I didn't know Al Jolson but I remember O. O. McIn-tyre's line that he suffered the backstage jitters like every-one else but, when finally onstage, he clicked with machine gun-like rapidity. I can testify to that because I saw him from out front.

I remember when Max Liebman, rehearsing his cast and giving instructions. wound up: "So you have to remember all these things-and take care of the butterflies as well.

Ethel Barrymore once said she had suffered exquisite torture all her career from this mysterious ailment, which can, on occasion, make the victim feel too weak to utter a line. Her debut as a teen-age youngster, so goes the legend, found her in that fix, literally. The spell that had struck her speechless was abruptly broken by a hearty voice from the balcony. "Come on, Ethel, we're all for you." She may have suffered stage fright endlessly but she's never been speechless since, thank goodness.

A lot of you may remember that great speaker, Al Smith, and you may also recall that he was struck dumb the first time he upped to a microphone. Of course, he later had a word for the darned thing—"raddio"—and the country loved the coinage. It became as widely circulated as the famed blooper of Graham McNamee's "Gasoloon," which Ed Wynn promptly picked up and kidded him about for weeks in the days of the "Fire Chief" programs. And, by the way, what do you suppose caused Graham to say "gasoloon" when he'd intended it to be "gasoline?" The "gasoloon" when he'd intended it to be "gasoline?" The same old thing, a form of stage fright. One afternoon, making a recording, the veteran McNamee had to repeat a simple announcement 21 times before he managed to get it out as it should be. And this, mind you, was one of the glibbest veterans the airlanes ever owned.

#### **More Bloopers**

Another case was Harry Von Zell's "Hoobert Heever," as odd a label as has ever been tacked on that distinguished former chief executive. It's the jitters that lay behind not for these fantastic mixups. Another incident was that of the actor who intended to say he was going "to give the bell a pull," and wound up saying he was going "to give the bull a pill." And, of course, there is the chap who was introducing the premiere of a new show spon-sored by the Perfect Circle Piston Ring Company. He told waiting nation the elaborate program was being brought

them by the "Cerfect Perkle Riston Ping Company." Back in the years I served as a Kansas City newsboy I used to watch the acts from the wings in the city's playhouses. I'd also watch them beforehand and I have a vivid recollection of Jack Haley, that Broadway and Hollywood veteran, in makeup and stage clothes, walking in a circle as he rehearsed to himself in a chant the lines of a new act. He saw or heard nothing, moving as if in a nervous trance. And here was one of the hep guys of show business, fully capable of getting out of any jam he was apt to encounter onstage.

#### Who's Skeered?

I remember one evening when I was starting a new show. "Are you scared?" asked Tuffie, my wife. "Hardly," spoke up a friend standing by, "Do you ever get scared anymore, John?" I could manage only a sickly grin, and anymore, John?" I could manage only a sickly grin, and hope he didn't know my legs had turned to rubber. I was on the opening of this season's "Show of Shows," and shortly before we took the air was talking to Bob Burton, Imogene Coca's husband. "Well," he said, suddenly, "I shouldn't be taking up your time now when you're worry-ing about remembering your lines and all that." Up spoke Len Cantor, who was serving as my "Man Friday" to see I didn't get lost in the unfamiliar shuffle. "Don't you be-lieve it," he said, with conviction. "Mr. Swayze is one of the few here this evening who isn't worrying about lines or anything else!" I almost fell off the stage apron. I wasn't worrying? I was paralyzed! Yet others have said the same thing, ask-Was paralyzed: Fet others have said the same thing, ask-ing how I keep cool when something goes wrong on the "Camel News Caravan." "Don't you ever have stage fright?" they ask. Boy, oh boy! I not only get it on open-ing nights, I occasionally have recurring spells on a show I've been on for years. They zoom out of nowhere, these world. and ottack with their inciding britten being I've been on for years. They zoom out of now spells, and attack with their insidious legions. In turn, I'd always envied my good friend, Ben Grauer, as cool appearing a potato as I ever saw face a micro-phone or camera. "That jasper," I said to myself, "just phone or camera. hasn't any nerves." By chance one afternoon Ben plopped down beside me at a lunch counter where I was having a sandwich. He reached in his pocket and pulled out a small silver pillbox, precisely the same kind I carry and from precisely the same place, Mexico City. He opened it, this unflustered cool cucumber, and what did I see inside? Precisely the same kind of nerve sedative tablets I use myself when the going gets too rough!



One method that is used rather widely is the presentation of a story with a brief exchange between an interviewer and interviewee as the first step. Then film which affects or depicts the story matter in which the interviewee is the expert is shown. There is, thus, an opportunity to discuss the film with the interviewee, as it is shown, taking It in at a proper point, going back to the visual depiction of interviewer and interviewee, and then back to film, intercutting. It gives a change of pace, gives renewed interest, and brings an expertize to the explanation of the film which otherwise would be lacking. Then, again, there are those who put personalities on a television news program for a minute and a half. The guest comes in, and the commentator says, "This is Mr. John Doe who yesterday afternoon climbed the side of a building to save a little girl when the building was on fire. Mr. Doe, it has been very nice to have you with us." A minute and a half is up. "Goodbye. Glad you were here." That kind of inter-view does not improve any program and I don't think it should be used.

0.

Cameramen-or cameraman-reporter teams-are one of the most important factors in TV news reporting. It is they who are on the spot where the news is happening, and actually, by deciding instantaneously what to shoot and what not to shoot, they perform a very real editorial function. Their news sense and judgment, which must be applied in seconds without the benefit of reflection or hindsight, strongly affect program quality, and my col-

Yet, you know, somehow I fancy we'd miss 'em if we didn't have 'em, at that.

RAPE OF THE TAPE

#### Hollywood.

The TV Producer shuffled along the park road leading up to the zoo, deep in thought, his brow wrinkled in seven clearly defined channels.

= By LOU DERMAN=

The Sponsor's threat reverberated in his brain: "Get more laughs, Kahn, or I drop 'Life With Moe' and pick up 'Life With

Joe

More laughs, more laughs, "Life With Moe" averaged a laugh every four seconds, but that wasn't good enough. Their opposition, Beat the Experts, got screams every three seconds by beating experts with rubberhoses.

The Public is a masochist, Kahn thought bitterly. More laughs.

Where to get more laughs?

Lou Derman

Fire the writers? Na. He had hired and fired every writer in town at least three times. Apparently the writers had a strong union

and they never submitted a new joke without first getting approval from the Guild office. Kahn's job was at stake and he knew it. He had to coax louder and funnier laughs from his studio audiences, but Once he had received a wonderful telegram from how?

"Great. Terrific. The Sponsor about their last show. "Great. Terrific. Never heard such screams. They laughed like lunatics." Luckily The Sponsor had never discovered the truth.

They really had been lunatics.

Forty schizophrenics smuggled out of a nearby institution and planted strategically among the studio audience. For 30 consecutive minutes they had chuckled, giggled, snickered, tittered, guffawed, screamed, howled and gone crazy. Correction-they had already went crazy.

They had even found the soap commercial deliriously funny, and the TV viewing audience had thought it a wonderful gimmick: foaming soapsuds onstage and a frothing audience offstage.

Oh, yes. There had been one other stroke of genius.

Kahn had gotten the idea one day while strolling about the zoo, just as he was doing now. The Sponsor had then, just as now, threatened to cancel "Life With Moe," and Kahn in desperation had come up with a lifesaver.

He had distributed a pack of honest-to-goodness laughing hyenas among the studio audience, all dressed up as out-of-towners. They had clocked a laugh-a-second-a record for Studio B—and one hyena, the hammy one in the pack, had leaped up on the stage and begun mugging before the TV cameras. By the time they could reach him he had blurted out the Name of The Song and won himself \$5,000 and two weeks in Europe with Cy Howard.

Yes, they had clocked a laugh-a-second that night. The producer sighed.

You couldn't rent a pack of hyenas every week-it ran into too much money-and besides, hyenas were too tricky to handle. That hammy one had almost queered the act. He stopped before the hyena cage and stared wistfully at one hysterical animal.

"Hya, Mr. Kahn, wanna hire Felix tonight?"

It was Joe, the amiable, bribe-able zookeeper. "No, Joe," Kahn said sadly. "I used up the budget money last week on itching powder."

"Itching powder?

"We sprinkled it on the audience seats."

"Oh yeh. Good idea. Get a lotta laughs?"

"Only one every four seconds. That stuff works slow." "That's too bad, Mr. Kahn." "Yeh.'

Kahn listened to the manical screech of the hyenas and

a frustrated look crept into his honest blue eyes. "If only I could get people to laugh like that," he said wistfully

"Uh, Mr. Kahn. . . ."

"Yes?"

"I gotta confession."

"What, Joe?" "That hyena, it ain't really laughing." "What do you mean?"

"It's got laryngitis. It can't laugh." "Stop kidding, Joe," Kahn said irritably, "I hear it laugh. How can you tell me Felix has laryngitis?"

"Inside Felix, Mr. Kahn . . . a soundtrack." An incredulous look spread over The Producer's harried

features. He could hardly hear his own voice as he whispered:

. on a soundtrack, huh?"

"Laughs... on a soundtrack, huh?" "Sure. What the heck, Mr. Kahn. People come to the zoo to hear our hyenas laugh and we can't afford to gam-So, starting last week all our hyenas switched to ble. tape

"The Entertainment Vehicle most responsible for spreading chaos and confusion among Soviet spy agents.'

Moreover, "Life With Moe" became such a TV must that they figured out a way to beam it to people who had only radio sets.

With such phenomenal success, Kahn's services became sought after by every TV network in the country. He reached the pinnacle of his career, however, when he managed to combine several oiling comedy shows into one fabulous riotous package entitled:

"Life With Moe, Joe, Pat, Nat and Freiberg."

And Kahn took no chances. He dubbed in enough laughs to sink a Don Wilson.

Kahn's Magnificent Hoax must have remained undetected forever, if he hadn't let success turn his head. Bursting with his great secret, Kahn told a fellow-producer about his Perfect Crime. One drink led to another and Kahn decided to prove to his skeptical friend what a genius could do when the mood seized him.

That fateful Sunday 8 p. m., Kahn's "Life With Moe, Joe, Pat, Nat and Freiberg" was rolling along smoothly, picking up the usual 14 laughs per second. Suddenly

Kahn stopped his cameras and gave orders for the laugh-tape to keep playing under the blacked-out screens.

Shortly thereafter, 40.000.000 Americans did a concerted double-take when they realized they had been laughing at absolutely nothing for three solid minutes!

Infuriated at having been thus duped. The People began to vent their fury at the new medium which had outraged Newspapers carried banner headlines their intelligence. every night, and the dispatches all told the same grim story

Salem. Mass .- A witch-hunting mob burned a 19-inch TV set at the stake.

Dalhart, Tex.-A hanging party stormed a private home and strung up a quivering TV aerial.

Kansas City .--- An unruly crowd raided a saloon and rode its TV set out of town on a bar rail.

Kahn? To save him from mob violence, the Government had to step in.

They sent him up for life on an income tax chargeor as VARIETY put it:

CANNED CACKLES OUT-KAHN IN CAN.

# **'LET'S BE BRAVE'**

#### By SOL SAKS

(Writer, 'My Favorite Husband' CBS-TV)

Hollywood.

The one important lesson we in television can learn from the motion picture industry is that underestimating the customer can be a fatal mistake.

From the time they were able to offer-at the cost of a few pennies-the entrancing sight of figures that moved to people who had rarely if ever been inside a theatre, the motion picture industry grew with leaps and bounds. Grew, both culturally and economically to be a colossus; rich, powerful, influential . . , and afraid of its own flickering shadow. This colossus of the entertainment world was guided not by directors, writers, actors or even producers: but by men in walnut-panelled offices who had their fingers on the pulse of the boxoffice and claimed to know just what the average person-symbolized by a little old lady who lived in Keokuk-wanted to see.

But the man in the walnut-panelled office claimed to know only what the little old lady in Keokuk wanted to see; the standard of what she should see he left to any self-appointed guide vociferous enough to threaten effects at the b.o. And every time one of these Lilliputian guides raised his voice in remonstration, the colossus would quiver in fright, apologize, and promise never to disobey again.

The net result was usually a non-controversial, non-moral, non-intelligent picture featuring Betty Grable's legs, made at a cost that could build a college and bringing back enough profit to build a small city.

#### -And Then the TV Dawn

Then along came television.

At first the motion picture industry decided to just ignore it and maybe it would go away. But when they found they would have to give battle, they fought the only way they knew how. They got more expensive publicity agents to get bigger pictures in more newspapers of prettier girls in scantier costumes standing next to a can of axle-grease in commemoration of Lubrication Week; they sent movie idols out to hold revival meetings all over the country, exhorting the faithful that movies were still the best entertainment; until, panicky, they reached the reductio ad absurdum of trying to defeat television by putting cardboard framed glasses on people so that

## Stars Of 'Electric Pictures' Worth All They Earn **By BOB CONSIDINE**

They're not a bad lot, these stars of TV, or "electric

pictures" as the medium is called by NBC's Ann Gillis. They more than earn whatever they make. Someone recently wrote that Liberace makes \$40,000 a week (or was

it a minute?) for doing what apparently comes naturally. More power to him. I'm sure he's underpaid. For TV people work or worry 24 hours a day, as well as in 13-week periods. Berle, Allen, Groucho, Lucy and the Bishop work for coolie wages. They are never "off." Goggle-eyed

fans may see them (with the exception of the Bish) relaxing at Toots Shor's or Lindy's, the Pump Room or the Brown Derby, in the wee sma' hours. But they are working. They are talking shop. That's work. TV

people talk only shop. Radio people have been known to mention other topics. H. V. Kaltenborn, Lowell Thomas and others have been known to go for a full evening without some discussion of their light-

ing, writers, channel number, rating, etc. Not TV people. For them there is no variety, except with a capital V, and thus no rest. The top ones are constantly in rehearsal or going through the usually well-con-cealed agony of "the show," or unwinding after a tavern or clarinet cave, or taking part in a benefit—often spurious. Sleep brings little surcease, for then they enter into a common nightmare:

They show up late for "the show" because of an accident or a defective watch. Then they lose their script, or the Teleprompter develops crankcase trouble and sticks on a time which ends with "suddenly..." In this macabre line which ends with "suddenly. . . In this macabre dream, the audience consists entirely of that member of the sponsor's advisory board who hates the star's guts like crazy and is determined to replace him by Tony Wons.

Television stars, nine times out of ten. are convinced that most makeup dabbers are out to run them off the air. The makeup people seem to them to be in cahoots with the lighting directors, who set their scalding beams in such a way as to bring out the most wrinkles per square inch.

If the TV star is a comedian he/she is bound to think that his/her writers have entered into a secret conspiracy with a rival comedian to make him/her-the first comedian-sound duller than Joe/Josephine Miller. And as a constant viewer of comedy programs I'm inclined to believe the fears are often wellgrounded.

If the TV star runs a panel of political discussion he finds his soul gnawed by the basic ingratitude of politics, who serve him for free. Homer Q. Quackenfafter, the candidate, willingly stood on his head on "the show" before election. But now that he's safely ensconced in a fat cat job in Washington, the bum wouldn't *think* of filling in for a scheduled principal who broke her leg on the way to the studio.

There is a poignant lack of security around even the most famous TV stars. If they can be said to be happy from time to time, those times must be immediately after a new 13-week option has been picked up. The times are not lengthy. There is always a new worry. What's the opposition doing? What about that new show on that big independent, where they're throwing red cherry pies in-stead of plain old black and whites? What's the fellow with that rating outfit got against you?

#### 'The Show'

That lack of security comes out in all discussions about "the show." There is no other show in a parallel field except "the show." Discussion of anybody else's TV effort embarrasses the principal of "the show." He/she is quick to read into the friendliest friend's simplest remark about somebody's else's show a reflection on "the show." but an excertaing discussion of a semi-rival's show is mis-taken by the principal as a blast at "the show." He/she casts about wondering if the speaker really is a true friend, or whether the sponsor will spend enough extra money to make "the show" so big it can be received only on 27-inch screens.

It's a wonder these people are as nice folks as they are, when you consider all the pressures, all the uncertainties, all the insecurity, all the dependence on the whims of patron and public.

I know only two that TV completely soured, as compared to dozens ruined by Hollywood or who went haywire with a newspaper column.

One, a beloved figure among elderly women and fanciers of Chic Sale humor, has won millions of fans as a kind of latter day Will Rogers. Yet he has the most genuine loathing of people I've ever encountered. He honestly hates everybody who works for him, despises all who shower blessings upon him and can't wait to get seclusion of his hotel after a show, there to lock himself in against the world. Another, whom millions of moppets pray for each evening, remembering him in their prayers along with their parents and dogs, submits to tons of publicity pictures each year showing him dandling bug-eyed toddlers on his knee. My wife recently said to him, "It must be wonderful to be loved by so many children. Do you have any of your own?'



Bob Considine

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Kahn's eyes almost popped out of his head. "Genius! Sheer genius!" he shouted. "You take out the hyena's voice-box and insert a laugh-tape...." "Uh, Mr. Kahn, begging your pardon," the zookeeper said respectfully, "the phrase is 'dub in.' It's a term coined by us zookeepere" coined by us zookeepers."

Kahn threw an affectionate arm around Joe.

"My friend, you don't know what you've just done for me," he said in tense, quivering tones. "Your gimmick is going to revolutionize the entire industry. And when the history of Television is written, my name will rank with Baird, Zworykin and Madman Muntz."

Within the week "Life With Moe" had been filmed, and canned laugher dubbed in every two seconds. The audi-ence, poor trusting souls, couldn't tell a straight line from a punchline-but didn't seem to care. They never had to guess if a joke were funny. Every time the "audience" laughed, they laughed—and "Life With Moe" continued to gain more and more listeners.

That first month a true Nielsen was taken—only people named Nielsen were polled—and it was found that "Life With Moe," like Abou Ben Adam, lead all the rest. The scoreboard in VARIETY read;

Life	With	Moc		 	 	 	 	169
Life	With	Joe		 	 	 	 	7
Life	With	Pat		 	 	 	 • •	5
Life	With	Nat		 	 	 	 	3
Life	With	Frei	berg		 	 	 	12
								Moe"

was

Befo awarded the Nobel Peace Prize as: they could see roller coasters coming out of the screen.

Then finally, when all else had failed, a few of the more forward thinking men in the industry presented one last hope; a revolutionary method of attack. a brand new thought .- the best way to get people to go to the movies was to make good movies.

In a few short years, despite the inevitable mistakes, the television industry has already made some achievements of which we can all be proud: shows like "Mr. Peepers" and Philco Playhouse, writers like Paddy Chayefsky, records of the American scene like "See It Now.

But already we begin to see ominous signs. Already the men in the walnut-panelled rooms are figuring out the surefire formulas; the writers, directors and actors are already taking their places along the assembly line belts which will carry their efforts through the fusing machine and into the punch-press with four adjustments; A, imitations of "I Love Lucy"; B, imitations of "What's My Line?"; C, imitations of "Dragnet"; and X. an adaptable adjustment for any future successful formula some daring pioneer might discover.

Soon the self-appointed inspectors will take their place in the shipping room; the bluenose reformer to pass on the product morally; and the grocer from New York State to pass on it politically.

Let's be brave. Let's, within the bounds of good taste

"Hell, no," he said, quite offended. "I hate the little .

But by and large they're a good lot. They take a beating from the more acid tongued critics. But they must have this comfort: They burn up more material in a month than some of the imperishable vaudeville stars of old-on the Keith-Orpheum. Pantages, Sullivan and Considine timedid in years. And reach more people. And work harder for what little they can keep in the way of worldly goods. Period.

and good citizenship, provide the best possible entertainment we can. And if any of the irresponsible amongst us step outside the bounds of good taste and good citizenship, there are duly constituted authorities to bring them back in line. Within these confines we will make many mistakes and produce some trash; but if a proper proportion is worthwhile and entertaining, that wonderful little old lady in Keokuk will be on our side.

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# **Network Radio Needs Some Soul-Searching To Evolve Its Own Pattern For Future**

#### By BOB CHANDLER

fewer areas remain without television, network radio finds itself on the horns of a constantly growing dilemma. The webs are losing their audiences, and consequently their billings. In the battle to regain those audiences, they're faced with a dual problem: first, to justify their existence; second, to reawaken the public's awareness, not in radio (because the public is aware of radio), but in network radio.

Question of justifying their existence is a more crucial one than they would like to admit, and becomes more critical as TV expands. Experience has shown in nighttime radio that in the fields of drama, comedy and general entertainment, people prefer to see and listen than to listen alone. The networks are faced with the reality that in the field of entertainment as it's now constituted, television is in the cathird's seat and will continue to be so in terms of audience and revenue.

The webs may point to their morning and afternoon strength to dispute this. But that strength is a tenuous one at best-television is making giant strides in daytime programming, and the top agencies are preparing for the plunge into daytime video. Morning television too has jumped, and the morning TV habit has taken hold more rapidly than radio experts like to admit. There's no question that soapers on network radio are here to stay-they allow the hausfrau to go about her work and at the same time provide her with enter-tainment, something that television can't do. But as more and more housewives switch to TV in the daytime, how many radio networks can support themselves on the basis of soap opera coin alone?

This situation brought about by the expansion and refinement of television leads to the question of self-justification. If television is going to take the play away from radio in the general entertainment field, what then can network radio programming do that a local station can't do as well? Music and news? In most cases, no. The fantastic development of the recording industry since the introduction of the The LP has made music available to even the lowliest 250-watter. wire services likewise have made news available to the stations as quickly and surely as it's available to the networks.

#### **Programming Ripley**

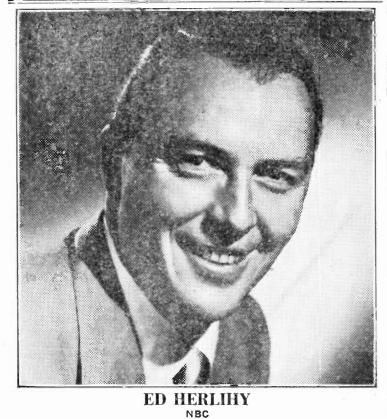
If the function of network radio is to instantaneously transmit to all affiliates programming which they otherwise would be unable to attain—but programming which gets audience—how does it justify its existence when the only programming it can offer which will attract audience is the very same type of programming the station can produce i.self?

This dilemma explains what on the surface appears to be a paradox -the fact that while network radio has been barely able to hold its own in terms of billing, local revenues in most of the country have It also explains the constant increase in sales risen to alltime highs. of radio sets. This holds true in even the most highly saturated TV markets—New York, for example, has seven television stations, but almost all its AM outlets report substantial gains in revenue and profit, with at least two of them reporting record gross billings this On the other hand, the networks, while registering only a slight increase in gross billing at best, have brought in so much of this billing under trick sales formulae and overloaded discount structures that the term "gross billing" is almost meaningless for comparison purposes.

Why has local radio made such substantial gains while network rev-ence has barely been able to hold its ground? Why has national spot business skyrocketed upwards with the very same sponsorship monies that were funneled out of the webs? Because local radio has entered an era of specialization, specialization which draws audience and which the webs can't duplicate. Foreign language stations have made sub-stantial geins; form stations will hold their audiences; an increasing number of urban stations have found ready audiences in the Negro population via programming especially slanted for them; popular music and news specialists find ready listeners and ready bankrollers; even classical music stations have found new sources of audience and Run through the list of stations in any community-you'll find coin. a trademark on each station's programming, and that trademark won't be so much the network it's affiliated with as the type of listener it appeals to in its community

#### Whither Webs?

In the face of this fait accompli, where do the networks go? What can they offer that the local station can't, and that television can't offer with more appeal? There are some obvious answers—instantaneous on-the-spot news reports at important events, musical events like concerts and operas-in a word, communications. But will these alone be enough to support network radio? Not four networks, anyway. Fortunately, the webs have come up with a couple of answers, partial



As new television outlets spring up almost daily and as fewer and | answers to be sure, but at least inklings of what can be done. has inaugurated a new era in radio journalism with its series of documentaries under Stuart Novins and his unit has undertaken projects formerly in the province of the print media-and done them better. With intensive research and preparation and lots of good legwor's the documentary unit has come up with exposes and studies of conditions in this country that are sweeping and dramatic in scope. They're pure radio and listenable radio, and with proper advance notice, the American public could quite easily be persuaded to abandon its talevision screen for the loudspeaker to give a listen to these. NBC too has evolved pure radio in its "Weekend" concept. and shuttling back to CBS, the web has struck a potential vein of listener gold in its "Stage Struck."

Rodio must use its natural advantage over TV. It can move faster, get into smaller places, it can evolve from the work of one on-the-spot men with a pocket transmitter of tape machine rather than an announcer, cameraman, audio man, director and engineer. It must use s et vantage of reaching audience where TV can't-in the automobile, re factory, the store. Americans like to work and play with a redio at their sides. Network radio has these advantages over TV, but thus far it hasn't made proper use of them. Local radio has, and it's profil-ing; network radio, by contrast, hasn't and it's feeling the pinch. An example of local radio's initiative is the series (first summer, now year-round) of where-to-go capsules on WNEW, N. Y. for General Motors Acceptance Corp., a natural for the driver and auto sponsor alike.

Network radio has a function and can perform it, but its job is to go through some thorough soul-searching and come up with new concep's of that function. Once it finds a raison d'etre and goes about filling its functions, audience and sponsors will come a'flocking. It's a case of the old adage of building a better mousetrap. Do what television and local radio can't do and you're in business.

# **IT'S THE FORMULA THAT REALLY COUNTS**

#### By CARL S. WARD

(General Manager, WCBS Radio, N.Y.)

wards at 9:30 just ahead of God-

In the afternoon we lured Emily

Kimbrough away from the writing and lecture field to do a mature

and amusing afternoon commen-

tary. We changed the time on the already successful "Galen Drake Show," and we added a folk humor-

ist, John Henry Faulk, also a gifted

member of the lecture circuit, in

Now all these changes had four

the decentralization of family lis-

tening to a degree. Therefore,

there was more program planning

to please the individual, rather

2. Programming for easy, but

3. Greater emphasis on talent

who could be equally entertaining

before a large convention audience,

a local club gathering, a civic or-

a studio micro-

frey's network show.

the late afternoon.

than the family unit.

not casual. listening.

ganization—or

phone.

basic objectives:

There's a wonderful song in | pered the mixture by scheduling Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Me and lively, personality-gal Joan Ed-Juliet" called "The Big Black Giant." It vitally characterizes, as you probably remember, the great, expectant mass of people who sit out front waiting to be entertained.

Looking back at 1953, it seems to me that all branches of the entertainment industry were pretty busy during the year wooing that big black giant with renewed ardor. More than ever before, the audience, our customers, were our first and foremost consideration. We, all of us-screen, stage, and broadcasting people alike-wanted new audiences, bigger audiences, for our shows. And we went about winning them in different ways.

The movies tried new projection methods to lure people away from home. The theatre went back to with sceneryless producbasics tons where actors actually read their lines. Ballet hit the road and evoked roars of appreciation for its entrechats and elevations even in the hinterlands. And while still comparatively new itself, television sought new audiences by introducing a number of stimulating, vigorous, highly experimental productions.

Radio. too, was changing as local stations moved ahead with revitalized program patterns. Let me outline for you what has hap-pened at WCBS, New York, as an example of the pattern of local radio station programming in 1953. Not that we did anything completely new, or different, or startling. Stations all across the country were devising their own approaches to appeal to greater audiences, but know this station best and it's fairly illustrative of the direction in which local radio moved in '53. In January of last year WCBS was in a fortunate situation: we were the No. 1 station audience-wise, in our market and, commercially, we had a virtual sellout. Not content to rest, however, we want-ed new audiences, new sponsors. To win them, we had gone to work on our programs. Every local daytime program (except newscasts) in the WCBS lineup had been rescheduled, revamped or re-placed within a 12-month period. We added live music, an instrumental quintet led by Elliott Law-rence. to our "Jack Sterling Show" and tightened up its overall production. We reprogrammed the 8:15-9 a. m. spot with Bob Haymes, singer, composer, radio entertain-er. We added more tape-recording, more field reporting to the "Bill Leonard Show" and height-ened its drama by putting it in a 30 minute framework. We pep-MUrray Hill 8-6600

# **Always** Room For One More

# By ROBERT M. WEITMAN (V.P., ABC Talent and Programming)

Competition, like VARTETY, is the spice of show business. One should understand that we should not only be as good or better than our competitors, but we should try to excel in relation to our own standards.

Having learned, after years in the theatres, that if every show was good, everybody did better business, so I believe that all around better television means more viewers.

In our shop, we are trying to diversify Just as a movie theatre should have a change of pace, daily TV programming should make the same try. The problem is not so simple in TV. Many shows are required and many sponsors have to be satisfied. And sponsors must sell merchandise.

Accepting this theory, the question is what can be done about it? First of all, the best availab'e talent must be mobilized. Not only performers, but writers, directors, producers and musicians.

This talent must be coordinated through executive staff with the

entire sales organization. Secondly, it must be understood that there is not one public, but many publics which combine to make the mass audience.

Thirdly, there must be a realization that this public is fickle, tires easily, and therefore needs new entertainment stimuli. For this reason we should not be afraid to experiment with new faces, new ideas, and new formats.

Only through this type of experimenting can we develop the kind of competition that is healthy for the entire industry. It is my hope that the new year

will bring bigger and better shows to all the networks. There's always room for one more.

cording. lecture work, composing, etc., insofar as such activity would aid in building the personality's radio audience.

Actually, all these objectives were quite similar. What we wantbasic objectives. 1. Greater emphasis on "person-alized programming." The in-crease in the number of radio bedroom, etc., meant gap between performer and audi-We wanted to bridge the ence. We were trying to get closer to the "big black giant." Not a new theory, granted, but certainly one that seemed right for the times. The year 1953 gave us a chance to test our theories to see how they worked out. And now 11 months later, the station can take an objective look at what has happened. A comparison of Pulse figures covering the two local program time periods (6-10 a. m. and 4-6 p. m. Mon.-Fri.) shows that in 1953 these time blocks have a 20% 4. Greater emphasis on talent higher share of audience than in with outside activities such as re- 1952.



#### **JACKSON BECK**

THE UNITED STATES STEEL HOUR Narrator-Actor Radio-TV-Films

#### Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

**RADIO-TELEVISION** 

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## **Religious Programming** (An Updated Reappraisal)

#### By MALCOLM (MAL) BOYD

Mr. Boyd is a former partner of Mary Pickford and Buddy Rogers in P.R.B., Inc., and former president of the National Society of Television Pro-ducers: now a Candidate for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church and a senior student at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, in Berkeley, Calif. will graduate from the seminary and be ordained in the Episcopal Church next June.)

#### Hollywood.

Hollywood. If "religious" programs on TV and radio arc to achieve the im-pact which will be satisfactory both to church bodies and to the industry, several apparent hurdles will have to be jumped. And they can be.

An important TV or radio sponsor doesn't just launch a new pro-gram or even a schedule of spot announcements without much serious consideration, backed up by solid research along specific lines. What is the audience sought? Where in this audience located? Will network do the job best, or will the most effective method be pin-pointing via specific markets? Is the sales message being geared to people who do not know the product or company name, to people, who are familiar with both but are buying a competitive product, or to people who are familiar with the name and are buying . . . but who are now asked to buy a new product by the same manufacturer?

In regard to the use of TV and radio by a church body, the same type of questioning must be pur-sued, and specifically it can be boiled down to this: are we trying to reach the churched or the un-churched with this particular pro-The distinction is quite imgram? portant in this case because the entire approach will be predicated on the answer. The terminology (semantics being most important here), the physical background, symbolism, the whole methodology will be based upon the answer. Lacking the answer, danger is ac-tually courted . . . danger of old prejudices and misinformation unintelligently dealt-with and unreal-

istically not squarely faced. The great success of Bishop Sheen has actually obscured a vi-tal point. His success is that of a dynamic personality, ideally suited

to the TV medium. If we will look back through the years at the efforts of church and radio to achieve good religious programs, we will find the memorable instances of success in terms of personalities: Fosdick, Sockman, Sheen, There has been a staggering lack of specific creative ap-proaches. This is especially shocking when one realizes the enormous creative aspect of religion in a re-ligious man's life. The minimum of fresh creative thinking along lines of religious programming is ironical when one realizes that church bodies are interested in a soul among souls, a man among men, an individual located in the midst of a Hooperated-mass. But more frequently than not the church bodies have failed to reach ards and the tremendous handicap the sought-for soul, man, individual in the crowd.

**Bypassng Sameness** 

The Lutheran-produced dramas paper. have offered us an interesting ex-periment to watch, as they repre-

and the TV nets are in a position to do something about this). The answer to badly written, directed and produced programs is good craftsmanship and solid creative work grounded in a professional experience.

This costs money. And so the idea of sustaining religious programs must be reappraised increasingly. If a program is to compete on every basis, from creative in-genuity and acceptable c1:.ftsmanship to plush treatment in regard to promotion and time slot, there appear to be two realistic alternatives: either the church body must put up the money (as in the case of the Lutheran-sponsored dramas) or commercial sponsorship must be acceptable, and therefore desirable both to commercial sponsor and to church body (as in the commercial sponsorship of Bishop Sheen).

One more hurdle should be men-tioned here. The cleric who acts in a liaison function between church body and industry can, quite without being aware of it, become a counterpart of the dreaded "sponsor's wife." She became in-famous as the symbol for unneces-sary tampering with creative efforts, for authority which had to be handled with kid gloves while regarded with fear and contempt and for "no talent." If the church's liaison-functionary will seriously define his field of activity, this hur-dle can be eliminated. His job of consolidation is the basic one: he must represent the church in terms of the goal of a given TV or radio project and in terms of the motives underlying it, as well as the uses to which the project will be put. It is most important that the

industry understand why church bodies are interested in radio and TV. It is vital that religious bodies Since TV is gradually understand how the industry functions and what the industry interest in religion is. The industry's lifeblood is good programs which will attract audiences and sponsors.

**Music's Vital** 

To Films – Why

**Not Television?** 

By HARRY SOSNIK=

Of the various forms of tele-



This is Nora Drake Radio—for Toni Television Newspaper SU 7-5400

cious stone in an inferior setting. It dulls the true beauty of the stone whereas the proper setting sets off the real beauty and highlights the interesting facets.

It's the old story of penny-wisepound-foolish. There are many fine dramatic shows in which the drama and humor could be cleverly heightened by music properly composed for them. This neglect was understandable in the pioneering days when everyone was grop-ing and there was no precedent established. Today the motion picture industry, through many is the of trial and error, has established the importance of various key eleimportance of music is an estab-lished fact. It doesn't have to be proven to anyone today; least of all the public. No Hollywood pro-ducer of 'B' pictures would dream of using music of the inferior quality being used in grade 'A'

Since TV is gradually absorbing the best of the various motion picture techniques and, of necessity, devising certain ones of its own, there is no excuse for ignoring one of the most important of all.

The first argument advanced of course would be costs, which is not entirely an honest one. The cost percentage-wise, as compared to the whole, is so small that I'm sure any sound business man who real-ized how much could be added in value for the few dollars intelli-gently spent, would not hesitate. The picture business has long since recognized the importance of

television?

vision programs, the dramatic form advanced the furthest and has firmly established itself as one of the most important parts of TV. The filmed shows and live shows that cleverly integrate pre-filmed spots with live studio action are always improving and absorbing Hollywood motion picture technique and finesse. This is especially remarkable when one considers the limited amount of time and money that is available in required to produce a new show every week, which when shown, is as forgotten as yesterdays news-

However, with all of the ad sent one of the few deviations in vancements in the various departwhich TV is following radio. Ex-designing, direction, etc., there is ciuding this particular experiment and the other rare deviations from the pattern, one may make the in spite of the fact that motion picture producers have long since recognized its tremendous value as one of the most important factors in the ultimate success of its great pictures. In many cases it is a known fact that a fine musical score has been the difference between a boxoffice success or flop. Television is still using record libraries and soundtracks from so-called "library services" that no Hollywood 'B' picture would dream of using. Not only is the music itself bad but the sound recording dience segments, in specific time slots. It is not fair to a network or station to present a weak pro-gram (and, in TV on a network dience segments, in TV on a network and old fashioned library music basis, it is becoming impossible makes the entire production look since a good rating structure dete- and sound cheap. I can only comriorates in the case of a weak link pare this to the placing of a pre-

the right musical score so why not **DUMONT IN KCTY (K.C.)** 

DuMont Labs completed negotiations with Herbert Mayer, prexy of Empire Coil Co., for the pur-chase of UHF station KCTY in Kansas City, Mo., for an undis-closed sum, and on Friday (1) morning the FCC gave its approval to the changeover Immediately to the changeover. Immediately turned over to DuMont's broadcast-

KCTY has been set to receive

Other DuMont o.&o. is WDTV in Pittsburgh, Pa.

# **Strangest Thing Happened When** I Left Berlin's 'Maskebar'

#### By LEON PEARSON (NBC Commentator)

On the occasion of a recent visit to Berlin, something occurred which I myself find it hard to believe—though the incident involved me and -what shall I say-the shades of Adolf Hitler?

I went with a group of American newsmen, after dinner at the Press Club to a place of entertainment called the Maskebar, or the Mask Bar. The girls wear masks—that is, up to midnight, when they take them off. One

of the boys made an unkind crack about that. The girls are not very pretty, or very young, and Joe Fleming of the UP said: "The management fig-ures that by midnight they've taken in all the dough they can, so there's no harm in letting you see the facts of life."

It was just about this time that I left. I had had enough smoke and bad air. I got outside, hailed a taxi, and drove slowly through the streets of Berlin, looking at the ruins in the moonlight. When we came to the Reichs Chancellery—or what's left of it-I stopped the cab, paid the driver, and wan-



Leon Pearson

dered in among the ruins of the building where Hitler breathed his last. It was an eerie place. To describe it, I would need the morbid and melancholy phrases of Edgar Allan Poe. And my mood was suited to the scene—or I would not have been able to believe what happened next.

A figure stepped out of the darkness and approached me. It looked for all the world like Adolph Hitler. It came close. There was the cap with the high crown, the puttees, and the ridiculous little mustache though I noticed the mustache was a trifile singed.

The figure stopped and addressed me. The very tones of voice were Hitler's.

"I have waited eight years for this." he said, and I recalled it was just eight years ago to the day since Hitler's death. "Eight years, and when I return, what do I find but an American!"

#### With That Tie, What Else?

"How do you know I am an American?" "By your necktie. No one but an American would wear monkeys on his necktie."

"There was a time," I said, "when we had to take insults from you. Not any more." "Oh, no?" said Hitler. "Are you not taking insults from my people,

"Oh, no?" said Hitler. "Are you not taking insults from my people, my German people?" "Certainly not." I said. "Then what is the meaning of this phrase I have heard only tonight," he said—" 'Ami, go home'. 'Ami' means American, no?" "You don't understand." I retorted, "the Germans on our side don't say such things. It's only the Germans on the other side." "What do you mean." asked Hitler, "by our side and the other side?" "I am speaking of the different sectors of Berlin. For Occupation purposes. Berlin was divided into four sectors by the four powers. Those cries, 'Ami, go home,' come only from the Russian sector." At this point, an expression of amazement came across Hitler's face, which could be seen even there in the shadows—amazement followed

which could be seen even there in the shadows—amazement followed by a mischievous brightness of the eyes. "Then you are not getting along with the Russians! Ha, ha! I could have teld you. Vou one not getting charge with the Russians!"

have told you. You are not getting along with the Russians!" Here his voice rose so high I was afraid he would be heard out in the street. He brought his arms up like a puppet and he kicked his heels and did a little dance, that reminded me of the dance he did in the Forest of Complegne in 1940. "I could have told you! Like you, I made a pact with Stalin, but it

didn't work."

"The reason it didn't work," I said, "is because you turned and stabbed him in the back." "But when did it begin?"

#### The Real Enemy

"Well, I suppose the beginning of the Cold War dates back . . ." "Ah, what a beautiful phrase! So which is your real enemy today, Germany or Russia?"

"Frankly, we do not consider Germany an enemy now." "That's good! One of these days, you might even come around to helping my country—in spite of the old hatreds."

helping my country—in spite of the old hatreds." "We have a gigantic program — a very expensive program — for rebuilding the strength of Germany." Herr Hitler stared at me. Then he moved closer and examined my necktie again. "You are an American, aren't you?" "You don't seem to realize, Herr Hitler, that much has happened since your death. We now are rebuilding not only the industrial and commercial strength of Germany, but also the military strength." "What? My soldiers will be back again?" "No, certainly not. No Wehrmacht. This will be a new German force, integrated in a European Army, for defense against Russia." "But we get arms again!" "Yes, if you are willing to take them. There seems to be some reluctance."

reluctance.

Explain this - I do not understand."

"Well, your people seem to have had enough of war, and we en-counter a little difficulty to persuade them. We are offering all sorts of inducements."

Hitler said: "We are getting arms again without having to tear up a treaty?"

"That's right. In fact, without even having to pay for them. We re giving you arms under the Mutual Security Program." "But what happens to the French and the British? What do they say

**BUY; FIRST UHF 0&0** 

ing division, the station became the web's fourth o.&o. and its first UHF'er.

the full sked of DuMont's programming, Ted Bergmann, network chieftain, disclosed after the purchase was announced.

overall observation, regarding TV as well as radio, that personalities have been used as "crutches" in the presentation of religion, and that fresh creative approaches (in music, drama, panels and discussions) have been notably lacking.

Too often it has been felt by church bodies, especially on the local level, that a good motive for a program compensates for a weakly, or downright badly, produced show. Yet a church body is com-peting with other sponsors for au-



**BILL SILBERT** BUtterfield 8-3859

WRH

about this?"

"They are co-sponsors of the plan."

Hitler had no comment at this. He merely stared at me. His jaw fell, which was rather a grotesque sight, for the jaw of a dead man is, at best, macabre.

I saw at once there was no point in trying to explain all this, so I merely said: "Herr Hitler, you must remember you have been dead

I merely said: "Here fitter, you must remember you have been dead for some time — " "Eight years," he said, "Only eight years. Can it be that — " I started to go, but he moved toward me and seized my arm. "Wait, wait! Tell me one more thing: Do you believe in reincarnation?"

don't quite see the connection."

"If you believe in reincarnation, perhaps there is hope for me. I made a mistake. Right here on this spot. I never should have done away with myself. If I could only find some magic potion that would restore me to life — do you think there might be a place for me?" "Certainly not," I said. "Well, not in the Adenauer Government, but — "

"There's no place for you, Herr Hitler, in my camp." "Well," he said reflectively, "perhaps it is a little early. But one of these days -

Here he clicked his heels again and did that grotesque little dance. "The Cold War?," he said in a shrill voice, "what a beautiful thing!" And he went off cackling into the catacombs. I left the place hurriedly, and went back to join my comrades. I

decided not to tell them what I had seen. I was afraid they wouldn't believe it.

# **Television Goes To College**— And Threatens To Steal Show

By ROBERT GESSNER

(Chairman, Department of Motion Pictures, N.Y.U.)

When universities first opened ever since, was: "What are you do-+ their doors for business back in ing about Television?" the days which we now label, with a straight face, The Dark Ages, the



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profe ssors taught the problems o f keeping healthy and out of jail. Today, some 10 centuries later, that double billing of Medicine and Law are still tergrossers -people insist on becoming

#### Prof. Gessner

ill and delight in law-breaking—but new attractions have been added. The latest of these is Television, which threatens at this writing to steal the show.

This is the most sensational upheaval in modern education. There has been nothing comparable since colleges discovered football was big business. Next to possessing an imposing athletic plant no self-respecting university wants to be caught dead without a TV setup. Michigan State, for instance, is equally proud of its Rose Bowl dios. Some schools, such as the University of Southern California and Rutgers, at the close of the football season were more pleased with their cathode rays than their forward passes.

This phenomenon is more surprising when you consider how re-luctant for so many centuries were universities in accepting such a staid art as the drama. Only a few years ago Harvard shook its leonine head against Professor George Pierce Baker's notion of erecting a student theatre. It has taken some long years for academicians to admit that motion pictures, like the horseless carriage, is here to stay. Our Department, founded in 1941. is still the only four-year curriculum in the country.

#### Jet-Propelled TV

But jet-propelled Television hasn't had to hoe an earth-bound path. path. Like atomic energy, nobody understands it but everybody wants a slice of it. Publicity de-partments want it for promotion, athletic departments for revenue. Drama departments for drama, Speech for speakers, Radio depart-ments to replace a dying craft. Not unlike the fairy princess in the castle, the suitors woo her for her dowry without considering whether the marriage will be happy

Television can be all things to all men. It can extend a university's public relations, it can bring in money for bigger and better athletic scholarships, it can transmit lessons into living rooms, it can educate as well as entertain.

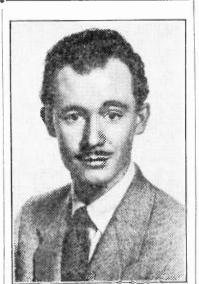
Although a university's prime purpose is instruction, the main emphasis to date has not been on courses of study in the field of Television. The chief obstacle has been an absence of trained teachers who know the medium as well as the reluctance of professional practitioners to take time off for teaching. The cost of facilities is an obstacle to private institutions. and Columbia NYU so for the state-endowed Universities of Illinois, Oklahoma, Michi gan State, Ohio, University of California at Los Angeles, etc.

It was a query which sent us into a one-man Committee for the Investigation of Undercover Television. Television had not yet in those days come to life. It was, however, clear even on a seven-inch screen that this was primarily moving images. That they were transmitted electronically, not via celluloid, seemed secondary. The creative requirements of a story, acting, sets, etc., through technical facilities of camera and editing, were obviously an electronic extension of motion picture tech-nique. The result was that the Department of Motion Pictures was assigned the responsibility of in-struction in the field of Television.

#### 'Tain't the Same

Because Television has been commercially sponsored through agencies who have been sponsoring radio programs and because Television has been transmitted by commercial companies previously operating exclusively in the field of radio, there has been the popular misconception that Television is closely related to radio. This has been similar to saying that painting is like music because people pay for both. There is no doubt that the commercial on a radio show and the commercial on a television show are the common goals of an advertising agency, just as the selling of time on a radio program and time on a television program are the common objectives of a network. But as far as The For-gotten Man, the Audience, is concerned, the commercial is what he is willing to suffer, like breakfast oatmeal, before the aromatic eggs and bacon and coffee. To confuse the issue for the myopic, it was the radio companies which first began broadcasting visual images. Every month that passes Miss Cathode Ray swells in embarrassing dimensions, betraying her prenuptial affinity with Oscar of Hollywood, so that the day of the shotgun wed-ding can no longer be postponed.

At any rate, by teaching our students camera, lighting, editing, sets, costumes, make-up, and all the visual language of story telling, our students have been enabled to pursue, with talent, careers in both celluloid and live television. To us, Television is an electronic trans-mission of moving images, and to the audience it matters not whether the audience it matters not whether these images arrive in the living room from celluloid or an elec-tronic source. An image is an



Season's Greetings TEX ANTOINE (Uncle Wethbee, too) WNBT

image is an image for o' that, an' that an' o' that, and with due apologies to the prosody of Robert Burns.

Schools throughout the ages have been charged with the responsi-bility of study and research in fields which have later benefitted commercial enterprises, and this is no less true for Television. We too need our support from those who would most benefit by training programs and experimental produc-ductions. The Television industry should not commit the shortcomings of the motion picture industry by failing to appreciate the value of training young people for future programming. Already it is evident that Television burns up talent faster than any other entertainment enterprise. Nothing could be more disastrous to both to the educational and entertainment responsibilities of Television than the neglect of talent which is needed to staff the potential 2,000 TV stations designed for this country. This responsibility is so frightening that only venerable professors might be the sole ones willing enough to enter where others fear to tread.

Why not set up a TV Industry

# Can Anyone Be Funny About Plainfield, N. J.?

By MAX SHULMAN. I am older today, and I know that

nobody-not Mark Twain, not S. J. Perelman, not Aristophanes-could write a funny show about Plain-field, N. J.

But this hap-pened many years ago when I was young and foolish and dauntless. I got a call one day from a man who had been at col-lege with me and was now in the radio



producing business. He had, he said, an idea that would pay me large sums of money for a few minutes' light work each week. Dazzled, I went forthwith to his office. Here I was further dazzled. The office was panelled in walnut. and my friend, who had been at college, a tacky and saturnine fig-ure who spent his days skulking about in the library stacks. had now blossomed into a florid fellow with porcelain caps and a spread collar. What's more, he called me "Laddie.'

So beguiled was I by the walnut panelling, the gleaming dentition, the spread collar, and the Laddie that it completely escaped my notice that the project was in-capable of achievement. He wanted me to write a funny show about Plainfield, New Jersey. This was to be a sample script, the first of a proposed series about typical American towns. After Plainfield, I was to write further hilarious scripts about such mirth-generating centers as Wilkes-Barre, Youngs-town, Fort Wayne, Cedar Rapids and Duluth. It was hoped to interest a motor car company in spon-soring the series, the sales pitch being that anybody who heard these jolly broadcasts would leap instantly into his automobile and drive off to visit these capitals of gaiety

With a clap on my back and no money for my trouble, my friend sent me off to Plainfield, where I was somewhat dismayed to find a conspicuous absence of sportiveness. The natives were sober, bor-dering on the funereal. They dering on the funereal. They walked down the cheerless streets bent on their dingy business. and when I explained my mission in the town, they cast me a cold eye. was pretty dispirited myself when I left Plainfield that night, carry-ing with me a few fly-blown pam-

phlets from the library and Chamber of Commerce.

Back at my desk I read the pam-phlets, quieted my trembling, and fell to work with the determination of a man who has made an utter fool of himself and can't face the thought. I rolled paper into my

typewriter and began: "Plainfield, the Queen City of New Jersey, lies in beautiful Watchung Mountains, 24 miles southwest of New York City. Here 40,000 good burghers live in trim homes on wide, clean streets. If you're a Plainfield resident, you can spend your Sunday afternoons at one of the city's 16 parks and playgrounds—playing baseball, ten-nis, softball, soccer, archery, lawn bowling, horseshoe pitching, crick-et, field hockey, football and skat-ing. And if you spend your Sunday afternoons doing all these things, you can spend your Sun-day evenings at one of Plainfield's three modern hospitals."

(There, thought I, there's a joke. This isn't so hard when you put your mind to it. I continued typ-

ing.) "Plainfield has 14.521 telephones which 71,838 calls are made daily. Four hundred telegrams are sent each day and Plainfield citizens own 14,690 passenger cars and 1,805 trucks. The local post-office each year sells \$279,000 worth of stamps, the glue on the back of which tastes just as awful in Plainfield as anywhere else." (See, said I to myself. Another

joke. T breeze!) This is turning out to be a

"There are 10,395 water meters, 14,996 electric meters, 13,467 gas meters, and 135 meter inspectors -all with sore feet.

(What a fool I was to ever doubt this thing! Why, this will be the funniest document since "Floogle

Street.") "Plainfield's industries include motor trucks and busses, printing presses, tools and hardware specialties, hats, dresses, adhesives and broad silk-broad silk is different from ordinary silk; the silkworms

are fatter . . ." That did it. Suddenly the whole brave sham collapsed. I rose, sighing, from the typewriter. Young, foolish and dauntless Young, foolish and dauntless though I was, it was clear even to me: nobody can be funny about Plainfield, New Jersey. I never submitted the script to my friend but it didn't matter any-

my friend, but it didn't matter anyhow, because the project died aborning. My friend soon left radio and went to Hollywood. Today he is with Orange Julius.

#### **Chesterfield Goes Skip On Godfrey's 'Friends' But Stanton Snags GM**

First break in the Chesterfield-Arthur Godfrey relationship came last week with the ciggie outfit stepping out of the Wednesday night "Godfrey & Friends" on night "Godfrey & Friends" on CBS-TV but staying on as an alter-nate. The breach was filled im-mediately, however, when web prexy Frank Stanton personally went to bat to swing General Motors into the skip spot effective with show of tonight (Wed.). Chesterfield's halving of its

Chesterfield's halving of its sponsorship is indicative of a general cutback in major spending that probably stems from recent adverse medical reports on smoking. The GM deal, on the other hand, is an important gain for CBS since the motor outfit has devoted most of its "special" TV splurging to shows on NBC. Just how Godfrey himself figured in capturing GM coin is not known, although God-frey and Defense Secretary Charles Wilson, former GM prexy, are close friends.



Television has entered college through the front door, but it's roaming the learned halls looking forlornly for a classroom. The academic question of how you teach Television is quite similar to the production question of who best produces shows-radio people. motion picture people, or live TV people.

Our experience at NYU might be of interest to those in the industries as well as in the colleges who are vexed by experiences of their own. The first college course for credit in the country began in 1945 in the Department of Motion Pictures, as the result of, curiously, an innocent inquiry from Barney Balaban, president of Paramount Pictures. The question, which has been repeated I am sure in a hundred different climes and climates

### THE ADVENTURES OF OZZIE and HARRIET

WRH

On Television and Radio for ABC

#### Starr New TWA Prez

#### Hollywood.

Hugh Wedlock has resigned as prexy of the Television Writers of America, western region, citing "a heavy writing schedule" as his reason. He is succeeded by Ben Starr, who was v.p. Wedlock will remain on the exec board.

Nate Monaster. as exec board member who garnered most votes in the recent TWA election, steps up to v.p.

**RADIO-TELEVISION** 

#### LABOR'S RADIO PAINS By M. S. NOVIK

(Public Service Radio Consultant)

war early in 1946. It decided to in Cincinnati seek a voice of its own.

In 1945, just as today, the cost of existing AM stations was extremely high. The Nostradamus of the broadcasting industry predicted that FM was the answer. So labor represented by the ILGWU-AFL in New York, Los Angeles and Chattanooga, and the UAW-CIO in Detroit and Cleveland, applied for and obtained FCC licenses for FM stations in these leading metropolitan manufacturing communities

Nostradamus was talking about television too in 1946, but even he could not predict how many years it would take at an estimated an-nual expense of \$500.000 before a new TV station would even begin to break even.

The Noble Experiment in FM came to an end in 1951 but not before labor proved its point. The five stations that did get on the air proved to be outstanding ex-amples of public relations on behalf of organized labor in their communities. The ILGWU and UAW FM stations performed valuable services to their listeners. In addition to offering well balanced all-around program services they also kept the public informed as to the role labor plays in our every day life.

#### Collapse of FM

Under the dynamic and public relations-conscious leadership of these two unions other unions were eady to follow. But the medium -FM—collapsed from under them. ready Only one labor-operated AM station managed to survive, and it owes its present healthy condition to a foresighted investment made many years ago. Today WCFL, Chicago, operated by the Chicago Fed-eration of Labor, remains labor's sole venture in standard broadcasting.

A milestone in labor's radio history came at the 1949 AFL convention when for the first time the delegates voted for a public relations program that included plans to go on the air on a regular basis. On Jan. 1, 1950, Frank Edwards started his nightly series of news commentaries on the coast-to-coast MBS net sponsored by the "10,000-000 men and women who make up the American Federation of Labor, your friends and fellow citizens who are working to keep America strong and free." Today, four years later, the Frank Edwards show is one of the top rated news shows on the air, beating out his MBS confrere, Fulton Lewis Jr., in a recent survey of a weekly cumulative audience of 6,568,000 to 4.230,000 listeners.

The format is a simple one. Edwards reports the news as he sees AFL imposes no restrictions or limitations on what he may or may not say. The commercial messages are of institutional nature. The format has been so successful that many other unions, including regional and local groups, have picked up the ball in their own communities. The UAW sponsors Guy Nunn in a daily newscast in Detroit and a weekly half-hour forum every Sunday in the Motor City. Taking notice of the AFL-Edwards success, the CIO recently inaugurated a nightly newscast on

Labor's experiment in radio be-| St. Louis. The Brotherhood of Railgan right after the close of the last way Clerks sponsors Drew Pearson

Last spring the AFL presented "Both Sides," a weekly half-hour TV show on the ABC-TV network. moderated by Quincy Howe. The commercials were dedicated to the various contributions of labor to American prosperity.

And just recently the AFL Longshoremen's Union embarked on a series of daily news programs in English, Polish and Italian on four key New York stations to inform the public, as well as the longshoremen, of progress and accomplish-ments in routing out racketeers and crime on the New York water-front. The AFL-ILA currently is also sponsoring three weekend programs in New York.

Summing up, the record of ac-complishments of labor in radio in a few short years has been quite outstanding. Frank Edwards' campaign on behalf of a little girl stricken with polio has resulted in dozens of iron lungs being installed in community hospitals which never before maintained such equipment. Edwards, too. carried the battle for Tidelands Oil resulting in thousands of letters and telegrams deluging both Houses of Congress. Recently he sponsored the letter writing campaign from families and triends to the 24 GI PW's in Korea who refused to come home.

The success of Edwards' program, like that of Nunn and Vandercook. is based directly upon organized labor's theory that the best way to keep America free is to keep her people informed. These programs are not devoted to lobbying for labor legislation but are limited to broadcasting the news and both sides of current issues not always available in the press—so that the public may decide for itself.

#### Hawaii TV Hopes To Break Even By July '54 Honolulu.

Hawaii's two TV stations enter 1954 with hopes that they'll reach the break-even point financially by July, according to C. Richard Evans, general manager of the Hawaiian Broadcasting System.

Christmas sales are expected to bring a total of 40,000 sets into operation, with Evans hinting a possible time rate boost for KGMB-TV by midvear.

That station is nearly sold out of time and "our only hope of in the sale of more receivers because rates are based on the num-ber of sets in operation," he said.

THE 3 OF THEM MAKE **A LOVELY COUPLE** By HOWARD G. BARNES= (Producer, CBS Radio's 'Stage Struck')

published an article in which the late Earle McGill, an ex-theatre hand then laboring in radio's vineyard, asserted that "Clio and Thalia lie in the clutch of the kilocycle" and that radio offers actors a far greater challenge than the legit, to say nothing of steadier employment.

The following Sunday, on the same page, Richard Maney took a Homeric belt at Mr. McGill in defense of the theatre, and the clash found echoes as far afield as the pages of Newsweek magazine. Said Mr. Maney:

"From your columns of last Sun-day I note that Earle McGill is wallowing in the delusion that what goes on between the commercials

on the air has something to do with

acting . . As cultural controversies go this was good clean fun but the fact is that no real conflict exists between theatre and radio as branches of the drama. The intimacy be-tween Clio, Thalia and the Kilocycle is more in the nature of an embrace than a clutch. And, to paraphrase Groucho Marx, the the three of them make a lovely couple.

Radio and theatre have essentials in common. They help each other according to their ability and, sometimes, according to each others' needs.

Their common essence is speech: written, spoken, or sung. Their common instruments are the actors who breathe life into the ideas which have been given form by the words. Their common goal is entertainment for the audience, without which there is nothing.

From this community of means and objectives there has flowed, for more than two decades, a practical interchange of resources. The legitimate theatre and radio have exchanged or contributed one to the other, actors, writers, directors, musical talent, techniques, con-cepts, and even theatres. The exchange has not been even-Stephen under all circumstances and in all respects, but it isn't a question of who gives more to whom. Rather, it's a question of how these two media, existing in the same culof time and "our only hope of tural economic and geographical reaching the profit-making stage is environment benefit each other; and there can hardly be any ques-

In August, 1943, the N. Y. Times | weekly one-hour actuality report | "Inside U. S. A.," will be heard on the state of the Broadway legit and its vital extension, The Road. represents a mature recognition of this mutuality.

> To begin with there is virtually no playwright, from Aristophanes to Arthur Miller, whose dramas have not been adapted for the air. The indispensability of drama to radio's very life is best indicated by the fact that the words "theatre." "stage," "playhouse." "drama," and terms which clearly imply down imply drama, appear more frequently in the titles of radio programs than perhaps any other groups of words. That very few radio plays have been translated to the legitimate theatre is no discredit to the younger medium. The theatre's overwhelming "balance of trade" in this respect is due largely to the fact that it has had a head start of two civilizations.

#### Well Balanced

In other categories the interchange is better balanced. Thea-tre and radio, for example, now share a common reservoir of acting and musical talent.

A random selection of 10 or 20 copies of The Playbill for recent years will yield such biographical information as the following, with almost monotonous frequency:

"Shirley Booth has added zest and verve to many a radio program — 'Duffy's Tavern,' 'Hogan's — 'Duffy's Tavern,' 'Hogan's Daughter,' and the Fred Allen program."

"Edith Adams (Eileen in 'Wonderful Town') says she began her professional career on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scout show.'

"Eddie Albert . . , grew inter-ested in the professional stage . . . through radio singing. A regular radio job launched him."

"John Conte . . . for five years singing master of ceremonies of the Maxwell House Coffee Hour."

Often, in a single production like "Picnic," one finds radio refer-ences in the biographical notes of half a dozen players, and from memory the average executive in radio or the theatre can reel off a dozen names equally well known on the boards and before the microphones such as Ed Begley, Anthony Ross. Berry Kroeger, Margaret Phillips, Everett Sloane and Paul Stewart. Doubtless a find like ration that they do. "Stage Struck," CBS Radio's of the most entertaining items of

from again in the theatre.

99

The most celebrated examples of this occupational duality include Ed Wynn who was known to the stage as "The Perfect Fool" and to redio as "The Fire Chief." and Helen Hayes, who has had several truly distinguished drama pro-grams of her own in addition to dozens of guest appearances.

Virtues of Quality

If radio and theatre had no other ties, this dependence on a common source of performing talent would still be vital. Economically, it spreads the salary load. Artistically it permits two-way transmission of creative influences and technical know-how. As the late drama critic, John Anderson, once commented:

"The theatre could profit by ra-dio's example of voice richness and between the two, we might not only enhance the power of radio drama but bring back to the real theatre the authority of style in writing and eloquence in language.

What's sauce for actors is sauce for writers. The theatre has its share of radio-trained dramatists and radio frequently benefits from scripts by recognized playwrights.

Arthur Miller labored mightily for "Cavalcade of America" before he won theatrical acclaim. The program's producer was George Kondolf who came to BBD&O from the legit and is now back on Broadway with "The Fifth Season." Abe Burrows, a substantial con-tributor to "Can Can" and "Guys and Dolls" made his leap from a radio springboard. Radio-trained (and for many years radio-nour-ished) Howard Teichmann is co-author with George S. Kaufman of the "Solid Gold Cadillac." Arthur Laurents, author of "Home of the Brave," also sweated at radio's smoking furnaces. Alan Jay Ler-ner, wrote for "Philco Playhouse" and the "Raleigh Room" on radio before he turned his typewriter to "Brigadoon," "Paint Your Wagon," "The Day Before Spring." and "Love Life." George Axelrod, in-ventor of "The Seven Year Itch," strengthened his literary muscles as writer for CBS Radio's Robert Q. Lewis shows and for "Manhattan at Midnight."

Julian Funt, a wellspring of day-"Child of Grace," opening during the 1953-54 season. Sam Taylor, author of "Sabrina Fair," and Arnold Auerbach, author of sketches for "Call Me Mister" and "New Faces," are also met trained.

Conversely, original scripts have been written for radio by such distinguished dramatists as Robert Sherwood, Maxwell Anderson, T. S. Eliot, Irwin Shaw, William Saroyan, Paul Green, and others. Consider also the cases of successful Broadway authors whose plays have developed more or less permanent niches (and riches) in radio and TV such as Clifford Goldsmith's "What a Life." known on the air as "The Aldrich Family." F. Hugh Herbert's "Kiss and Tell" which became "Corliss Archer."

And how would one extricate ra-



the ABC radio network featuring John W. Vandercook. All of these programs have achieved high listenership ratings and a wide following among the non-union as well as the union membership segments of the American listening public.

Of course, when the occasion arises labor will take to the air to tell its side of some issue or controversy currently facing the American public. For example, in 1947 the unions turned to the radio on a large scale for the first time to discuss Taft-Hartley. Over \$500,-000 was spent, and the services of many famous Hollywood stars-themselves all union memberswere utilized to accent the Taft-Hartley bill.

Last fall the Teamsters Union sponsored the broadcasts of the Notre Dame football games in many key cities of the midwest. The Retail Clerks Union is sponsoring Elmer Davis' newscasts in

BOB CUNNINGHAM

Welcome Travelers-NBC-AM-TV Morris B. Sachs Amateur Hour-WENR-WBKB

dio from stage in the careers of Orson Welles and John Houseman (now back on Broadway), whose Mercury Theatre emerged from the Paleozoic mists of WPA to set foot not on dry land but on the air?

There is one tie that radio and theatre do not have-the tie of investment and joint financial interest. They operate and gain revenue separately and independently -a fact which eliminates any economic motive for efforts by either to impose itself on the other.

All this illuminates the logic be-hind "Stage Struck." The natural capacities of radio and theatre for mutual advancement, long recognized, should be actively exercised. Neither medium can fail to benefit, to the extent that the theatre-going and radio-listening public benefits. After all, it is the pubbenefits. After all, it is the pub-lic that Jimmy Durante. star of stage and radio, speaks for when he sings: "I can do without Broadway, but can Broadway do without me?

WRH

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

#### **TELEVISION'S BEAN** BAI

**By ROBERT SAUDEK** 

(Director, TV-Radio Workshop, Ford Foundation)

One of television's problems is pushing them around, interrupting at too many programs are writ- their train of thought. Why should that too many programs are written on the back of a rate card. There appears to be no embarrassment in asking a capable writer or producer to routine his program for arbitrary interruptions of arbitrary lengths, for the presentation completely irrelevant material without adequate transition.

100

This arises directly out of the fact that program producers take for granted a set of rules which have not been revised since the days when the "bean ball" was outlawed from baseball. It seems that no one has given mature consideration to the bean ball in televi-Just as the audience is atsion. tuning to a good set of characters and a good plot, out of the tube comes the baseball traveling ninety miles an hour and hitting you right on the head. You are given one minute to recover from the blow, and sort out the characters and plot in your mind when the show resumes.

The bean ball was invented in order to make a batter duck, scare him away, strike him out. Slowwitted batters sometimes caught it on the head and were left dazed. There is no scientific proof that advertising's bean ball has the same effect on the customers, but it is common sense that hardly anyone in the television audience likes the pitcher, or pitchman, as he is now called. Therefore, if television's bean ball can sell goods even when the audience ducks, how much would they buy if they really liked the salesman?

For the past year the American Machine & Foundry Co., gen-erally known as AMF, has produced among the most absorbing television commercials. Their interest is not only because their products include a pretzel bender. an automatic pin spotter and a power tool machine, any of which might make boring commercials if only they contained the orthodox announcer telling about them and displaying pretzels, bowling pins or home-made furniture. AMF has demonstrated the very rhythm of their business—pretzel twisting machine in action, a pin spotter operating efficiently and a power tool machine turning out everything from a 2x4 beam to a pair of book ends. As a result, there are those in the audience who say the AMF commercials are as interesting as the program material contained in 'Omnibus''-and sometimes more interesting!

Ads to Fit the Mood Greyhound Corp. and Scott Paper Co. have fashioned their ad-vertising to meet the mood of the program that it appears in, and regular renewals would be some indication of the commercial success of doing business this way.

Outside of a country carnival or sideshow, it is almost unthinkable to touch briefly on some of the that a salesman could be most suc- major points of radio's strength cessful by insulting his customers.

television be different? Salesmanship can be direct and convincing and still not intrude on the cus-tomers' sense of the fitness of things.

Is it possible that some copywriter some day will convince his associates that the mechanical workings of an electric toaster might be interesting to the audience? Breathes there a woman with soul so dead that she will not respond to a sonnet instead of an exhortation to buy cosmetics?

Business is business, but Lever Bros. decided to do their business in a spectacularly handsome building. and Lord & Taylor display their wares in windows that easily match most Broadway set designs. It is remarkable that so many advertisers turn their television showcases into bargain basement counters without taste or design or any effort to show their products in an interesting and informative manner. It is not impossible to imagine that a prominent performer might undertake to associate himself with a product on television, provided her appearance gave her more to do than the standard en-It is conceivable that dorsement. Herman Wouk or William Saroyan might be persuaded to collaborate with an advertiser to present interesting one-minute character sketches that would involve the product without over-involving it. In short, there is a place for ex- change of pace.

success-both to reflect agency and

advertiser thinking and to exert leadership in the direction of that

The events of this year have cer-

porting on radio that has come from the leading trade publica-

the traditional time for summa-tions and recapitulations, I want

points which have been the bases

justified the favorable re-

And since the year's end is

thinking.

tainly

tions.



JOHN TILLMAN Telepix News—5th Year For Con Edison —WPIX—

perimentation in television advertising, and the integration of program material with the tone and nature of the advertising is not so difficult that it could not be tried. Nobody likes the pitcher who throws bean balls, but everybody likes the pitcher who is out to pitch a good game. What television commercials need are a few hurlers who have plenty on the ball and a

## Don't Underestimate That **Radio Audience**

#### By JOHN KAROL

(V.P. in Charge of Sales, CBS Radio Network)

It has been most gratifying to for many of the stories on the continuing values of radio. note, during this year, the acceptance by most of the trade papers of During this Christmas month of

the factual side of the radio story. gift giving, more than 1.000,000 The "death of a medium" type arradios will be purchased. The figticle has virtually disappeared. In ure quite likely will be far higher, fact. I can recall only one such "think" piece in recent months. In since more-than-a-million is the average monthly number of radio sets place of this type of article, most produced. This is a staggeringly large number. It represents an intrade magazine writers and editors have turned their attention to stacrease of more than 32% over last tistically sound and carefully docuyear. And just as difficult to vis-ualize is the related fact that since mented columns that place the many media in their proper light and correct relationships. They have sought—with considerable the war more than 112,000,000 sets

have been produced. Since virtually all homes are now radio homes these sets are broadening the base of the medium. Some, of course, are replace-But the big bulk of them ments. are moving into automobiles, kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms, home workshop rooms and so on. More 1,500,000 battery-operated than portables have been made this year, and these are going on weekend trips and to beaches and on boat rides.

It's painfully obvious that if so many people are spending quite a bit of money in these sets they are going to use them. However, we can go beyond common sense to research and get some indications of their usage. In the first week of March of this year, Nielsen reports that in the course of a week, 36,000,000 homes listened to nighttime radio. And these homes listened an average of nine hours and 20 minutes per week. In the daytime, 40,000,000 homes listened during the week. They listened an average of 15 hours and 46 minutes. These figures do not in-clude out-of-home listening. We

## No Sportscaster Can Do It Alone By MEL ALLEN

It's no mere coincidence that a sportscaster can come up with a myriad of pertinent facts during the play-by-play of a sports event. The keyword is research, not just before every game, but during the actual course of the game itself, with a ready, willing and able staff standing by.

My kid brother, Larry, has the all important job of gathering and collating this important statistical information for me. Without it, no sportscaster can possibly do an adequate job. Larry digs up background information on each player, as well as alltime records of the teams and the competition.

At least a week of preparation goes into every football game I cover. After brother Larry lets me have all the material, I study it. I carry the lineup in my pocket and spend every spare minute memorizing the numbers and corresponding play-I've got to know each football team thoroughers. ly before the weekend, as though I've been playing with them. I make it my buisness to get to the



Mel Allen

Site of the game at least one day ahead. Then I Mel Allen interview each coach, watch films of his team in action. I ask him all sorts of questions, including some about the opposing team. The latter is an effective device, sometimes, to find out all about the strengths and weaknesses of the adversaries. Thus, by the time the game starts, my head is crammed with info about all players, their shortcomings, their personal quirks and their favorite fortes, their plays. Since the scene changes every week, this becomes quite a chore. I've got to keep in mind the three essentials. 1. Accuracy. 2. Speed in translating action into words. 3. Adding color.

The baseball season is a little different. I practically live with the Yankees and this association enables me to gather a wealth of anecdotes about the players.

Television has not decreased the need for research. In fact, it has punctuated it. The home audience can see almost as much as the sportscaster can and he therefore has to watch his p's and q's. However, I must assume there are many people watching who are not completely familiar with all the aspects of the sport. The finer points must be explained to them. I believe it is a sportscaster's job to develop new sports fans as well as please those who are already devoted followers. Arming yourself with information that can turn a factual account into a human interest story helps achieve this end.

Just stop to realize how many millions of women have become rabid baseball or football fans because of TV. Do you think they would have "caught the bug" if the game hadn't been explained to them? Do you think their attention would have held if the dull moments in the game hadn't been leavened by pertinent comments?

So you see, research is a necessary factor to "hypo" the play-by-play and increase the legions of fans. And the kiddos who help on the research deserve kudos.

these women are married. They in so much of the trade pressbut for a family. Nighttime radio advertisers also can point their sales messages at almost 43.000.000 working men. Since surveys show decisively the importance of men in buying so many different prod-ucts-foods and drugs among them-the evening advertiser is in a position to impress his message on this segment of the population. Finally, he has in his potential audience 9,000,000 of tomorrow's customers—the girls and boys in high school and the young women and men in college.

These nighttime advantages reduce themselves to the fact that there is a far greater audience po-tential at night than in the day-And because more people time. are available as family units, there is more listening in terms of people (as well as homes). This, of course, has a pleasant effect on the This, of advertiser's cost-per-thousand.

purchase not just for themselves facts such as these presented here -are also the facts that have strengthened radio-network and local-in the minds and plans of advertisers and agencies.

> To give you the facts on this phase of network broadcasting, I will have to quote from my own network, whose figures are more readily available to me.

> In the first 11 months of 1953, we had more advertisers than in the comparable months of 1952. We had sold more quarter hours. We had a greater gross billing. I believe that the coming year

> will show a continuing increase in the use of the radio medium by advertisers. I believe that set sales will continue at a high level as the American people continue to indicate their interest in our medium. And I believe that in the coming year, the press of our trade will continue its factual reporting of our medium and its constructive

The facts you have been reading, thinking on all media.







#### JACK STERLING

"THE BIG TOP" CBS-TV "THE JACK STERLING SHOW" WCES "MAKE UP YOUR MIND"-CES

S. S. S. S. S. S. S.

know from data on this hard-to-measure phase of radio listening that the out-of-home audience is increasing and that it is a very large audience. The 26.200,000 sets in automobiles constitutes a bigtime medium in itself.

#### Nighttime, Too

These points have gained recognition rather rapidly and they have played a major role in the strength that network radio is displaying. Another set of factors, combined with these, is adding to the strength of nighttime radio. Advertisers, like

their trade press contemporaries, are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that at night radio can reach the nonworking housewife-just as it does by day—and that it also can reach the 18,400,000 women who work. The importance of this audience potential is greatly magnified by the fact that over half of TV

**BEN GRAUER** NBC

RADIO

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

RADIO-TELEVISION

101

# Who's Really on First? (We Know Who's Third)

By ROBERT E. KINTNER (President, ABC Network)

Usually, at the end of one year or the beginning of a new yearand often at points between these two extremes-business leaders and others pause to "point with pride" or "view with alarm" certain developments in their industry or on wider horizons.



The same holds true for broadcasting, although most statements by network executives are in the "point with pride" category—and usually in the "we are the Number One network" subdivision. Network "A" claims supremacy on the basis of the Nielsen rating of its average program-but does not point out its clearance advantage, created by a government-controlled monopoly, responsible for this lead. Network "B" comes back with its claim for rating supremacy based on Trendex, and logically so, for in the competitive television markets Network "B" enjoys an advantage. But the question is—Who is really on first? Network "B" begins an advertising campaign de-signed to show commercial leadership, and pegs

Robt. Kintner

the copy to total annual gross billings to date. Network "A" comes back quickly showing PIB figures for the current month, and indicating that this month has been a turning point in the billing picture. Each network claims to be first, and each substantiates the claim—albeit on a different base.

But the question is again-Who is really on first?

There seems to be some doubt-in the minds of not only the agencies and advertisers but also of the networks themselves-as to just who occupies first-base and who is on second.

But there isn't much doubt as to who is on third. That position is occupied by the American Broadcasting Co. In terms of the generally applied criteria of ratings, billings or the other coarse yardsticks used to measure the position of the *first* networks, the ABC Radio and Television Networks are on third.

#### Don't Ignore Time & Place

We believe that advertisers and their agencies are using the magnifying glass rather than the telescope to examine broadcasting. Their interest should be in the specific program or time period they buy, rather than the often misleading concept of the position of the entire network. Network "B" may have a charming, folksy emcee in its day-time radio programming, but ABC's morning serials consistently outrate this personality among younger housewives. Too few advertisers are aware of this precise information.

In television, Network "A" may lead in both ratings and clearances for all its dramatic programs, but ABC-TV, in open competition with all networks, secured the "United States Steel Hour" and we have every reason to believe our client is pleased with the association.

There is no question that Lucy and Ricky are a fine, and very amus-ABC-TV has developed a situation comedy, "Make Room for Daddy," as a vehicle for Danny Thomas, and those "in the know" forecast that this will be one of the top programs of television. It is believable, warm, entertaining and funny; in time, it too should be a "first."

In a very real sense, then, the label of the Number One network. a myth. There is no Number One network. When you examine the is a myth. component parts of the individual networks rather than make the overall rule of thumb classification, there are several "first" networks.

In the field of magazines, is McCall's really the Number Three magazine? The answer is no. For when a reader has a copy of McCall's in front of her, it is the Number One magazine for that time—it absorbs her full attention. The advertiser with an insertion in McCall's does not have to consider the higher circulation of Life or the Ladies' Home Journal, for to millions of readers McCall's is the Number One magazine.

The same holds true in broadcasting-to its audience, at the time of broadcast-the program and its network are Number One.

Another analogy-hotels. In Chicago there are a number of fine hotels. Possibly the Ambassador East is the "first" hotel for Chicago. But the Drake has certain suites and rooms far better than some of the less plush accommodations in the Ambassador. Yet, there are those who will only stay at the Ambassador regardless of the ac-commodations available. ABC, in both radio and television, has some Yet, there are commodations available. ABC, in both radio and television, has some very desirable "suites." Nonetheless, a few—their number is growing smaller every day—advertising executives who are "Ambassador-oriented" will not even consider accommodations at ABC. These are the few who settle for inferior accommodations just for the address.





JIM BACKUS as "Judge Bradley Stevens" in "I MARRIED JOAN" NBC-TV



(Producer, CBS-TV 'Studio One')

Television has rocketed to its present popularity through an everbroadening maze of superlatives and awesome statistics.

Today, with less than a decade of existence behind it as a mass communications medium, its influence is measured in terms of the millions upon millions of lives it is

stature as a "going business" is written in even greater sums. As show business, on a multimillion dollar scale, it is rivalled in scope only by the vast Hollywood movie industry.

Yet, from the standpoint of entertainment, television presents a most remarkable paradox. By the very nature of the audience it reaches, its most pronounced quality is intimacy. A quality, let me add, that is riddled with perils and pitfalls.

Foremost among them is the mater of audience complexion itself. Despite the astronomical figures that hang about it like an outside halo, and unlike its contemporaries in the entertainment arts, televi-sion must address itself, both audibly and visibly, to literally one person at a time.

For the TV producer, this places the matter of programming squareon a personal level and confronts him with a psychological hurdle unique in show business.

This audience-of-one concept dictates a highly specialized approach to television production, if the medium is to hold its own in competition with other forms of entertainment.

No Time For Trivia



(NBC-TV Director)

I'm not expecting Mr. Petrillo to give me a free life-long membership card, but I'm putting in a pitch for live musicians!

No one disputes the fact that the play's the thing and the writer puts his all into the words on the paper. The director translates these to the TV screen. His cast plays a vital part—and a wealth of acting talent is available to him. His sets create illusions—the best designers work regularly in the medium. Costumes and makeup play similarly creative roles. The finishing touch lies with the musical backgrounds.

The theatre has demonstrated the importance of music in giving form and shape to a play—e.g., "Streetcar," "Death of a Salesman," "Seven Year Itch." The movies have used it for years, and "High Noon," "Third Man." "Laura," are but a few which attribute an im-

The same thing should apply in television dramatics. But, what is the situation of the producer who faces the everyday realisms of When all the figures are in for sets, cast, script and director, money. there's usually no money left for music. And, after all, there are recorded cues available. But, even if the right record is available, the director has to tailor his action to the music, not vice versa as in the other mediums. Music does not have to be original all the time, but it should be custom made to fit the particular situation. Live, you can control not only the content but the concept. The parand helps the story along. This is not impossible, but much more difficult with records . . . plus the time element, of which there is never enough. Despite the excellent help of the most cooperative manual to the particulty of the most cooperative people at the networks, I can remember several occasions when I've wasted more time searching for the right record for a 15-second cue that it would take to score a whole show live.

#### Solo Backgrounds

Some shows have gotten around this . . . using solo instruments. Hank Sylvern does a beautiful job with the organ on "Suspense." Tony Mottola's guitar is an integral part of "Danger." Some shows are able to afford a full orchestra. The large budgeted U. S. Steel series, of course, and the much smaller budgeted "Armstrong Circle Theories" which offends its director the budgeted "Armstrong Circle Theatre"-which affords its directors the luxury of Harold Levey and 15 pieces. And I know from my own experience as the original di-rector of "Mister Peepers" that part of its success is due to the wit and humor of Bernie Green's baton.

And don't think the audience doesn't know the difference. Last summer on "Studio One Summer Theatre" I had Billy Nalle's live piano back almost the entire show. We had more requests for the name of the tune he wrote than we did for the name of the director! On "Robert Montgomery Presents" this past Thanksgiving, Ray Por-ter's a capella nine-voice choir brought a continuity and flavor that I couldn't have given the show with recorded music. The public knew the difference!

It doesn't always have to be a full orchestra. Some scripts might be better just backed by a small combination or a solo instrument. And some scripts could manage very well indeed without the added luxury. But, if the writer knew live music was available how much more leeway he would have to achieve even greater effects. And how much easier it would be for the director to follow through and how much more exciting the final result would be for the audience-and the client.

Since television has become the great monster that devours the talents of so many writers, actors, designers, directors and producers -let it also feast on the musical genius.

And, after all, since television, every client's mother, sister and aunt have become authorities on writing, designing, producing and directing—why not let them be authorities on musicians as well?

of others. There are no mass emotions, there is no mass stimulation or for both. -and there is no captive audience that has paid anywhere from \$.60 to \$6.60 for its seats and is deter-mined to get its money's worth. The very fact that the TV show plays to countless small audiences, scattered all over the land, gives has advance knowledge of what he is quite a job.

tions to either fantasy or comedy is going to see. The reviews and that the same persons would have the advertisements have told him in a house packed with hundreds whether the vehicle is suitable or unsuitable for adults, for children,

No such previous warnings are posted for the TV audience. producer's effort must stand or fall on its spontaneous appeal, or lack of it, to a wide-range of viewers, with an equally wide diversity of tastes. It must please as many as the television producer a special possible, hore as few as possible-kind of responsibility. On Broad-way, for example, the theatregoer these specifications in a single show



capable of

JEAN SOREL RADIO-TV-STAGE Management-MADELYN KILLEEN. Circle 7-3648

Television has no time to waste on butlers who stalk across the stage to pour clipped accents into a telephone that jangles just as the curtain goes up. The show itself must get attention right away. It must literally shock its audience into attention-agreeably, maybe, but shock it nevertheless.

We've been trying to avoid this pitfall on "Studio One." I hope we've been successful. In "Dry Run," for example, our story of a dramatic submarine rescue during World War II, we attempted to cre-ate with the first few shots an atmosphere charged with suspense, and—as the story demands—frus-tration. In "Silent the Song," we opened with the dramatic element of a famous opera singer stricken voiceless in the middle of an aria. But once the TV show has won attention, this attention must be held also, at a disadvantage peculiarly its own. One, two, three or even more people in a living room will not have the same reac-

NELSON CASE

# **RDF: LINK BETWEEN U. S. AND FRANCE**

**By PIERRE CRENESSE** (North American Director, French Broadcasting System)

This has been a banner year for French Radio in the United States, with its successful contribution to the production of the National Assn. of Education Broadcasters' tape network highlighting its program planning

This ambitious project was added to the already existing schedule of regular shows sent out monthly by RDF.

Since March 7, 1953, the French Broadcasting System has produced, for the 100 stations of the NAEB network, over 100 programs designed to promote and foster French culture through radio, and including such diversified material as great plays in French, literary talks, dramatizations of the lives of great composers, and discussions about such very controversial musical schools as dodecaphonism and concrete music.

L'Avare by Moliere, Le Cid by Corneille, Hernani by Victor Hugo, and Cyrano de Bergerac by Rostand, have been among those plays presented in French by the celebrated Comedie Francaise which have met with success wherever they have been heard. In New York, they are broadcast over WNYC on Saturdays at 2 p.m. Modern dramatists have not been neglected in a series called "The French Theatre," which includes plays by Giraudoux, film producer Marcel Pagnol, and versatile, talented Jean Cocteau. A gamut of French composers and their works offers a panoramic audition of France's contribution to music from the 14th Century to the present day (WNYC—Sundays at Contemporary French Composers presented interviews with noon noon). Contemporary French Composers presented interviews with Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulene—to name but a few—as well as Pierre Boulez, leading dodecaphonist and tapesichord-ist. The American public was also privileged to hear the famed French Music Festivals of Sceaux, Versailles, Vichy, Besancon and Strasbourg, as well as fascinating dramatizations of the lives of many great composers. Great Writers of France, Great French Poets and The French Academy round out the cultural programs for the NAEB. All of these shows are produced in Paris by Magdeleine Paz. and— except for the Comedie Francaise and French Theatre programs all are in English.

#### **French Editorial Opinion**

Another important feature added to the roster of French Broadcasting System shows in 1953 is the French Press Review, a 15-minute summary of French editorial opinion, shortwaved from Paris and presented every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. over station WNYC.

In addition to the above, the French Broadcasting System (RDF) has continued to produce and distribute to over 350 stations throughout the country, as well as Alaska. Hawaii, the Virgin Islands, Panama, New Zealand and Canada—and over 100 stations in Japan— Its 20 regular programs a month: Masterworks from France (classical music). Songs of France (for the folklore fancier), Paris Star Time (top tunes), French in the Air (language lessons), and Bonjour Mesdames (recipes, fashions, etc., strictly for the ladies), all pro-duced in Paris by a staff of Franco-American radiomen headed by Paul Gilson and Michel Robida.

Heard every Sunday night from 11:30 to 12 Midnight over WNBC, as well as 90 NBC network stations, is Stars from Paris, presenting France's most popular stars—from perennial favorites Jacqueline Francois and Jean Sablon to little-known but up-and-coming starlets Anny Gould, Mouloudji and Michele Arnaud. During the summer months, Stars from Paris was also heard over 128 NBC network stations, on Monday nights from 10:35 to 11 p.m., and met with a great deal of enthusiastic audience response.

During 1953, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. broadcast the Music Festivals of France, both in French and in English, and these were also heard over some of the stations of the Universal Broadcasting System in the United States.

All of the French Broadcasting System's transcriptions are non-commercial, sustaining programs distributed free of charge, except for mailing costs, to stations throughout the country, as well as those other countries enumerated above,

In addition, I have had the pleasure of appearing on one of Lilli (Continued on page 190)



WM. KEENE Thanks To Those For Whom I Worked in '53 and Best Wishes To All For A Happy And Prosperous 1954.

WM. KEENE LE 2-1100



Co-chairman, Publicity Committee SWG Television Writers' Group)

Hollywood. Look back through the old files of VARIETY—along about the time radio was taking its first uncertain steps as the newest toddler in the family circle of show business -What does radio mean to show biz? Will it ever be as important as vaude, the legit or pix? What about the performers, the directors, the writers in show biz-will they make the transition into this new field? Will they even bother with radio?

These and a hundred questions like them were being posed in think pieces and dope stories by VARIETY'S muggs.

In the past two years, during television's period of painful ges-tation, a new generation of VARIETY muggs have been asking the same questions and exploring the same problems—this time about TV. This is by way of report from Hollywood of how the screenwriter has taken his place (Continued on page 186)

## The 'Telectronic Age' By DR. ALLEN B. DUMONT

symbolizes electronics with visi-bility. It embraces the idea of a useful television system applied to everyday living.

This newly-opened future for television has a great potential — one that goes far beyond the factors of entertainment, education or culture.

The applications to which television can be put are so vast that I have little doubt that the "Telectronic Age" will have a tremendous effect on our patterns of thought, morals, actions, commercial operations and everyday living.

Even with the great strides we have made with broadcast television programming and techniques. TV has only begun to scratch the surface of possibilities for which it can be used.

Definitely, a major part of tele-vision's future lies with industrial and scientific television. This important phase of television's future is not generally known or understood by the public. When all the possibilities of TV's use in indus-try and science are revealed (many uses are classified under security regulations) it will probably stagger the imagination of the average citizen.

Although the present role of television in industry and science is only a small fraction of what it will someday be, there already are some surprising instances of its use. These are spread over a sufficiently varied field to give a good picture of the all-inclusive role which industrial television is des-

tined to play. In the field of science, television is now considered as playing a vital role, with future possibilities unlimited

#### **DuMont's Superb Role**

Recently, an audience of more than 1,200 military men and business leaders, at a meeting of the National Advisory Committee for Aircraft at Lewis Laboratory in Cleveland, saw latest ramiet engine in action in a supersonic wind tunnel by means of DuMont closedcircuit television. The action would have been impossible to view with-

out television. In conjunction with the Argonne National Laboratories, a division of the Atomic Energy Commission, DuMont assisted in the develop-ment of stereo, or three-dimension-al television. It utilizes a split screen and polarized glasses. Sci-entists, working from behind a lead wall with dangerous radioactive materials, manipulate me-chanical hands. The hands are attached to devices which are so deli-

America is standing on the cate that they pick up and pour threshold of a new era — the "Te-lectronic Age." It is an age that laboratory work. The fact that the operator can see in three dimensions in such precision work gives him a much greater degree of accuracy.

The ability to send very fine, high definition pictures via indus-trial television is a boon to medical men. Television gives medical students a surgeon's eye view of operative procedure.

Previously, they had watched from amphitheatres, where the view was often blocked by surgeons and nurses who surrounded the op-erating table. Now, lecturers in nearby rooms can point out to larger audiences surgical proce-dures and other pertinent points without bothering operating surgeons.

In the study of bacteriology and other sciences, TV has contributed much progress. Slides, previously viewed through a microscope by one person at a time, can now be seen on a TV screen by many per-sons at the same time.

Scientists have employed TV as a third eye to reach inaccessable places such as volcano craters, crevices in ocean bottoms, and

abandoned mine shafts. Not long ago the British govern-ment used a TV camera to locate a sunken submarine that went down with 75 men aboard.

In industry, as in science, there is no limit to the uses to which TV can be put. For instance, a utility company employs TV as a means of checking smoke conditions at power plants smoke stacks.

Many companies use closed-circuit television to hold sales meetings between distant points. Railroads are exploring the use of TV in checking switching on incoming and outgoing trains.

Television plays a vital role in relaying messages to many people separated by great distances in a short period of time.

A great degree of imagination is required to visualize the astound-ing possibilities of industrial television. In the not-too-distant future it will become a necessity rather than a luxury.

To the average person, television today means sports, drama, variety shows and news programs. To the television scientist, it means a milestone in technical and scien-tific advancement, an electronic key for solving industrial as well as scientific problems.

#### Sat. Farm Show Next **On NBC-TV Chi Agenda**

Chicago.

Latest offbeat program idea to be tossed in the hopper by Chi NBC-TV exec producer Ben Park and his web programming crew in-volves a farm show angled for a Saturday morning time slot. With the Chi-produced "Hawkins Falls," "The Bennetts" and "Ding Dong School" rolling along as estab-lished properties ("Welcome Trav-elers" is now completely agencyproduced) and no other major ventures on the upcoming agenda, Park has been casting about for some additional low-budgeted sleeper formats worthy of eventual home office attention.

Since a rural-targeted show would invade a hitherto unexplored and unexploited network territory, and since the Windy City would be its natural point of Park has started sketching origin. the outlines. Eddy Arnold is be-ing considered as possible host for the show.



A substantial part of the programs on Channel 9, the new educational TV station here will include music and entertainment according to Chancellor Arthur H. Compton, prexy of Washington Univ, and a member of the St. Louis Educational Television Commission. Dr. Compton said that during after school hours entertainment of worthwhile nature for children will be provided.

Also the station will offer col-lege courses for adults in addition



to programs for school use. Richard J. Goggin, gen. mgr. of the station, said four major types of programs would be offered; educational subjects during school hours; high level entertainment for children in late afternoons; adult education in early evening and cultural and informative presenta-tions later in the evening. Approximately \$150.000 is still needed in the campaign to raise \$450,000 for the first three years of the station's operations.

#### Chi's 1,545,675 TV Sets Chicago.

Latest in the monthly surveys conducted by the Chi Electric Assn. pegs the number of TV sets in the Chi area at 1,545,675.

New installations during November totalled 28,798, reflecting a seasonal sales upbeat.

#### **BLOSSOM SEELEY and BENNY FIELDS**

CURRENTLY-Twice Daily: 11 to 12 A.M. ... 7 to 8 P.M.-WMGM Direction: William Morris Agency

#### Autry, Dennis Day Safaris

A couple of telestars are going out to the hustings to meet their constituents. Old hand at the barnstorm trick is Gene Autry, the Wrigley CBS'er, whose 50-city trek will be launched Jan. 8, opening in Duluth and winding up in Birmingham Feb. 28. In troupe will be regulars Pat Buttram, Rufe Davis, maestro Carl Cotner and Cass County Boys, plus the nag Champion.

Other singer-actor going safari is Dennis Day, but only for a week starting Jan. 27, in behalf of his NBC-TV sponsor, RCA Victor. He'll kick off in Chi for two days, then New York (Jan. 29-31) and one-nighters in Philly, Detroit and Cleveland.

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## YOUR UNION CARD By ALAN BUNCE (President, AFTRA)

About 30 years ago a shotgun wedding took place that shook the theatrical profession to its backdrop. After centuries of living apart in a virginal world of its own, "The Theatre" was wooed, won and taken in commercial wedlock by Big Business, which heretofore had been content to buy tickets at the boxoffice. With the invention of the radio tube, the performer suddenly became pregnant with advertising possibilities, and the American sponsor, being at heart an honest man, hastened to the altar with an astonished and slightly suspicious bride.

The intervening years have shown this union to be one of mutual advantage, if not complete compatibility. The results of this "marriage of convenience" on public and performer alike have been revolutionary. The immediate effect on the public, of course, was to bring the theatre to the audience instead of the audience to the theatre. The actor, now giving his performance in the living-room, was no longer dependent on the sale of tickets, the weather, Christmas week or Lent. With no sleeper jumps, defaulting managements nor even a curtain rising. he found himself playing to 10 years of audience in one night. Instead of gambling on the hit or flop of a theatrical venture, he tied his fate to the advertising budget of a soap company, or the sales campaign of a cosmetic. The actor's rough road had unexpectedly branched into shining new highways which sped him on not only to new fields of activity, new ways of making money, but to keener competition, of activity, new ways of making money, but to keener competition, new demands on his resourcefulness, talent and adaptability. Facing now the complexities of radio and television, finding himself an im-portant item in the advertising plan of a tobacco firm, he discovered that he must now be artist and accountant, performer and business-man. With his livelihood depending on many single "jobs" each month instead of one or two "engagements" a year, the necessity for a stricter management of his professional life became apparent. And the crying need for a proling of interests soon brought about successful efforts need for a pooling of interests soon brought about successful efforts to create new unions to assure proper uniformity and organization of his working conditions. Thus, as the stage actor many years ago fought for and won the blessings that came with the birth of the Actors' Equity Association, as the motion picture performer found protection in the Screen Actors' Guild, so the radio and television actors, singers, announcers, dancers, specialty acts, etc., formed new units—the Amercan Federation of Radio Artists and Television Authority, now suc-cessfully merged into AFTRA. Today, the 4A's (Associated Actors and Artistes of America), with five thriving major branches, each representing a different performing craft, stands as a triumphant refutation of the old fear that "temperamental" actors could not or should not get "mixed up" with unions.

#### **Examining the Ledger**

For the benefit of any doubting Thomases, any who still question the value of union membership, let us take stock. We could go back over 50 years and find inspiration in the story of "The White Rats," that original group of vaudeville performers who united to fight the unfair practices of the old booking offices. My late father-in-law, J. C. Nugent, talked glowingly of those early struggles and pointed with pride to the fact that they set the pattern for our present day performer unions. But let us take AFTRA as our example. What good is it? What does the member get for his money? More, I think, than even the most endent member performer to determine the prior than even the most ardent member realizes. In addition to the privi-lege of belonging to one of the most highly respected labor unions in the A. F. of L. roster, it should hardly be necessary to list such obvious advantages as welfare funds, death benefit plans, etc.

In trying to picture the position of a performer without benefit of unions, we might compare him to a soldier without an army or headquarters, or to a salesman without a reputable business organization behind him. Unlike the isolated actor of yesterday, desperately trying to decide how much salary he dare ask without risking the job, the union member today can start his negotiations (if, indeed, any are necessary) with the solid, unalterable backing of his union code, respected alike on both sides of the desk. Surely one of the greatest services of the union is to take the performer out of economic competition with his fellow performer and to bring him the dignity and strength that are inherent in a well-run American trade union.

Estimating the actual financial benefits accruing from union membership is largely guesswork. But a backward glance reveals some in-teresting figures. The New York radio actor of 1936, for instance, often had no choice but to accept a fee of \$10 or perhaps \$12.50 for a 15-minute show. Today the AFTRA minimum is \$30.50 for the same job. Half-hour radio programs were pretty much take-it-or-leave-it affairs,

The performer today, through his union, has brought stability and responsibility to the profession, helping himself and his employer alike. And, best of all, with an organization controlled and governed by its own working members in the true American way, the performer can face the hazards of his calling with greater confidence and pride.





HARRY SALTER MUSICAL DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER "NAME THAT TUNE" NEC-TV

## It's All Over In 60 Minutes By WILLIAM MOLYNEUX

(NBC-TV Scene Designer)

Art was long and Time was fleeting, till TV changed all that. No contemporary art form is briefer or more transitory, for no matter what blood, sweat and tears go into getting a program on the air, generally speaking it's all over in an hour.

If there were time to brood this might lead to interesting frustrations, but the designer is so immediately involved in plans for the next show he's too busy to think about the fleeting nature of his glory.

An infinite variety of tasks and problems create this "busy-ness." Broadway musical comedy budgets these days run to \$250,000, but it is hoped by those who underwrite them, that they are making a long-term investment. Next to this the \$6,000 budget I had for "Suor An-gelica," one of the NBC Opera Series, may seem modest, but when you consider it was for a single one-hour performance it becomes rather substantial. To justify that kind of budget and realize the scope it permits calls for endless book-work, desk-work, shop-work and scrounging around in prop shops.

The book-work starts when the scene designer gets his assignment. For the recent color telecast of "Carmen" I did research on Span-ish architecture, and studied the opera's libretto. From this reading came a departure from the usu-al scenic treatment of "Carmen," for in the fourth act. I transferred the scene usually played outside the arena to a confined area just inside the gates, which helped convey Carmen's feeling of being trapped.

After research comes the prep aration of rough sketches which are discussed at a planning meeting with the production staff-producer, director, light-man, etc. The dedirector, light-man, etc. signer emerges from this knowing where he must provide free-space for camera movement, what kind of fabrics will be used in the costumes (information he needs so his walls will not war with them in confusing effects) the amount of time available for moving sets, and the amount of space for setting

## The Shows They Never Did

By MAC BENOFF

#### This Is Your Life?

EDWARDS:—Now, Mr. Jones. you met the principal of your school who came out of a sick bed, all the way from Mapawonee, Oklahoma. JONES:—(TEARFULLY) Good old Mapawonee. EDWARDS:—You've met your long lost friend whom you hadn't seen for 40 years, and the adopted daughter of your brother-in-law's courie who came from Tabulu Lawar. How does that make you

cousin who came from Tabulu, Japan. How does that make you feel?

JONES:--(Sobbing) Just wonderful. Wonderful.

EDWARDS:---Well now, hold tight for an even bigger surprise. Do you remember working in a little town near St. Louis? JONES:--Mackushla, Missouri?

EDWARDS:-Mackushla, Missouri. Right. You clerked in a bank

JONES

*EDWARDS*:—Do you remember him, Mr. Hawkins? *HAWKINS*:—That's Jones, all right. *JONES*:—(LAMELY) Hi. *EDWARDS*:—Well, Mr. Jones, you worked in Mr. Hawkins' bank for four years and then one morning you didn't show up. Is that right? JONES:--(LOOKING FOR THE EXIT) If you don't mind, Mr. Edwards-

EDWARDS:-(EXUBERANTLY) In fact, you never showed up. Ha, ha, ha! and at the end of the month the bank found out it was short \$40,000. HAWKINS:-Forty-five.

JONES:--I've got to leave now. EDWARDS:--Wait a minute. Look who's coming. Mr. Jones. The Sheriff of Mackushla. Missouri. (SHERIFF ENTERS)

SHERIFF:-Howdy, Jones. EDWARDS:-You haven't seen Mr. Jones in 10 years, have you, Sheriff?

SHERIFF:-That's right. We got a tip he was in a saloon in Genesee. I got there just as he was leaving. I fired five shots but he got away in his car. EDWARDS:—Boy! I'll bet that was exciting.

JONES:—You can keep my prizes. Mr. Edwards, I'm leaving. EDWARDS:—Hold it a second, Mr. Jones. Here's someone else who

wants to see you. Mr. Wilkins.

JONES: -- Wilkins?

JONES:—Wilkins? EDWARDS:—Yes, after you left Genesee, you crossed the state line, putting your offense under the jurisdiction of the Federal authori-ties. Folks, how about a big hand for Mr. Wilkins of the FBI. (WILKINS ENTERS, TAKES A BOW, PUTS HANDCUFFS ON MR. JONES) Surprised, aren't you, Mr. Jones? JONES:—That's one way of looking at it. EDWARDS: Well, we're gate lots more surprises. Here are three

JONES: — Inats one way of looking at it. EDWARDS: — Well, we've gots lots more surprises. Here are three depositors. Mr. Hyman, Mrs. Owen and Mr. Bridges, who have claims against you for the money you absconded with. (THEY ENTER THROUGH THE DOORWAY TO LIFE AND HAND JONES SOME PAPERS) MR. BRIDGES: — These are subnoanes to annear in court

MR. BRIDGES:-These are subpoenas to appear in court.

EDWARDS:—How about some applause, Folks. (THE AUDIENCE APPLAUDS, DISTRACTING EVERYONE, JONES RUNS OFF THE STAGE, THE SHERIFF DRAWS HIS GUN AND RUNS AFTER HIM, THE OTHERS FOLLOW. EDWARDS IS ALONE)

EDWARDS:---Well. our time was up anyway. Tune in next week for THIS IS YOUR LIFE?

#### What's My Line?

DALY:-Well, panel, so far you've all been stumped and Mrs. Beaver has won \$45. You've got one more chance. Let's see now, Mrs. Beaver is self-employed, you won't know the commodity she sells, but it's recognizable without the wrapper, and it's used in a house.

CERF:-I'll take a last guess. Mrs. Beaver sells bananas. DALY:-No. I'm sorry, panel. You didn't get this one, but it was

pretty tough. Mrs. Beaver is a stripper. (ALL LAUGH). Thank you for coming, Mrs. Beaver, and here's your 50 bucks-I mean dollars.

#### You Bet Your Life

MARX:—Oh, I'm sorry contestants. The 30th President of the United States was Calvin Coolidge. You lose the jackpot of \$9,000. CONTESTANT:—Oh nerts!

MARX:-Well, whaddya know. You win \$100 anyway. Nerts is the magic word!



JOHN CAMERON SWAYZE

them.

The preparation of final sketches, done in color even for black and white broadcasts, follows. Af-ter their approval, the designer prepares his working drawings to scale, and paint elevations for the carpenter and paint crews, who perform the miracle of transforming an idea on paper into three-di-mensional reality. When he isn't needed in the shop, he goes out into the outside world and looks for props.

Three and a half years designing TV sets has taught me there's no such thing as a routine operation and no permanent record of one's efforts. It may seem futile that the fruits of so much time, money and effort are disposed of after an hour's use, but the fact is this provides a healthy climate for the creative artist. With no time to muse on past triumphs the scene designer cannot rest on his laurels but must progress in his work by meeting ever-changing challenges.

#### CLAIRE MANN

Beauty and Health Authority of DuMont-TV Star-Producer of Daily 1:00-1:30 "CLAIRE MANN TV SHOW" Dedicated to Glamourizing Women of All Nations

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#### Getting a Re-Run For Your Money Continued from page 93

Forty-eighth

economic life, within the sphere of their morals and ethics as they understand and accept them. A story is told well if it is written with such artfulness

that the listener gets involved and entangled, that he lives through the ordeals and triumphs of the characters as if they were his own ordeals and triumphs. Subconsciously, he applies the experiences of the characters to himself and his own problems. In short, he has received and understood the "message."

The good story can be recognized by three distinct signs: It is entertaining. Its theme emerges from the contemporary stream of life. It has a definite purpose of conveying a message.

The theme is the foundation of a story. It must be clear, precise and without distracting ornaments.

At a time when communications were slow, when churches, schools, newspapers and political organizations failed to remcay blatant injustices in the social order of the day, the Schillers, the Ibsens, the Strindbergs and the Hauptmanns stood up and screamed their accusations from the pulpit of the stage into the faces of the mighty. In strong stories, they delivered dramatized editorials against the forced draft of youth of their country to serve in foreign wars, against the lack of pension for invalid officers, against the introduction of machinery in manufacturing plants without thought of the fate of the dismissed laborer. against the enslavement of women in the home and in the community, etc. They made the stage a moralizing, political platform; their books became fighting pamphlets. they caused revolutions on one hand and inflamed will to resistance on the other.

Many of their themes, so very important a lifetime ago, have lost their impact, because wrongs have been righted. Our communication system of today, in combination with our internal political order, is so efficient that the writer very often comes too late with a dramatized problem, because city hall or the women's clubs or the editorials and columns of the newspapers have taken care of the problem and made it a point of public discussion, which usually brings the desired results.

#### **A Weapon for Victory**

Then what is there to write about?

Today we have more burning themes at our fingertips than ever. Our world is divided in two great camps: the free world and the enslaved world. More than ever, today we need dramatists to explore and exploit the theme of human relations. This is a theme that has no value in the enslaved part of the world. It could become the secret weapon for victory in the hands of the writers of the free world.

The fight between the two worlds is a savage one. The Aristotelian and the communist philosophies of writing are locked in battle. Both are eager to win the masses.

Aristotle teaches that writing is poetry. Poetry is Art. Art is Beauty. Beauty uplifts the soul. A soul uplifted by the experience of this art will become sirong to stand up under the gnawing doubt, in the values of our existence. It will feel secure. Man's uplifted soul will feel the nearness of God within him, and will lose the fear of the ultimate death of everything living.

Aristotelian philosophy is the victory over animalism, barbarism, over negativism and anarchism. Shakespeare's, Mozart's, Lessing's, Albert Schweitzer's works are living in the realm of this philosophy and have made the world a richer and better place to live in.

The communist credo of writing in our time and our world is the exact opposite. Its aim is to tear down, to plant doubts in our hearts, to sow uncertainty, to deny God to make us feel insecure and spiritually helpless! As remedy, they offer us their alternative: That man doesn't need to search for God, since man himself is God and that he doesn't have to recognize anything above him, with the exception of Super-God: the State!

It is a tempting credo for human beings who live without guidance and conviction within themselves and are insecure within their family, their community and their nation.

It is the writer's duty to enter this battle for the

**COME BACK IN FIVE YEARS'** 

By TED BERGMANN.

human spirit. He must take sides, or he will remain a writer out of contact with his time. In our race against a communist-inspired writing, we must write the better stories and win the greater audiences. Our better stories must prove:

VARIETY

Anniversary

the value of life of the individual

the value of the individual's good relations with others the value of our way of life in a free world

the value of our great past, applied to the present and future.

Television is the broadest platform ever presented to the modern writer to carry his themes forward and let his message be heard by the greatest mass of people. The legitimate stage reaches only a few, the motion picture reaches millions, but television reaches tens of millions al-most hourly, day and night. Its penetration and convincing power are unbelievable.

The tiresome argument of the motion picture people and exhibitors that television is a hateful competitor must stop, because both have only one real competitor: Communism. If this competitor wins the souls of the people, the fight among movie and TV people will be remembered as a most stupid act of fratricide.

All differences must be eliminated. Peace and unity must rule within. The spirits must be raised, not the prices. The art of powerful writing must be cultivated, not the haggling for higher royalties.

The writers are our last and strongest hope-that they will deliver the bread and the wine.

#### **By REUB KAUFMAN** (President, Guild Films)

We began producing TV programs against our will. We never intended to produce programs. Program production literally was forced upon us.

Originally organized as a distribution firm, Guild Films set up an efficient and experienced staff and system for economically and expeditiously handling and servicing the sale of TV show series. But our search for sizable shows was hampered by three unfortunate conditions.

Where satisfactory shows were contemplated, but not yet made, most of the budding eager-to-go-into-business producers had little more than an idea. They usually needed almost complete financial backing, and very few of them appreciated either the importance or the cost of such backing.

Where satisfactory shows already were in production, the producers were unwilling as a rule to accept what we considered to be reasonable distribution terms. These producers felt that their show was all important and that the business of selling, promoting and servicing it was just one of those necessary evils and of relatively small value.

Then, of course, there were all kinds of shows which we considered unsatisfactory.

In the face of these conditions we reluctantly decided to produce our own shows. The first of these was Liberace, followed by "Life With Elizabeth" and "The Joe Paleoka-All three are in almost constant production. Story,"

Our experience as producer-distributors has proved for us the desirability of the combination.

#### **Pulse on Public**

Our intimate knowledge of the buying market enables us to determine what constitutes a salable show. We pick for production the kind of shows we feel the public wants, and therefore the ones which can be depended upon to "payoff" for the sponsors. In fact, our decision to pro-duce a particular show is largely dictated by our own understanding of the market demand.

Our sales commitments are guaranteed by our own pro-duction capacity. We therefore are able to avoid one of the pitfalls which exist where the producer and distributor are not one and the same. As distributors we fully appreciate the problems in-

promotion of a realistic attitude towards UHF took the form recently of a cost-per-thousand com-parison between a substantial

outlets of similar set potential. This study, which has attracted a lot of favorable comment among agencies, made graphic the factas one example--that a half-dozen of the top UHF stations yielded a better cost-per-thousand than 73 VHF outlets much more heavily bought and readily accepted.

This comparison disregarded entirely the special inducements

vision in 1953, even though more than 200 stations had gone on the air in the year and a half after the lifting of the freeze. In spite of this rapid advance the problem of networking was still far from solved. All four networks faced a major difficulty in getting network station clearance. It has been a catch-as-catch-can situation in trying to satisfy advertisers' orders.

But with the right kind of support UHF television can change this situation. As each day passes and more stations are built, the closer we can come to four really

Wednesday, January 6, 1954.

herent in "selling" a show. We know how quickly the public reacts to good taste, quality, entertainment and story values in production. As producers we see to it that these values are never lacking in our own shows.

Finally, as producer-distributors, we do not fear to enter into comprehensive production schedules, for we have confidence in our own sales power. Since last January, for example, we have had one or more of our shows in constant production. This has made it possible for us to assemble and retain capable production personnel who are secure in their jobs and therefore very much concerned with the quality and cost of the shows which they are helping to create.

Our dual role as producer and distributor has been an important factor in the widespread distribution which was obtained in so short a time for our shows. Our plans for the year ahead call for further expansion of the producerdistributor policy.

#### Weaver Credo Continued from page

sures exist today to do just this. Every pressure that tries to make television follow the old radio pattern is a pres-sure toward a fragmentized service. The argument runs as follows: In network operation, when a client insists on a low-circulation show he likes, instead of a show which fits into an overall programming strategy, and which main-tains the basic circulation which is what is paid for by the time rates; or when an agency uses pressure to increase commercial time, or cut production rates, or refuse pre-emption rights to the network, etc., then the momentum of the network operation is slowed, its resources cut, and the proponents of the fragmentized service are aided. The latter include many of the syndicate companies, taient companies, motion picture companies and companies under their control, as well as some of the advertising agencies, some station representatives, etc. The general agencies, some station representatives, etc. The general pressure of these forces is to shift the money from the facilities or time-buying side of the business to the talent or program side. When this is done in a network like NBC, by the network itself selling a key program, part of the income is set aside for our public service responsi-bility. The other constant bility. The other operators generally make the public service responsibility a matter for the stations, and main-tain that they are only in the entertainment or amusement business, or in the business of selling goods.

#### Warming Up Affiliates

Awareness of these possibilities has already created a change of heart among executives in many affiliated sta-tions who now realize that their future is in this "magazine concept" type of broadcasting which has emerged in the last few years. More and more of the advertising lead-ers are coming around to this belief, although in the day-today operations, it is hard for them to change their previously taken positions.

But with all the troubles, it is still an exhilarating future that we have. One of the major influences which will work for our success in the great network service is: the increasing awareness of opinion makers that the leaders of advertising, and particularly the agency heads, are far more responsible for the new standard of living that has come to our country than they were previously credited with. As public recognition of the advertising agency responsibility in building our economic structure grows, so too will the advertising fraternity's awareness of their responsibility toward the good health of the media they support, and their responsibility through their buying actions in determining the kind of program service America will have. It is not as showmen, as in radio, but again as advertising men, that the agencies will move ahead. using soon the power of color to create again the incentives which will drive the people's productivity forward to a new and higher standard of living. As they realize that this can be done more economically under an advertisingbuying rather than a program-buying strategy, and that the former also will enable the broadcaster to support a far more incisive and complete schedule, and hence a more vital, useful and enriching instrument, then the agencies will overwhelmingly support the NBC efforts.

(Director, DuMont Television Network) I'll never forget those words: support economically, and will provide viewers with a wide choice "Come back in five years." The occasion was one of the first of programs. calls I ever made as a television

But we in television, and especially those of us who meet Maditime salesman for DuMont-to a son Avenue advertising executives, New York advertising agency have been acutely aware that hich is no longer in existence. After I regaled the radio direc-or of the agency for 45 minutes which is no longer in existence. tor of the agency for 45 minutes

That's what makes me recall my

buffed for supposed lack of circulation—in spite of the fact that our rates were commensurate with circulation actually at hand. Usually the advertisers just didn't want to be bothered, even to go into Boston and Philadelphia by

We remember how hard it was in those early days to develop successful sales patterns. We remember the steady evolution of the first big shows: Old Gold's. "Origi-nal Amateur Hour," which was DuMont's first network hour sale; Procter and Gamble's first TV show, "Fashions On Parade;" General Food's "Capitain Video" show,

number of UHF stations and VHF network.

the U.S. The FCC's new allocation plan providing for 500 stations in the VHF and at least 1,500 in the UHF, makes quite clear just how important UHF will be in Amer- ica's television future. Use of UHF will give the coun- try a truly competitive television system, will assure all major mar-	early days of selling VHF tele- vision. And that's why it is com- forting to remember that not so long ago these same agencies doubted that VHF would soon reach enough market penetration to constitute a major advertising medium. Let me make it clear first of all that I am not going to ask any advertisers to pioneer in the de- velopment of UHF. But I am ask- ing advertisers not to apply a dif- ferent and tougher set of stand- ards to UHF values than they do to VHF. Nothing in the arithmetic of cost-per-thousand can logically carry a UHF or VHF any more than does the television screen in the viewer's home.	have to take place with the wide- spread opening of UHF stations. One DuMont contribution to the The 'New' Radio Columbus. Radio will never die note: State of Ohio is planning a \$750,000, nine-station, five- channel, two-way radio hook- up for police communications on its \$324,000,000, 241-mile turnpike. Transmissions will be au- thorized from 152 to 174 meg- acycles in the VHF band. There has been no call for a program manager or an-	operators, the spectacular rate of growth in almost all instances, and any dependence on the widely- held belief that those individuals who have made real investments in receiver conversions form an especially zealous and responsive group of television viewers. Each operator of one of the new UHF stations must make a huge investment—\$500,000 to \$1,000,000 —and at the same time he must be willing to take a rate commensu-	The only condition in which a national advertiser can live in se- curity with his time franchise is in the availability of sufficient network stations to give him na- tionwide clearance for all major markets according to his needs. And that means full development of UHF. But if UHF operators do not get advertising support, if they have to fold up, we will find that there has been created a com- pletely deadlocked monopoly situ- ation in which a comparatively few major advertisers are favored. So, again, I am not asking the nation's advertisers to pioneer in UHF—but only to include UHF markets in their budgets, with an eye to advertising's own future satisfaction. Let's not hear those words: "Come back in five years."

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

**RADIO-TELEVISION** 

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Have we "scraped the botton of the barrel" on talent, as has been asserted recently? No-decidedly no!!

Never have there been so many applications for auditions for "Original Amateur Hour" as at present. And never previously has the percentage of talent been so acceptable. That

applies, also, to the obtaining of jobs by talent after it has appeared on "Original Amateur Hour."

The list of persons who have gone on from our show to places in the entertainment world within the last five years fills two single-spaced typewritten pages.

In the 18 years of "Original Amateur Hour's" history there has been no greater tempo than now. And opportunity never has been so immediate as at present. From all over the NBC-TV network one obtains instantaneous response to a good act an interesting personality. And the vision of others appearing draws an increasing number of requests for auditions.

We are bringing acts into New York for television appearances from every part of the continent. The most remote hamlet may produce as good an act as the largest metropolitan center. This procedure requires organization, experience and judgment—but the effort, the patience, and the cost pay off.

Two TV-columnists-Charlton Wallace in the Cincinnati Times-Star and Norman Clark in the Baltimore News-Post—recently noted that, unlike certain network talent shows that feature professional per-formers, the "Original Amateur Hour" has no trouble whatsoever in rounding up a great deal of good talent. I believe that is because, as John Lester remarked in the Newark Star-Eagle and other papers, "Original Amateur Hour" is accepted as an institution. Its "graduates" are in every phase of the amusement world, and its method of projecting the talent, rather than the m.c., gives the break to the performer

But no show-or institution-can live on tradition. We are constantly alert, searching, auditioning. We adopt every improved means of projection. We went to television even before there was a network. Except for one dramatic show, we are the oldest program on that medium.

Television has broadened the field for talent. Where they previously had no opportunity in radio, the dancer, the pantomimist, the magician and other silent specialty acts are now seen regularly by millions of people. When they appear on "Amateur Hour," job of fers frequently come to them before they are off the air. Television also gives the hopeful aspirant in a far-away place an

opportunity to see, as well as hear, what is going over. Thus, the base

of our talent source is broadened. I find, also, that talent is improving in quality. And viewers and listeners are quick to sense that. An artistic dancer, who had made a serious study of the art, won three consecutive times a few weeks ago by overwhelming vote of our coast-to-coast audience. This young man exemplifies the upbeat.

I must confess, I enjoy working with these folk, trying to uncover their talent and project it,, and entering into their spirit of zest and hopefuiness. Oh, there's no shortage of talent! The problem is to marshal it to the best advantage—and that's what we try to do. From the volume of mail that flows in I gather that we're making a lot of meanly heaved. people happy with our efforts.

# **Closed Circuit Communications**

#### **By NATHAN L. HALPERN** (Pres., Theatre Network TV)

Tele-Sessions simply means tele- | had some good type casting, with vision for business meetings—ses-sions, that is. The electronic miracle thus applied modernizes well-known commercial pitchmen Furness, and Rex Marshall—and old ways of holding meetings for dealers, salesmen, stockholders, and buyers

Distinguished from home TV because it is a completely private system—not for the public—a closed circuit Tele-Session is exhibited only for the important few chosen by the company holding the meeting.

Tele-Sessions teed off last year with a coast-to-coast dealer meeting for James Lees & Sons. manufacturers of carpets. National merchandising policies were set forth by Lees' top management to their dealers simultaneously across the nation, with productive sales and promotion results.

Within the past year, A. T. & T. Atlantic Refining, Esso. Ford, Phil-co. General Electric, Westinghouse, and many other large companies have used closed-circuit TV. Not only did the top companies begin

some excellent untypical casting in President Eisenhower. Corpora-

(Continued on page 190)

ican business. On the strength of its history alone, it can be confident of doing more than its share of the merchandising job. With its rapidly expanding audience and its decreasing costs per-thousand viewers, television can deliver sales more quickly and economically than any other medium. Door-to-door selling has enjoyed

a huge success in this country because it gave the salesman an opportunity to demonstrate his product to the consumer at the for network television is new

By J. L. VAN VOLKENBURG (President, CBS Television)

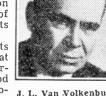
America. By the end of 1954, it is to-door principle of selling posestimated, more than 35,000,000 sible on a multi-million scale. On families will own sets, and audi-ences of more than 60,000,000 will manufacturer can create an almost watch a single network program.

This fabulous audience, considered in the light of its buying a single store. power, will make television a giant in merchandising. It is already the greatest single pipeline to the American consumer, a fact of which most business men have only recently begun to be aware.

But this year, American business will be preoccupied as never before with the job of moving merchandise through the impact of advertising.

In fact, the very health of national our economy may depend upon the success of their efforts during 1954. Economists

tell us that we are entering a period

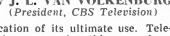


when the pro- J. L. Van Volkenburg duction of

consumer goods will reach an alltime peak. Fortunately, at the same time, they point out that private incomes and savings are also at a high level, and that the nation will enjoy continuing prosperity if only the average wage earner can be induced to spend a portion of his earnings and savings for the products which will improve his standard of living.

will To this end, advertisers spend a record \$8,000,000,000 during the coming year. But they will expect unprecedented results from every media - sales, sales, and more sales.

#### Merchandising



**Economy-Sized Medium** 

unbelievable consumer demand for his product before it is stocked in

**Television**—1954's Big

Television's merchandising success stories are already numerous, carry.' but they are truly just beginning. growth Soon a new element will be added to television—color. Now that the FCC has finally given its approval to the NTSC standards of broadcasting, color television for the est gain of any network. To be public will be a reality within the sure, this increase is in part due all, many advertisers who have never used television—manufac-turers in the clothing and decoration fields, for instance—will be attracted to this medium by the unique presentation which color alone can give to their creations. Consumer demand for these new products, as well as many familiar ones seen for the first time in color. is sure to have a stimulating effect on our entire economy. In time, color television will become one of the most potent forces for economic progress in our country.

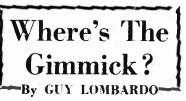
What is the future of this giant in the marketplace? Will television be content to play just a leading role in influencing the buying habits of the nation? Or will it, as some fear, establish such a singular pipeline to the consumer that it ultimately will over-shadow and engulf all other forms of advertising?

of them all, is now prepared to take up this challenge from Amer-ican business. On the stree the achieved its success at the expense of other media. Rather, on the which have ballooned largely from the success of recent television merchandising. According to an impartial survey conducted by the

Television is now installed in location of its ultimate use. Tele- money, and not diverted from the two-thirds of all the homes in vision now makes this same door- budgets in other media. In other vords, television is bringing, and will continue to bring, many new advertisers into the market

It is almost an axiom in the ad-vertising business that "the more efficient a medium can become, the greater the share of the selling load it will be expected to carry." Television's booming growth may be directly attributed to this principle. During 1953, the CBS Television Network alone re-ceived a 40% increase in total dollar value of billings, the greatability they have never achieved before in any other medium. Pack-aging and display will take aging and display will take on a portance to the advertiser is the new meaning. Entire campaigns new flexibility which has been will be styled especially for the made available by the participat-color cameras. Most important of possible for many businesses with modest budgets to enjoy the bene-fits of network television without the cost of going it alone. On many important network shows like the Sunday afternoon "Omni-bus" program, the p'an of shared costs has proved to be a tremen-dous boon to advertisers. In addition, our 15-minute segment plan for daytime network shows, by which an advertiser may buy as many segments as he chooses on a daily, weekly, or seasonal basis, has brought television within the means of many new advertisers.

Television's continuing growth will depend, to a large degree, upon its adaptability to the changing needs of advertisers, large and small. But our chief responsibility, as always, will be to maintain the kind of quality programs which will assure advertisers of reaching the biggest possible audiences. As long as we fulfi'l this primary re-sponsibility, network television will continue to be the most effective and economical means of America.



They always told me we would need a gimmick on TV. I don't know how many times—surely a million-I heard them say, "Who cares about watching a trombone player? How many different ways can you photograph a piano player?

And so, for about four years I looked over a batch of program ideas ranging from stop-the-music type gimmicks to songwriter gim-micks, etc.

Boy, did they laugh when I asked, "What's the matter with putting our band on TV doing exactly the kind of thing we've been so successfully doing for so many years — playing for dancing?" After they stopped laughing they asked, "Where's the gimmick?"

Well, fellows, we've at last found the sponsor, Lincoln-Mercury, who believes as we do, that there is much good entertainment to be had by viewers from a simple, un-pretentious musical program on which the band is seen (notice, I said the band is seen) playing for dancing in a room where dancers dancing in a room where dancers normally dance. In other words, we're not trying to fool anyone, we're not trying to get by on gim-micks. Time will tell whether we're right or wrong, but so far it looks like we have been right, judging from the manner in which our rating has climbed. There is no doubt in my mind that television has not really solved the problem of what to do with bands. The fault hasn't been solely that of the bands. Let's face the facts: there are only a very few bands around today in whom the public is interested. However, neither has television been blameless in this respect. Too often, producers, agencies and net-(Continued on page 190)

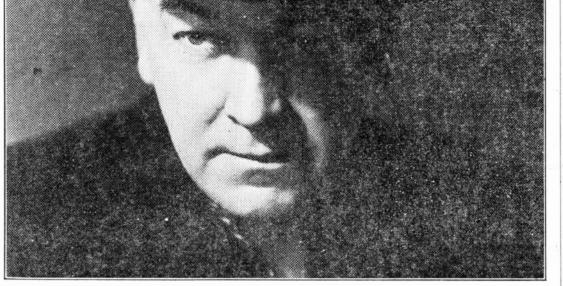


to go on Tele-Sessions, but the country's topper, President Eisen hower, was televised closed-circuit from the White House into the Ford Dearborn plant for impressive dedication ceremonies. Tele-Sessions also moved into

color TV this past fall. For the first time, a novel hat style show for retail store buyers on large-screen color TV was presented by Lee and Disney Hats. With images approximately 30 square feet, the impact of color TV was great upon the store buyers invited by Lee.

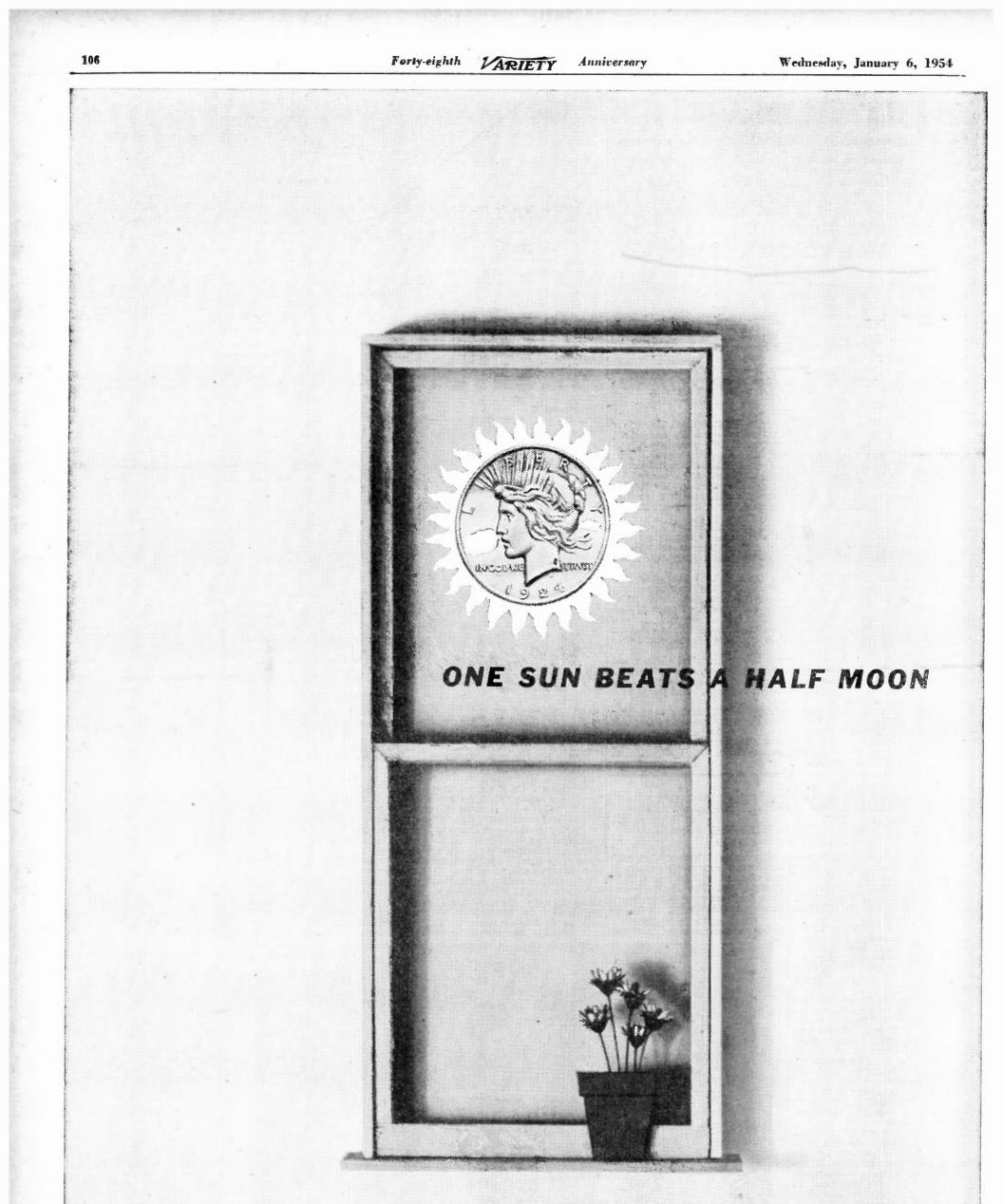
Shortly thereafter, proceedings of the 58th annual National Assn. of Manufacturers Congress of American Industry were televised in large-screen color television to a few thousand NAM members and guests, a new record audience for viewing any type of color television. The color pictures were superb, and the tint telecast became the talk of the several thousand attending.

Already closed-circuit TV has



#### WILLIAM BOYD

Hopalong Cassidy, Inc.

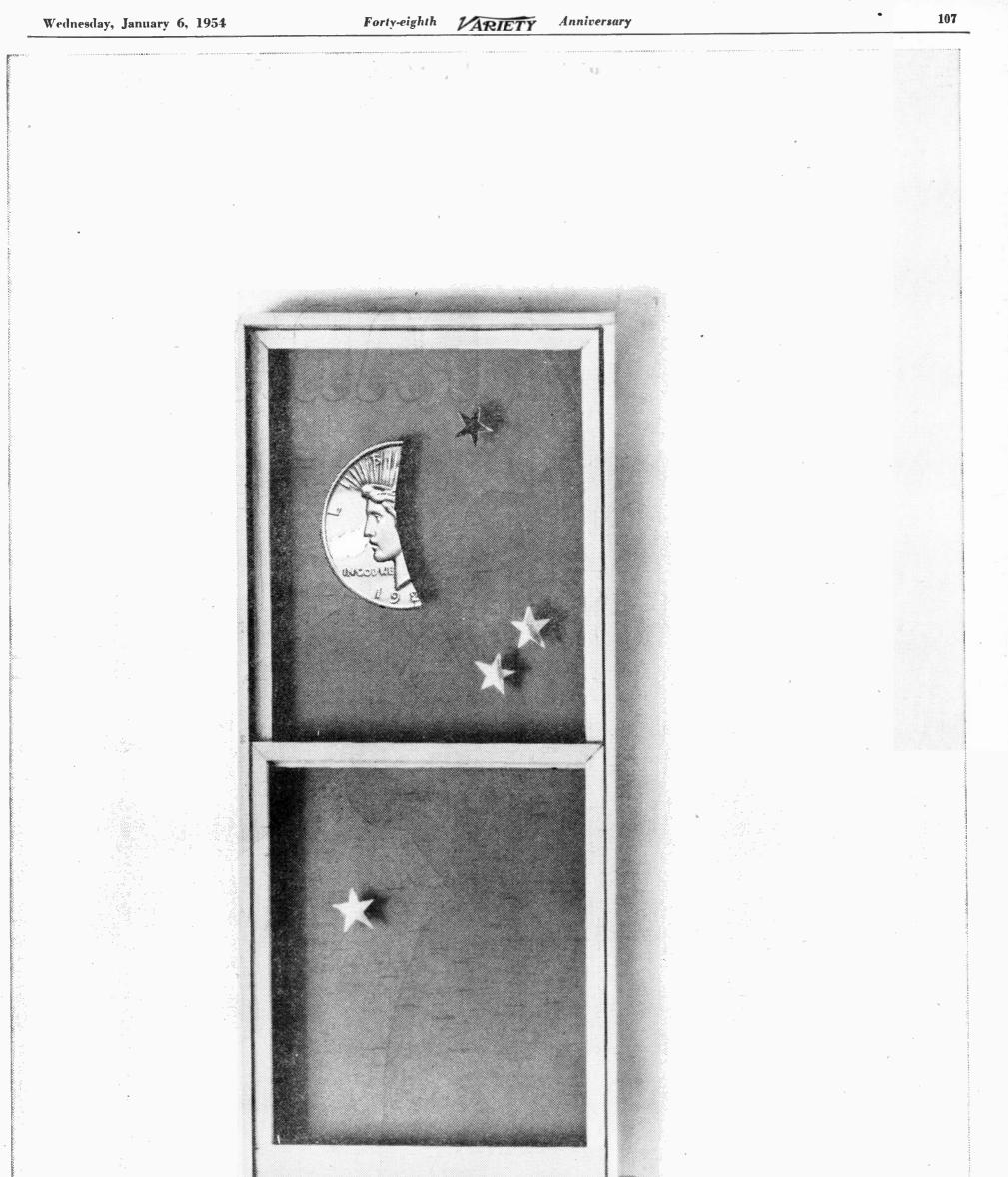


# One average dollar invested in NBC daytime television delivers 621 advertising impres-

sions. The same dollar invested in the average nighttime television show makes only

WRH

SOURCES: A. C. Nielsen Co. Jan.-April '53. PIB Gross Time Cost Jan.-April '53. Variety Talent Est. Nov. '52.



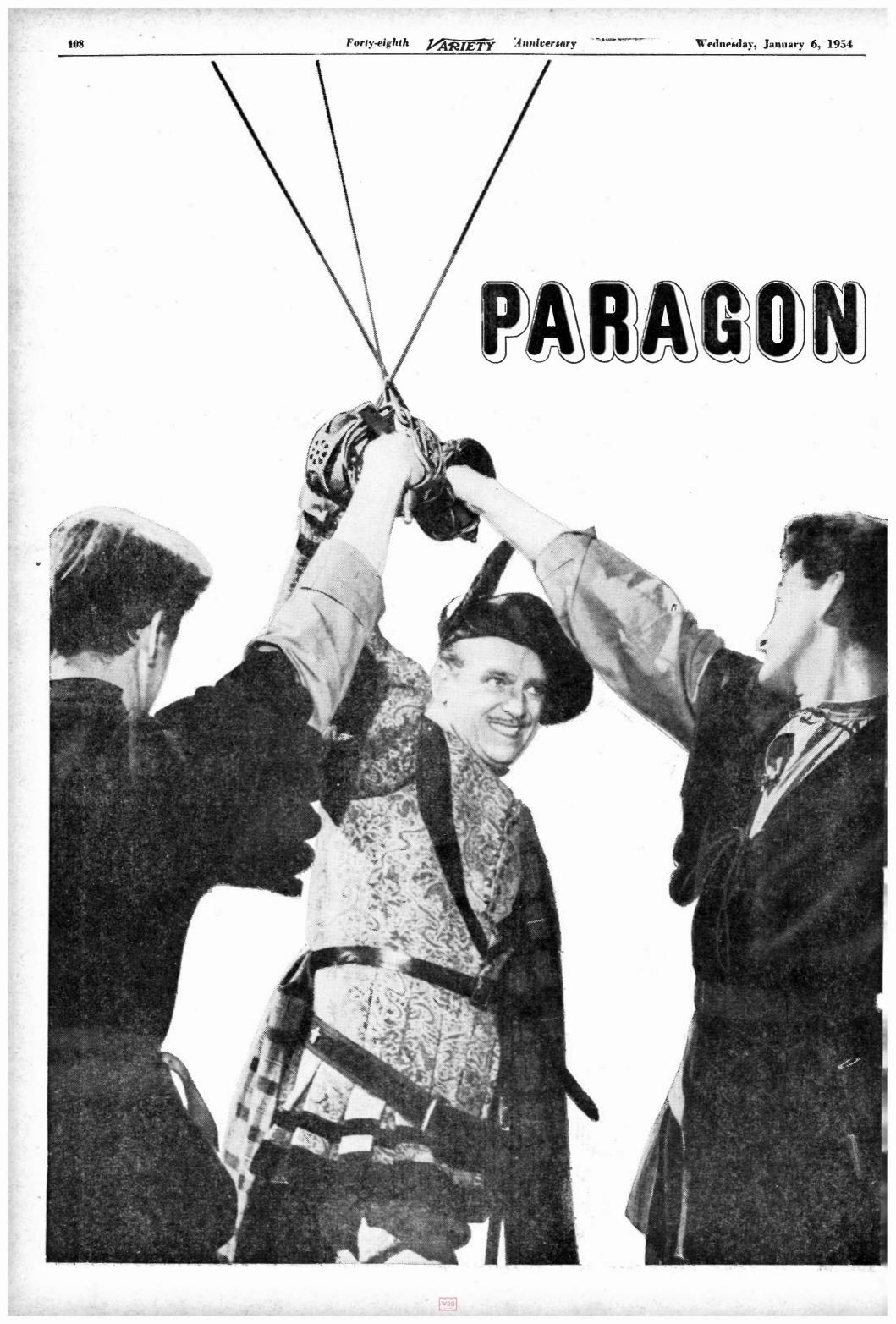


303 advertising impressions-less than half as many. Clear as daylight itself is the

fact that Daytime Dollars Buy More ... when they're placed on NBC TELEVISION

WRH

a service of Radio Corporation of America



# PLAYHOUSE will point your sales <u>up!</u>

VARIETY

Once in a great while a quality program proves itself a quantity sales-producer. Such a program was "Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. Presents," as evidenced by its outstanding record of achievement in over 120 markets.

Now, with Walter Abel, one of America's most consistently popular stage, screen and television stars, taking over as host, this same profit-proved program is available to you as "PARAGON PLAY-HOUSE."

Look at the record "PARAGON" will bring to you:

Highest average rating of all shows according to Pulse Multi-Market ratings for syndicated programs, from start of that service through October, 1953.



Forty-eighth

"Highest score of any dramatic series tested to date" according to Schwerin Research Corporation (last March). Strong appeal to all age groups . . . all income groups.

Anniversary

Excellent ratings against tough competition from coast to

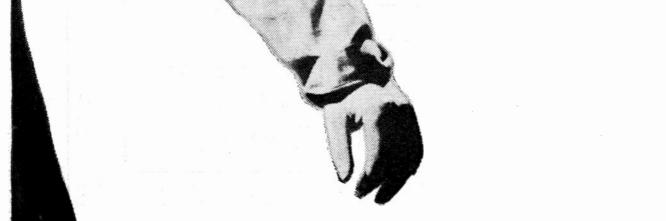
coast according to ARB. New York: up to 25.4 with share of audience up to 62% against six other stations. Boston: up to 19.1 with share up to 49% against Studio One. San Francisco: up to 26.5 with share up to 50% against Jackie Gleason.

"PARAGON PLAYHOUSE" was produced and directed by Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., who stars in 9 out of 39 episodes. As a re-run, with Walter Abel as host, "PARAGON" is destined to reach eren greater audiences, and at far lower cost per thousand. Further, "PARAGON" offers each local or regional sponsor a brand-new, full-scale campaign of hardhitting merchandising and promotion!

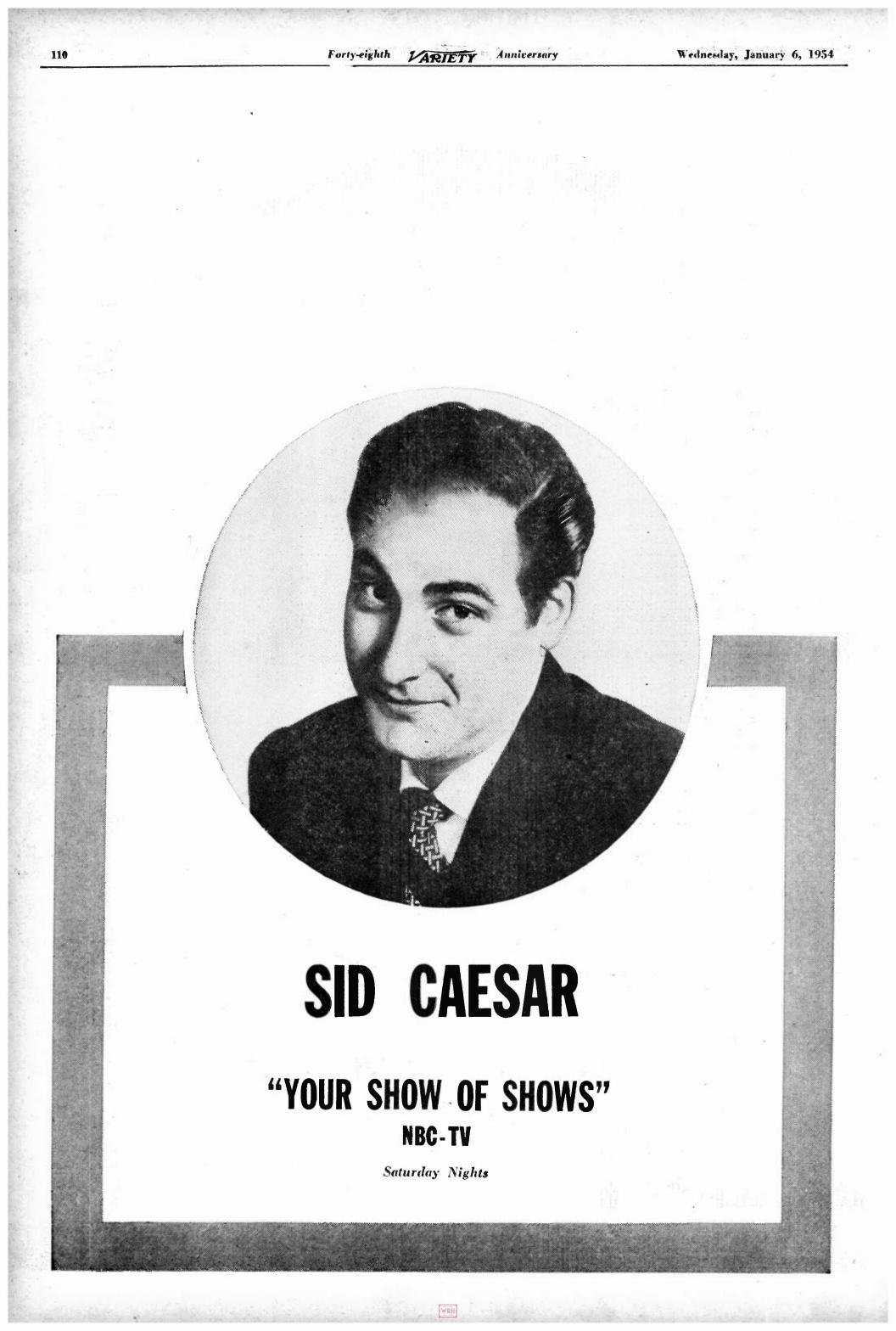
"PARAGON PLAYHOUSE", with its top production backed by top promotion and merchandising, is another fine illustration of NBC FILM DIVISION'S assurance to you of:

- 1. The widest choice of high-rating hits in the industry.
- 2. "Million-Dollar" production for exclusive local sponsorship at local budget prices.
- 3. Market-tested advertising, promotion, publicity, exploitation and merchandising as an integral NBC FILM DIVI-SION Service.

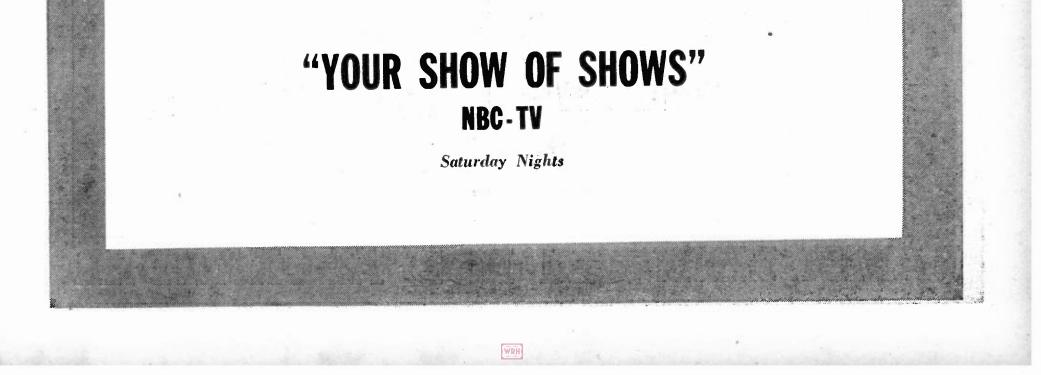
### SERVING ALL SPONSORS ... SERVING ALL STATIONS



NBC FILM DIVISION --- 30 Rockefelier Plaza, N. Y. 20, N. Y. . Merchandisé Mart, Chicago, III. . Sunset & Vine Sts., Holfywood, Calif. . In Canada: RCA Victor, Royat York Hotel. Toronto



# **IMOGENE COCA**



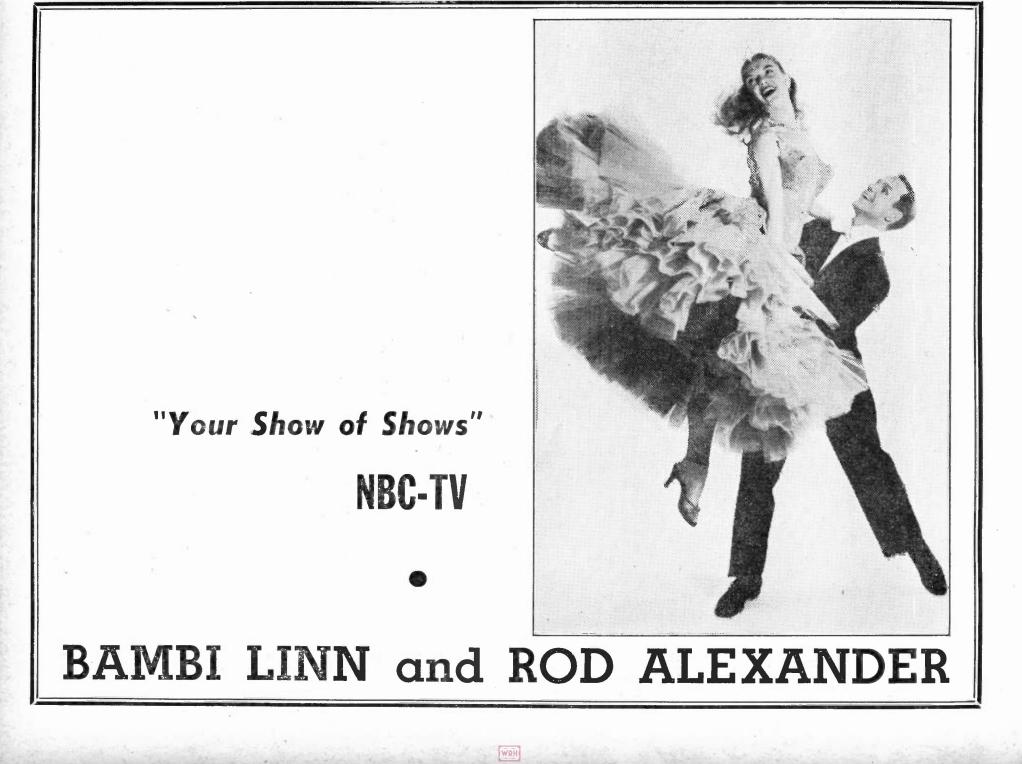
Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



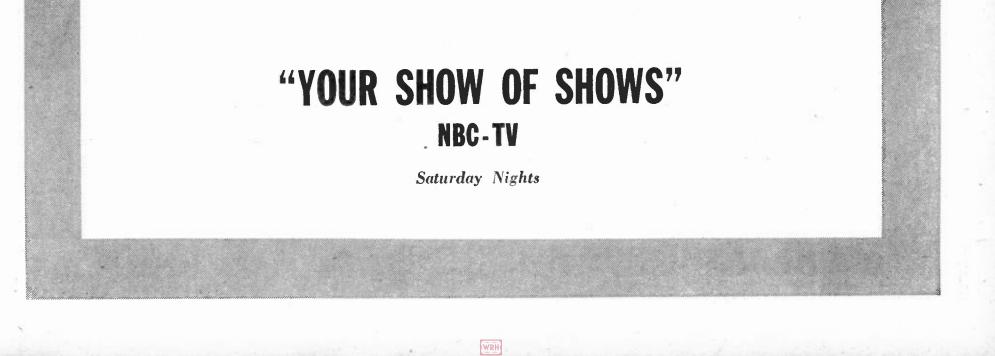
# Charles Sanford Musical Director "YOUR SHOW OF SHOWS"

NBC-TV, Saturday Nights



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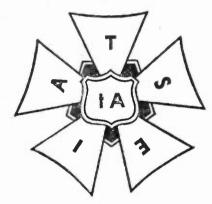
### MAX LIEBMAN



### **KEITH TEXTOR and SYLVIA MICHAELS** "YOUR SHOW OF SHOWS" NBC-TV

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the United States and Canada

Affiliated with the American Federation of Labor



**Representing Craftsmen Employed in Production, Distribution and Exhibition** in the Entertainment Field

#### **RICHARD F. WALSH**

#### HARLAND HOLMDEN

International President

**General Secretary-Treasurer** 

SUITE 1900, THE AMERICAS BUILDING 1270 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS

NEW YORK 20, N. Y.

#### Congratulations

SID KULLER

Writer

VARIETY

DONALD O'CONNOR SHOW

**Producer-Writer-Director\*** 

"THREE FOR THE SHOW"

Starring WILL MASTIN TRIO Featuring SAMMY DAVIS JR. ABC-TV

Writer-Director

**RITZ BROS. SHOW ALL STAR REVUE** NBC-TV

\*With Ashmead Scott

#### IT'S OUR 2nd WONDERFUL YEAR

On The

### JOAN EDWARDS SHOW

WRH

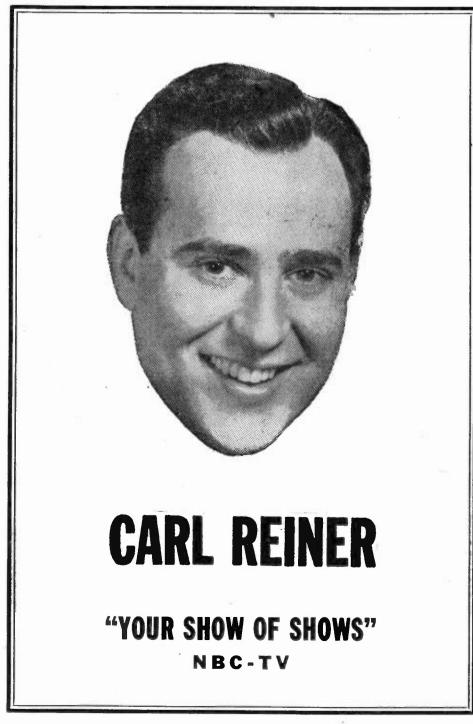
WCBS

Monday Through Friday

9:30 A.M.

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary







TONY WEBSTER

JOE STEIN

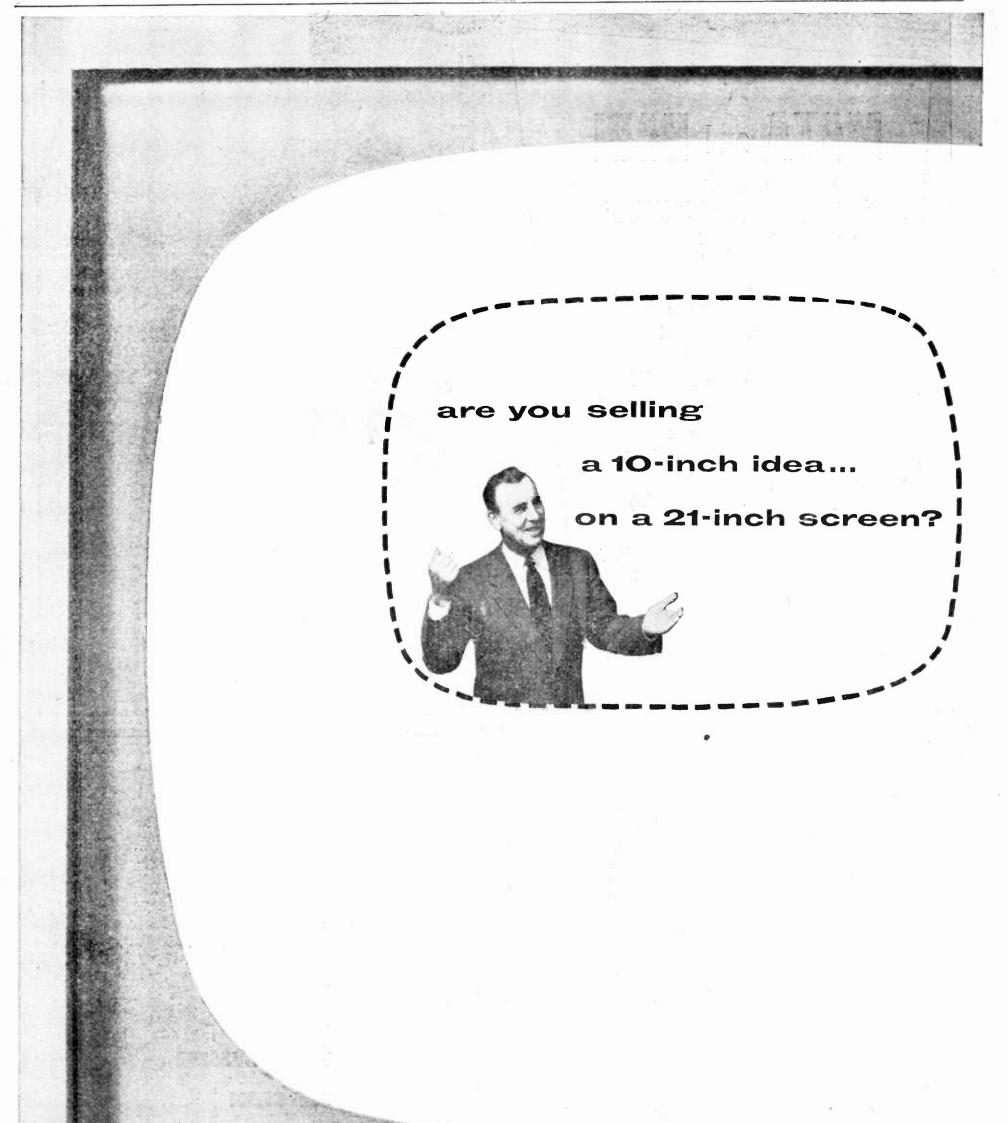
#### DANNY SIMON

#### DOC SIMON

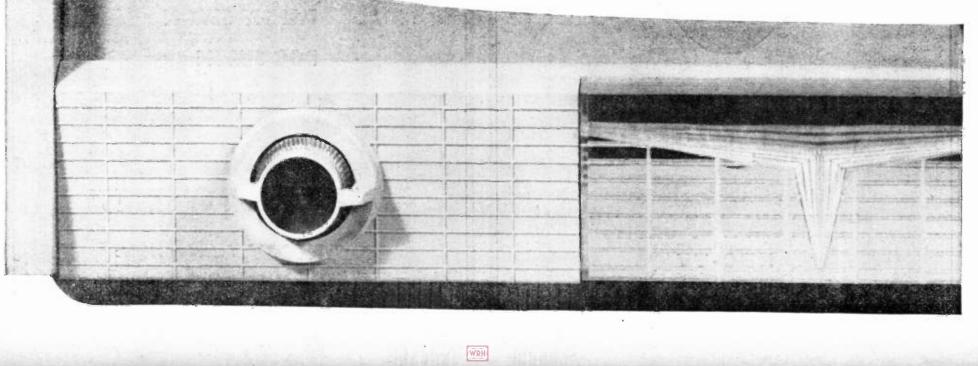
#### "YOUR SHOW OF SHOWS"

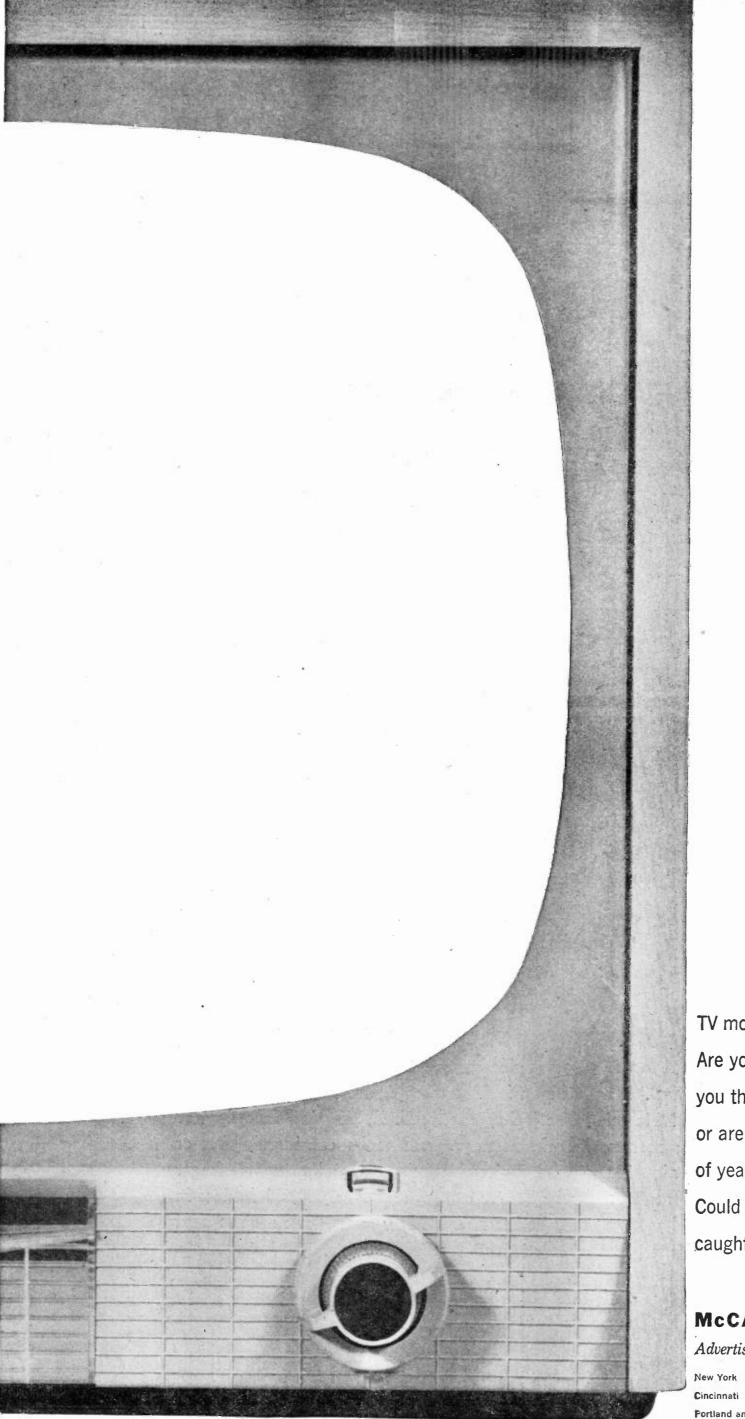
NBC-TV, Saturday Nights





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WRH

TV moves <u>fast</u>. Are your commercials giving you the jump on competition—

or are they lagging a couple of years behind? Think it over. Could be your sales curve is caught in a creative backwater.

#### McCANN-ERICKSON, Inc. Advertising

New York • Boston • Cleveland • Detroit • Chicago Cincinnati • San Francisco • Los Angeles • Hollywood Portland and offices throughout the world

### MARTIN BLOCK

and his Make Believe Ballroom

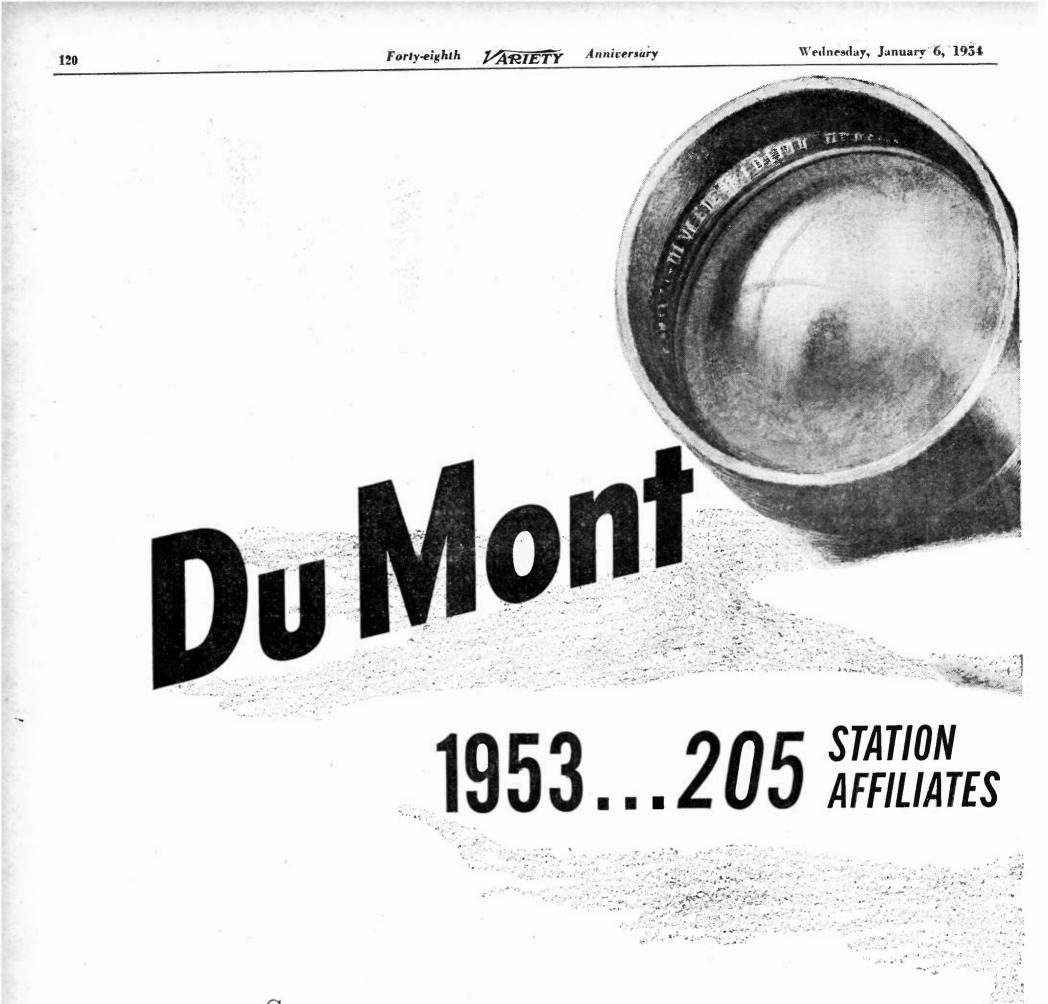
What an opportunity: Radio's number-one salesman is now on New York's first station-WABC. Martin Block is in a class by himself! And has been for 18 long years! No other disc jockey can match his fanatical following, or phenomenal sales success; his afternoon program ranks consistently first or second in popularity. Now he's bringing his unique appeal to a 64% larger audience...thanks to WABC's impressive coverage (nearly 6,000,000 families in 89 counties). And you'll be surprised to find out how little Block costs to buy! Get the facts, figures, full information. Call SUsquehanna 7-5000, *right away*.

### **NOW ON** WABC

Monday thru Friday 2:35-6:45 p.m. Saturday 10-12 noon • 6-7:30 p.m.



### **WABC-770** NEW YORK, N.Y.



SINCE THE END of the freeze the Du Mont Television Network has tripled in size! It now has 205 stations...and still continues to grow!

Leading this rise, in October 1953, Bishop Sheen's outstanding "Life Is Worth Living" program became the first network series to be scheduled clearance record. Even this record was broken by the Professional Football Championship Game of December 27th with 131 live stations...the largest *live* clearance in network television history.

In its 57% average annual rise in billings since 1950...in its network growth...and in the creation of top programs...the rising success of the Du Mont Television Network reflects new pleasure for its public, new profits for its advertisers.

over 165 stations. Du Mont's "Dollar A Second" program and *weekly* Professional Football broadcasts also topped 100 stations...setting another

#### **VISION** is the DuMont Dimension

#### Forty-eighth ARIETY Anniversary

# Zooms Up.

# AVERAGE RATING ALL NETWORK QUARTER HOURS **17.7**\*

### **1950-53...57%** AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE IN BILLINGS

#### **TELEVISION NETWORK**

DU MON

515 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. MUrray Hill 8-2600

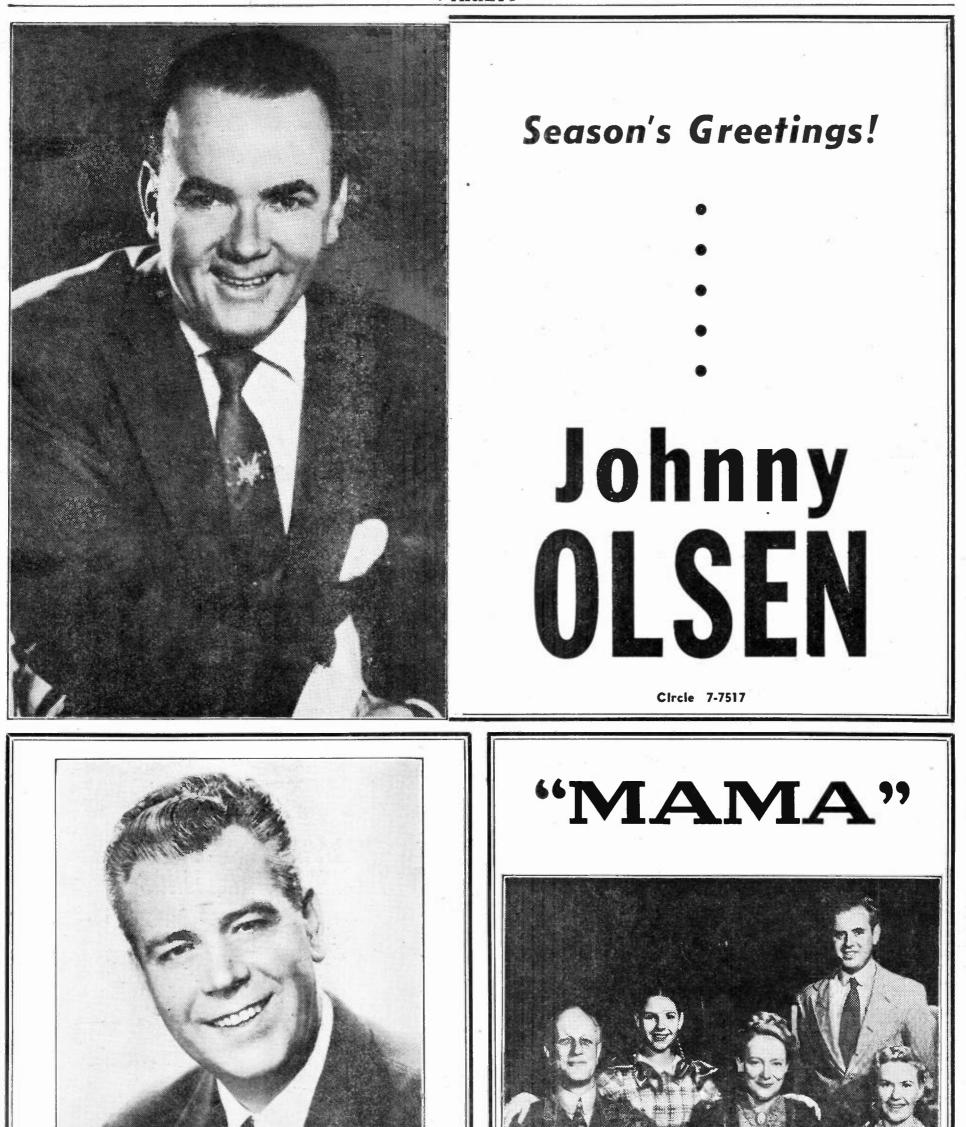
435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, III. MO 4-6262

A Division of The Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories, Inc.



Nielsen, Second report for November, 1953

and a start





#### TODD RUSSELL "WHEEL OF FORTUNE"—CBS-TV "ROOTIE KAZOOTIE"—ABC-TV

Management: WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY



This is the beloved Hansen family seen each Friday night at 8:00 on CBS-TV: Peggy Wood (Mama); Judson Laire (Papa); Rosemary Rice (Katrin); Dick Van Patten (Nels); Robin Morgan (Dagmar); Ruth Gates (Aunt Jenny); Carol Irwin, producer; Ralph Nelson, director.

#### THE AMERICAN TOBACCO CO., INC. **Lucky Strike Cigarettes**

- "Private Secretary," starring Ann Sothern "Robert Montgomery Presents-
  - Your Lucky Strike Theatre" (Alternate Weeks) "The Jack Benny Program"
- "Your Hit Parade" (Alternate Weeks)
- "Make Room for Daddy," starring Danny Thomas (Alternate Weeks)

**ARMSTRONG CORK COMPANY** Floor Covering, Building Material

"Armstrong's Circle Theatre"

CHRYSLER CORPORATION Plymouth, Dodge, De Soto, Chrysler Automobiles "Medallion Theatre"

**CROSLEY DIVISION** OF AVCO MANUFACTURING CORP. Radio and Television Sets

"Your Hit Parade" (Alternate Weeks)

**DE SOTO-PLYMOUTH DEALERS** 

"Cavalcade of America"

**GEMEX COMPANY** Watchbands

> "The George Jessel Show" (Alternate Weeks)

**GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY** 

"The Fred Waring Show" "The General Electric Theater"

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY, LAMP DIVISION

"The Jane Froman Show"

GENERAL MILLS, INC. Betty Crocker Cake Mix, Cheerios "The Stu Erwin Show"

THE B. F. GOODRICH COMPANY Life-Saver Tubeless Tires "The George Burns & Gracie

Allen Show" (Alternate Weeks)

LEVER BROTHERS COMPANY Surf, All-Purpose Detergent "Art Linkletter's House Party"

**U. S. STEEL CORPORATION** "United States Steel Hour" (Alternate Weeks)

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

THE AMERICAN TOBACCO CO., INC. Lucky Strike Cigarettes "The American Way" "The Jack Benny Program"

> CREAM OF WHEAT CORPORATION Cream of Wheat "Theatre of Today"

CONSOLIDATED COSMETICS, INC.

**GEO.** A. HORMEL & COMPANY **Canned Meat Products** "Music With the Hormel Girls"



**OF AMERICA** "The Groucho Marx Show-You Bet Your Life" E. I. DU PONT DE NEMOURS & CO. (INC.) 123



Lanolin Plus Products

"The Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy Show" (Alternate Weeks)

**DE SOTO-PLYMOUTH DEALERS OF AMERICA** 

> "The Groucho Marx Show-You Bet Your Life"

**GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY** "The Bing Crosby Show"

**LEVER BROTHERS COMPANY** Surf, All-Purpose Detergent "Art Linkletter's House Party"

**THOMAS NELSON & SONS Revised** Standard Version of the Bible "The Evening Comes"

**REXALL DRUG COMPANY Drug Products** 

"Amos 'n' Andy"

#### BATTEN, BARTON, DURSTINE & OSBORN, INC.

NEW YORK BOSTON + BUFFALO + CHICAGO + CLEVELAND + PITTSBURGH ALENNE'APOLIS SAN FRANCISCO . HOLLYWOOD . LOS ANGELES . DETROIT .

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

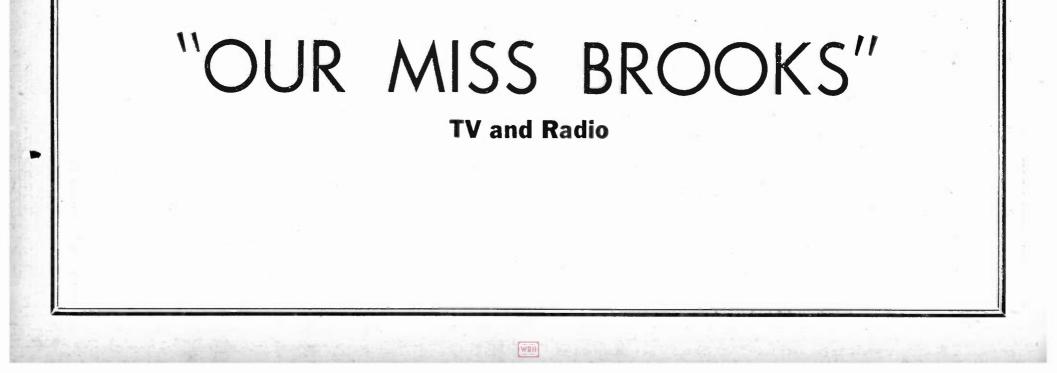




#### DOROTHY and DICK

# JOE QUILLAN

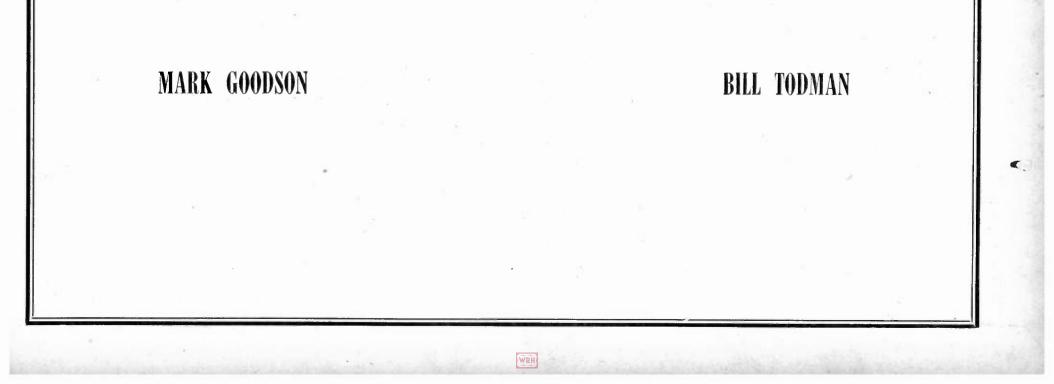
**Co-Writer** 



### GOODSON-TODMAN PRODUCTIONS

Creative Programming for Radio and Television

49 East 52nd Street New York 22, N. Y.



2

,

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



Jinx . . . and friends . . . Sahara Desert . . . December, 1953 Thank you, Radio and TV, for making a Magic Carpet for the McCrary Family in '53—Our datelines for the year: Korea, Japan, Formosa, Hong Kong—Coronation—Madrid—Paris, Algiers—Mexico City—the Big Three Conference, Bermuda—all this and New York, too! Jinx and Tex McCrary.

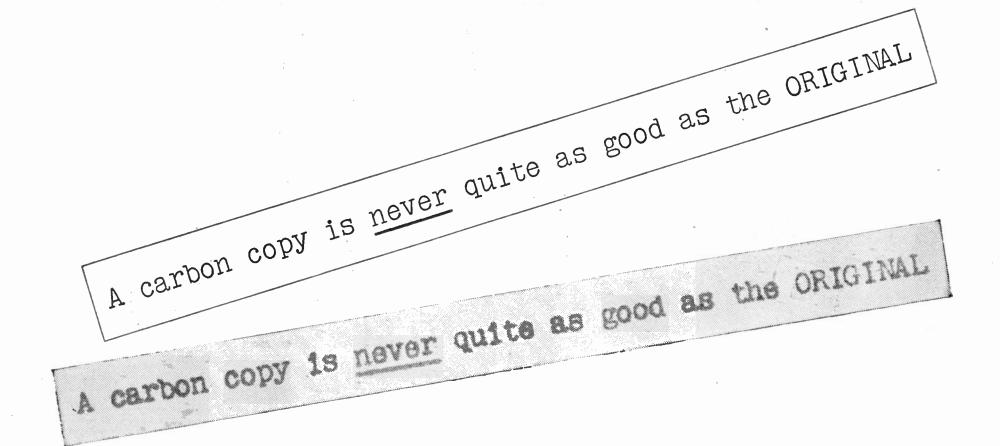




#### JOE WILSON

#### "TELEVISION'S PIONEER SPORTSCASTER"

NBC, CHICAGO



the <u>original</u>...

## 1130 ON YOUR DIAL

565 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



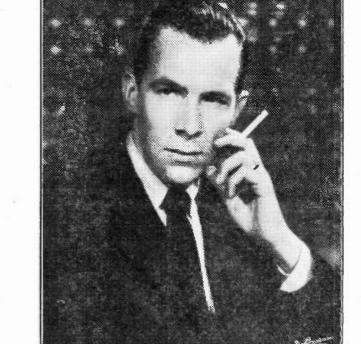


Bob Murphy

1

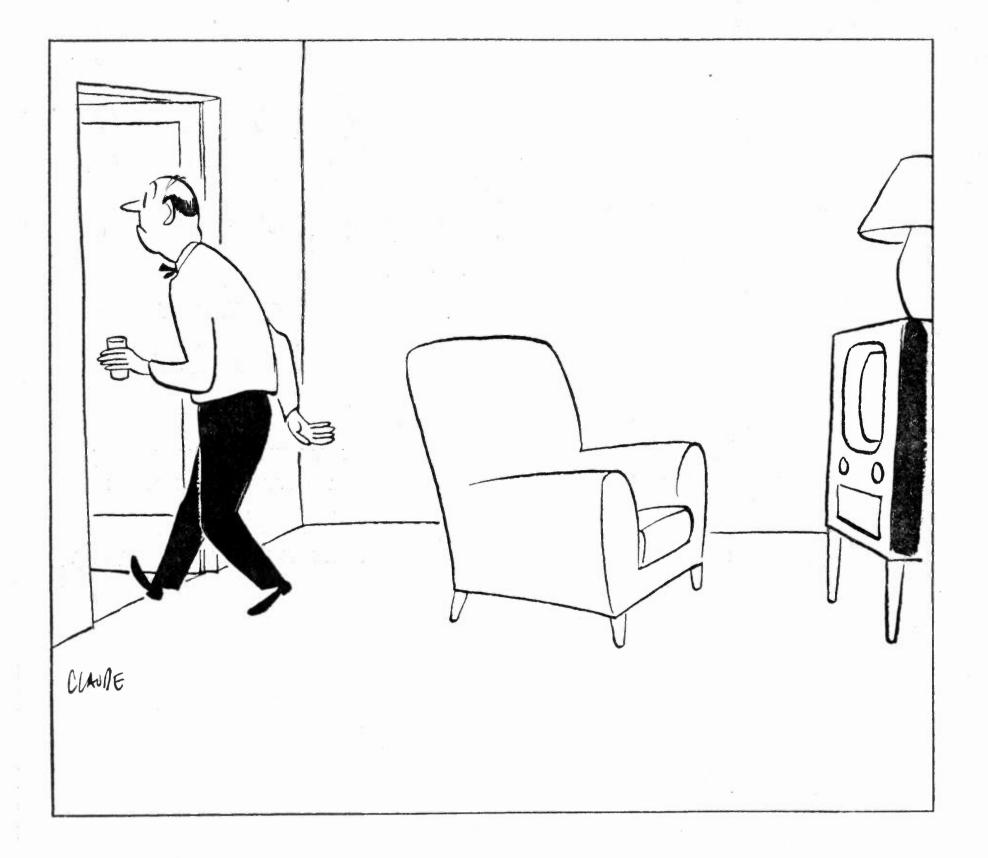


Kay Westfall





ken nordine Currently: Motorola TV Hour Sky King TV Theatre Chicago Symphony Orchestra Faces in the Window Frigidaire Toni Co.



Vanishing American

There's only one thing that can keep this new breed of vanishing Americans from vanishing when your commercials come on . . . creative ingenuity.

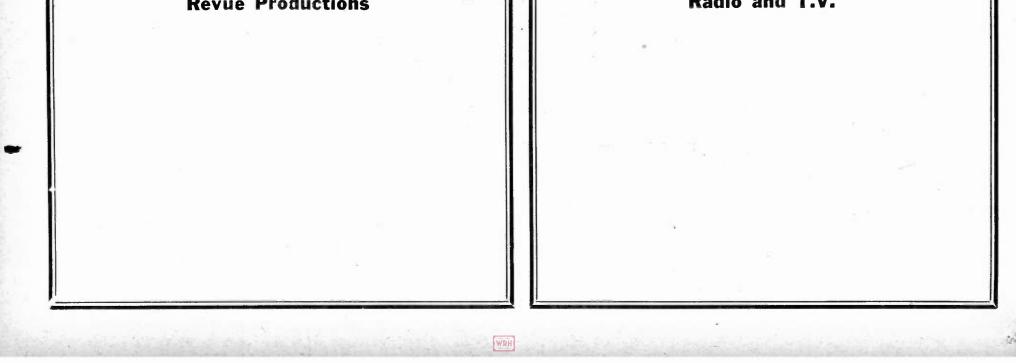
#### YOUNG & RUBICAM, INC. ADVERTISING

New York Chicago Detroit San Francisco Los Angeles Hollywood Montreal Toronto Mexico City London

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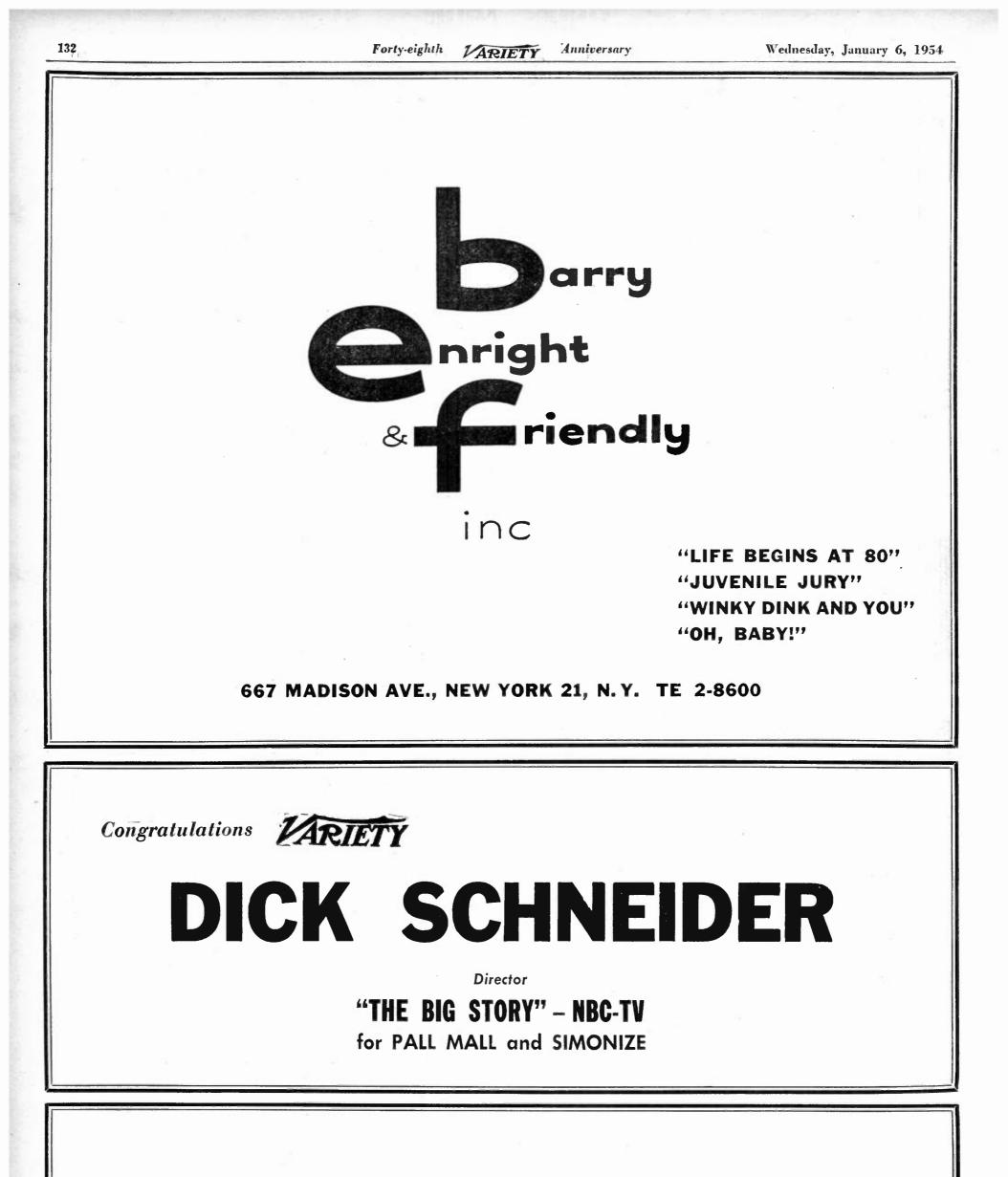


Padia and TV



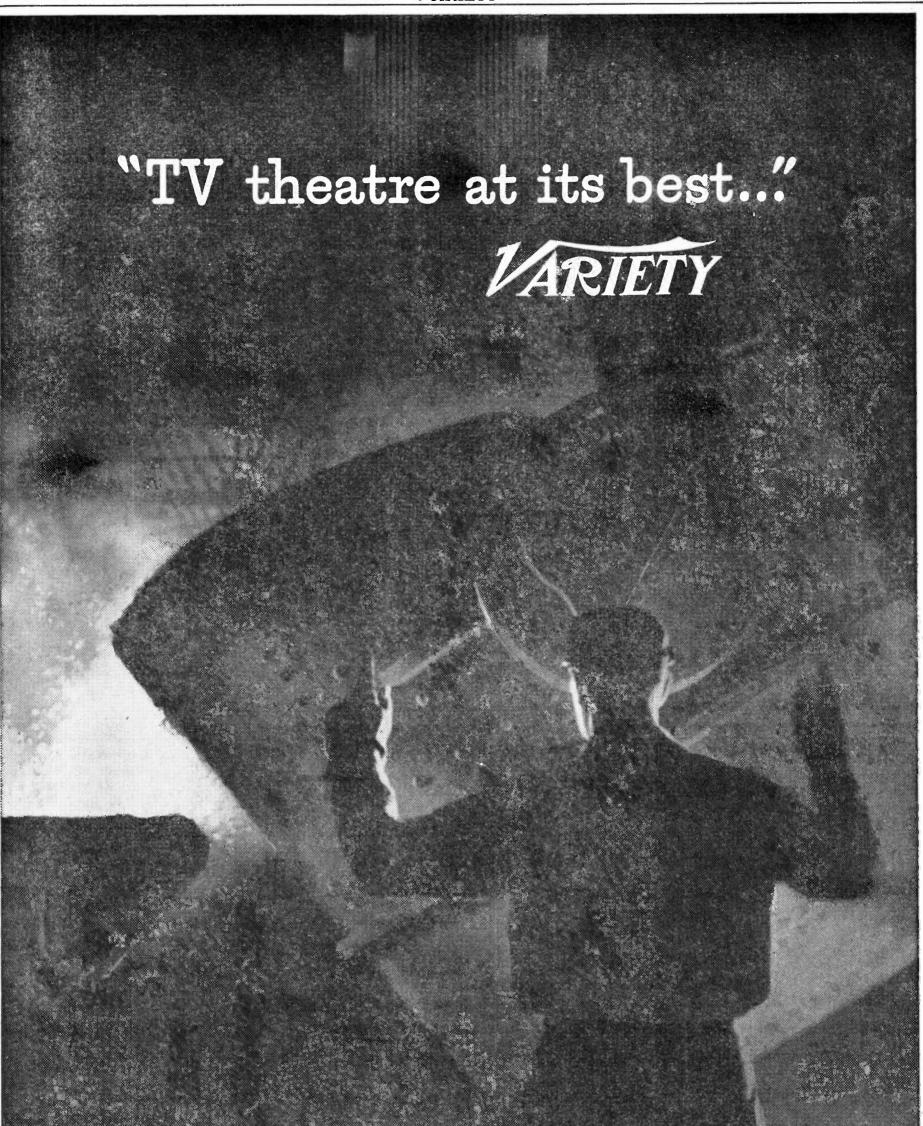


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#### Congratulations VARIETY

### **EDWARD EVERETT HORTON**



### THE UNITED STATES STEEL HOUR

WRH

produced by The Theatre Guild

Warmest Best Wishes

#### MERCEDES McCAMBRIDGE

FLETCHER MARKLE

### WILBUR STARK-JERRY LAYTON, INC.

Radio and Television Productions 270 Park Avenue, New York

#### CURRENT

– TV –

"ROCKY KING DETECTIVE" Starring ROSCOE KARNS Featuring TODD KARNS "COLONEL HUMPHREY FLACK" Starring ALAN MOWBRAY Featuring FRANK JENKS

### MARC DANIELS

- RADIO -

#### "MODERN ROMANCES" "HOLLYWOOD STARWAY"

#### AVAILABLE

DRAMA, Half Hour (Live) "ROOKIE COP" "THE SERGEANT AND THE LADY" "MISTER FEATHERS" "AMAZING MRS. TUPPER" "RENDEZVOUS" "WOMAN'S DECISION" Daytime Series "LADIES CHOICE" Panel "WHAT'S THE GAG" AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION "WIN FOR HIM" "THREE TO WIN" "SPIN THE PICTURE"

Management: William Morris Agency Management: Phil Weltman Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary



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W

# JOE CONNELLY--BOB MOSHER

**TELEVISION:** 

"Meet Mr. McNutley" "Amos 'n' Andy" **RADIO:** 

"Amos 'n' Andy" "Meet Mr. McNutley"

Congratulations VARIETY

### JERRY LESTER



#### Starring with JERRY LESTER

#### "LATE DATE" WNBT

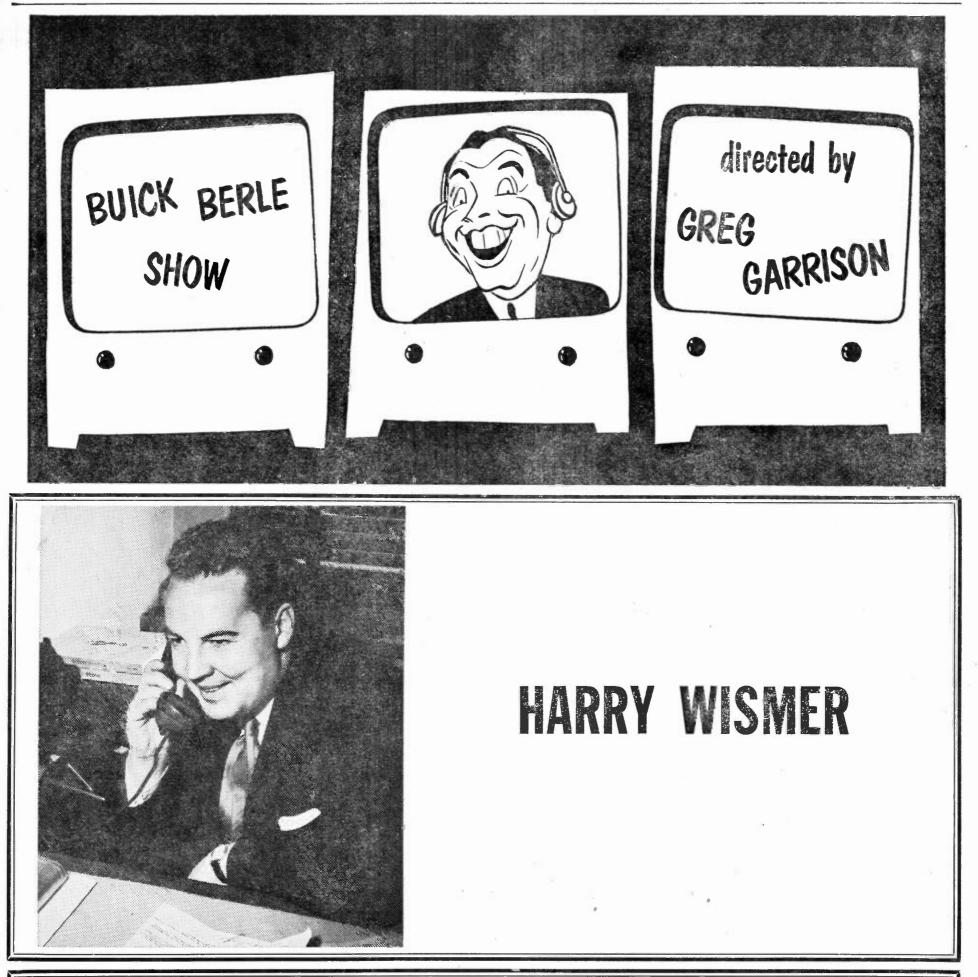


Anniversary



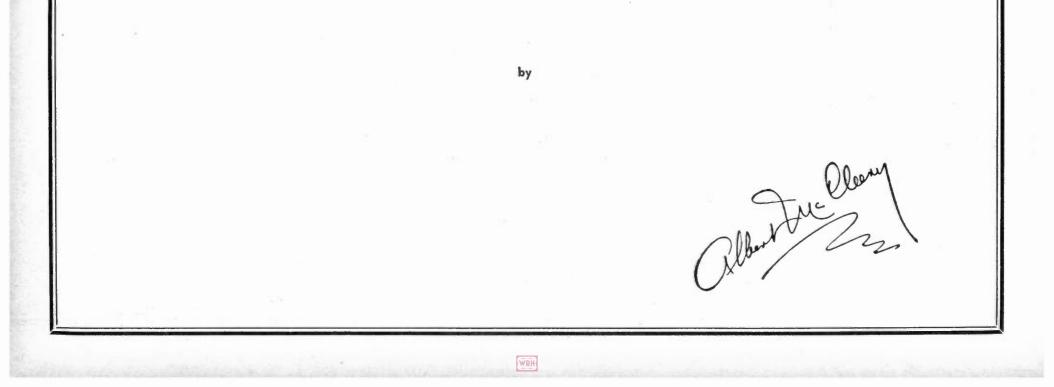
Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



**DEVISED** and **DIRECTED** 

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#### **Best Wishes from**

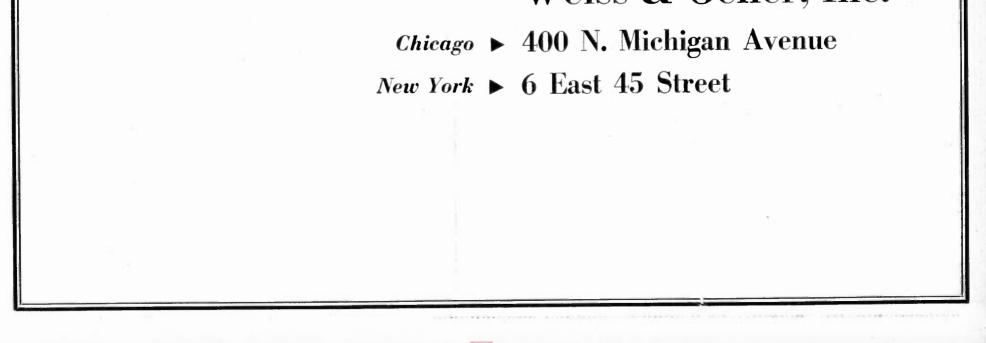
# DANNY THOMAS

#### "MAKE ROOM FOR DADDY"

ABC-TV <sup>for</sup> Lucky Strike Speidel Watch Band

### Congratulations

Weiss & Geller, Inc.



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



Season's Greetings

JOHN GART

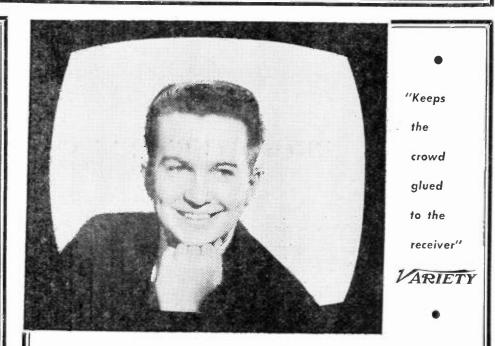
Conductor - Composer

#### THE PAUL WINCHELL SHOW - WNBT

DENNIS JAMES CHANCE OF A LIFE TIME







### CHARLIE



#### Currently:

#### "RAIN OR SHINE"

Monday thru Friday, 7:25 - 7:30 P.M. Saturdays, 6:05 - 6:10 P.M.

for DUNHILL CIGARETTES

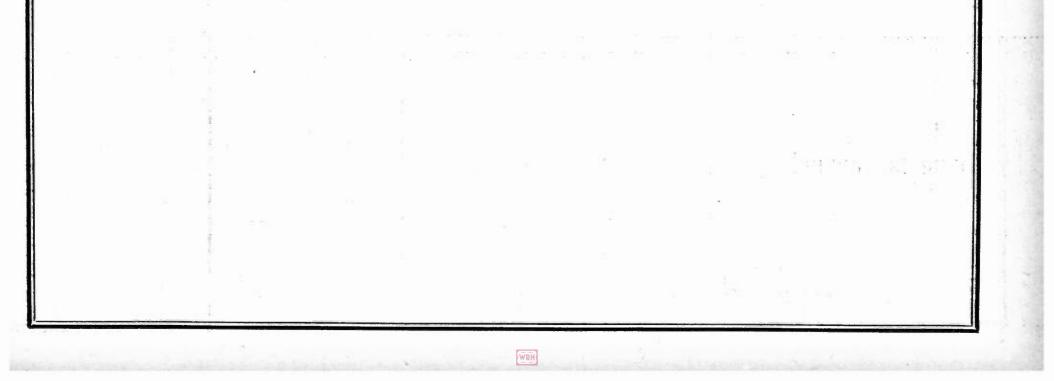
PIEL'S BEER DeJUR CAMERAS

WCBS-TV=====



### SEASON'S GREETINGS

PROCKTER TELEVISION ENTERPRISES Inc.



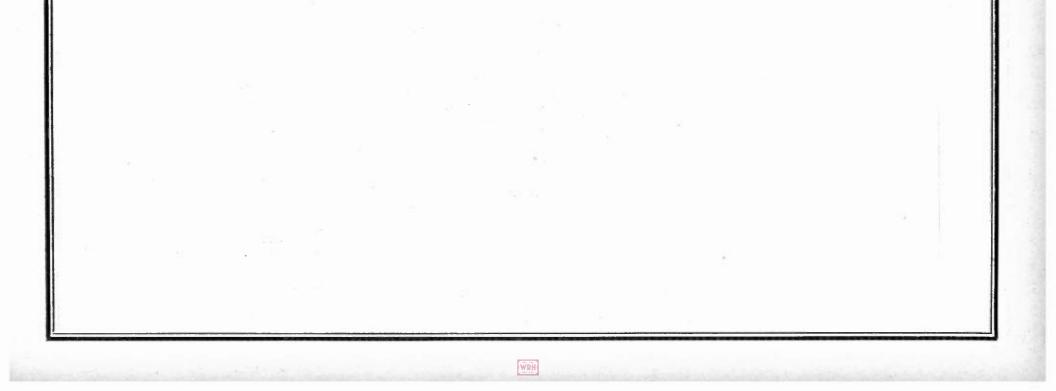


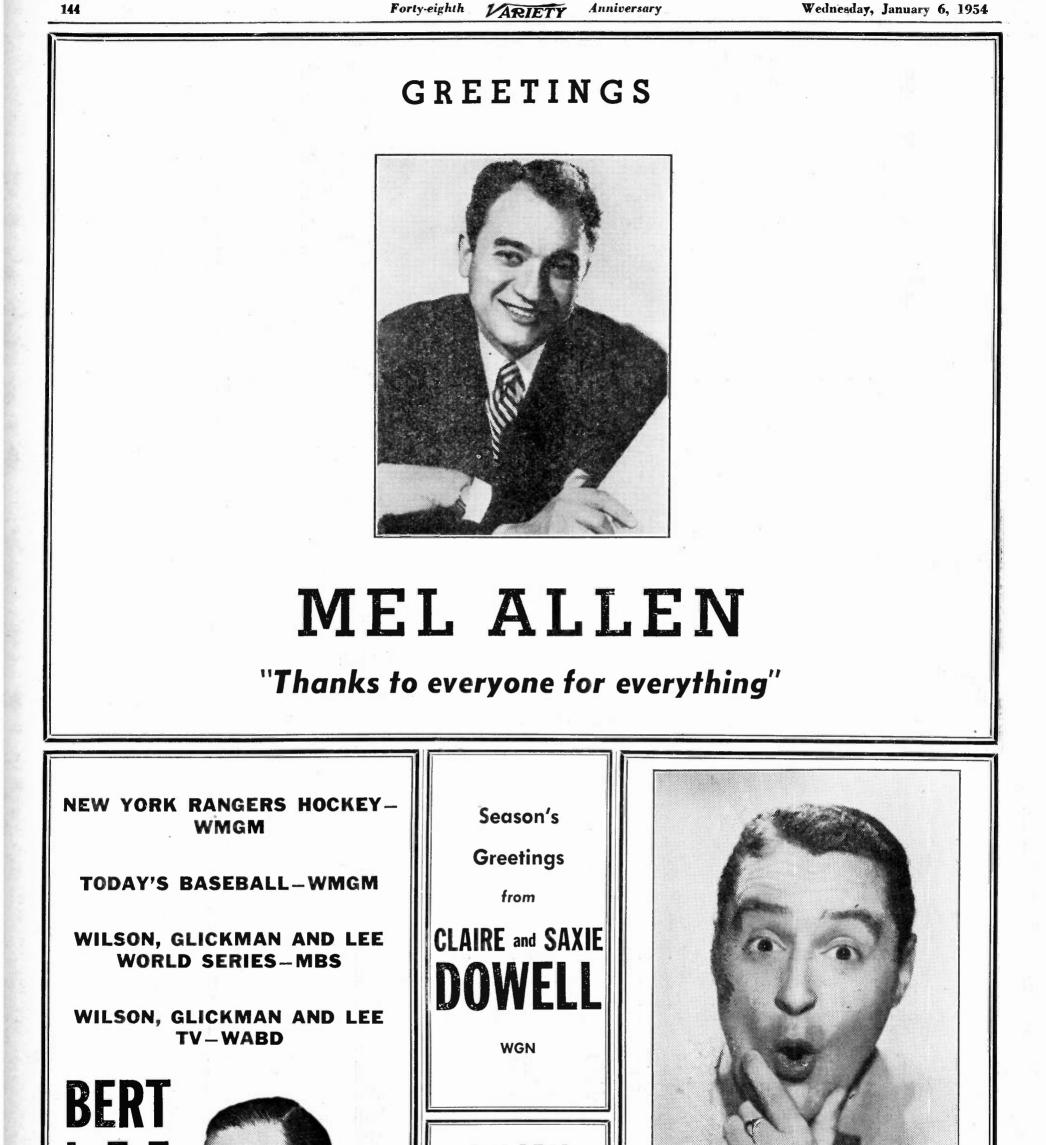
# CHARLES MARTIN

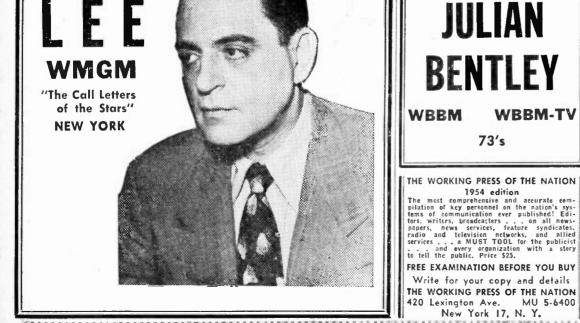
#### **PRODUCER-DIRECTOR**

# PHILIP MORRIS PLAYHOUSEThursdays-10 P. M.CBS-TV

143









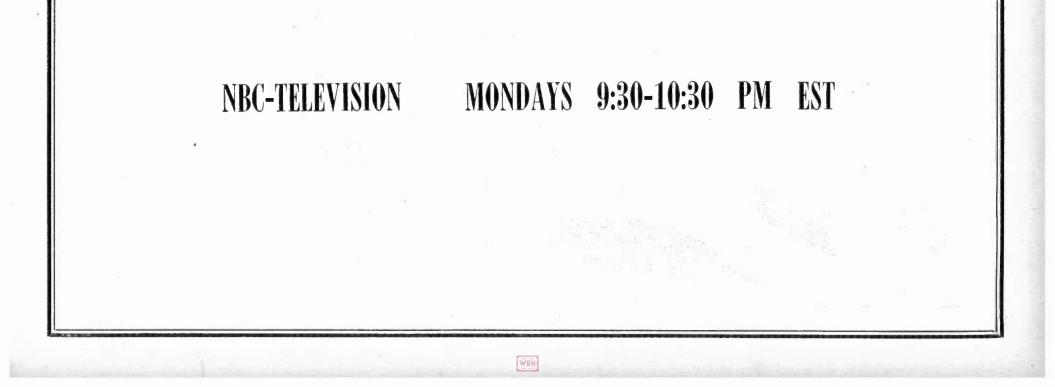
# **ROBERT MONTGOMERY**

## **Presents**

# THE JOHNSON'S WAX PROGRAM

and

YOUR LUCKY STRIKE THEATRE



**Congratulations** 

# **ROBERT ARMBRUSTER**

MUSICAL DIRECTOR NBC Western Division

RCA-VICTOR RED SEAL RECORDS

Management: ART RUSH, INC.

#### **Congratulations**

# LEON FROMKESS

**Executive Producer** 

"Ramar of the Jungle"

# LAWRENCE and LEE





Management:

JOHN GIBBS AGENCY 30 Rockefeller Plaza New York 20, N. Y.

Congratulations VARIETY !

#### Thanks for all the nice things you said about a couple of Palookas named,

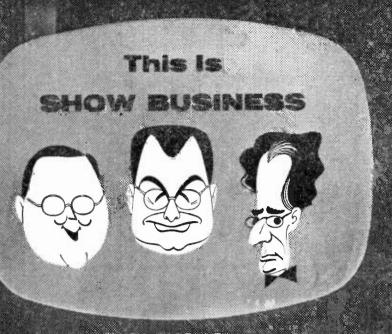
WRH

Joe, and Ham Fisher

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

THE BUICK BERLE SMOW

BUICK MOTOR DIVISION



SCHICK INCORPORATED



UNITED STATES TOBACCO COMPANY



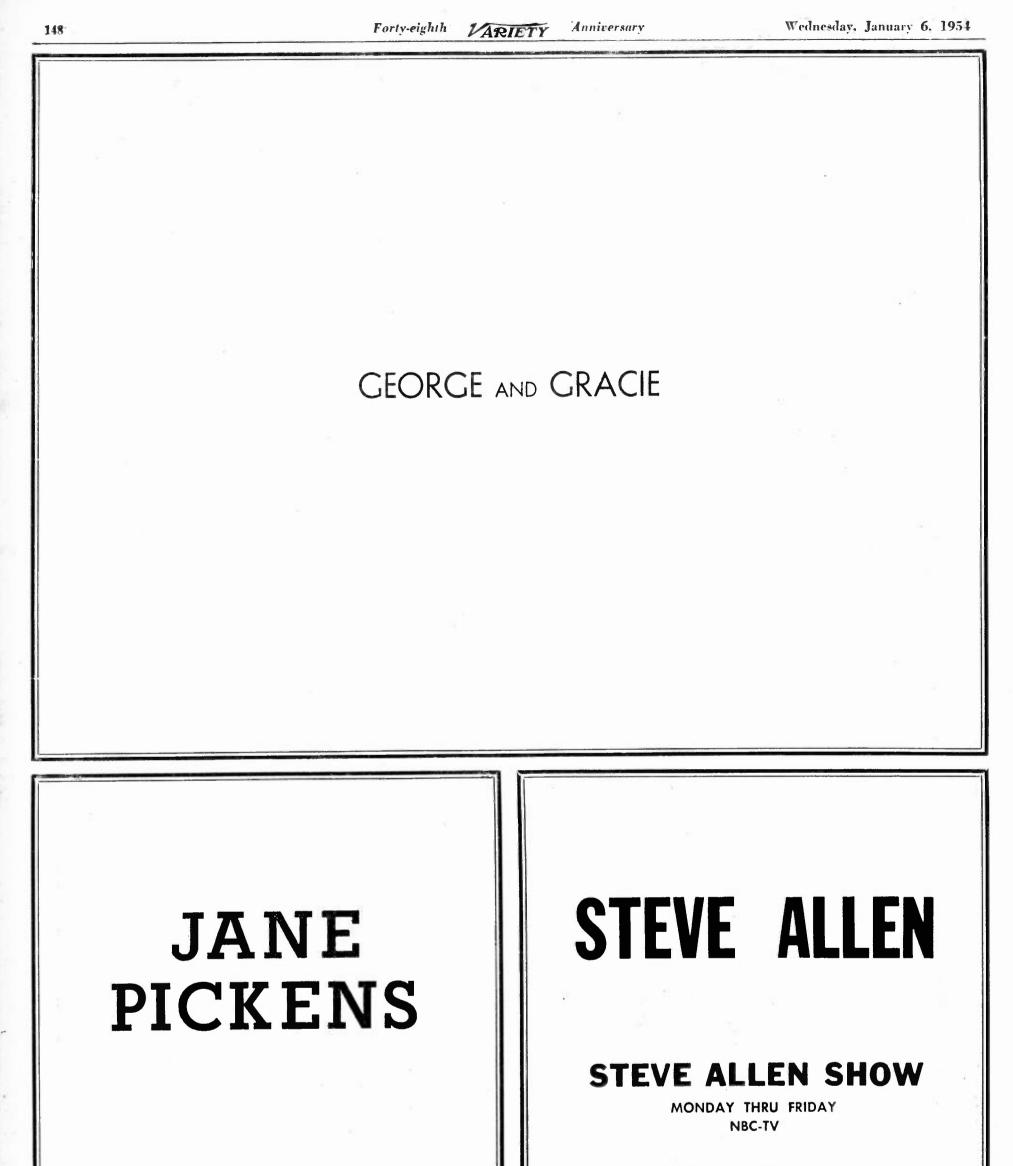
## MARTIN KANE

UNITED STATES TOBACCO COMPANY

The Jackie Gleason Show







### WHAT'S MY LINE?

SUNDAY NIGHT CBS-TV

Management JULES L. GREEN

小小大学家等意义多

WRH

Public Relations ARTHUR CANTOR

CORAL RECORDS

-64

Personal Management MOE GALE 48 West 48th Street NEW YORK CITY

121211111111

**YEA NOW IN PRODUCTION!** A grand new total of **78** magnificent half-hours!

GREAT

These leaders have RENEWED FOR 2ND YEAR!

- BLATZ Beer in 3 markets! • DREWRYS Beer in 9 markets!
- OLYMPIA Beer in 6 markets! • GENESEE Beer in 5 markets!
- SCHAEFER Beer in New York City!

#### TOP RATINGS in market after market! • SEATTLE, 1st Place!

- Sch I LE, I SI FILLES Sat. eve. rates 53.3 Telepulse, June 1953 Beats Robert Manigamery, Mr. & Mrs. North, Eddie Cantor, Ford Theatre, Playhouse of Stars. • WASHINGTON, D. C. - 2nd Place!
- TUAS AND THE STATES THE STATES AND T • KANSAS CITY, 1st Place!

Fri. eve. - rates 32.3 - Telepulse, Aug. 1953 Beats Philco-Goodyear TV Playhouse, Ford Theatre, Kraft TV Theatre, This is Your Life, G. E. Theatre, What's S. Line, Godfrey's Tolent Scauts.

- TOP RATINGS in market after market! • PITTSBURGH - 1st Place! Thur, eve. - rates 41.5 - Telepulse, Aug. 1953 Beats This is Your Life, Down You Go, Ford Theatre, Playhouse of Stars, Robert Montgamery.
- SAN ANTONIO 2nd Place! JAN ANIUNIU - 200 FIDE: JUES. eve. - rates 26.3 - Telepuise, Aug. 1953 Beol: Suspense, Blind Dole, Burns & Allen, Kraft Ty Theatre, Toost of the Town, Beuloh, G. E. Thatre, w.bert Montgomery, Lux Video Theatre.
- PORTLAND 2nd Place! TURILATIN - LITUE FUNCT. Tues. eve. - rates 58.5 - Telepulse, Sept. 1953 Beat: Break the Bank, Chance of a Lifetime, Play-house of Stars, The Goldbergs, Big Story.

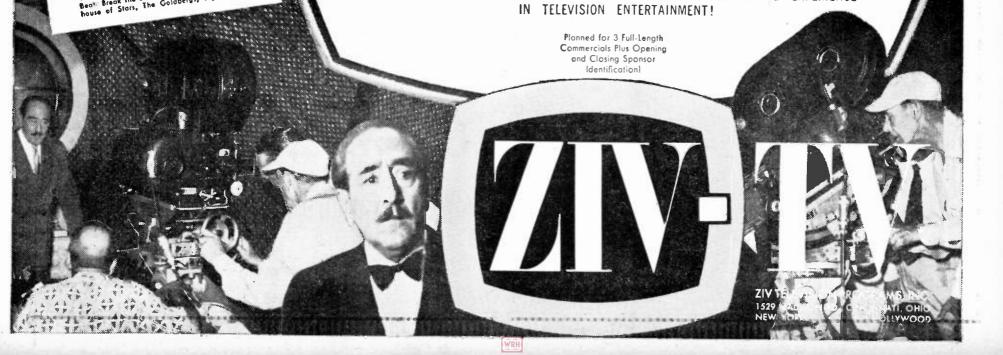
MOST MAGNIFICENT SERIES OF TELEVISION DRAMAS EVER PRODUCED!

TRULY THE

# ADOLPHE ENJO

YOUR STAR AND HOST IN

EACH MAGNIFICENT' HALF-HOUR DRAMA A VIVID AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE



# TOPS IN CHICAGO

In Radio

... WGN reaches more people per week than any other Chicago station ... bar none.

With more than 4,686,000 radio homes in WGN's coverage area you have the greatest advertising potential in the Middle West.\*

WGN's Illinois coverage represents 94% of all Illinois retail sales! \*\*

WGN...more than ever your basic buy in the Middle West.

\*Nielsen Coverage Service \*\*Sales Management Survey of Buying Power



Eastern Sales Office: 220 E. 42nd Street, New York 17, N.Y. for New York City, Philadelphia and Boston Geo. P. Hollingbery Co. Advertising Solicitors for All Other Cities Los Angeles-411 W. 5th Street • New York-500 5th Avenue • Atlanta-223 Peachtree Strees Chicago-307 N. Michigan Avenue • San Francisco-625 Market Street

In Television

A national advertiser said:

"Out of five markets used in this promotion, WGN-TV delivered 40% of the returns."

A local agency told WGN-TV:

"The leads developed from a single announcement on your program were better than four times any other television show we have utilized."

Large or small...make WGN-TV your best buy in Chicago ... serving more local retail and national spot program advertisers than any other Chicago station.



#### Congratulations

RAND

#### PRODUCER-DIRECTOR

WRH

#### Procter & Gamble's "FIRESIDE THEATER"

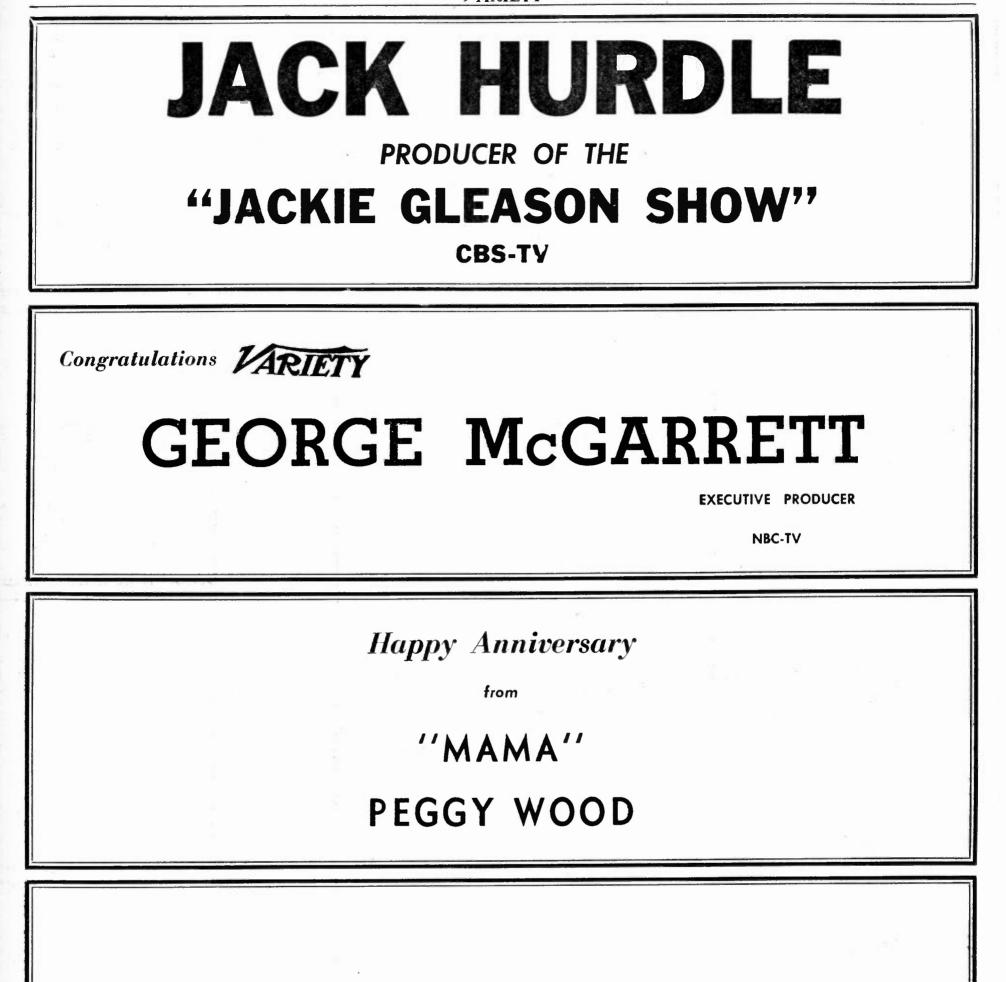
General Electric's "GE THEATRE"



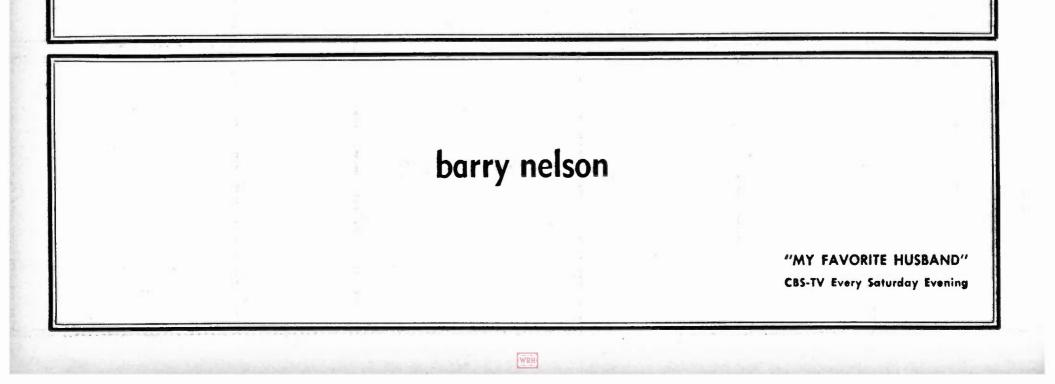
As the curtain goes up on another successful year of the TELEVISION PLAYHOUSE, Philco and Goodyear broadcast their sincere appreciation to all the talented actors, actresses, writers and technicians whose work has established the PLAYHOUSE as television's outstanding dramatic program. 151

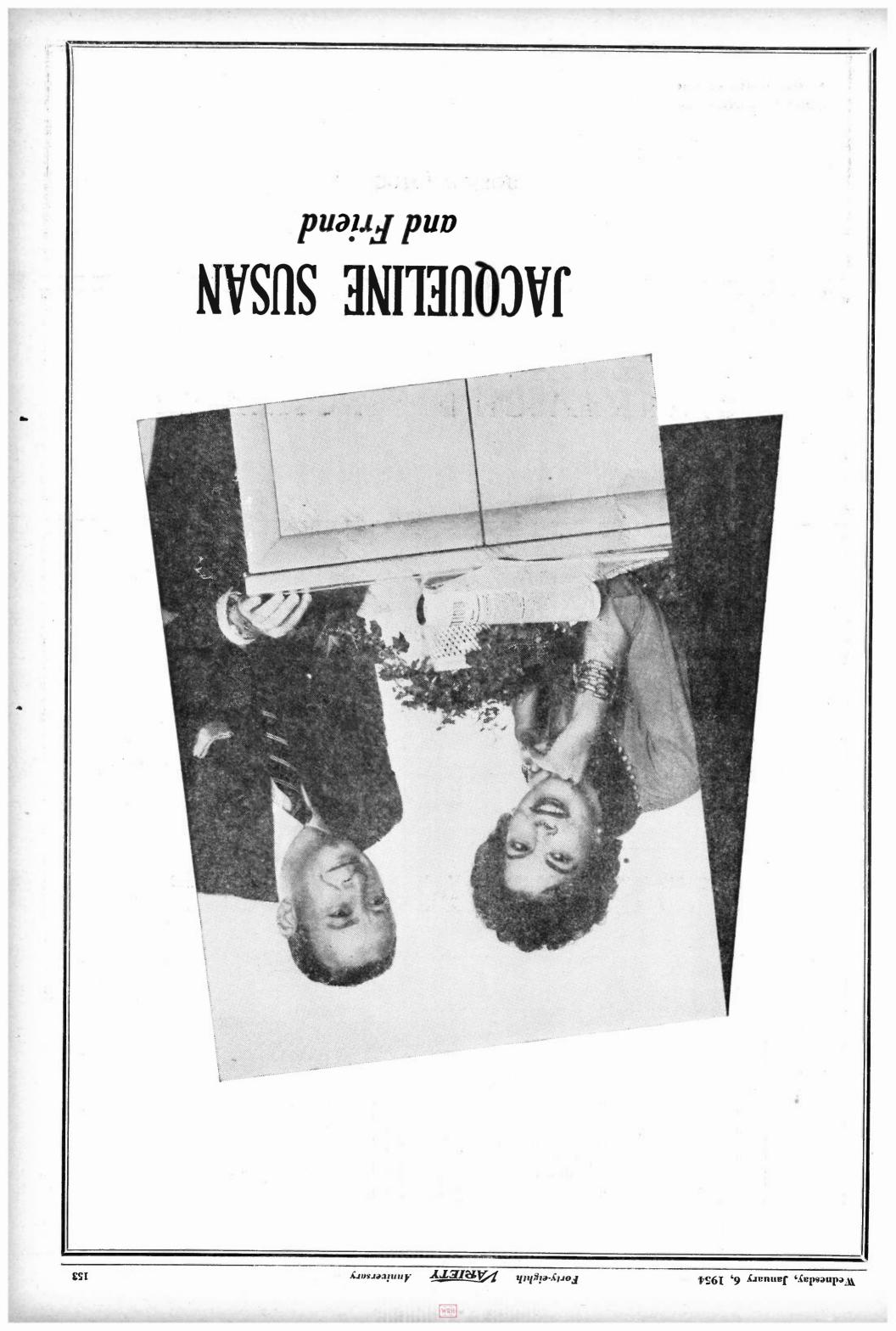
# TELEVISION PLAYHOUSE \* PHILCO CORPORATION Sundays + 9-10 P.M. E.S.T. \* THE GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER COMPANY, INC.

152



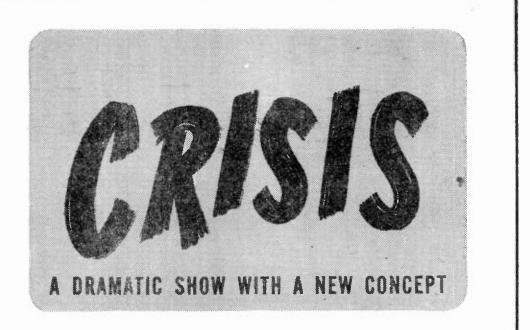
ED SIMMONS and NORMAN LEAR





Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

BY "AMERICA'S Leading independent tv producer"



# a new Walt FRAMER production

STRIKE

IT RICH

THE BIG

PAYOFF

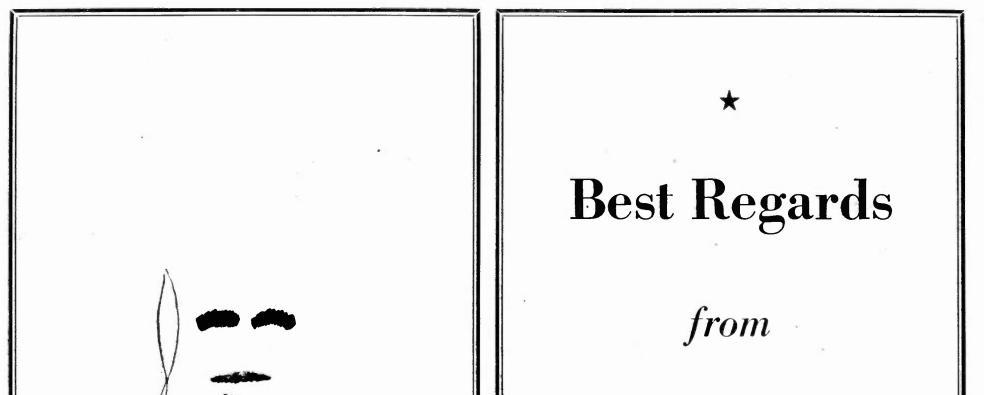
Creator and

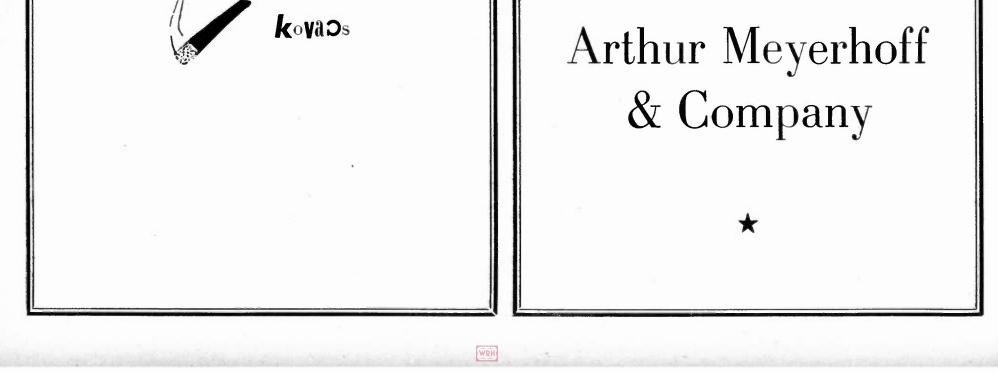
Producer of "Top-Rated"...

Our current top-rated shows prove that we have a success-formula that pays big dividends in traceable results. It is our firm belief that CRISIS is destined for fully as brilliant a future. Inquiries are invited from agencies and advertisers in search of an economical, powerful, resultful format. We are at your SERVICE!

#### WALT FRAMER PRODUCTIONS

1150 AVENUE of the AMERICAS, New York 36, N. Y. OXford 7-3322





## it happened one night...

... WatV's initial telecast from its new Empire State Building transmitter with a telethon for The Lighthouse. The cognoscenti say a charity is lucky to get half of the money pledged during a telethon. WatV proved differently. Of the 19,626 verified pledges received — totaling \$115,000 — a fancy 93%, or \$107,000, is in the bank. There are some 4 million TV homes in this Metropolitan Market; and The Lighthouse received some 20,000 pledges. Even without a calculator it is obvious that WatV hit a minimum of 1 in every 200 homes with its opening. It is also obvious that the average contribution was in excess of \$5; in cash, not IOU's.

this is impact

When it comes to how many homes Watv hit, the surveys are no help; they don't contact viewers through the night. We do know WOIV hit 1 in every 200. But for every viewer that contributed, how many did not? How many homes do you have to hit to net 20,000 five dollar bills? Would 1 in 20 be a fair guess? Or 1 in 50? Or 100 or 200? We don't know, nobody knows. We think we're not "blue-skying" when we estimate our audience that night as more than a million of the 4 million TV homes.

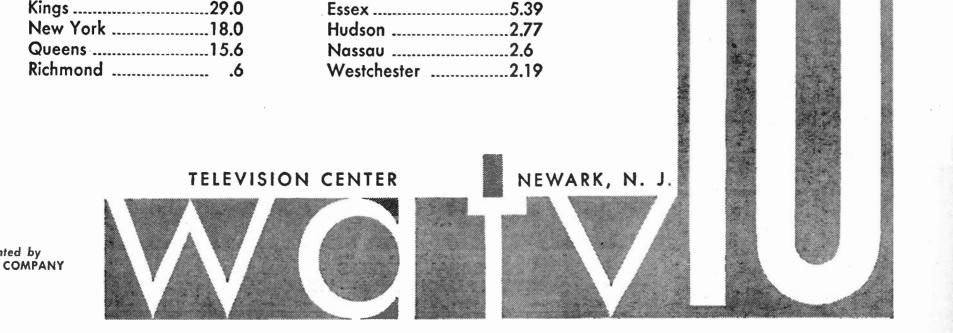
# this is coverage

Where did the money come from? The addresses show that: 94% came from the 7 New York and 3 New Jersey counties that make up the population heart of this Metropolitan Market. These 7 counties represent 73% of this market.

# this is penetration

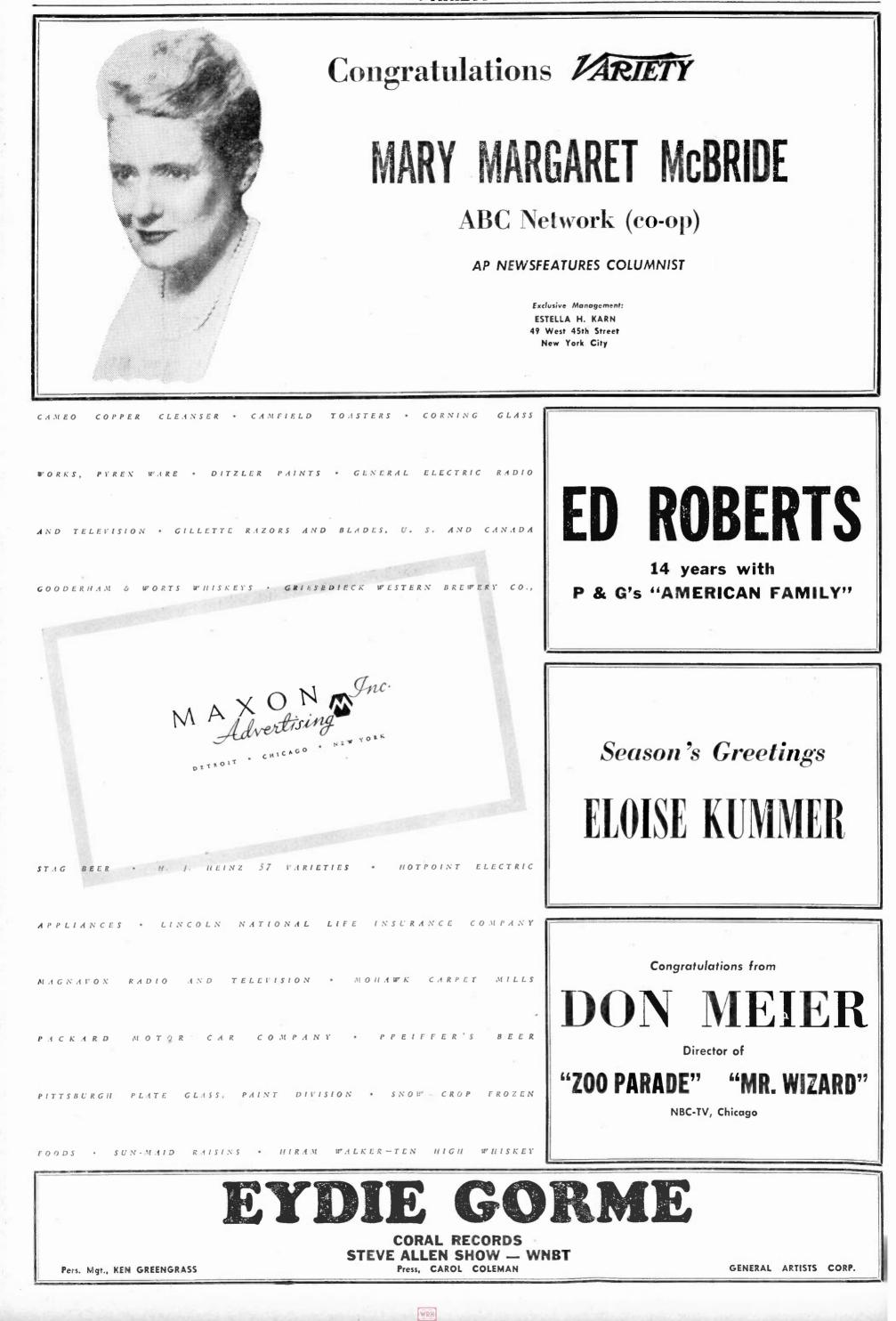
COUNTY	% OF PLEDGES	COUNTY	% OF PLEDGES
Bronx		Bergen	2.20
V:	00.0	<b>F</b>	5.00





Represented by WEED & COMPANY

WRH



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

5

# JANE FROMAN

#### WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY

# pardon us for crowing FURTH ULLMAN 2nd ANNIVERSARY

**Production Designer** Colgate Comedy Hour

# RANDY VERSON VERSON NERBANAAN

Hey, VARIETY

but this is our



# OF TV's "THE BIG PAYOFF"

#### for the COLGATE-PALMOLIVE CO. Monday through Friday 3:60-3:30 P.M.



Thanks to WALT FRAMER and the WM. ESTY CO., INC.

WRH



Forty-eighth LARIETY Anniversary

# **KEEP YOUR**

# EYE ON DANCER-FITZGERALD-SAMPLE

The same understanding, realistic approach that has made D-F-S the largest radio advertising agency for 18 consecutive years is also at work making Television more effective for many of the nation's largest advertisers, among them :



## AMERICAN CHICLE CAMPBELL SOUP FALSTAFF BREWING GENERAL MILLS PROCTER & GAMBLE STERLING DRUG

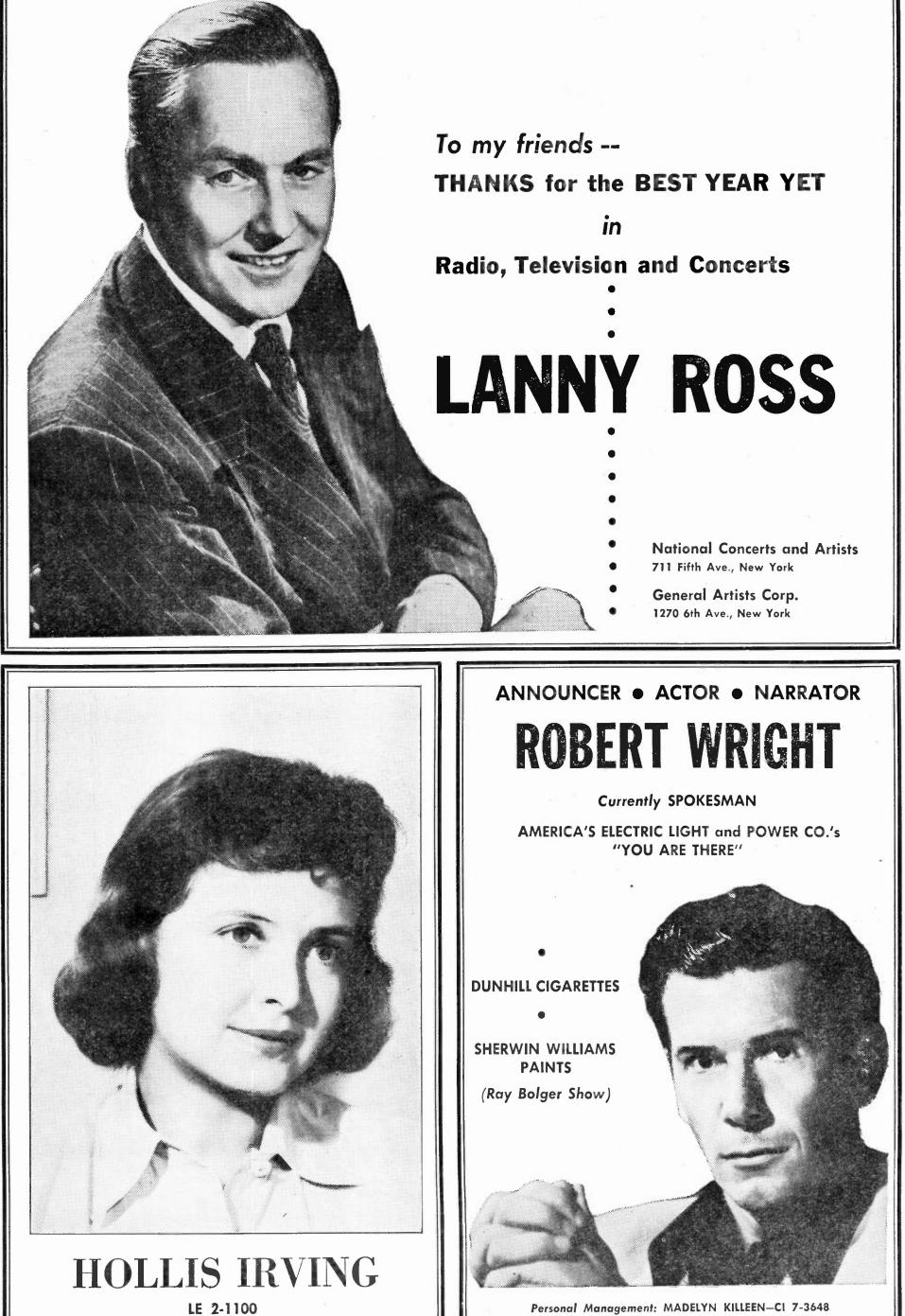
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## NEW YORK · CHICAGO · HOLLYWOOD · SAN FRANCISCO · TORONTO

arm -

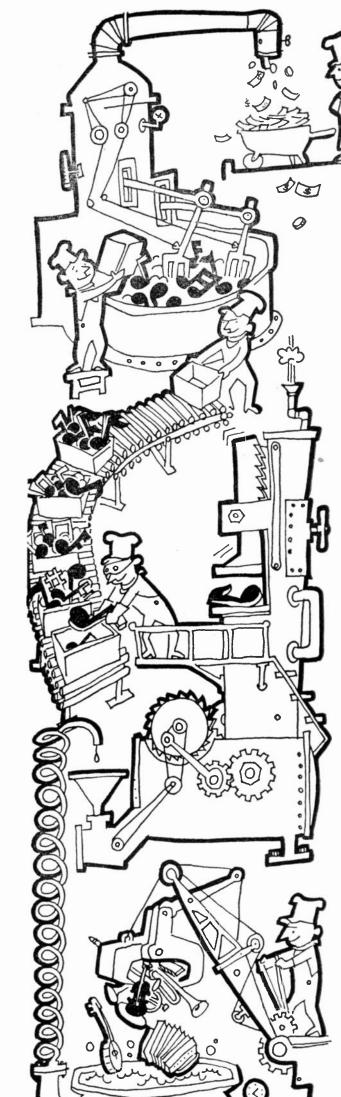
WRH

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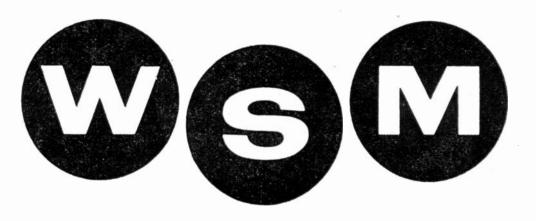
Personal Management: MADELYN KILLEEN-CI 7-3648





#### **Music is Big Business**

#### in Nashville ... and



#### has made it so.

#### Where is Music City, U.S.A. today?

American

In the 20s-it was New York, pouring out Broadway tunes.

In the 30s-it was Hollywood, grinding out cinema musicals.

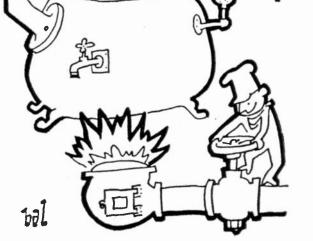
In the 40s—it was neck-and-neck between New York and Hollywood as the twin music capitals of America.

But today, the musical center of gravity has shifted to Nashville, Tennessee-the modern Music City, U.S. A.-thanks to Station WSM's formidable, unequaled talent pool.

You needn't take our word for it; we admit to a flair for colorful tall tales. So we'll spare you the typical Tin Pan Valley exaggeration, and refer you instead to a few conservative, highly respected journals whose reputation for impaling stark facts is unquestioned.

Farm and Ranch 。	•	•	٠	*	"It is a well known fact that the balance of power in the present day music industry has shifted from New York and Hollywood to Nashville, Tenn."
Nation's Business .	•	•	•	•	"What brought this music into great popularity nationally, and now inter- nationally, was Station WSM. It's country music glamour boys are as big-sometimes bigger-in record sales and juke box popularity as Bing Crosby or Frank Sinatra "
Collier's		•	•	•	"Nashville is the focal point For years this form of show business flour- ished apart from the Hollywood-New York axis, but recently the balance has been suddenly and violently disrupted. The Nashville muse has won the en- tire nation if the rest of the radio industry is in the doldrums, WSM has more business than it can handle "
Pathfinder	,	•	٠	•	"Not all the gold in the South is in the vaults at Fort Knox. A sizeable chunk of it is found in Radio Station WSM, Nashville, Tennessee, capital of folk music The reason is Grand Ole Opry, owned outright by WSM, the show- case of American folk music All the major record companies do a land- office business in Nashville."

**Coronet** . . . . . . . . "Events occurring today in Nashville comprise a sociological phenomenon



'Will it ever stop growing?' the newly-rich song publishers, record firms and performers keep asking."

••••• "This year income (is) prophesied to reach \$35 million. The top country singers, expected to gross at least \$7,500.000 from records, personal appearances, radio, and sheet music sales . . . give thanks to Radio Station WSM. a powerful clear-channeler which blankets 30-odd states."

**New York Times Magazine** "There's a revolution brewing in the music business . . . (and) the center of this activity is Nashville, home of the fabulous radio program called Grand Ole Opry."

<

Similar reports have appeared in Time, Look, Billboard, Variety, Redbook, Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, Saturday Evening Post, and many other publications.

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

Wednesday, January 6, 1954



WRH



#### **GOODSON & TODMAN**

present

### FRED ALLEN

in

#### "JUDGE FOR YOURSELF"

sponsored

by

## OLD GOLDS

"Acclaimed by Mr. Allen's Relatives"

W N B T Tuesday, 10 P.M.



# RALPH LEVY CBS

164

Image: State of the state	Producer—Director "JACK BENNY" TV SHOW
1776 Broadway 203 N. Wabash Ave. New York 19, N. Y. Chicago 1, III.	

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

RA-ING.

165

# AR



#### SALESMANSHIP

Sarra's commercials are extremely effective "visual selling"- they make friends and motivate buying action.



# ATTENTION

Sarra's ingenious use of audio-visual techniques compels attention for the product's complete story.



RETENTION

Sarra's commercials possess an unforgetable quality-the impression lasts long after the broadcast.



ACTION

RECOGNITION

Sarra's advertising experts never forget the primary importance of strong product identification.



The advertiser gets results when Sarra's team of creative advertising men and expert technicians apply their talents.

More than 2500 TV commercials already produced, and more than 20 years' experi-ence as specialists in Visual Selling give Sarra "know-how". Find out how it can work for you.



VIDE-O-RIGINAL is the name for a quality-controlled motion picture rint made in Sarra's own nhotographic laboratory. And whether you order one-or one hundredeach is custom-made for maximum fidelity on the home TV screen.

#### **OTHER SUCCESSFUL TV ADVERTISERS** SERVED BY SARRA

The STUDEBAKER Corp.-Roche, Williams & Cleary, Inc.

CHAMPAGNE VELVET GOLD LA-BEL Beer, Terre Haute Brewing Co.—Weiss & Geller, Inc.

JERGENS LOTION, Andrew Jer-gens, Inc. — Robert W. Orr & Associates, Inc.

SYLVANIA TV sets, Sylvania Elec-tric Products, Inc.—Roy S. Durstine. Inc.

#### **CLIP BOARD OF RECENT SARRA RELEASES**



LUCKY STRIKE, American Tobacco Co.-Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc.



STOPETTE Deodorant, Jules Montenier, Inc.-Earle Ludgin & Co.



PET Milk Co.-Gardner Advertising Co. Awarded Chicago Art Directors' Club Gold Medal.



- The GREAT ATLANTIC & PACIFIC TEA COMPANY-Paris & Peart.
- RAINBO, FAIR-MAID, COLONIAL breads, Campbell Taggart Associ-ated Bakeries.

Pabst "BLUE RIBBON" Beer, Pabst Sales Co.-Warwick & Legler, Inc.

NEW YORK: 200 East 56th Street

**CHICAGO: 16 East Ontario Street** 



#### TELEVISION COMMERCIALS · PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION · MOTION PICTURES · SOUND SLIDE FILMS

# **MARTIN GOODMAN PRODUCTIONS**

65 West 54th Street

NEW YORK CITY

## **Compliments of the Season**

# ROBERT MERRILL

**R.C.A. VICTOR RECORDS** 

**METROPOLITAN OPERA** 

Management MOE GALE

DOUGLAS EDWARDS



1 3

1929

# TONI GILMAN

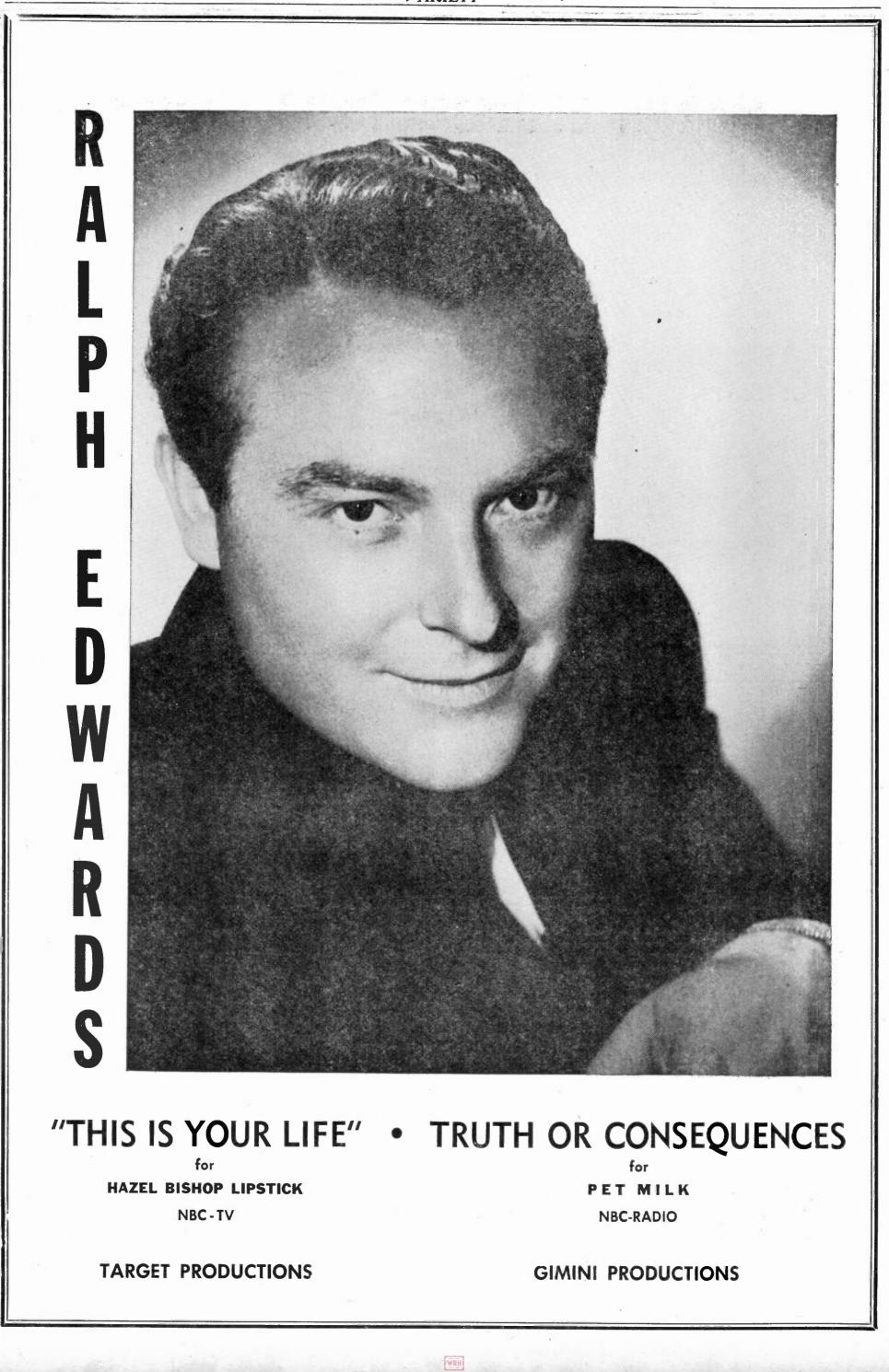
## SILVER ANNIVERSARY

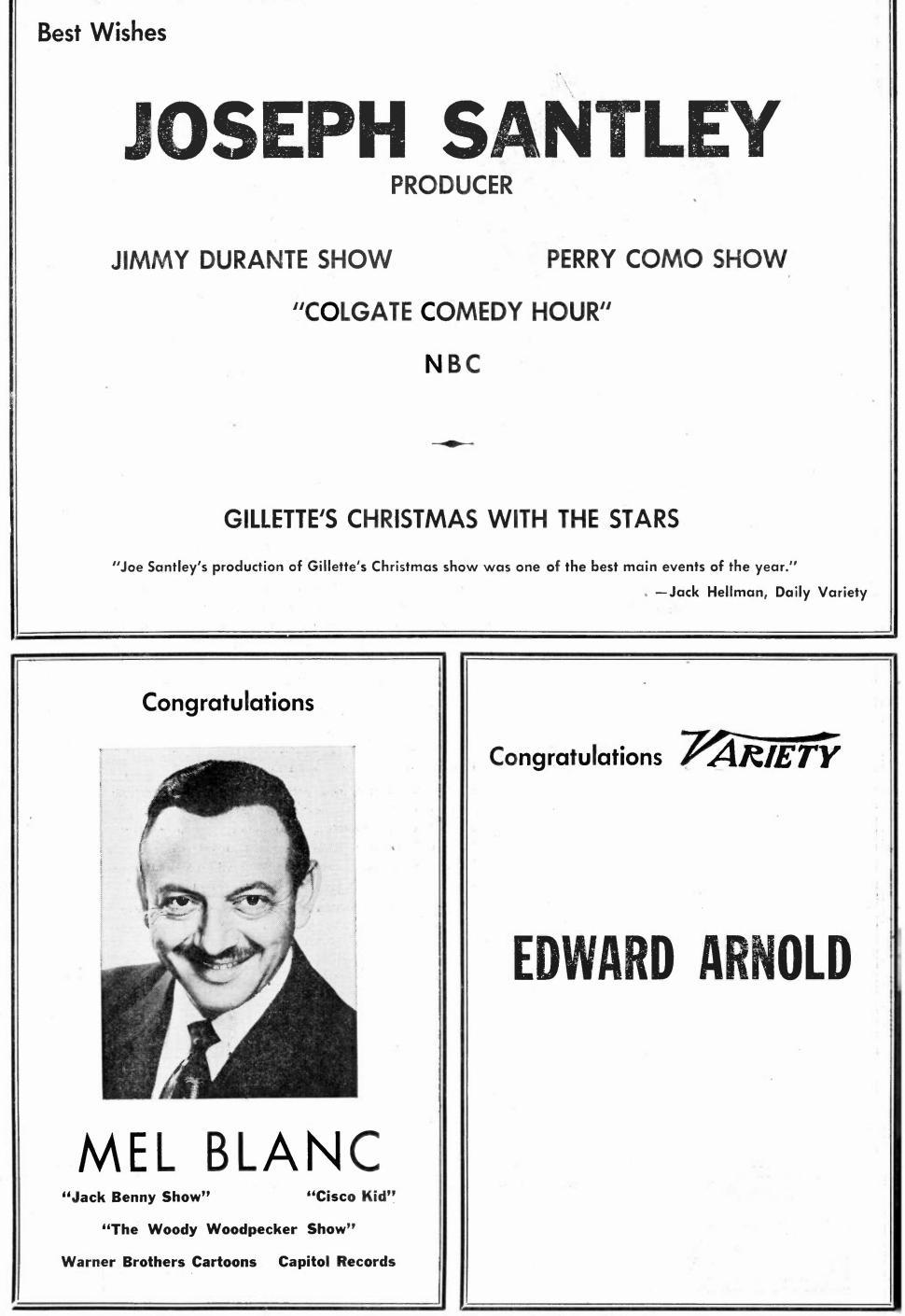
My thanks . . .

to the stage doormen, grips, stagehands, fellow performers, press folk, producers, directors . . . all of whom have directed me through 25 happy years of Show Business.



1954





Forty-eighth ARIETY Anniversary

# NO CIRCUS

at

# . ONLY FACTS

For over six years KTLA has been acknowledged as the leading independent television station in Los Angeles. In the face of many special rating interpretations, a moment's review of the ratings will prove it to you again. For example: both ARB and HOOPER in October and again in November show that KTLA ranks above all other independent stations more than 56% of its class A time.

#### • ... BUT RATINGS ARE NOT THE ONLY MEASURE OF LEADERSHIP !

**KTLA leads in public acceptance** and has won more awards than any other TV station in L. A.

**KTLA leads in top local personalities** built to give that personal appeal which means more sales for you.

KTLA leads in protecting its audience from false advertising and has never allowed "switch" advertisers.

**KTLA leads in strict application of NARTB standards to** all of its time classes to insure audience loyalty.

**KTLA leads in commercial effectiveness** because we never load up with those triple and quadruple spots which are sure death to sales.

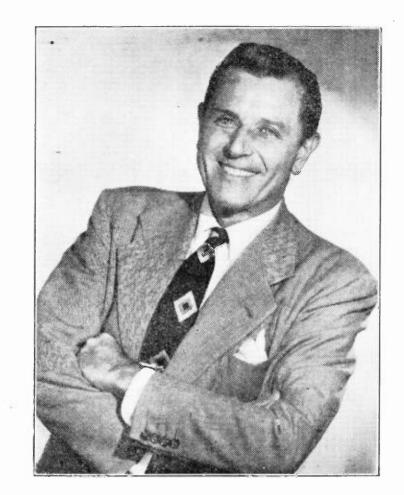
• When you check all the facts, you, too, will agree that KTLA is truly the Leading Independent Television station in Los Angeles.



KTLA Offices and Studios • 5451 Marathon St., Los Angeles 38 • HOllywood 9-3181 PAUL H. RAYMER COMPANY • NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

KTLA-THE BEST ADVERTISING BUY IN LOS ANGELES

### Here's Hoping All of You STRIKE IT RICH In 1954!





Happy for Over 5 Years With Walt Framer and "Strike It Rich"

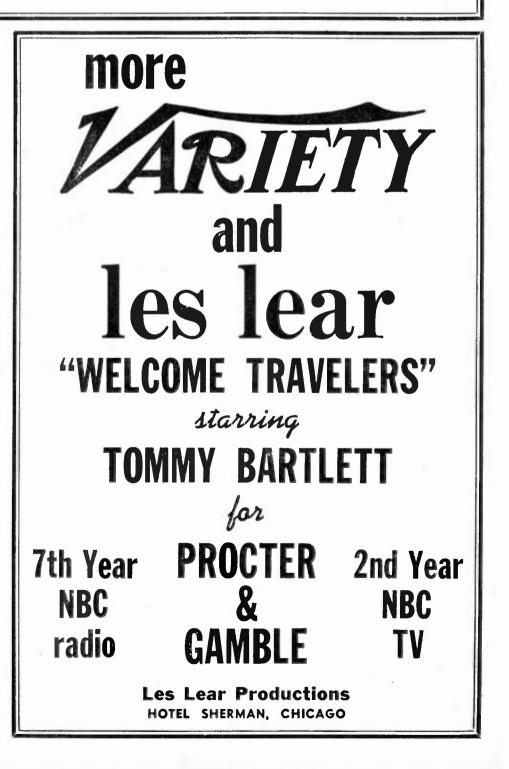
Happy for Over 4 Years With Colgate-Palmolive Company

# **"STRIKE IT RICH"**

Monday Thru Friday 11:30 AM CBS-TV Monday Thru Friday 11 AM NBC RADIO Wednesdays 9 PM CBS-TV



and Brooklyn! Wherever you go today in and around New York, you'll find this sign in more and more stores. "Spanish is Spoken" . . . that's what it says, and more retailers are finding it an important tool with which to attract the buyer who each day is playing a greater part in the sales picture of your product and many other products . . . the SPANISH SPEAKING CONSUMER. Almost three quarters of a million strong, and getting larger all the time, this market within the great market of New York, responds best when you speak—in Spanish!



For a complete story on this new and astounding market, and how best to reach it, we suggest you write or phone ...



Telephone: CIRCLE 6-3900

WRH

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## Sold

to Benton and Bowles for General Foods

# MASQUERADE PARTY

Television's Most Exciting New Panel Game

#### **WOLF PRODUCTIONS**

# Available

A Proven Hard Selling TV Show

# **BREAK THE BANK**

**Television's Leading Quiz Program** 

3-Year Award Winner Radio, T.V. Mirror and Fame Magazine

#### WOLF ASSOCIATES, INC.

420 Madison Avenue, New York

PLaza 5-2050





Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary



BERNARDINE FLYNN MAURICE COPELAND Philip Lord Butler Manville Art Van Harvey Elmira Roessler Vivian Lasswell John Galvarro George Cisar

**Russ Reed** 

ROS TWOHEY

Muriel Monsel

Irwin Charone

Norman Gottschalk

Toni Gilman

Val Bettin Mary Foskett

Stanley Gordon

Vera Ward

DON GIBSON BEV YOUNGER Sam Siegel Viola Berwick Jim Andelin Karen Conley Jacqueline Berkey

JACK LESTER

**ELOISE KUMMER** 

Jerry Garvey

Carlton Kadell

Kay Westfall

**Dick Cleary** 

Elsbeth Hofmann

WR

# WATCH MR.WIZARD

# on the NBC-TV Network from Chicago

# CREATED, WRITTEN BY AND STARRING

A HERBERT S. LAUFMAN PACKAGE

JULES PEWOWAR, Producer

WRH

#### "Mr. Wizard's Science Secrets" Written by DON HERBERT Published by POPULAR MECHANICS PRESS Now in FOURTH printing of 25,000 each Available at all bookstores-\$3

"Mr. Wizard's Science Secrets Kit" Available at bookstores and toy departments-\$7.95

## 75,000 CHILDREN

carry Mr. Wizard's Science Club cards and meet weekly at more than 5,000 clubs in 42 states, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Canada and Mexico to perform Mr. Wizard's experiments. Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# CETHEL AND ALBERT??



Starring

## **PEG LYNCH and ALAN BUNCE**

NBC-TV, SATURDAY, 7:30 P.M.

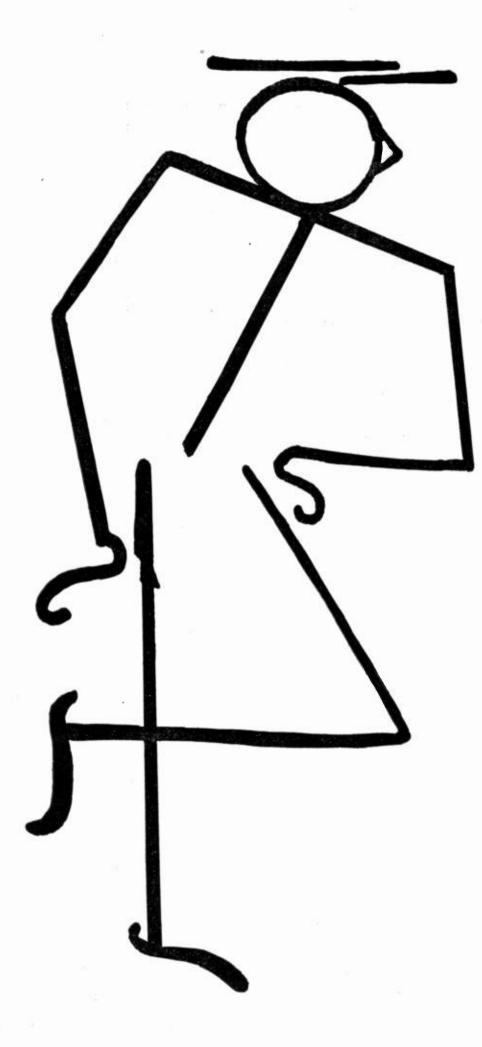
(FOR THE SUNBEAM CORPORATION)

TOM LOEB Producer WALTER HART Director

# EDDIE BUZZELL

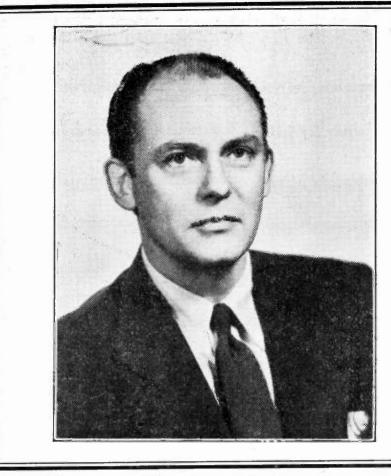
174





# THE JACKIE GLEASON SHOW CBS-TV

#### A JACKIE GLEASON ENTERPRISE PRODUCTION



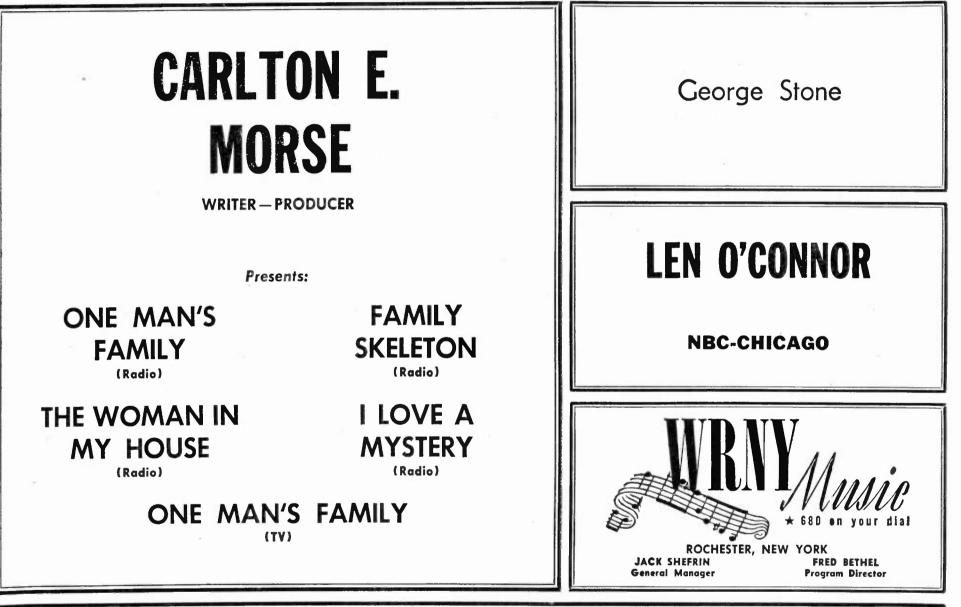
# LEE COOLEY

CREATES---WRITES---AND PRODUCES

THE PERRY COMO SHOW

For Chesterfield Cigarettes

Exclusive Representatives GENERAL ARTISTS CORP.



176



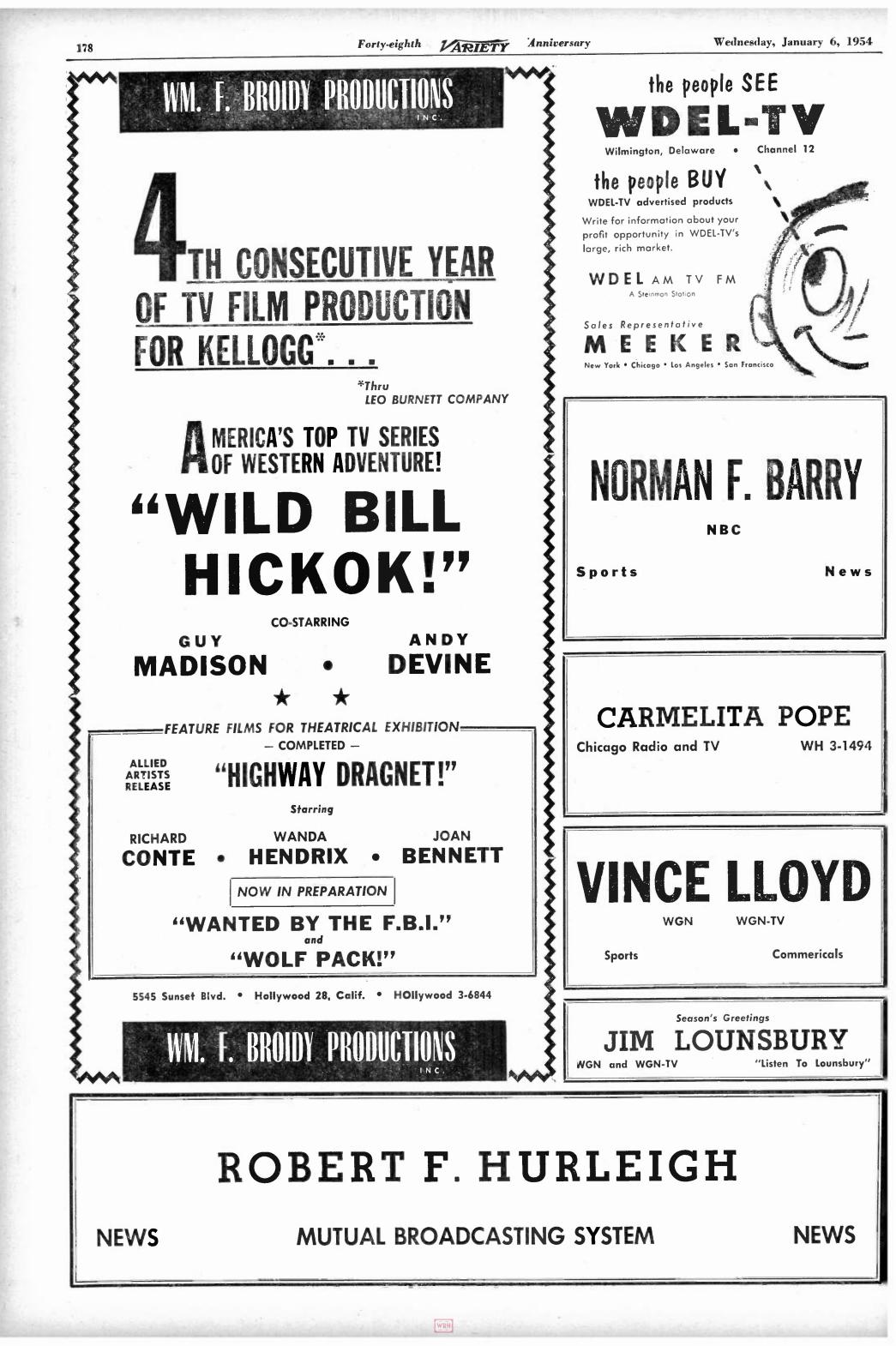


our violets

"We Loves Yez All Dearly"

# Ed and Pegeen Fitzgerald

#### WABC

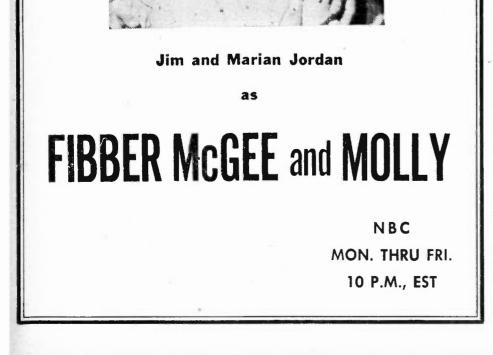


# Best Wishes on Your 48th Anniversary



#### Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

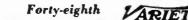
Marwick and Legler, Inc. ADVERTISING LOS ANGELES NEW YORK The TV film series with the longest run and the top audience rating for kids is "SMILIN' ED'S GANG" Produced by

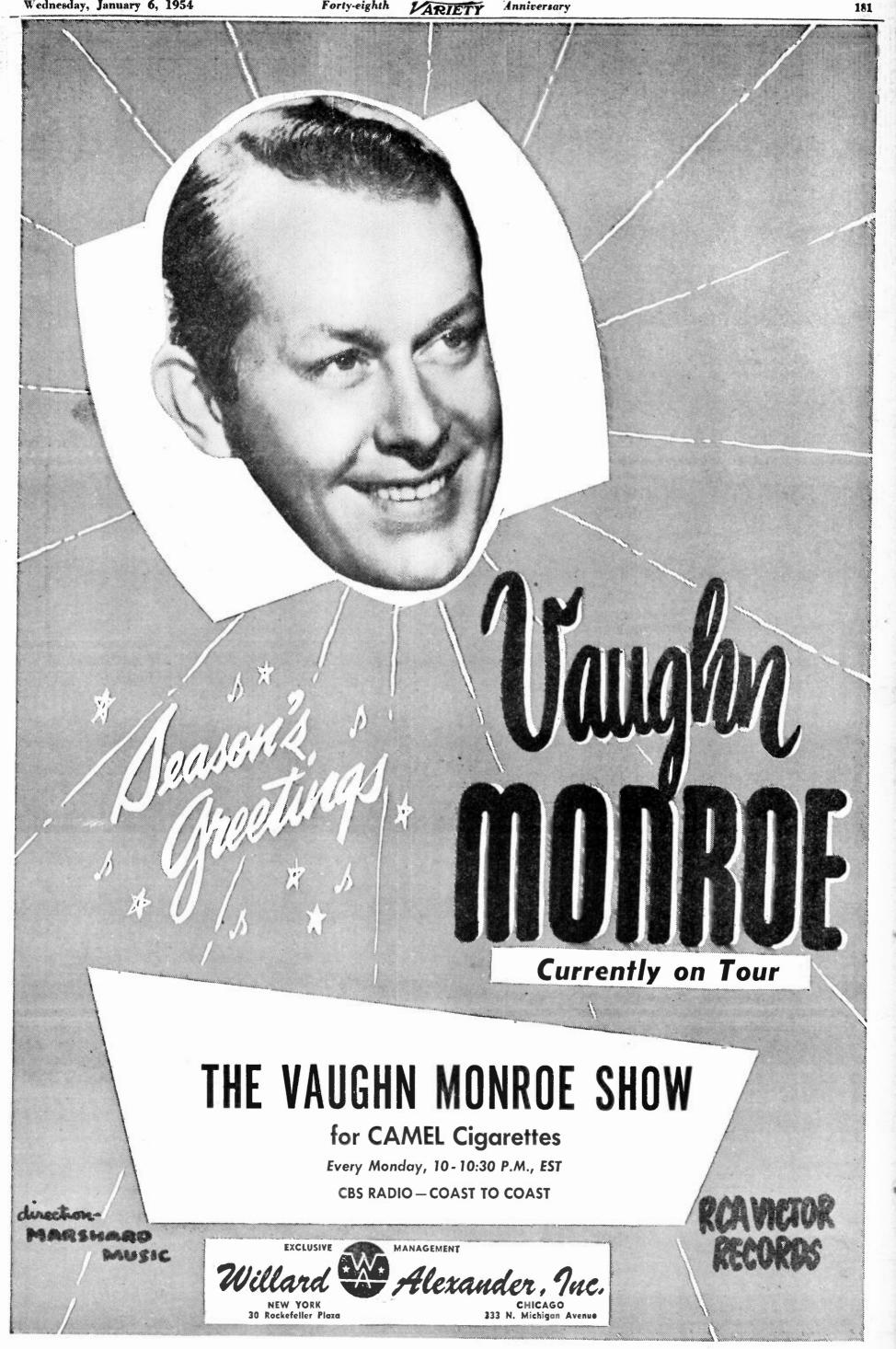


# FRANK FERRIN

4th Year for Buster Brown Shoes ABC-TV (Via Leo Burnett Agency) 11th Year on Radio for Buster Brown Shoes

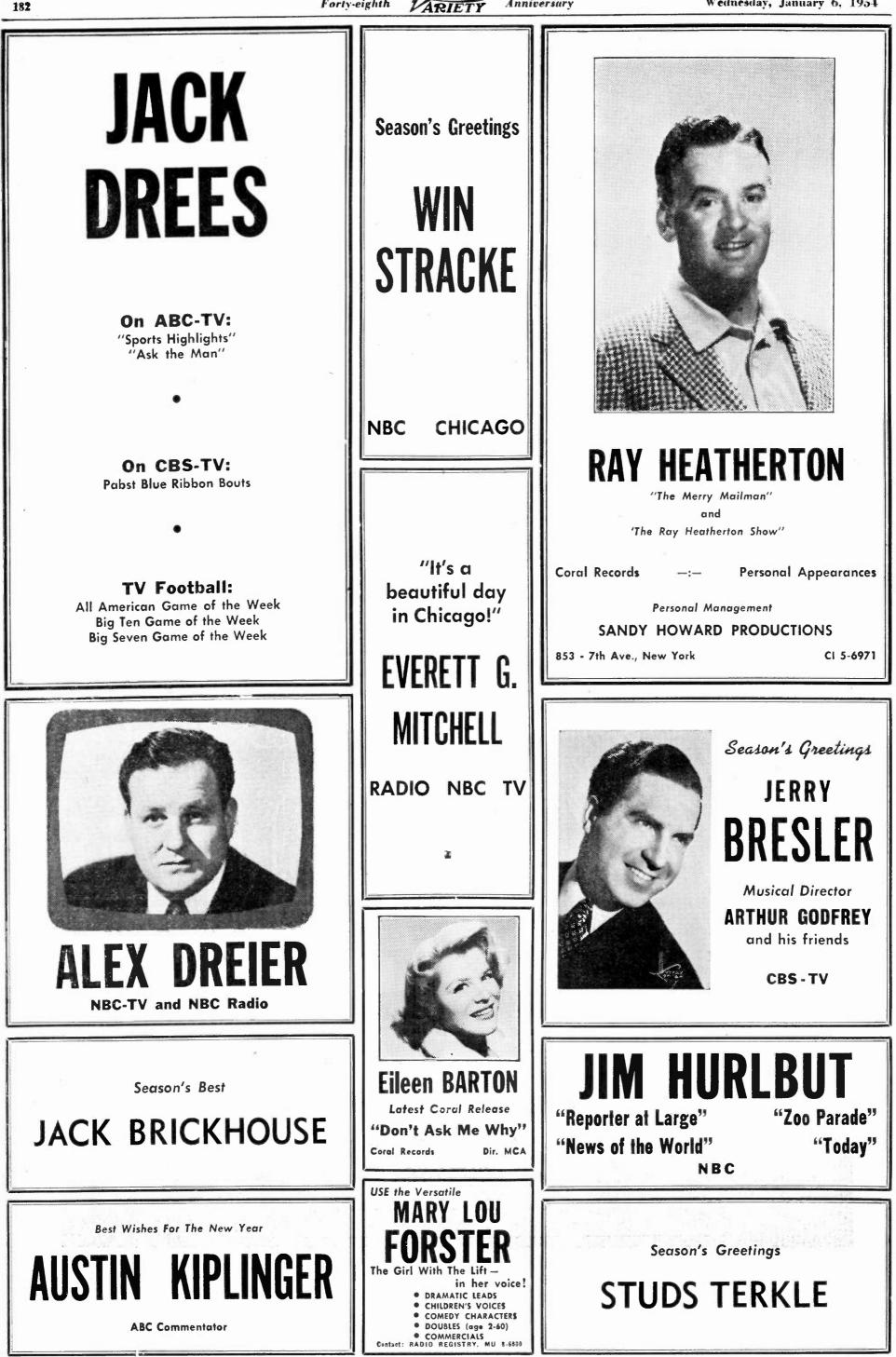




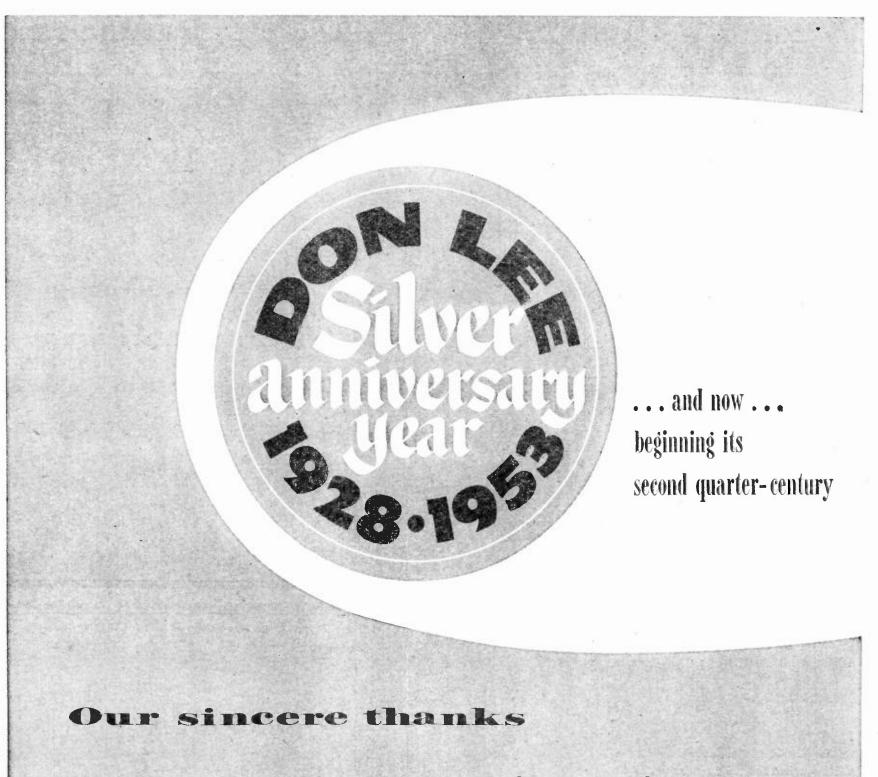


Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

Wednesday, January 6, 1954









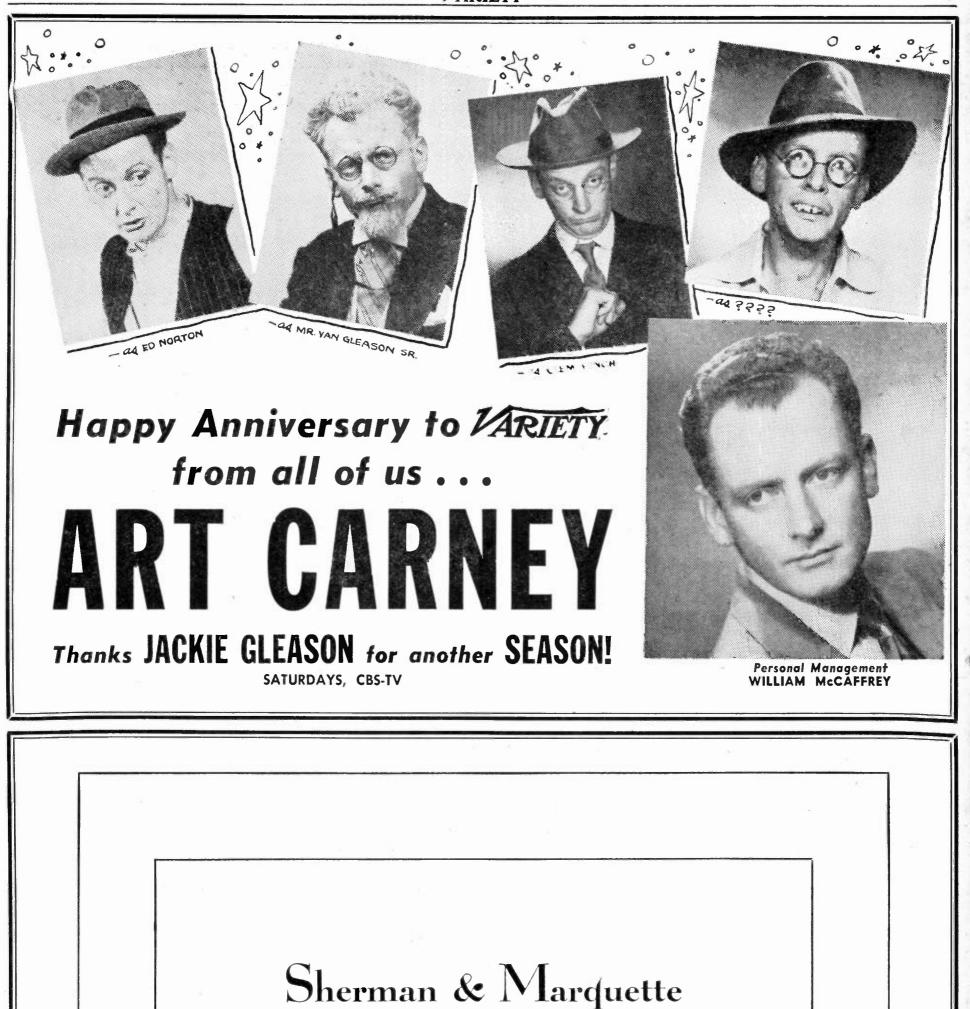
... to the many people in the entertainment world who, through the last twenty-five



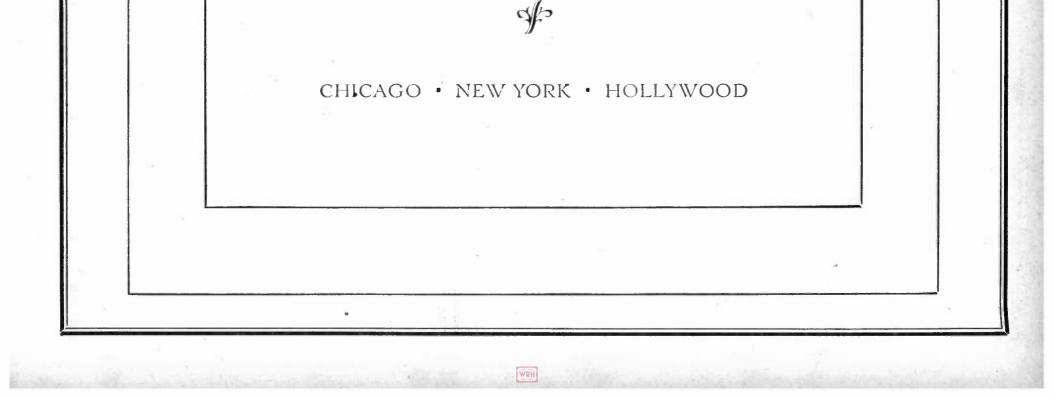


Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

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ADVERTISING





## HELEN HALL WOR'S **BARBARA WELLES**



NBC, HOLLYWOOD

## SWG

Continued from page 102 = in the chaotic new world of television.

As of today more than 500 mem-bers of the Screen Writers' Guild have television writing credits. Every month sees more SWG members turning to this hungry new market to sell his wares.

A semi-autonomous Television Writers' Group has been formed within the SWG to handle writers' problems in TV, to negotiate TV writing contracts, to arbitrate credits and adjudicate grievances.

As of now an even hundred television producers have signed the TV writers' basic contract or. in the case of producers not yet in production, letters of adherence. The contract itself, incidentally, is a precedental document (not won without an early show of strength on the part of the writers, by the way) that establishes the prin-ciples of residual rights and separation of rights for the writersomething writers have never been able to establish in the motion picture field.

Three members of the incoming SWG executive board were elected specifically to represent the TV writers on that body and to act as liaison between it and the TWG.

Within the TWG itself subcom-mittees have been appointed to explore the presentation of annual awards for TV writing. to arbitrate credits (doubly important now that residuals are involved), to conduct roundtable discussions with leaders of the industry. to bulletin the membership with up-to-date market lists, to settle grievances, and to handle the ever-growing prob-lems of the writer in TV.

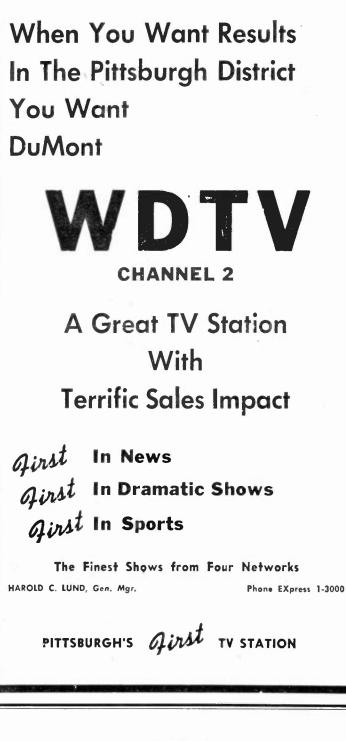
This present organizational setup has not come into being without its full share of troubles and headaches. Originally an advisory group functioning amid the chaos of TV itself, the TWG has emerged this year as a body fully representative of the TV writer. This year, for the first time, the executive board of the Group was elected by SWG members with television credits and it will make periodic reports to those who elected it.

To sum up, the Hollywood screenwriter feels he has made the first transitional steps into TV successfully. He feels that a good, workable minimum basic agreement has been negotiated - an agreement that gives him a firm basis for future negotiations in the field of TV. He feels that TV is going to loom larger and larger in his scheme of things in the years to come and that TV producers have come to recognize and appreciate the special talents he can bring to the solution is bound to become television's biggest bugaboo in the years to come—the problem of supplying a continuing stream of dramatic, well written stories and screenplays for the monster TV tube.

#### **REVERTING TO TYPE**

Everyone In Pitt Figured Nick Perry to Resume Thesping

Pittsburgh. Nick Perry, one of town's most popular teevee performers, who announced last summer following his resignation from WDTV to go with new UHF channel 16, WENS, that he was quitting the cameras for good to go into the sales and business end, has had a change of heart, as everybody who knew him figured he would. Last week, Perry had another announcement to make, that he was fed up with being a salesman and would be back on the greasepaint block again immediately. He's staying with WENS, however, and will do a daily filmed program called "This Is Pittsburgh," in which he'll shoot things of interest around town in the daytime and run them off on Channel 16 for 15 minutes at night.



Congratulations VARIETY

## FRED COE

**Television Playhouse** . NBC Mr. Peepers .... NBC-TV Bonino ..... NBC-TV

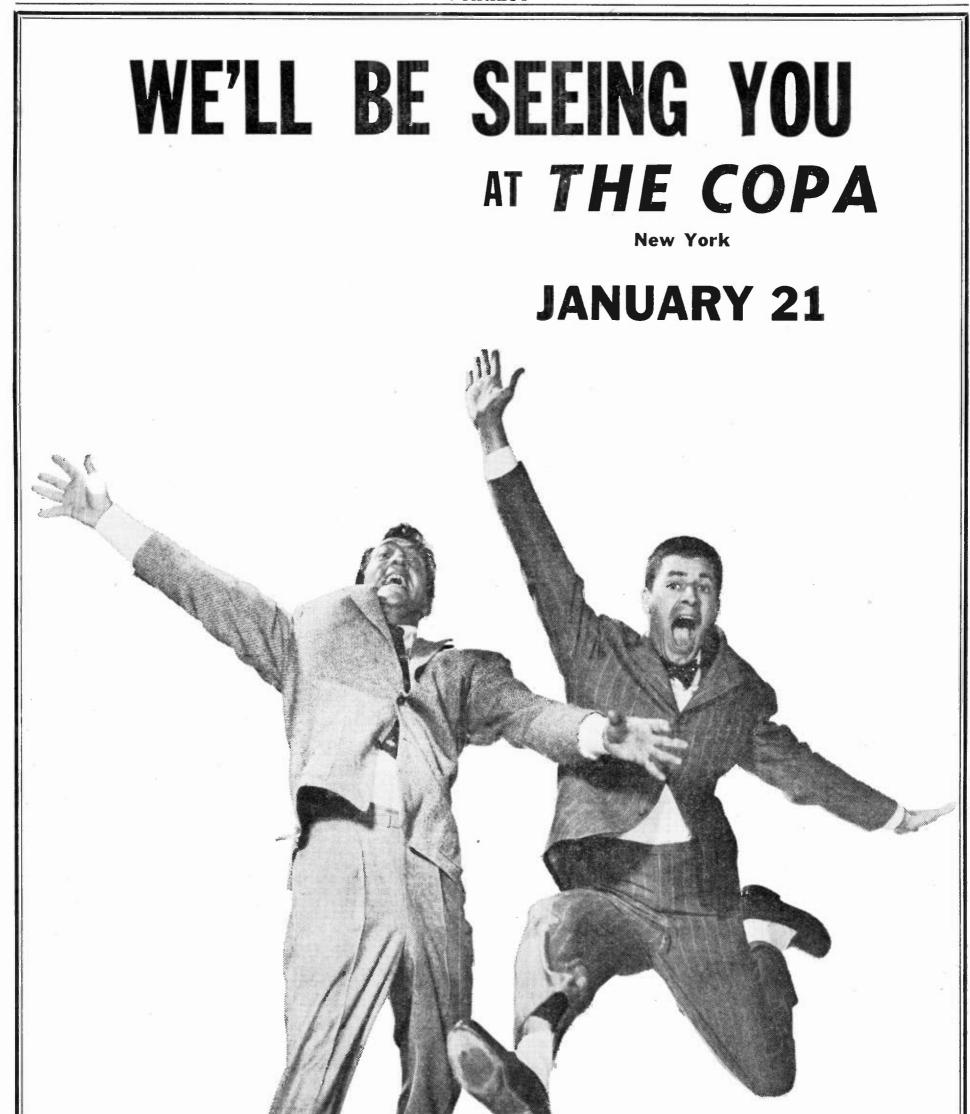
## **BOB MASSON**

### **Bob Hope TV Show**

Program, Monday through Friday, got under way last week on a sustaining basis, but there were sponsor nibbles almost at once after Perry's return to the airlanes had been announced. He's also lined up on WENS as the commercial announcer for flock of bankrolled shows.



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary





#### RADIO-TELEVISION

#### Forty-eighth VARIETY

## **Television Reviews**

**BACKBONE OF AMERICA** With Wendell Corey, Yvonne De-Carlo, Thomas Mitchell, Gene Lockhart, others Writer: Robert E. Sherwood

188

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Producer: Adrian Samish Director: Marc Daniels 60 Mins.; Tues. (29), 8 p.m. MILLER HIGH LIFE NBC-TV, from Hollywood

The long-awaited premiere of Robert E. Sherwood as a TV

what all the shouting was about. True, as one of America's more distinguished playwrights, Sher-wood was on the spot. He had to deliver. Perhaps not revolutionize the new medium, but certainly elevate it a notch or two as a cre-ative force for enlightenment.

The sad truth is that "Backbone of America," Sherwood's initial entry, did none of these, but rather emerged as a somewhat commondramatist (under his three-year, nine-play contract) must have found many a viewer wondering sin of writing down to his public, found many a viewer wondering sin of writing down to his public, facet of Americana when the

to the core of the matter and per-mitted his chief protagonist, Thomas Mitchell, to proclaim his inalienable rights as an American

citizen to live in peace and dig-nity after a horde of Madison Ave. promotion sharpies descended on his "average American" household, too much that had gone before was downright dull. And what pro-fundities there were to ulter were strictly shallow and lowercase.

The unfortunate aspect is that what Sherwood was trying to say has needed saying badly for some time. For in his saga of Fred Tupple and his "average American"

thereby selling both himself and the medium short. By the time the playwright got velopment, throws the giveaway book at the Tupples to bally their book at the Tupples to bally their designation as the typical, normal Middle of America family. The Tupples rebel, refuse to compro-mise on being "average." As an idea it had merit, but it was dis-sipated by the playwright as his scripting effort became diffuse and complicated complicated.

The manner in which Sherwood said it was hardly conducive to toprate television viewing. His tech-nique, of first things coming first, with the middle and the end in their exact consecutive places, was strictly a hangover from the Warner-Metro-Par-Goldwyn pix school of story construction designed for mass appeal. Even the insertion of a film clip of a train speeding across the midwest plains some-how seemed ludicrous and oldhat. Through the entire first half, one kept wondering when Sherwood

kept wondering when Sherwood was going to get down to brass tacks and say something, but by the time he did, the play was im-mersed in cliches and bromides. "Backbone," too, suffered a his-trionic embarrassment in the slotting of Yvonne DeCarlo as "V. J.." the topkick of the huck-stering hoopla fraternity, for hers was a performance in which pos-turing proved a poor substitute for conviction and dramatic tal-ents. Too, casting a femme in the ents. Too. casting a femme in the role, while perhaps serving Sher-wood's "compromises" toward ex-pediting a love interest and the final fadeout clinch, only served to put the play's accent in the wrong place. Sherwood would have had place. Sherwood would have had a far better play by sticking to the theme at hand of resolving the dilemma of Gotham encroach-ments on mid-America. The others in the cast did their best to currents in indequasies

The others in the cast did their best to overcome the inadequacies of Sherwood's TV script, notably Wendell Corey, the principled un-derling to V. J. who has no relish for his assignment to find the typi-cal midwest family; Mitchell as Tupple, along with the others. Mare Daniels' direction also direction also

Marc Daniels' direction also seemed commonplace. It's no secret to Sherwood or any one else at this late date that TV. notably in the realm of drama. is an enlightened medium. It has a structure and a style of its own that needn't pay obeisance to films or the stage. One has only to re-call, as but one illustration. the long list of superior Philco-Good-year Playhouse attractions. In contrast, Sherwood's "Backbone" had an oldhat aura about it, as pedestrian in dialog as in style. *Rose.* 

**Tele Follow-Up** 

James Thurber in print and

Thurber translated into the tele-

vision medium appear to be two

different things, at least judging

from the two adaptations of the

humorist's work that have been

presented on tele this season. First,

'This Little Kittie Stayed Cool,"

got only a mild reception when delivered on "Omnibus" earlier this season. The second, a larger production of a different type, got its exposure last week (29) on ABC-TV's "Motorola TV Hour." Production was a musical adap

tales are charm and warmth, but unfortunately the Motorola presen-tation lacked both. This in spite of a pleasant score by Mark Bucci and an excellent singing cast and an excellent singing cast headed by Roberta Peters and John Raitt. Teleplay

has an interesting Story was written by genealogy. Thurber, and then adapted to play form by Fred Sadoff (who also did the teladaptation) for Sadoff's ac-tors' workshop group, which first presented it. Bucci wrote the music and with Thurber's help also wrote lyrics. Last year, the Barter Theatre in Virginia presented an-other adaptation of the story. Motorola exec producer Herb Brodkin chose the Sadoff version for the tele show, however.

Lack of charm and warmth in Lack of charm and warmth in the televersion can be traced to two factors. One lies in the adap-tation itself. With Thurber's pro-pensity for coining strange words for his fantasy, and with the many non-sequiturs that fairy tales of this type call for, the teleplay should have had a far more leisure-by page than was given it in the ly pace than was given it in the hourlong presentation. The rather harried pace the video version took on detracted from its simplicity, hence much of its charm Sace hence much of its charm. Sec-ondly, while casting on the sur-face seemed good, Sir Cedric Hard-wicke, as the Golux (serving both wicke. as the Golux (serving both as a character and the narrator) gave a performance somewhat on the stumbling side while Basil Rathbone, as the vil-lain of the piece, never was able to make his character jell. Add to this the fact that the pace of the piece left the viewers trying to figure out some plot contriv-ances and forced acute attention in order to follow the story, and there's some inkling as to why it didn't quite come off. didn't quite come off.

Miss Peters had a minimum of lines to speak, but her voice was in beautiful form and she appeared In beautiful form and she appeared poised and certain of herself in her first video acting role. Raitt im-pressed on both the acting and singing end. Russell Nype was re-stricted to thesping, and being hid-den behind a mask until the snap-per, didn't make much of a dent. Alice Pearce had a good bit as an enchanted lady whose tears turned to jewels. Possibly the best part of the pro-

duction lay in Fred Stover's sets and Jimmy Naughton's are dicharm to the story. Al Lehman's costumes were also a distinct plus.

## 'LINE,' 'NAME'S SAME' TV-AM TOPS IN BRIT.

London.

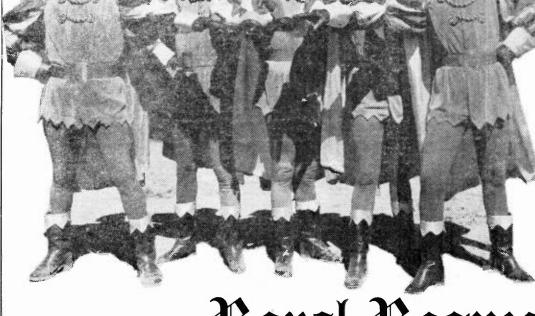
Great Britain's only annual citations in broadcasting spheresthe radio and television awards fostered by the Daily Mail—went to "What's My Line" in TV and "The Name's the Same" in AM. Both are American

Both are American shows (with Name's Same" a TV'er in the U. S.), botih are Goodson & Todson productions, and both are on CBS in America.

#### Admiral's \$1,175 Tint Set

Admiral Corp.'s first color set will have a 15-inch tube and a Production was a musical adap-tation of Thurber's fairy tale, "The Thirteen Clocks," and felicitous as Thurber's story (for children or adults or both) might have been in print, on television it seemed rather flat. Two erquisites of fairy \$1,175 pricetag, against a 21-inch monochrome table model at a record low of \$179.95, both being in company's 1954 line announced last week.

Company '54 target is 30,000 tin-



## Cecil Stewart's Royal Rogues AMERICA'S GREATEST SINGING GROUP

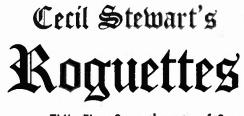
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES: Cecil Stewart's Royal Rogues, a singing quintet, each of whom also has featured solo parts, blend their magnificent voices in a medley of stirring songs. They bring the show's first stanza to a sock climax.

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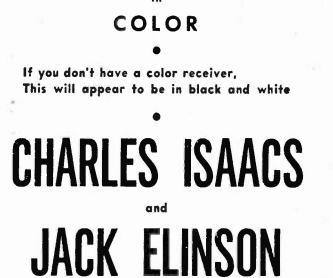
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## 1954

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## **EDGAR BERGEN - CHARLIE McCARTHY SHOW**

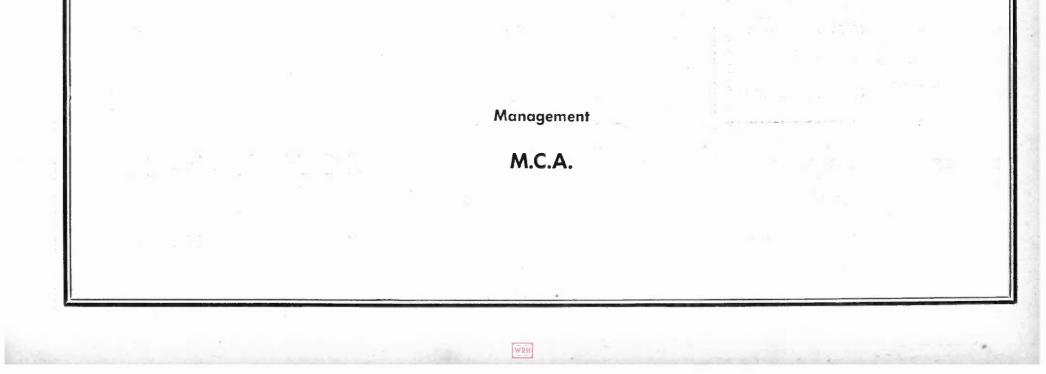
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1954-55 RADIO AND TV

Sponsored by

## **KRAFT FOODS COMPANY**



## **Closed-Circuit TV** Continued from page 105;

good results, the big business stars who had previously been widely known to trade audiences by name, could now be seen and heard by many. The impact of the corpora-tion executive "traveling" by electrons to meet with the trade is both new and important to American

tion executives have turned TV chandising in a fascinating new thespian for Tele-Sessions with tional Dairy Products Corp. will present shortly an unprecedented with show girls, dancers, singers, circus acts and stars—on closed-circuit TV, specially created for the electronic edification of the Sealtest trade audience in 16 cities simultaneously. The entertainment business life. Tele-Sessions, too, can integrate show business and business mer-will backstage the show's primary purpose—to present the entire year's Sealtest promotion campaign around the country.

in the most effective manner to the trade Not only is closed-circuit TV becoming a business mainstay, but its educational and professional uses are growing too. During the past year the American Cancer Society inaugurated a regular medical program in color TV to a net-work of seven cities for doctors'

professional instruction. Little publicized to date, this is an experi-ment with great jotential impor-tance in serving the health needs of the nation. Smith, Kline & French Laboratories, too, has continued its closed-circuit pioneering for instruction of the medical pro-



Palmer's WABC-TV programs; on WNBT's Art Treasures of the Louvre, Mutual's Wonderful City, and both Henry Cassidy's NBC-TV and John McVane's ABC-TV News Shows, as well as on station WICC, Bridgeport (Conn.), to discuss the Moroccan question.

Both in planning the distribution of our programs for the American public and in my broadcasts to France. I never forget that I am first and foremost a news correspondent and have been for the past 17 years.

#### On the Commie Hot Seat

In all my reports to France, my primary aim is to give the French people a true, undistorted picture of the United States, by telling them the desires and ambitions of Americans and what they are fighting for. Very often my comments, which are carried by a major network throughout France, greatly irritate the Communists and they retaliate in blistering editorials. These are generally in answer to my bi-weekly news commentaries sent to Paris via shortwave and relayed on our AM network through the facilities of the Voice of America facilities extended gratuitously and graciously to all accredited foreign correspondents.

Furthermore, I interview Frenchmen visiting the United States, recording their impressions and reactions to the American way of life, and I also report to my compatriots on the tremendous success of our top artists on the American stage, radio, TV and in night-clubs—such as Lilo, Patachou and Michele Morgan.

In January, I broadcast President Elsenhower's Inauguration, from Washington direct to Paris; in July, I covered the meeting of the Big Three in the Capital; and in October, I reported the Sesquicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase, from New Orleans.

We are working, at the present time, on the production of an imin Europe as they are in the U.S., will send the French radio audience their New Year's greetings, and will also play very short scenes, in French, from our great classics by Moliere, Racine and Mariyaux. At the end of the program, M. Pierre Descaves, the Administrator of the Comedie Francaise, as well as members of its celebrated Com-pany, will congratulate these American artists and thank them for their gesture of good will and friendship toward France.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that these important exchanges between France and the United States would not be pos-sible without the wonderful cooperation we have constantly received from the American radio networks and independent stations, as well as the determined spirit of the American people working towards a better world through mutual understanding. We are especially grate-ful to Ted Cott, chairman of the Consultant Committee of the French Broadcasting System, whose advice has helped us develop high-caliber programs sure to appeal to the American public; and to Seymour Siegel, who devotes so much energy toward bringing the best foreign culture to the youth of America. Our goal is peace and under-standing the world-over through radio: let's keep up the good work!

## Where's The Gimmick?

Continued from page 103

works have been losing sight of No gimmicks. the forest because of the trees.

Fellows, why all this insistence upon a gimmick? Granting that a good gimmick might help provide a good show, is a gimmick always necessary?

Looking at the Lombardo band very objectively—and if I couldn't be objective about my own band we wouldn't be in business today it has sustained a great deal of popularity with the public over the years. The public pays good money to dance to it in ballrooms and in supper rooms, to see it concertize, and for its records. A long time ago a few brothers said to one an-other, "We only want one thing: to be the best dance band in the world. We intend to do that by playing good dance music, and not be trying to be comedians on the side, or by doing anything else except playing dance music."

I assume that all of us have had the experience of sitting in a sup-per-and-dance room while a good band was playing dance music. During those minutes when we didn't dance, what did we do? Chances are that nine minutes out of every 10 we were watching the faces and antics of the people who were dancing. There's a lot of pleasure to be had in watching other people having fun. And that's what the cameras on our the dancing the memorie there show do during the moments they are not focusing on the bandstand or on my informal table-hopping (yes. we do that "naturally" on non--TV evenings, as well). Now, please do not get the idea that I am against any and all gim-mick shows. Contailly, there are

mick shows. Certainly there are shows whose gimmicks are original and entertaining. But, is a gim-mick always necessary?



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Don Davis, President John T. Schilling, General Manager

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## LOOKING BACK ..... TO

#### By PAUL LEVITAN (Producer, Special Events, CBS-TV)

getting smaller. And helping to augural Ball. To the tune of tens shrink it are television's special of millions, they started a gloomy events broadcasts.

Less than a decade ago basketball games from Madison Square Garden were among the industry's first TV remotes. This wasn't much of a shrinking job-just a couple of miles across Manhattan —but at the time it was big and complex and confusing.

Pioneer technicians struggled under such weighty problems as "Where and how do you light for a basketball game?" "Where and how do you place your camera (cameras)?" "How much mobility will they need and how do they get it?" Even such a basic item as focusing the camera was far from settled. Some claimed the cameraman should do it. Others were sure it would be best to have it done from the control booth.

The few hundred humans who had access to a receiver-mostly in labs and workshops-learned about these broadcasts by boxed notices in the papers saying "TV TONIGHT! 8 P. M. (Approximate-ly)." Sometimes the show would get on the air at 8:07:20 and sometimes at 8:22:30.

Then, as with everything else, only more so, growth began in earnest. Television started to flex its electronic muscles. Cables and microwave relays spread to all microwave relays spread to all parts of the country. And, lum-bering along after them, came TV's remote pickup cameras. By the time 1948 rolled around, we were able to tackle a Presidential Con-vention. All the way from Philadelphia.

The shrinking had become noticeable. The old New England town meeting had spread to the point where viewers in Baltimore, Washington, New York and Boston could watch their democracy at work in Philadelphia.

#### **Philly's Initial Zing**

It was immediately after the hilly Conventions that TV Philly Conventions "caught fire." Detroit and Pitts-burgh and Atlanta and St. Louis and Los Angeles all joined hands and suddenly television was trans-continental. In each city "joining up" was a big event. Cumulatively, it was a running big event for the nation. The time soon came when the average television screen—10 inches, remember?—still proved large enough to contain both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at the same time.

So far and so fast had the shrinking proceeded.

The year 1953 was even more spectacular — from the special events point of view-than was 1952, despite the absence of Presidential conventions and national During the past year, election. television, like any healthy 10-yearold, bounced all over this country, putting meat on the programming skeleton.

Parents in their living rooms watched 50,000 Boy Scouts from every state making fires and cooking hot dogs at the Third Annual Boy Scout Jamboree on a California ranch. For the first time a nation's viewers joined the revelry at New Orlean's century-old Mardi Gras Parade. The ever-growing audience saw the Inauguration of the President they had watched campaign and then elected. Tele-

The World's a small apple-and vision even took them to his In-March day by watching their gov-ernment set off an awesome atomic blast on Nevada's Yucca Flat. good part of the population of the country went on a "walking camtour of the home of the era'' United Nations in New York City. On Christmas Eve the nation enjoyed the outdoor singing of the Men and Boys Choir of the Washington National Cathedral and the Boys Town at Omaha. When the first shipload of liberated prisoners of war returned from Korea, TV's remote cameras enabled millions of their well-wishing compatriots to look in at dockside in San Francisco.

#### Not An Actor In the Lot

To date, the shrinking has en-compassed most of this continent with the network feeding UN broadcasts to stations in Canada. Of course, on none of these pro-

grams do we have the benefit of trained actors. Still, we have managed to muddle through with the help of such professionally un-known TV performers as D. D. Eisenhower, H. S. Truman, S. Claus, R. Taft, A. Stevenson, J. McCarthy and A. Ton. Bomb. Incidentally, special events programs have even managed to rack up the highest audience ratings in the industry.

Best of all, the shrinking hasn't stopped. The rest of the globe is far from Sanforized. Soon to come are trans-oceanic, Latin American, and finally, round-the-world "live" broadcasts. Not only will we watch our own elected leg-islators legislate, but, if we wish, we'll look in on Great Britain's Barliment and Encede Chember Parliament and France's Chamber of Deputies. As a nation we'll fol-low our Olympic heroes to their trials in any city in the world. If the future must hold more Pan-munjoms, perhaps events will proceed more swiftly and surely with half the world looking on.

We've only begun. By the time we're through, television will wrap up this whole, big, revolving apple and set it down in your living room as easily as it now handles a station break.

As for my stake in this future, I have two primary ambitions, one of which I'll probably realize. The other is too fantastic. My ambi-tions? One, I want to produce the first remote broadcast from the moon. Two, I want, someday, to produce just one show that has a real honest-to-goodness rehearsal. But there I go dreaming. It's just not economical to rehearse an atom bomb or the election of a President.

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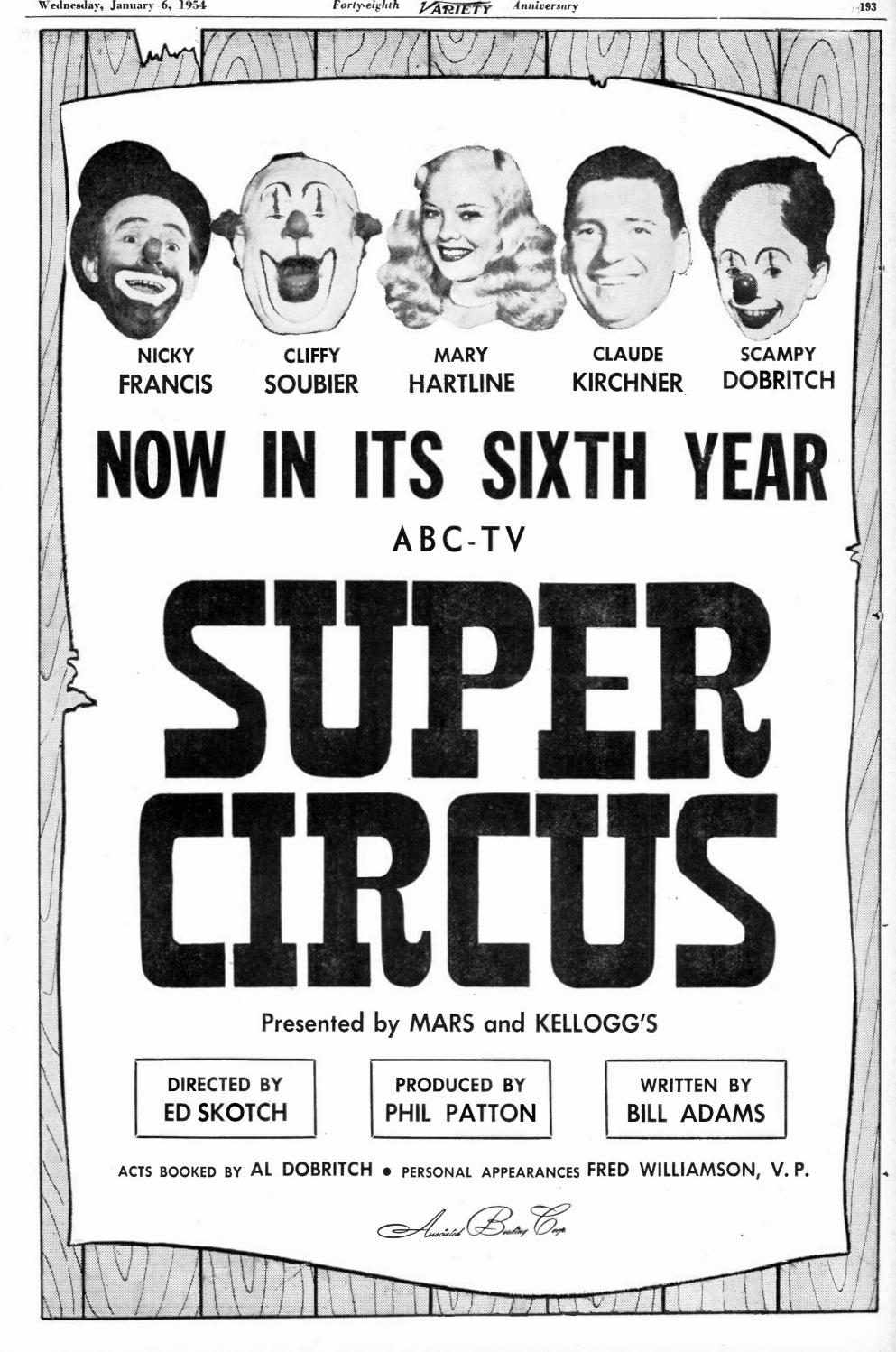
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## THE RITZ BROTHERS

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## TV in Germany Torn Between Fear Of State Control, Dislike for Comm'ls

possible state control, by almost as help. This is the major problem.

strong a dislike for heavy commercial broadcasting and in many parts by a current lack of funds, German broadcasters look forward fcar the restrictions of state cenwith paradoxical optimism to the future of TV in their country.

Among most of Germany's four regional networks the radio operations, supported by a levy of two marks (50c roughly) a month on each set, are expected to keep the pembryonic TV operations on their feet for at least the next couple of years. West Germany now has 20,000 TV receivers, which pay the networks five marks each monthly (100,000 Deutsche Marks or about \$20.000 American money), enough, perhaps, to allow for a half-hour TV show.

Radio has 12,000,000 sets there, issuing a revenue of nearly 25,-000.000 Deutsche marks a month. From this TV gets its funds, but for it to expand it needs more

Plagued by an inordinate fear of | money then radio can muster to

State support has been offered, but almost categorically refused by German broadcasters, who by long conditioning have grown to sorship. Instead, small portions of the TV programming schedule will webs to garner additional funds. Even this is looked upon with disdain, according to two German broadcasters. Ulrich Lauterbach and Friedrick Sauer, who last week neared the end of six-week junkets through the States arranged by the U.S. Department of State's Inter-Educational Exchange national Service.

Lauterbach is production chief for Radio Frankfort and Sauer, film and outside broadcast head for Radio Munich-two of the West Germany's five regional networks. each an independent operation and each presently with the makings of a small TV outlet. The great white hope for TV, according to Lauterbach, is programming sufficiently good to induce many of Germany's

ceivers, and thus add to  $TV_{\perp}$  to what degree and when) I don't revenue and the industry's chance know," opined Sauer. for independence

To conserve wealth and to bring best programming, the five independent regionals have banded together to produce in the future the main part of the TV sked (via West Germany's only channel). Cooperative programming won't begin until next spring however, because until then construction of microwave relay towers on which a national hookup is contingent won't be ready. Right now, each region has to struggle along as best it can. be sponsored on most regional Radio Frankfort, for example, is not wealthy enough to afford the luxury of independent TV programming. Munich, on the other hand, covering all of rich Bavaria, plans to do a half hour (even after national ties) regularly for its own market.

> To both Lauterbach and Sauer the survival of TV is as much a moral issue as one financial. They feel that TV can survive without commercials although the poorer webs intend to utilize it during restricted programming hours. Lauterbach commented, "A station must work in the public interest."

"We don't like doing commercials in Germany-radio and TV people both, and the people generally, but we must do it for 40,000,000 people to invest in re- awhile, but how we do it (meaning

Radio Munich has radio com-

mercials now, but in limited time segments and this coin goes into a cultural fund. Frankfort, clean until now in that respect, has been forced to project plans for similar commercial time, but there, since it is one of the poorer operations, coin must go into TV operation.

The regional networks, according to the German visitors here, break down this way: Radio Munich, with about 2,500,000 million listeners in Bavaria; Radio Frankfort, with 1,-000,000 in the Hessen area; Radio Stuttgart (Wirtenberg and parts of and Baden). Radio Baden-Baden (French occupation zone), each with about 1,000,000; and then there is the largest web, NWDR (English zone for the most part. covering Cologne, Hamburg and Berlin) with the remainder of the 12,000,000 sets in its area. Each is a public corporation.

D.C., both Lauterbach and Sauer

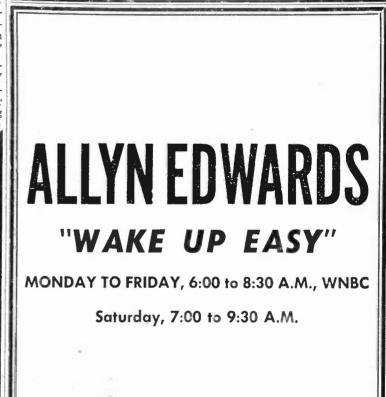
went their own way across the nation. Both were immensely impressed by American efforts at educational TV, and gently scoffed at efforts of commercial broadcasters to undermine independent educational stations.

"I appreciate the effort (U.S.) is making with educational TV. Here it is really good. Here they are really fighting for educational TV," Lauterbach said, and as an example he pointed out the educational venture in Ames, Ia.

## **CBS-TV Pacts Campo** For Seven-Year Deal

Latino bandleader Pupi Campo, who's featured on Jack Paar's morning show Fridays on CBS-TV has been signed by the network to a seven-year contract. No immediate plans for a new show; he'll continue to appear on the Paar segment.

Bandleader is currently installed After a week in Washington, in the Chateau Madrid, N. Y. nitery.





For more than twenty years some of the foremost national and local advertisers have renewed their contracts with WEVD to reach the Jewish population of the New York Metropolitan area.

Here they find an amazing market of vast buying power, represented by more than 600,000 families with a population exceeding 3,000,000.

To this adult listening audience WEVD's selected cultural, educational and entertainment features in Jewish and in English are an eager "must" on the dial.

Through the years advertisers have proved the loyalty of WEVD's unique audience . . . it stays tuned to WEVD . . . it responds quickly to quality . . . it has the means to buy.

That is the ONLY reason why sponsors renew their WEVD contracts year after year.

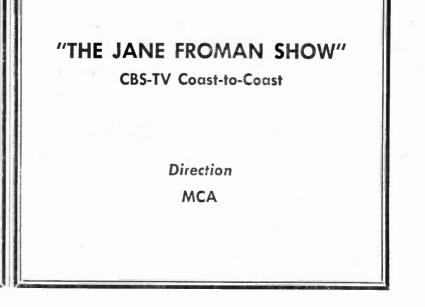
Advertisers who wish to cover the Metropolitan New York area need the voice of WEVD.

Send for Your Copy of the Distinguished Roster of WHO'S WHO AMONG WEVD'S SPONSORS

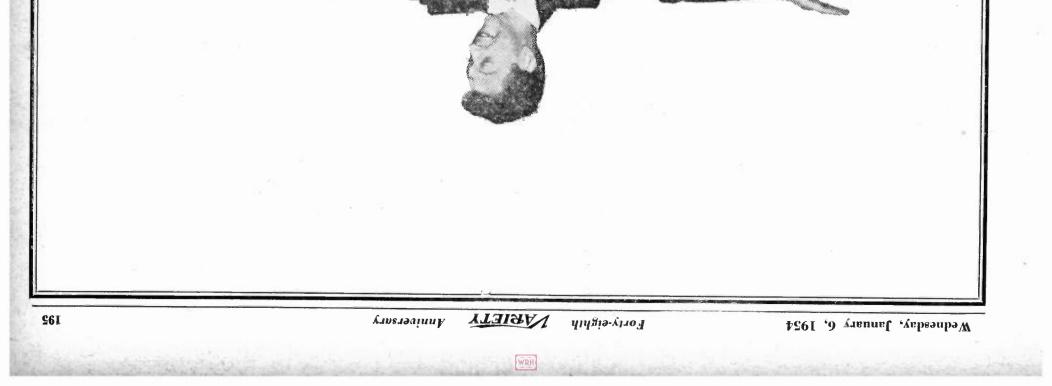
All Programs Broadcast on AM and FM Simultaneously

HENRY GREENFIELD, Managing Director

WEVD, 117-119 West 46th Street, New York 19, N.Y.



DONALD O'CONNOR



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Congratulations VARIETY

## PHIL LESLIE

## Still Writing "FIBBER McGEE and MOLLY"

NBC

## EDWARD R. MURROW, OR THE 'SEE' AROUND US By LEONARD TRAUBE

another way of saying "This . Is Civil Liberties Union in trying to hire a hall in Indianapolis against Ed Murrow." At a network with Ed Murrow." At a network with a treeful of topflight reporters and analysts, plus pundits on thisa & an after-the-fact thunderbolt, but a thata specialty (and guys behind sensation just the same. the scenery with that who-me tag of anonymity), the No. 1 cape fits

The "trouble" with Ed Murrow is that in his adult life he's hardly known what it is to produce a turkey.

tor of public affairs (with veepee stripes that he still holds) was not evident to anyone but him. After this quickie he returned to his onthe-air character and made a statement. "I'm not an executive. Bud- that name. gets, in-baskets and out-baskets aren't for me. After a year and a half I returned to broadcasting where I belong."

After his sixmonth of "Hear It Now" irresistible urge to give the show eyes reached fruition in November of that year with the preem of "See 't Now," which he produces and edits with another lofty fellow and shrewd administrator, the towering Fred W. Friendly.

A click from the go, it's been getting better, and on a couple of oc-casions "See It" has shown itself to be the most powerful "eyes and ears" in all of television.

The Murrow & Friendly "story" of Air Force Reserve Lieut. Milo J. Radulovich is easily the most important single contribution made to Even if the stunning television. "expose" had not had the result of returning the officer to his Reserve berth by direction of Air Secretary Harold Talbott—this against the erroneous interpretation of the case by Defense Secretary Charles Wilson-the Radulovich half hour would still stand as historic. Next in line for the "hot potato" medal was an up-and-sock-'em report on

The gem of .Columbia's ocean is film of the battle of the American

Murrow has four heads. In addi-tion to "See It." he presides over the CBS-TV "Person to Person," with graceful humility around the which in its maiden season as an "at home" imager has become a top stanza and one of the few interview sessions which makes any sense in teevee. His radio standby on the net is of course "Edward R. Murrow With the News," long-That he was a flop in 1946-47 time crossboarder which to his viewers is a natural extension of when he served as the web's direc. his wartime "This Is London" aircasts minus the blitz.

Another extension but in reverse his 1953 bestseller symposium of

Part of what Murrow himself "believes" as a broadcaster is embodied in a statement he made in 1947 when he teed off his new radio series: "We shall do our best to identify sources and to resist the on radio to June of 1951, the temptation to use this microphone as a privileged platform from which to advocate action." But as Murrow doesn't need to advocate action. What came out in the Radulovich program was advocacy by reason of superior reporting; the "action" was considered an inevitable result, as is often the case where the "cause" reporter is equal to the subject.

> Last week (Dec. 29) Murrow did his "See It" finale of the calendar year (with "Person to Person" launching him into 1954 on New Night). Having done the Year's strictly colossal hour-long "This Is Korea . . . Christmas '52'' last year. this was the sequel, though down to the show's regular half hour and sans the wartime aura. But what Murrow & Correspondents can do in 30 remote minutes is the envy of the sojournalism trade.

The "little" things loom big. For instance, when a Marine told him quickly warmed up the lad with, plug,

"that's my part of the country." That was all. Here was a tasty temptation for Murrow to hog the picture by overpersonalization. Oregon is Murwhich he threw out the phrase. Though a North Carolinian (Greensboro), at age four he moved with his family to Blan-chard, Wash. Murrow could have told the GI about his days at Blanchard elementary school, Edi-son (Wash.) High School, and Washington State College.

There were other warm vignets in cold Korea at Christmas Eve that gradually turned to morning in the fluidly-bridged editing process. Here was Murrow back-and forthcoming with soldiers near "a hole in the ground surrounded by sandbags." With a Negro officer, a company commander, articulately expressing his views on the reason for the fighting as the cameras gave play to his men as he spoke with a platoon sergeant who said "The fighting was worth it despite the hardships" . . . with an-other loocy of the 1st Marines (5th Battalion) who said, "The will to with anbe a Marine makes a good Marine nine times out of 10"... with a group receiving their mail by helicopter and Murrow being "sirred" silly as he carried on the telepix report . . . with a section of the Field Artillery as they sang "Dreaming of a White Xmas" and "Silent Night" (offkey and all) and with a section of the GIs in another sector being picked up in the latter song . with another Marine, on security detail a few yards from the enemy, who said "Every man should spend some time in the Armed Forces" with a minesweeper-Ed Scott calling the play and interviewing members of the crew as the craft sped across the waters . . . with the 35th Infantry as they entertained Korea orphans at a Xmas dinner and one little girl sang "Silent Night" in her native "Silent Night" in her native tongue . . . and finally at Inchon, scene of Gen. MacArthur's landing in the first few months of the conflict, where replacements de-barked to square off the vets' "Rotation Blues" and where one of the reliefs took the mike to say "hello" to his wife who is pregnant—and he gave anticipated date, Feb. 10. Another milestone in "The 'See' Around Us" with a bow to spon-coving Aleose for foregoing the he lives in Portland, Ore., Murrow soring Alcoa for foregoing the

## **Open Season For Pressure Groups in TV Kid Shows**

### By ALLEN DUCOVNY

(Exec. Producer, Rockhill Productions)

Teacher Assns, the National Assn. for Better Radio & Television programs and others, declare an an-nual "open season" for sniping at network and independent package producers. Their well meant efforts to raise the standards are directed at the entire field. Their heaviest artillery and most pointed barbs, however, are usually reserved for and aimed at the producers of what they choose to call generically "children's programs.

As a writer, director, producer of many so-called "children's proover a period of many grams" years, it is my considered opinion that in most instances the criticisms offered by these groups are valid. Anyone in his right mind must freely admit that bestial crime and horror are not conducive to the best psychological development of the child mind; that ingenious methods for killing, maiming, stealing and defrauding, graphically demonstrated, invite experimental imitation which has been found to be the source of much juvenile delinquency; that other "imitative devices" such as bad grammar and vile oaths defeat parents' and teachers' efforts to develop a sense of good taste in the minds of their youthful charges.

This "alarming failure," to quote from the NAFBRA report. , to provide television programs which meet fundamental standards of ac-ceptability for child audiences" is due, I regretfully feel, to an industry-wide attitude shared by producers, broadcasters, advertis-ing agencies and trade publications which fosters a popular misconception, to wit: that "kid shows" are necessary evils; that they are and of necessity must be, per se, Class C productions; that juvenile audiences are not discriminnating and will, therefore, accept any old hogwash dished up for them so long as it includes a good guy, a bad guy and a lot of noise.

In this, the "pressure groups, too, are not entirely blameless. For in lumping together, as do the radio-TV fan publications, all pro-grams designed for audiences ranging in age from five to 15, they tend to destroy the incentive on the part of many producers and sponsors of programs wider in scope, more elaborate in produc-tion details than, let us say, "Ding, Dong School," to strive for and achieve higher standards of parentteacher acceptability. And why must this be? Why shouldn't "children's programs" be broken down into divisions as are adult programs? To lump together, in the same category, programs like "Ding, Dong School," "Howdy Doolike dy," "Mr. Wizard" and "Tom Cor-bett, Space Cadet" makes no better sense to me than to place Dionne Lucas' cooking program in the same division as "What's My Line," "Forum of the Air" and "Studio One." Pressure groups are responsible for another area of misunderstanding between themselves and most producers of juvenile programs who have been led to believe through arbitrary statements and autocratic attitude that, in effect, children are to be given not what they want, but rather what educators and parents feel they should have. Which is, what is good for

This is the time of year when them. It is not surprising, therepressure groups, such as Parent-"We'll give the little so-and-sos what they want so long as they want it enough to buy the sponsor's product, and to hell with the DTA!" Fortunately this efficiency PTA." Fortunately, this attitude is not shared by all of us, since some of us have learned from personal contact with educators and PT groups that there is no objec-tion whatsoever to the kind of excitement demanded and enjoyed by juvenile audiences so long as the production follows the simple dictates of good taste and excludes harmful ingredients such as imitative devices and unnecessary hor-ror, violence and bestiality.

Let me cite, as an example, the 'Tom Corbett, Space Cadet'' series.

It may come as something of a surprise to many people, particu-larly lay viewers, to learn that as much time, thought and painstaking effort goes into each half hour "Space Cadet" program as is ex-pended on any "Class A" nighttime show. Far more, in fact, than in some of them. Perhaps because, in case you don't already know it, "Space Cadet" is a science-fiction series projected far into the future at a time when interplanetary intercourse will be an accepted fait accompli and the word "universal" will have far more depth of meaning than it has today. For this reason, and because it is our policy to make the show as scientifically accurate in every detail as it is possible, a good deal of research is essential before a story idea can become an acceptable script.

There are very good reasons, even above and beyond personal integrity, for making such a fetish of authenticity in the production of "Space Cadet." First, we have learned that most juveniles are fascinated with all things scientific. Secondly, our succeas has proven that most youngsters are completely captivated with the concept of flight through space and the prob-able possibility of visits to other planets in their own lifetime.

To accomplish this end, we have retained the services of Willy Ley as technical adviser. Mr. Ley, one of the foremost living rocket experts and an internationally recognized authority on the subject of space travel, attends every script conference, guides the writer in the development of his factual details and painstakingly edits the script for technical errors. This service is especially useful to us, since our concept and format eschews the usual prototype menace or "heavy," employing instead conflict that grows out of the space cadets' associations at "Space cadets' associations at "Space Academy" and/or that provided by natural phenomena in space.

Luncheons 12 to 3:30

## Without Pampering Waist HOUSE OF

52nd STREET & SEVENTH AVE.

> JUST OFF TIMES SQUARE

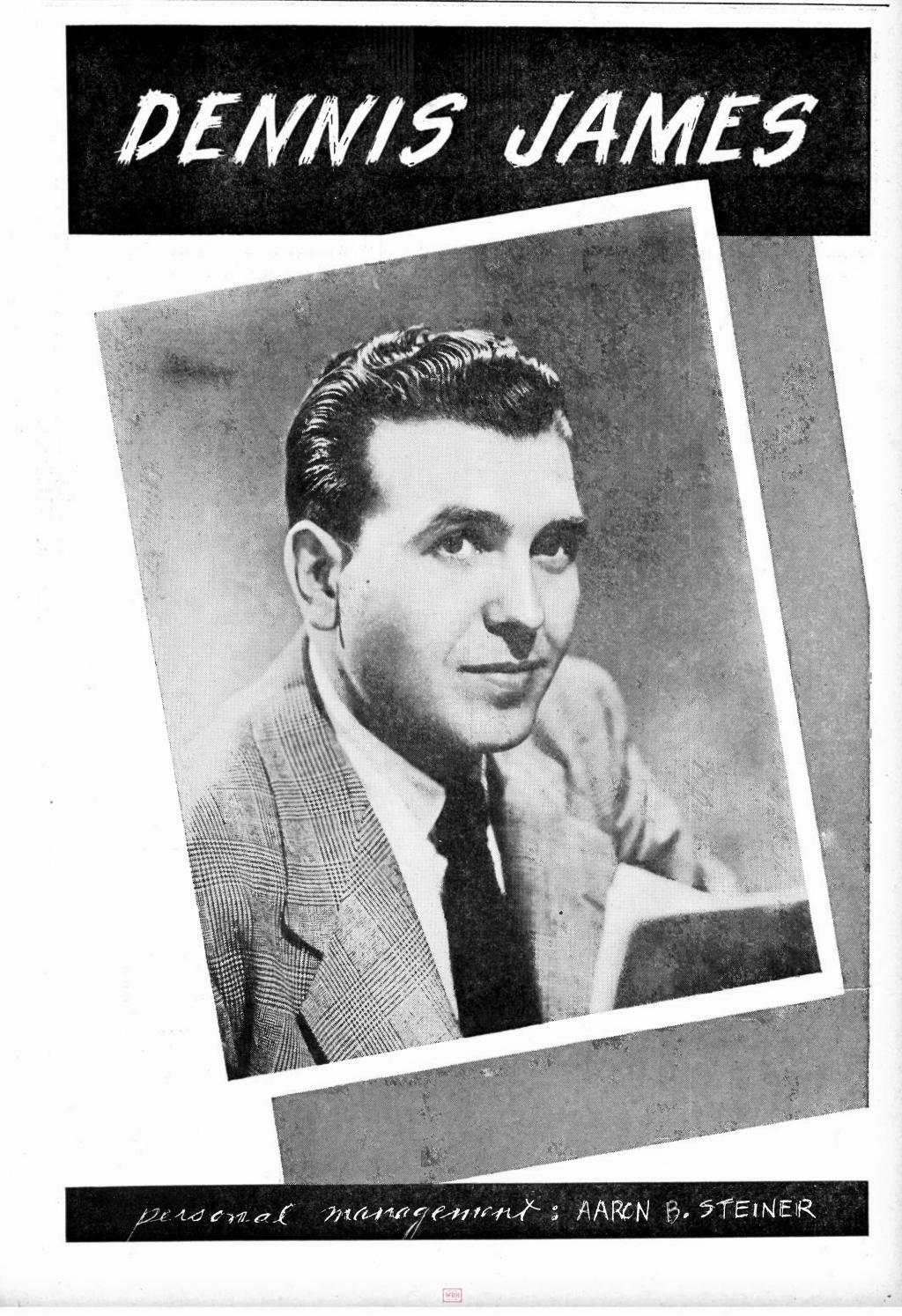
After-Theatre Specialties

If you can't forsake table Dine with us, look like Gable If you not type for gym See us and be slim Feast to your heart's content On delicacies from Orient

CHAN FOOD

Chan food give palate pleasure Never increase waist measure.





## **Outside** of **New York** Is Nowhere

198

By MORT NUSBAUM (WHAM-TV, Rochester)

Rochester, N. Y.

I ran into my old friend Buster Bovitz in New York last week. (I go to New York every month or so to get my shoes shined; it's a pretty sporty feeling to be able to tell your friends you went to New York to get your shoes shined.) The last time I had seen Buster was about 10 years ago when he had been a comedy writer for ra-dio. Except for a checkered vest and a gold elk's tooth, he looked about the same. I asked him what he was doing these days. He spat

on my shoes reflectively. "I'm still scribbling," Buster said, "only now it's for the television. No more one-liners like in radio. I write saturation comedy. I thought this over and said, "What?

"Saturation comedy," Buster explained, "it's like you get these gags and you run a story around them. The one I work on now is called "The Fimblick Family." We establish this guy. Elmo Fimblick; he works in a bank. He all the time does something wrong, like losing a sack of money or some-thing. Then he has a wife and two kids who always get in trouble. like with chickenpox. I spot the gags in the story. A couple laughs and a couple tears, that's saturation comedy. You see?"

"What you doing now, kid?" Buster wanted to know. I told him I was doing some

television work in Rochester. Buster shook his head sadly. "You ought to get back to the big town, kid," he said. "Once you get out of New York all the stuff on the TV is the same. It's like once I was in Philadelphia, all the shows I saw had these broads on them showing you how to cook eggplant. There's no class, like the things we do here." I said that sometimes we did

shows without eggplant.

#### 'Brains and Idears'

"The big thing," Buster told me, "is that once you get out of New York you got no brains. It's like here I'm an idear man. A producer

Moon, he's like a Mickey Rooney type, only fatter. He was a natural for saturation comedy. Only they needed an idear. So they come to me. Quick like that, I say let's put him in a bank. None of the other shows have put a man in a bank. And that's how the show started. Up in Rochester, who can you go to when you need an idear? You got no one up there who can say, quick like that, put him in a bank. Up there you haven't got the brains."

I ventured that sometimes we came up with an idea or two. "It's not the same," Buster said.

"You want to do a show the right way, you got to have writers and idear men. You got to have con-ferences. Like we sit around the table and one guy says, how about someone comes in the bank and slaps Elmo across the face with a wad of dollar bills? And another guy says, compliments of George Washington. You see what I mean? It's creative, one guy sparks an-other. It's like I saw in the paper. television is a creative industry. You gotta have brains and idears.

I said that it was possible to be creative outside of New York.

"That's a bunch of goulash," Bovitz said. "All the brains and idears are here. For instance, while we're talking, I bet there are 10 agencies working right now on new panel shows. And the give-aways. All over New York there are guys figuring new angles, like how you can give a contestant enough money so he can get to the hospital where his sister is dying. That's what I mean, creative. In Rochester who thinks about such things?"

No one, I admitted.

"In comedy alone, once you get out of New York you're nowhere. Like how many guys in Rochester are working on the new relaxed comedy? Here it's the biggest thing in the industry, it's the new trend. Does anyone in Rochester write relaxed comedy?"

I said no, but that relaxed comedy started in Chicago anyway. "It started there." Buster said,

but it wasn't anything until we did it in New York. Here we do relaxed comedy with a punch, keep it moving. We don't give it a chance to slow down. We all the time are creating."

I was too numb to answer. "Tell you what, kid," Buster said. "You want to be smart, you go back to Rochester and start thinking. Like get some new idears and then come to New York. Come up with something big in satura-

the time having trouble with the landlord." I said I would think about it. And I have been. I have my ticket to New York and my bag is packed. But so far my idears haven't jelled on the show. I've got this thing called "I Re-But so far my member Moishe," it's about a fam-ily with an accent who have landlord trouble. But somehow eggplant keeps sneaking into the script.

But I'm confident. Once I get to New York, I'll be real creative.

## **Fred Allen Near** That Deejay Alley

Fred Allen isn't becoming a fullblown disk jockey, as rumored some time back, but he's presiding over a show with song-plug values in a format switch of the NBC-TV "Judge for Yourself." Packagers Goodson & Todman were to "sneak preview" the new deal last night (Tues.) and along with that the professional judges are jettisoned but the joeblow panelists retained. Difference is that the latter, instead of matching their talent selection attributes with the pros, are now alone in picking out waxed tunes for hit list possibilities.

Comedy values are retained via Allen's interviewing the lay choosers of songs by secret vote. The final say-so will be by studio audience applause, however, their choice to be followed by revelation of the interviewees' picks. Execution of the tunes is by a

permanent company presently consisting of Kitty Kallen, Bob Car-roll, and the Skylarks. Three songs already recorded will be exposed weekly (among last night's num-bers, for instance, was Teresa Brewer's "Bell Bottom Blues"). The packagers have been considering the change for some time, there being increasingly difficulty on previous format in securing the type of talent willing to be exposed for "judgment." The pick-a-song motif is felt to be a stronger device.

### Paley, Stanton, Et Al., Set Up Foundation

Albany. CBS board chairman William S. Paley, prexy Frank Stanton and attorney Ralph Colin are listed as comes along, he's got a show he ton comedy and you're all set. directors of CBS Foundation, Inc., wants to do, he needs idears. For instance, like with 'The Fimblick' a family, they speak with some bership corporation. Aim is "to Family.' They had this guy Maxie kind of foreign accent, they're all alleviate want and human suffer-



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

By HAL DAVIS (V.P., Kenyon & Eckhardt)

So the sponsor wants you to do the commercials?

Gee, pop, that's tough.

And the trade papers are backing you up in your resolution to stand firmly on your constitutional rights as an artist.

Well, let's look at the facts of life.

The client isn't interested in you. Not really. He is using you as a salesman. To sell goods. Otherwise, he's not in business. The agencies aren't in business. You're not in business. What's the advantage of TV in selling goods? According to the

experts, it consists of the combination of sight and sound delivered into the home.

The combination works at its best in a convincing product display or testimonial by a convincing performer. This doesn't excuse shoddy commercials, unbelievable actions and worse words required of any performer. Commercial techniques have a long way to go for perfection.

But suppose you want to stay away from the dirty and sordid commercial end. Let somebody else handle the selling, let me do the entertainment. Buster, nine times out of 10, it won't work.

Our surveys show that people trust performers who perform believably. People don't go for commercials with sound over film. They like somebody to sell them. And why shouldn't you?

Are you any different than Arthur Godfrey or Ed Sullivan? Just poorer?

It hasn't hurt these performers to sell their products. People don't laugh at them in the streets. It's not beneath their dignity. Sometimes they say: "Well. I'll be on for so and so a while, and then go on for such and such. People won't believe me."

Maybe your client turnover won't be as great if you sell more goods. Did you ever think of why shows are dropped? Did you ever look at the shows which stay on for years and years and years? They may not be as artistic as desired, but they sell. And, more

often these days, they are also better produced, better directed and more satisfactory to their audiences.

Always conceding that the answer should be given in each case on the basis of product, star or performer believability and inherent correctness of commercial approach, there is no excuse for any performer not going along to sell his sponsor's product. If you can't feel that way, get the government to subsidize your

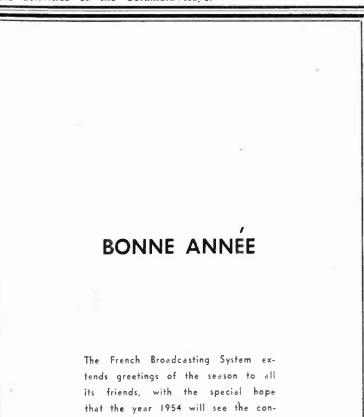
efforts. Our clients are having too much trouble convincing dealers and sales forces that people have to be sold. They're not anxious to add an anchor to the sales effort.

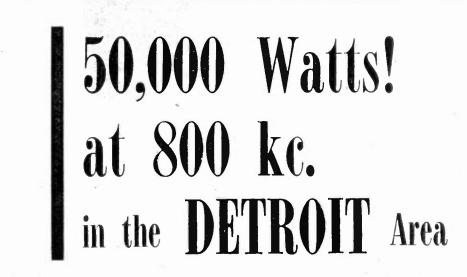
But save the agony for the Little Theatres. And it has to be a great performance plus selling—not one without the other. Anyway, that's one man's opinion.

sistance to such other corporations, thereof." community trusts, funds, founda-tions, activities, agencies or insti-

ing and to better improve mankind Broadcasting System, Inc., or any by voluntarily making contribu-tions and rendering financial as-

tutions, organized and operated of clusively for charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes, rescaled be beneficial to the busi-Rosenman, Goldmark, Colin & poration are Paley, Stanton, Colin, Joseph A. W. Iglehart and Dorsey





Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

• With a 15,000,000 population area, and coverage in 5 states, CKLW with 50,000 watt power, is selling more goods at less cost to more people. Schedule this greater-than-ever buy in 1954.

#### WATCH FOR CHANNEL NINE



#### MUTUAL BROADCASTING SYSTEM

Guardian Bldg. 

Detroit, 26

ADAM J. YOUNG, JR., INC. National Rep.

J. E. CAMPEAU President

tinuation of the long friendship between France and the United States, as we work together . . . through radio . . . for lasting peace.

PIERRE CRENESSE, Director.

Compliments of a friend

WALLY COX (a Gloria Safier client) and/or/as

## "MISTER PEEPERS"



THE SPONSOR: REYNOLDS METALS COMPANY THE NETWORK: NBC-TV THE AGENCY: RUSSEL M. SEEDS CO. 200

#### Forty-eighth VARIETY

Anniversary

## **Problem-Ridden Brit. Pix Industry Still Has Bullish Hope for Future**

### By HAROLD MYERS

London.

There has never been such anxiety. And for the British motion picture industry, which has regu-And for the British motion larly emerged from one crisis only to start another, this is really say-ing something. The facts this time are really telling, and there is no getting away from the problems that are piling up one on top of the other.

The other. To start with, there's the peren-nial question of admission tax, which nowadays drains the box-office to the tune of almost \$100,-000,000 a year. If a reasonable proportion of that money could be charmeled back into the industry, to be divided between exhibitors, producers and distributors, balance sheets would look healthier, production would keep in the blach, there would be no need to go cop in hand to the government for indirect subsidies, and the industry would be in a healthier position to face the prospective on-set of commercial television.

The motion picture theatre boxoffices have been a valuable and reasonably steady source of income to successive governments and naturally they are reluctant to cut their share. The money comes in steadi y via the weekly checks from exhibitors who, in addition to their other burdens, have to assume the role of unbaid tax collectors.

Like many other measures started as a temporary expedient. admission tax is here to stay. It was first introduced during World War I when the government was looking for additional taxation. Since then, by a series of spec-tacular increases, notably during World War II, the industry has been well-milked.

#### **Trade Hits Back**

Now with one voice they are hitting back, and there is increasing confidence that there will be some favorab'e concession in this year's budget. Last year's plea was turned down, but not without a promise that the trade's case would he given careful consideration in the coming budget. There was also an implied promise that, if there were no upward trend in boxoffice receipts, the Chancellor of the Ex-chequer would put the admission tax claim towards the head of the queue.

As everyone knows, there has unfortunately been no upward trend in receipts. On the con-trary, they've been dipping strad-ily during the past year or two, and even the Treasury is not get-ting all the coin it anticipated. From that point of view, the trade is on fairly safe ground in mcking its new overtures. The main question mark concerns the amount of relief that may be forthcoming. The industry has formulated a plan which would cost the government something like \$20,-000.000 annually and of this total h exhibitors will have a little c::tra for themselves, as would the producers and, by a readjustment of seat prices, there would be some

concession to be passed on to the public who, in the last analysis, are the actual contributors of the tax. It is no exaggeration to suggest

that the future prosperity of the British film industry depends in large measure on government acceptance of their claim. Without relief many small exhibitors will be forced out of business and even some of the major groups may be compelled to shutter some of their unprofitable theatres.

that there is no future, for the time being at any rate, in distributing their product on a 3-D basis, with a two-dimensional version for unequipped theatres. They feel this would be bad public relations and might mislead the picture going public. They reason that it would be bad business to preview a film in its 3-D version, publicize it the same way and then have to of-fer it as a flattie in the majority of situations.

Even more anxious than the exhibitors in regard to the future shape and size of motion pictures are the British filmmakers who, for the time being, are carrying on with the standard 2-D production. But if the pattern of the industry is undergoing a major change, they cannot sit indefinitely on the sidelines and will have to make a major policy decision in the near fu-ture. One enterprising indepen-dent spirit (Steven Pallos) embarked on Britain's first 3-D pro-duction and another independent (Renown) geared its future schedule for widescreen presentation with a 2-1 ratio. This is only scratching at the problem and a positive lead will have to come from the major producing enter-prises. But it cannot be a happy prospect for them.

After years of pruning and trimming, production budgets have been brought down to a reasonable level, with something like \$250,000-\$350,000 as the ceiling for top pictures. This type of budget, plus the coin that is channelled to pro-ducers from the Eady Fund, gives them a sporting chance to clear their costs in the domestic market, and what they get from overseas may represent almost the entire profit. So long as the conquest of the complete American market remains illusory and the majority of British pix are confined to the arthouse circuit, this is the only economic way of keeping the production industry on a stable financial basis.

#### **Record** Smasher

But what happens if, by force of circumstances, they are compelled to switch their entire schedule to CinemaScope productions? far, we have only seen "The Robe" in Britain and there are no two opinions about this film's potential at the boxoffice. The trade is unanimously agreed that it will be a record smasher wherever it is screened. But that picture, al-though pioneering the field, is reported to have cost between \$4,-000.000-\$5,000,000. Such an undertaking in the present financial climate in Britain would be unthinkable, and any producer who asked a bank to finance a project of such magnitude would be advised to see a psychiatrist. To spend that sort of money on a single British film would be a sure road to the bankruptey court.

The independent filmmakers in Britain are more than anxious about their future prospects if this bigscale type production becomes the accepted thing, but they are still somewhat in the dark whether the vast screen acreage of Cinema-Scope would be suitable for the domestic type of entertainment in which most British studios specialize. At the moment, they can do no more than wait and see and

entire country and as it is impossible to please all the people all the time, the nightly total of viewers has been kept down to reasonable proportions. Now all this looks like being changed. The govern-ment set its heart on a competitive system, and although they've been compelled to make conces-sions to public opinion, they are standing pat on their basic policy. Monkeyshines

Originally, they had intended introduction of a sponsored system on American lines, but J. Fred Muggs' appearance on the Coronation program made a monkey out of their plans. It was a heav-en-sent weapon in the hands of the opposition and they have exploited it for all they are worth. Now, as far as can be ascertained, the government has been modified to meet many of the objections, although there is still a vociferous political and industry opposition to its introduction.

### **Pix Still Sitting Pretty** As Top Mex Draw (With U.S. Aid), But TV Looms By D. L. GRAHAME Mexico City.

Pix continue sitting pretty as Mexico's top paid public diversion, but a fast defining uneasiness is discerned with the advent of 1954. The disturbing factor is not so much the situation within the trade—higher costs, sharper competition and, concerning Holly-wood, a drop in its dominance down here of more than 90% to around 60%—but a rising menace outside the biz. That menace is branded the problem child: TV.

Proximity and modernization make the pic trade in Mexico considerably reflect the business in the U.S. The native branch, now approaching 24 years of age (it's figured from the making of the first talker in 1930), strongly shows, in its endeavor to stress quality over quantity (yearly productions of 126 have proven costly lessons in the shape of too many duds), the influence of Hollywood, Italy and France.

#### 3-D Handicap

Production is definitely better in departments. Widescreen is all having greater acceptance than is third-dimension. The big block to 3-D is the official insistence that each customer be given, for free, a pair of brand new peepers, and refusal to permit a higher rate than the ceilinged 46c for the novelty pix, all of which whittled profits.

The long-agitated and finally government-attempted proposition of forcing 50% playing time for Mexican pix has apparently been killed, though the government's appeal from injunctions exhibitors obtained is pending in the national supreme court. Opinion is more general that exhibition can't be forced, that a pic can only rise, or fall, on its own merits.

Mexican competition to Hollywood, though higher, is neither very high nor so very strong. That competition holds at only around 20% of total playing time. The other 20% of opposition is mostly Italian, French, Spanish and British. Those Europeans are doing increasingly better on this market. **TV Rearing Head** 

Video, now in its third year, has just begun to worry filmsters. TV was popular from its start, with the opening here of station XHTV. channel 4, by the Romulo O'Farrill Sr. interests, publishers of the big local daily, Novedades. That favor expanded when cinema-radio tycoon Emilio Azcarraga estab-lished Televicentro, one of the world's top video theatres, for his XEWTV, channel 2. But there was still no major problem for picmen as the paid audience continued so small, limited to the very, very few who can afford still stiff prices for receivers, and to freeloaders, most of whom can't afford even the cheapest cinemas. Upsurging now is Azcarraga's move to expand TV range, limited to well within the bounds of the federal district, which includes this city. He's installing a 6.000-watt retransmitter 50 miles southeast of here, in a pass between the twin towering volcanoes. That's figured to give XEWTV a 500-mile range. He's to set up two other like relayers—one for the far west, the other to service the far east, Gulf and Pacific coasts.

## West Berlin Show Biz Perks

#### By HANS HOEHN=

Berlin.

West Berlin's show biz during the past year was still shaky, but opeful. Some of its branches still had to struggle along with finanhopeful. cial or other difficulties resulting from Berlin's position as an isolated city. Others regained considerable ground. One shouldn't forget, however, that Berlin's show biz, which had a complete collapse in 1945, received substantial outside assistance during the postwar years. Without it, it would not be back on the track to prewar prestige.

During the past year, American influence on local show biz has been very big. Probably more stateside performers than ever before found their way into Berlin, which has developed into an attractive spot for U. S. show people. Berliners have seen just every type of spot for U. S. show people. Berliners have seen just every type of U. S. performer, ranging from outstanding jazz orchs like Kenton, Krupa and Hampton, to beauty queens and ice artists. Even such big ensembles as the American National Theatre Ballet or the 123-member Army Band from Washington came over.

A big publicity lift was given by ex-Germans who returned to Ber-In, either for temporary film jobs or nostalgia—such as Rudolf Schuenzel, Oscar Karlweis, Willy Eichberger (Carl Esmond), Henry Koster, Paul Kohner, just to name a few. Others came in connection with festivals, film or vidpix making.

#### Film Metropolis

Berlin used to be Germany's film metropolis before the war. At that time, roughly 80% of all German pix were made here, with about 20% in Munich. But this trade was strongly handicapped since most of Berlin's studios (Babelsberg, Johannisthal, etc.) were in Russian-dominated territories after the war's end, which resulted in a reversed situation between Berlin and Munich. After some rather quiet years, to everyone's surprise local film production started on a brisk upbeat last spring. For the first time in many years, local studios were running at full capacity. Berlin filmites succeeded in convincing quite a number of these colleagues who had gone westwards for safety reasons that it was no risk to make pix here. Many for Barley reasons that it was not have been there is a solution of the second se over the dominating role.

#### Legit Situation

Although this city has still not regained its former position as Germany's theatrical metropolis, West Berlin's legit life has further improved during the past year. Two facts still handicap this trade in particular: Most of the Berlin theatres are in not too good a financial shape and many of their top performers have not returned from West German cities as yet.

#### Pop Music

Jazz has been the most popular contribution the Yanks brought to postwar Berlin. Almost all famous jazz troupes touring Europe have found their way to Berlin, and included last year were Gene Krupa, "Jazz at the Philharmonic," Stan Kenton and Lionel Hampton, as well as Hazel Scott and the Deep River Boys.

Sale of American phonograph records is on a steady upbeat, having surpassed the classical repertory by a wide margin. All this is actu-ally quite remarkable. Jazz was forbidden during the Hitler period. Berlin's jazz audience is probably the largest and most receptive one of all German cities.

#### **Classical Music**

One of the best things about West Berlin's show biz last year was its longhair stuff. The number of important classical music events, both foreign and domestic, increased steadily,

Concert biz registered big b.o., and was always SRO when the Berlin Philharmonic, considered by some as the world's best orch ensemble, under Wilhelm Furtwangler, were the performers.

Local opera performances again found international approval last year. At the last Cultural Festival, the most substantial program was offered on the opera side. In all, 23 different operas, including seven preems, were presented.

#### Niteries

· Before 1933, Berlin claimed the Continent's most luxurious night life. It lost much ground in the '30s, as the Nazis showed an open dislike for this sort of show biz. In 1945, Kurfuerstendamm and Friedrichstrasse, on which the bestknown nightclubs were located, looked more like battlefields.

Now, eight years later, visitors are again surprised at the large variety of nightly entertainment this city has to offer, covering every type from old German ballroom to the latest striptease acts. The at-tractions offered at these spots, however, are still not able to compete internationally.

The whole situation would look look different if Berlin's cabarets would have big headliners. But salaries for names apparently con-tinued their upward trend and local spots just can't afford to pay them. A couple of intime rooms seem to have the best chance to get along. Not to forget gambling casinos and—another dernier cri-cafes with "Spielautomaten" (slot machines). These spots attract all sorts of gentlemen who want to make a fast buck. Due to the general money shortage among Berliners. cafes, cabarets and other sorts of niteries keep complaining about their unsatisfactory biz (excluding perhaps "jive-joints" in which customers, of whom there are quite a few, mainly stick to beer). All in all, West Berlin's night life still can't compare to other Continental cities, such as Paris or Copenhagen.

#### **Major** Headache

It is this development that has provided one of the major exhibiting headaches of the past year. particularly affecting the small independent operator with limited capital reserves. Indeed, many of them have been forced to the conclusion that they will have to shut up shop if the conventional 2-D film goes out of fashion.

A few brave spirits saw the opportunity of combining good showmanship with the chance of making a fast buck, by cashing in on the 3-D craze which hit the indus-try earlier this year. But the idea confreres, but even so they've never caught on in a big way, and the few pioneers who made this capital investment now find they are denied third-dimensional prod- But they've been saved by the fact uct. The majors with sterfilms have come to the conclusion

ope for the best.

They are also troubled by the fact that their Eady money expectations for the next three years are less attractive than they have been hitherto. The compromise scheme which was agreed recently is set to yield under \$6.500,000 a year, as against the \$8,400,000 which they insisted was the minimum required for survival. The Eady income will be upped if there is tax relief, but for the time being they must reckon on the lower figure.

As if all this were not enough to contend with, the Brilish film industry is now threatened with the invasion of commercial televibeen far from happy at the obvi-ous encroachments TV has been making on boxoffice attendances. that there is still only a single television channel operating for the

All that, plus improved fare, hits pix.

WRH

#### Radio

Radio was very much alive last year (still no TV competition). Berlin's most popular radio station, RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), is now operating on a non-stop program, serving mainly the listeners behind the Iron Curtain, who often complain they are unable to hear this station due to Commies jamming stations or current interruptions during the daytime.

#### Television

Berlin was considerably far advanced in the video field. First station was set up in 1935 at Berlin-Witzleben. But the war set local technicians back a decade in TV research and advancement. In 1953 Berlin's TV zoomed into its first popularity after the start of regular programming Christmas, 1952, There are currently hardly more than 1,500 TV setowners, it's true, but there is much talk about TV, with every radio shop having TV sets on sale. Sale, however, is a matter of money, of which Berliners just haven't enough.

Berlin has developed as a nice production centre of telepix for the U. S. market, with units checking in and out. Edward Gruskin, John Nasht ("Orient Express"), Edward R. Murrow ("See It Now") and Paul Gordon's Europaeische Television Gesellschaft, were some of the outfits here last year, Programs were mainly made in association with local pic producing outfits. precedented 160, an increase of 30 over 1952.

and increased success of exported product.

deaf ears.

getting a facelifting.

Aires.

these factors are: an increase in the number of spectators in Italian pic houses during the year, from the 740,000,000 mark set last year to this twelvemonth's estimated 780,-

000,000 (Italy is one of few countries in the world regis-

tering an increase); a consequent and considerable spurt in the total b.o. take, up 10% over 1952 to a healthy gross

estimated at \$148,000,000 for 1953; the success of many

Italo-mades, and the rise of the Italian slice of the local market to over 30%; continued government aid in the form

of generous tax rebates to Italian pix; increased exports,

its infancy here with a 12,000 set total, it's felt that considerable time will pass before its influence is felt at the local boxoffice. There were warnings, amidst all this euphory, from reputable Italian sources as well as indus-

try-wise foreign visitors, against the longrun conse-quences of overproduction and the substitution of quantity for quality, of b.o. for prestige, but the year's statistics

were hard to beat, and most of the warnings have fallen on

Films Cost \$33,000,000

on local film production. Of the 160 features, 60-odd are

in color—likewise a record—using various systems such as Technicolor. Eastmancolor, Gevacolor, but predominantly (25) shot in Italian Ferraniacolor. Color was likewise a

feature of approximately one-half of the 400-odd short

subjects made here this year, Ferraniacolor predominating here again. Newsreels made by the three pooled groups

(INCOM, Universal, Mondo Libero) totaled 370. In the

field of technique, only four pix were lensed in 3-D, using the Poldelvision system, among them "Cavalleria Rusti-cana," a Toto comedy, and an animated cartoon feature. These were also shot in 2-D. CinemaScope was used by one visiting unit ("We Believe in Love"—20th), and on Errol Flynn's "William Tell" until the latter item ran out of funds and was stalled but more meant lister medias have

of funds and was stalled, but many recent Italo-mades have

been lensed with masked viewfinders, and will be adaptable to widescreen projection of conventional type.

Co-productions continue, in most cases, to prove the sys-

tem worthwhile, and in some cases, especially with regard to the Franco-Italian splice, have resulted in top b.o. figures in both countries. Experience has suggested a few changes in the joint production setup, principally to make it more elastic, and these have been incorporated in agree-

ments signed during the year. Franco-Italian co-produc-

makes also came into prominence with 12 pre-war films

Under the special unit for hypoing French pix abroad,

Unifrance Films, the foreign intake for French films has increased this year. The increased participation in festi-

vals and the special film weeks have helped hypo the

prestige of the better French productions for resulting growth in foreign contracts. Special film weeks were held in London. Mexico, Tokyo, Hongkong and Buenos

French tenacity in increasing U.S. distrib without thor-

oughly understanding the market was a factor that led to the U. S. impasse. Most French producers refuse to think

of longterm planning and believe it is sufficient to dump

their better films or dub a certain number to insure re-turns. They do not realize that most of the U. S. public

has to be conditioned and made aware of French films by a heightened pre-production publicity schedule.

Sees French Outgrossing U.S. Pix

rising tab prices were made the actual b. o. take the big-gest since the war. The combined weekly take of the 31 first-run houses is just a bit below the combined take of

57 theatres, music halls and chansonniers which shows

that films are still the top entertainment draw here. Of the five top Paris grossers three were Franco-Italo

Old axiom about a good French pic outgrossing a good U. S. film still seems to be true here, with 49% of last year's grosses going to French pix and 37% to American films. Number of spectators has dropped off a bit but

get a bigger and better distrib ratio in the U.S.

French have decided that it is time for them to

An approximate \$33,000,000 has been spent this year

And in a negative sort of way. TV did its share: still in

201



(Chairman of Directors, Greater Union Theatres)

Sydney

1954 is the year we must answer the call to put into practice the faith and belief which brought motion pictures to its present world status. About 100,000 theatres are operating in all countries of the world, countless millions of pounds are expended in studios, and more than 1.000,000 people have



careers because way back in the beginning of things the pioneer had an over-mastering faith in an idea. Industry is not created by doubters and by disbelievers. The men who carry an industry forward are people who have confidence in it, people who will exert their energies to carry it

forward. In the past few years there are some people in this industry who say its future has been challenged, that

Norman B. Rydge it will be relegated to a minor role. I say that every other form of entertainment has limita-tions which are unknown to the motion picture. We will never know how high is tops.

Films will always retain their pride of place provided we have faith in their future, and not only think and be-lieve in it, but actively do things to foster and develop it.

At no stage in its brief history has the motion picture stood still. Terrific advancements have been made because the industry has always sought to improve its entertainment and its technique in presenting that entertainment.

#### No Standstill

Today we in Australia hear much about widescreen, stereophonic sound and many other developments. True, all these have come to stay. For instance, the 3-D picture as we know it will not become the picture of the future.

It has its purpose, a limited purpose. But even 3-D is an indication that this industry does not stand still. It is forever prepared to try out new ideas. This displays courage. The fact that some ideas have been found generally unacceptable to the public cannot be urged in criticism of the industry or its ideas.

At least the industry is game to try them out and is prepared to discard them. This is courage of a big kind and from it comes advancement and progress.

On the development of CinemaScope, 20th-Fox has spent colossal sums in endeavoring to create a better motion picture which will attract better attendances.

#### **Constructive Moves**

They have displayed a unique courage in risking such

They have displayed a unique courage in risking such colossal sums to improve the entertainment which today we offer in our theatres. This type of constructive effort deserves the highest possible commendation. If 20th-Fox, by means of CinemaScope process, can pro-duce a motion picture which will attract bigger attend-ances, then the entire industry stands to gain as a result of their enterprise. of their enterprise.

Personally, I do hope their efforts meet with a tremen-dous success because, believe me, if those efforts are successful, it means we too in Australia, who are members of this great industry, must share in that success. The man with the magic lantern brought our industry into being. The man who gave it motion won for it world

wide audiences. The man who gave it color enhanced its appeal. The man who gave it sound carried it to great We have all gained from their efforts. heights.

Our industry, over 50 years old, has not stood still. and people who can carry it forward to new heights are people who are architects of a bigger future for all of us working in this industry.

## FRENCH PIX UPBEAT

Growth, expansion and firmness are the three attributes of the French film industry during the past year. A rise in production and a growing awareness and adaption of widescreen plus a decided hike in co-production marked the year's activities. The French also took a firm stand against U. S. companies during the accord talks and demanded a subsidy for hypoing their films abroad. There also was a finalization of a special Film Aid Law, heavier reciprocal patterns with other countries, increased use of color and a fendency to go back to the double features.

But 3-D did not make the expected splash here and "Bwana Devil" (UA) and "Man in Dark" (Col) did disappointing biz first-run with derogatory crix hurting. Films did better in secondary situations. Warner's "House of Wax" broke the ice a bit, being easier on the eyes, since showing it only dubbed to do away with the extra strain of reading subtitles. Widescreen has shown definite ad-vantages with "Sangaree" (Par), "Quo Vadis" (M-G) and "Julius Caesar" (M-G) definitely benefiting from the enlarged screens. Only 11 houses here are equipped for 3-D projection. There are 36 more in key cities and the provinces. Four houses will have CinemaScope innovations with stereoscopic sound, and 20 houses already have widescreen Provinces have 12 widescreen installations.

## Italo Pix Distribs Find B.O. Pulse; Video Still On Store-Window Phase By ROBERT F. HAWKINS

Rome.

Among

tions with a total of 36 make up the bulk of the 40-odd pix jointly produced by Italy and other nations. The re-mainder is divided among Spain (which signed a pact this Feeling in the Italian film industry is buoyant after another upbeat year. Continued optimism is based on year), Germany, Britain, U. S. and Turkey. many factors, most of which have contributed in pushing With increased Italian production, and increased rethis year's Italian feature production total to an un-

sponse to local pix by the Italian public, the number of films imported has decreased this year to an estimated 400 (but many of these pix are not expected to leave the vaults). The largest portion, as usual, is made up of U. S. productions, with 60-65% of the market.

With 3-D hardly making a dent in the Italian market, the trend has slowly begun here towards the wide screen, and many showcases in the key cities have set up new screens on their own at the start of the fall season. Cine-maScope, with "The Robe." is being set to roll with the new year in some spots, but the structure of Italian theatres may slow down its mass adoption. The Italian has more or less taken technique in his stride. What he is after is still the picture-and entertainment.

That the local producer has finally succeeded in locating the b.o. pulse of his public, and providing it with the fare it's looking for, is evident from the b.o. figures racked up by a large number of Italo-mades in recent months, figures which have regularly challenged those of leading (and more expensive) imports. And with the b.o. draw equal, or thereabouts, it's obvious that the exhibitor will prefer the local product, which entitles him to tax rebate privileges. Eloquent testimony to the rising b.o. power of the Italian film on the home market is the fact that this year the law concerning the compulsory programming of Italian pix has rarely if ever been invoked.

#### **Television Plans**

Italian TV is still in the store-window phase; most of its local viewers still see programs (over its single channel) or snatches thereof, from sidewalk positions in front of radio-TV shops. Penetration into homes is estimated at about 12.000 sets, and limited to areas surrounding Milan. about 12.000 sets, and limited to areas surrounding Milan, Turin, Genoa, Florence and Rome. Yet local TV is now on a regular basis, its "experimental" period ending Jan. 1, 1954. Three studios, in Milan, Turin and Rome, service the areas covered by the net, with Milan handling most sports, legit, news; Turin telecasting children's programs and reviews, and the capital beaming political news and pix. Milan has 13 cameras. Turin three, Rome four. Five mobile units cover the rest of the territory.

Five mobile units cover the rest of the territory. With pix flourishing and TV supported by indirect gov-ernmental subsidies. Italo legit is moribund, though it as well receives help from the government. Many of the better Italian thespers have died in recent years, and few youngstrs have replaced them. Others have gone over to pictures, or dubbing jobs, where pay is better. Causes for the decline are multiple, and have to do with prices, per-sonalities, lack of theatres and facilities, etc. Fact is, however, that theatre is no longer a draw.

man. French, Italian) and many understanding English, partly to the heavy tourist trade all through the year.

Zurich, the country's biggest city, is the centre of Swiss show biz. In legit and opera public favor is on the con-ventional side, giving preference to classical and standard works rather than new, fresh product. Opera and operetta repertoires are almost exclusively

made up of revivals, any attempt at presenting a modern musical opus, though tried again and again, is practically fruitless. Menotti's "Consul," for example, though helped by rave reviews, flopped completely a couple of years ago.

More and more, small-seaters and arthouses are opening in the big cities, shaping as highly promising outlets for unconventional and contemporary legit fare.

#### Bleak U. S. Pic Year

1953 was a pretty black year for Yank pictures. Although U. S. product has garnered a major portion of the though U. S. product has garnered a major portion of the country's playing time, the top grossers and extended runs in the key cities as well as the hinterland have been pre-dominantly European, with only a few exceptions. The number one spot among the latter was gained, by a wide margin, by "Limelight." It was the year's top grosser and racked up phenomenal biz wherever it appeared.

Only other Yank pix having played to above-average b.o. returns in the key spots were "Greatest Show On Earth" (Par), "Quo Vadis" (M-G), "High Noon" (UA) and in some situations. "House of Wax" (WB). Rest of the year's top grossers were all European productions. The current excitament over 2.D. CinemaScene and Ben

The current excitement over 3-D, CinemaScope and Panoramic Screen developments has not shown much impact on the Swiss market. Although local exhibitors carefully follow all incoming news on the subject, the new trend is far from having any overall effect. Their "wait and see" attitude has its equivalent in the public's opinion, who can "take it or leave it." However, it looks as though widescreen will win over 3-D in the end.

### **U. S. Jazz Inroads**

#### **Tinters Grow in Popularity**

The French drive for biz has seen a big rise in color with 25% of last year's productions tinted. Statistics show that tinters automatically get about 30% gross over black-and-white. Technicolor came into use here for the first time with Martine Carol inaugurating it here in "Un Caprice De Caroline Cherie" and "Lucrece Borgia." There is a movement underway to construct a French Techni lab. Eastmancolor is also coming into use here. Nega-tive comes from U.S. but positive stock is made here. Gevacolor is also a big tinter here with 10 filmed this year. Also in usage is Agfacolor and the Italo Ferraniacolor.

Coproduction finally has settled into an important part of the film picture here. Earlier difficulties have been ironed out, and many top grossers were in this category. There were 30 Franco-Italo productions, five Franco-Spanish, one Franco-German, one Franco-English and one Franco-American film. In the search for material, reOf the five top Paris grossers three were Franco-Italo pix and two U. S. Topper was the H. G. Clouzot's "Le Salaire De La Peur," followed by "Limelight" (UA). This was due in part to the great adulation and admiration France has for Charles Chaplin. Next was a sequel by Julian Duvivier in "The Return of Don Camillo," and then Paramount's "Greatest Show On Earth," followed by Rene Clair's comedy "Belles De Nuit." Of the next batch, "Ivan-hoe" (M-G), "American in Paris" (M-G), "The Quiet Man" (Rep), "House of Wax" (WB) were toppers. Fealing is also growing hear that greater U.S. produce

Feeling is also growing here that greater U.S. production, especially increased coproduction would enhance French names and techniques in the U. S. Anatole Litvak's "Act of Love," with Kirk Douglas, Dany Robin, Serge Reggiani and Fernand Ledoux likely will be the first important example of this type of production. The need for making French stars known to American audiences is now recognized as a paramount factor in eventual entrance into the U.S. market.



### **By GEORGE MEZOEFI**

ences, with only a negligible amount of local product. This

is partly due to the country itself being multi-lingual (Ger-

Zurich In terms of show biz, Switzerland, with its 4,000,000 population, presents a unique situation, being a blend of German-Austrian, French, Italian, British and U. S. influ-

concert life in this territory is versatile and of generally high standard. The major portion of regular concertgoers are in the longhair trade, and classical concerts featuring names from Europe and abroad can always count on a ready audience. Nevertheless, jazz concerts have gained considerably here and are nearly always SRO, provided some big name is involved. Such orchs as Lionel Hamp-ton, Stan Kenton, Britain's Humphrey Lyttleton or Nor-man Granz' "Jazz at the Philharmonic" package have played to excellent b.o.

The year's hit tunes have stemmed mostly from German, French and U. S. origin, the latter riding high with "Terry's Theme from Limelight" and "Song from Moulin Rouge." The Les Paul/Mary Ford platters are steady sellers and so are, among the younger fans, etchings by Doris Day, Rosemary Clooney, the Billy May and Stan Kenton orchs.

Swiss radio is state-owned and strictly non-commercial. The network includes three stations, one for the German, French and Italian part each. Accent of the programs is more on the heavy side, especially in the German part, whereas the two other stations allow more time to light entertainment.

TV is still in the diaper stage in this country. First telecasts have only begun late in '53 in Zurich and are on a tryout basis with three to four weekly telecasts of about an hour each. As per today, influence of TV on Swiss show biz is practically zero. The TV net is equally state-owned and excludes all commercials for the moment. 202

## **India's Film Production Slips But** U. S. Distribs Show 15-20% Increase

Rombay Attendance at cinemas of India showed a marked decline in 1953. The boxoffice on an all-India basis was off 40% to 50% compared to 1952. At one time it was feared many theatres would close down. But actually only four theatres in Madhaypradesh had to close down because of inability to pay the en-tertainment tax. That other cinemas did not shutter was not indicative of the bad business condi-tions. On the other hand the aura of prosperity that hovers over the film business has created an im-pression that there is easy money to make in the exhibition field. This keeps newcomers ever entering the show biz no matter what the previous lessee of the theatre had to give up because of dwin-dling revenue. This is the one factor that has kept the exhibition line alive.

To make matters worse, the number of pictures produced also showed a sharp decline. India produced only about 230 features during 1953 or a loss of nearly In proportion to the increase in the number of theatres during the last war and the years just following, the decline in production was way out of line in relation to actual demand.

One thing became very patent In previous years it was possible to run the same show month after month with no change in program. But now exhibitors have to think of changing programs even be-fore week is ended. Pictures had to be so often exhibs have started asking whether Indian pix have now to be shown the same as English films, one or two changes weekly

Production activity reached very low levels, with the result that seven studios had to close shop. Many tried to keep alive by reduc-ing floor fees for indie production units. Studio hands were laid off by the hundred. Contract players were kept at a minimum. Out of the sheer drive for economy, new faces were hunted and given leads. The economic depression in the trade is well illustrated by the dip of nearly 20% in revenue earned by the state governments through the entertainment tax. Part of this decline was, of course, due to the exemptions granted to drama, music and dance performances arranged by registered societies.

#### **One Consoling Factor**

The one consoling factor in the bleak atmosphere was the solidar-ity exhibited by the trade. The Film Federation of India was formed during the early part of the year, combining all the branches in the industry. Also a code of ethics was adopted for publicizing pictures.

Once it used to be the practice of producers to turn out very lengthy pictures. While the craze for such productions had disap peared in north India long ago, it still lingered in the south. The past year dealt a heavy blow to this type year dealt a neavy blow to this type of pic in the south. The average length of a south Indian picture now is 16,000 feet as against lengthy ones of 20,000 to 25,000 feet.

The contents of films produced during last year also underwent many changes, plots getting away from the old mythological yarns. The accent was all along on social the calendar year of 1955. This produced 21 films in 1948; 55 in gives the authorities of, shall we the political world. Cuts ordered by censors on partisan dialogue vals plenty of time in which to get reached the 100 mark in 1953. For and scenes, totalling 3,000 to 4,000 together and decide upon their fu- the first time since the war's end, feet in a single film, awakened many producers, and resulted in a trend towards escapist films modelled after Hollywood.

Probably 30 Indian pix will be made in color this year. Because the Indian government has decided to treat processed color copies of Indian films as regular imports from foreign countries (and levy the same duty of 4c per foot) Indian producers have been much handicapped.

Although many situations remained morning or matinee show opera-tions for English pictures during 1953, it is likely that foreign pix will arrive as the regular feature in an increasing number of spots in the next 12 months. While individual distributors complained of a drop in business, others had an unprecedented rise in billings. The all-round figure was encouraging.

Foreign Film Biz Up 15-20% Each exchange of the Foreign Distribution Unit is able to keep in live contact a maximum of only 40 to 60 theatres leaving 250 to 300 spots untouched. These are very inaccessible for reasons of language difficulty or transport problems. Considering the wear and tear on prints against actual revenue to be obtained in out-of-way spots, distribs found servicing them to be unprofitable. The overall increase in foreign film business is reported as between 15 to 20%.

## Move to Cut Down Int'l Film Fests

**By SIR HENRY FRENCH** 

(Director General, British Film **Producers** Association)

London Opinions differ widely as to the value of Film Festivals to the film industry. Some festivals are undoubtedly of importance to the nation, city or town in which they are held. Speaking generally, the promoters of festivals are much more enthusiastic about them than the producers or distributors of films without which festivals could not be organized. So far as my ex-perience goes, the attitude of the film industry during the last four or five years has become more and

more lukewarm on the subject of the large and best known festivals. The Administrative Council of the International Federation of Film Producers Associations announced early in December, after a meeting in London, that its policy was to reduce the number of festivals of all kinds, and particularly to limit festivals with competitions to one a year. Although this statement of policy appears to be revolutionary, it has been known for several years that the Federation was not "in love" with international festivals.

The Federation is in a strong position to determine policy on this subject. It now includes among its membership almost all national associations of film producers. If these associations and their individual members abide by the Federation ruling they will refuse to send any films to festivals which have not been approved by the Federation itself. The statement of the Federation's policy will not be brought into full operation until that it will consider all applications for approval to hold festivals year by year and will commit itself in 1954 only to a limited number of approved festivals in 1955. Simi-larly, in 1955 it will deal with applications for 1956.

## **Rio's Carioca Spree-O** -By GEORGE GURJAN\_

Rio de Janeiro. Rio is not the conventional B-pic

tropical port. It boasts no fanwaving traders in shorts and cork helmets and Russian spies are pretty scarce just now. It's an easygoing city, but on the whole rather staid and respectable despite alarmist "deterioration of morals' reports.

But once a year inhibitions and respectability are thrown to the winds. A three-day collective fit comes upon the city. Class distinctions and necklines drop; newspapers don't come out and radio stations either go off the air or broadcast nothing but sambas and marchas. The world may end with a whimper but the banging in Rio won't let you hear it.

Whatever Freud would have called this, it's known as Carnival to Cariocas. These are the days when portly businessmen conquer their repressions and parade about dressed as babies, when respectable matrons don bikinis and the shims have their field-day in travesty.

Carnival is not something the true Brazilian can take or leave alone. It is as if the Dybbuk of some primeval ancestor possessed him, dictating his convulsive mo-tions and guiding his feet in the savage and brilliant choreography of a tribal rite. The only way for him to escape Carnival's intoxicating influence is to leave town on a four-day weekend. Last Car-nival close to 200,000 "refugees" from Rio jammed up its deficient railroads and crowded interstate busses two or three days before bedlam started.

Rio begins preening itself for Carnival about two weeks before the event. Clubs and hotels hold dances (of which the Gloria Hotel's "Baile dos Artistas" is one of the most popular); the city administration decorates lampposts and parks in the downtown district, especially along Avanida Rio Branco (main street) and at the erstwhile famous Praca 11 de Junho; a curious melange of cheap redlight district, ghetto and homestead of inspired samba-composers. Street revels do not begin until Saturday of Carnival week.

Those who have seen Rio's outdoor Carnival during the last 20 years, however, feel and deplore its slow death. Gone is the corso (car parade) and part of the blame for this goes to automobile manu-(Continued on page 222)

PIC INDUSTRY IN '53

Nineteen hundred fiftythree brought a sort of revival for the West German film industry, and it seems now as though German films are right back on the way to their best prewar position. There were still relatively few German pix of international appraisal last year. But the quality of the German average production has been greatly improved, both technically and artistically, during the past year.

Meanwhile, the number of annually produced pix has reached a satisfactory point. West Germany produced 21 films in 1948; 55 in 1949; 69, 75 and 73 in the respective following years, and almost ture programs so as to come into line with the Federation's policy. The intention of the Federation is German pix were made here before 1945), were running at full capacity. Simultaneously with their quality upbeat, German pix pushed ahead on the b.o. ladder. While one year ago, Hollywood features still dominated the native market -they held, for instance, 39.9% of playing time in this country's most important key cities in Sep-tember, 1952 (September, 1951: 42.3%) followed by German pix with 31.8% (26.1%)—situation is now reversed. German pix gained 44.9% of dates in September, 1953, followed by American films with 29.3%. (Last statistics of October, 1953: German films—47.0%; U. S. films-29.1%.) Reason for this is, of course, not alone the quality improvement of local pix, but their steadily growing number being produced and shown.

## PARIS' 70 LEGIT HOUSES REMIND OF B'WAY GOLDEN ERA IN '20s

### By TOM CURTISS

Paris. Paris legit is in healthy shape with 1953 seeing over 200 preems at City of Light's 70-odd theatres. Condition of local show biz recalls state of U. S. legit in the lush '20s when Broadway had approximately same number of available houses and approximately same number of new offerings per season.

Smasheroo class here, true enough, is small as it was on Broadway 25 years ago, but moderate clicks pay off with handsome profits and are responsible for gen-eral activity. Interesting contrast Paris-N.Y.-wise was fate of Ten-nessee Williams' play, "Rose nessee Williams' play, "Rose Tattoo" here and on Broadway. "Tattoo," produced in N.Y. for

## **Aussie Steamed On CinemaScope**

**By ERNEST TURNBULL** (Managing Director, Hoyts Theatres, Ltd., Sydney)

Sydney. Australian exhibitors will be faced in 1954 with a challenging decision—to convert to Cinema-Scope and so keep pace with the industry's changing times or (as some did for too long in the early days of soundfilms) sit back to wait and see."

My own view is that most proexhibitors will jump gressive exhibitors will jump aboard the bandwagon as quickly as equipment can be made avail-able. Hoyts has implicit faith in CinemaScope and confidently faces a capital outlay of some £1,500,-000 to equip as many of its circuit of 185 theatres as is practicable. The excitement surrounding

CinemaScope in the American film industry has spread to Australia with feverish intensity. Although this revolutionary new process is still a novelty here there is a marked impression among exhibitors and other keen industry observers that standard presentation is already outmoded.

CinemaScope is the "shot in the arm" exhibition in this country welcomes. - It opens up an entirely new vista for theatre-owners large and small and my firm conviction that because of it a roseate future

lies ahead is widely shared. Throughout the war and postwar periods the Australian economy has passed through an artificial boom, soaring inflation, a "bal-anced" recession deliberately (Continued on page 222)

### **Upped Admissions Lop** Greek Film Boxoffice; American Pix Are Hurt By IRENE VELISSARIOU

Athens. Film trade in Greece is again on the downgrade. Firstrun business has declined in attendance about 15% in 1953 from the previous This is due mostly to inyear. crease in the admission price im-posed to cover the double cost of prints after the local currency devaluation. This is confirmed by the strange fact that while the first-

\$85,000, ran eight months and never paid back. In Paris the same show, produced for \$4,000 made money during its three-month run though it never registered as a much-patronized item.

Year's big ones were Andre Roussin-Madeleine Gray's adapta-tion of John Erkine's "Private Life of Helen of Troy," retitled "Helene, or the Joy of Living," which had London production and has been optioned by Joshua Logan for N.Y. production; Henri Jeanson's adaptation of Italian comedy, "Dazzling Hour," which received a west-coast tryout and is due in New York as a Gilbert Miller-Jose Ferrer offer-ing; "Kean," Jean-Paul Sartre adaptation of the 100-year-old Alexandre Dumas play, as a starring vehicle for Pierre Brasseur; new Jean Anouilh play about Joan of Arc, "Lark," which John Huston has bought for Broadway '54-'55; Jean - Louis Barrault - Madeleine Renaud Co.'s staging of the last Jean Giraudoux play, "For Lu-crece" and Paul Claudel's "Columbus."

Runners-up included novelist Julien Green's first play, "South"; Marc-Gilbert Sauvageon comedy, "13 at Table"; Barillet-Gredy com-edy, "White Queen"; Thierry Maul-nier drama of behind-Iron-Curtain life "Huuse of Dasheas", Long de life, "House of Darkness"; Jean de Letraz farce, "Eugene's Mistress"; Michel Duran's comedy, "Have Confidence in Me"; Albert Husson comedy, "Pavements of Heaven"; and Gallic adaptations of "Dial M for Murder," "Fourposter," "To Dorothy a Son," "Rope," and "Deep, Blue Sea." Both French version of "Seven Year Itch" made by Jacques Deval and Armand Salacrou's new play, "God's Guests," though panned by crix, did moderately good biz and both Andre Roussin's farce "When the Child Appears" and Max Regnier-Raymond Vincy's "Late M. Marcy," holdovers from previous year, prospered.

#### Musicals

Only new big musical was "Lovers of Venice," Michel Zevaco-Vincent Scotto operetta, which went into the Mogador after the revival of "Belle of New York' had done an 8-month stint. Folies Bergere still holds its two-year-old show, "Real Madness"; Casino de Paris continues with a slightly revised version of its two-year-old revue, "Gay Paris"; and the modest, intimate revue, "Ah, What Wonderful Revels," a miniature "Hellzapoppin," at the Dounou, arriving early last summer, has turned into a real hit.

#### Labor Troubles

General strike in August which tied up railroads, city transporta-tion, mails, telegraph and t<del>ele-</del> phone service, et al. did not hit legit as most houses were closed down for hot-weather holidays and few remaining open got patronage of the stranded populace.

In October, scene-shifters at Comedie-Francaise's Salle Luxembourg walked out in attempt to get overtime pay hiked. Government responded by closing all four statesubsidized theatres-Salle Luxem-bourg, Salle Richelieu and its two legit houses, the Opera and Opera-Comique-for three weeks. Huddles of Minister of Fine Arts with treasury officails had happy results beruns are lower this year, the reopened Nov. 11, and the governcause the four state-angeled houses ment nromised

**REVIVAL FOR W. BERLIN** Berlin.

#### **1954 Outlook Not Bright**

The year 1954 does not seem to hold bright prospects. The horizon is devoid of any promises especially in production that many Indian theatres fear they not have enough pictures to operate. This fear has actuated many of them to look to the foreign film distributors for a continued supply of pictures. Hence, it will not be surprising if many Indian cinemas, at least in the south, turn out to be foreign film operators in 1954.

Of course, Indian producers are not sitting idle. The belief gained ground late in 1953 that color might be the saving factor. With the setting up of a Technicolor unit in Bombay by Forrest Judd, Indian producers have been toying with the idea of producing tinters.

#### **Costly Affairs**

There are many reasons why film producers desire to see the number of festivals drastically restricted. In recent years the num-ber has been steadily growing. It is probably true to say that no producing company would, if left to itself, participate in any festival. Associations do so only because they know that films will be sent in from other countries. Participation is, in any case, an expensive husiness

As regards the festivals them-(Continued on page 222)

neighborhoods continue very strong, with upbeat in admissions over last year. This proves the inability of patrons to pay high admission prices. Columbia's "Salome," which was

scheduled to be released with increased admission price, was finally presented at regular prices, because a similar policy on Paramount's "Samson and Delilah" has dropped attendance and hurt the picture's results.

Italian, French and local competition against American production grew a bit keener in '53. American majors, it's felt, must produce and send better films here and in Europe generally if they are interested in Continental patrons' support. American films are being beaten by European productions when they have more appeal to European audiences. As a matter of fact, American pictures totaled 56.31% of last year's attendance, while a few years ago they covered 75% of the trade. This speaks for itself.

tional funds. Technicians got a pay rise and more elaborate productions are being planned.

Theatre National Populaire, touring troupe which is also govern-ment-sponsored, did two three-month stints at Palais de Challiot Theatre. Company, headed by Gerard Philippe and Jean Vilar, added Shakespeare's "Richard II" and Moliere's "Don Juan" to its rep of classics late in year after being under fire for its failures with several modern dramas.

Import of foreign scripts is increasing in Paris legit and among U.S.-British plays announced for early '54 are Tennessee Williams' "Summer and Smoke," T. S. Eliot's "Confidential Clerk," Graham Green's "Living Room," and Arthur Miller's "Crucible." Adaptation of Eugene O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms" did badly as did adaptation of S. N. Behrman's "Jane," but in general U. S. and British hits in French adaptations have proven fair bets.

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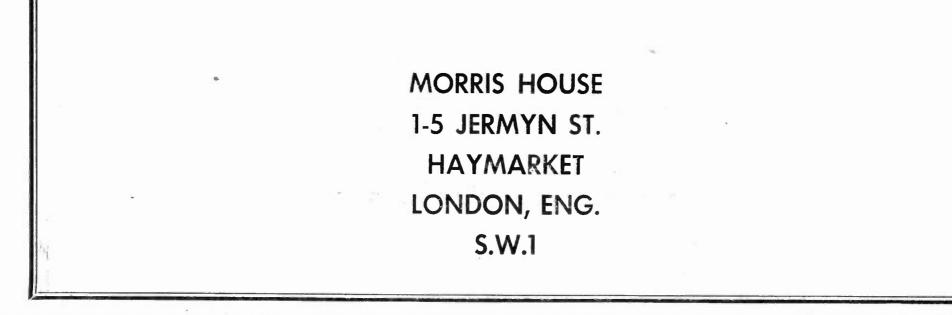
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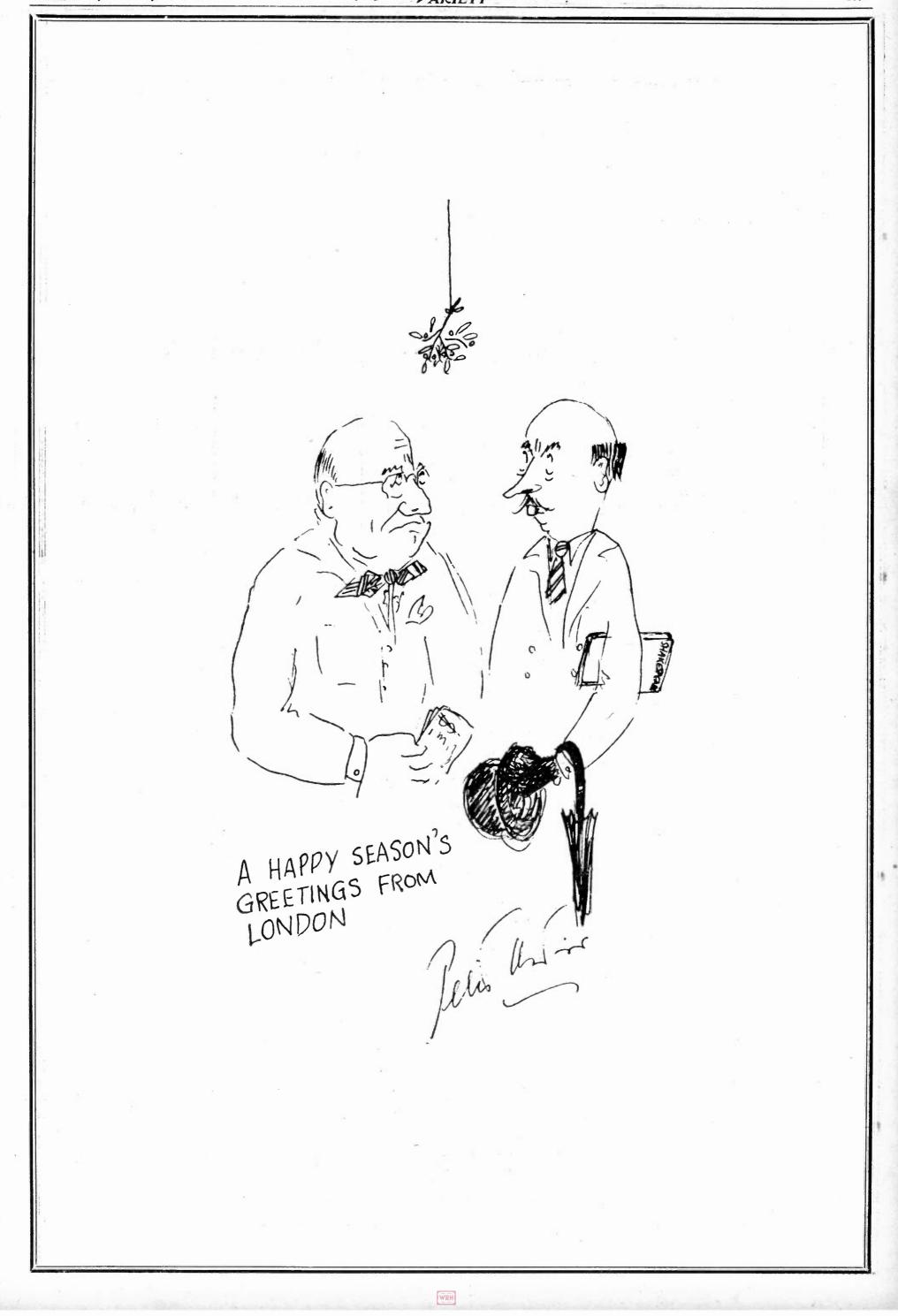
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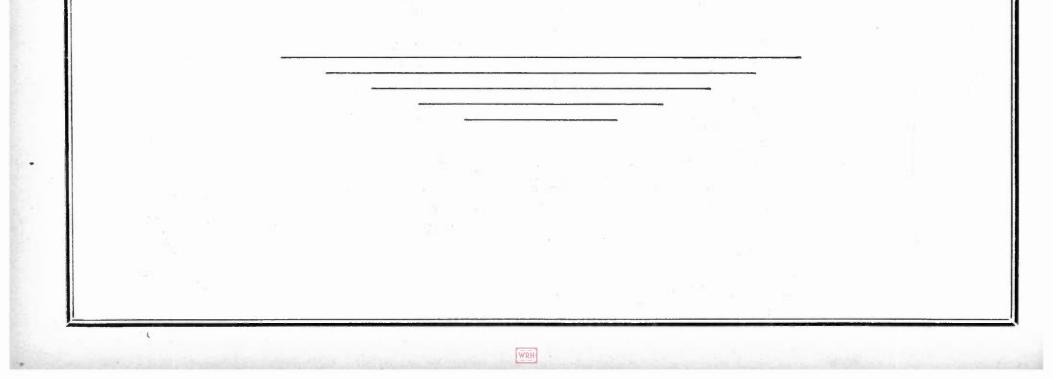
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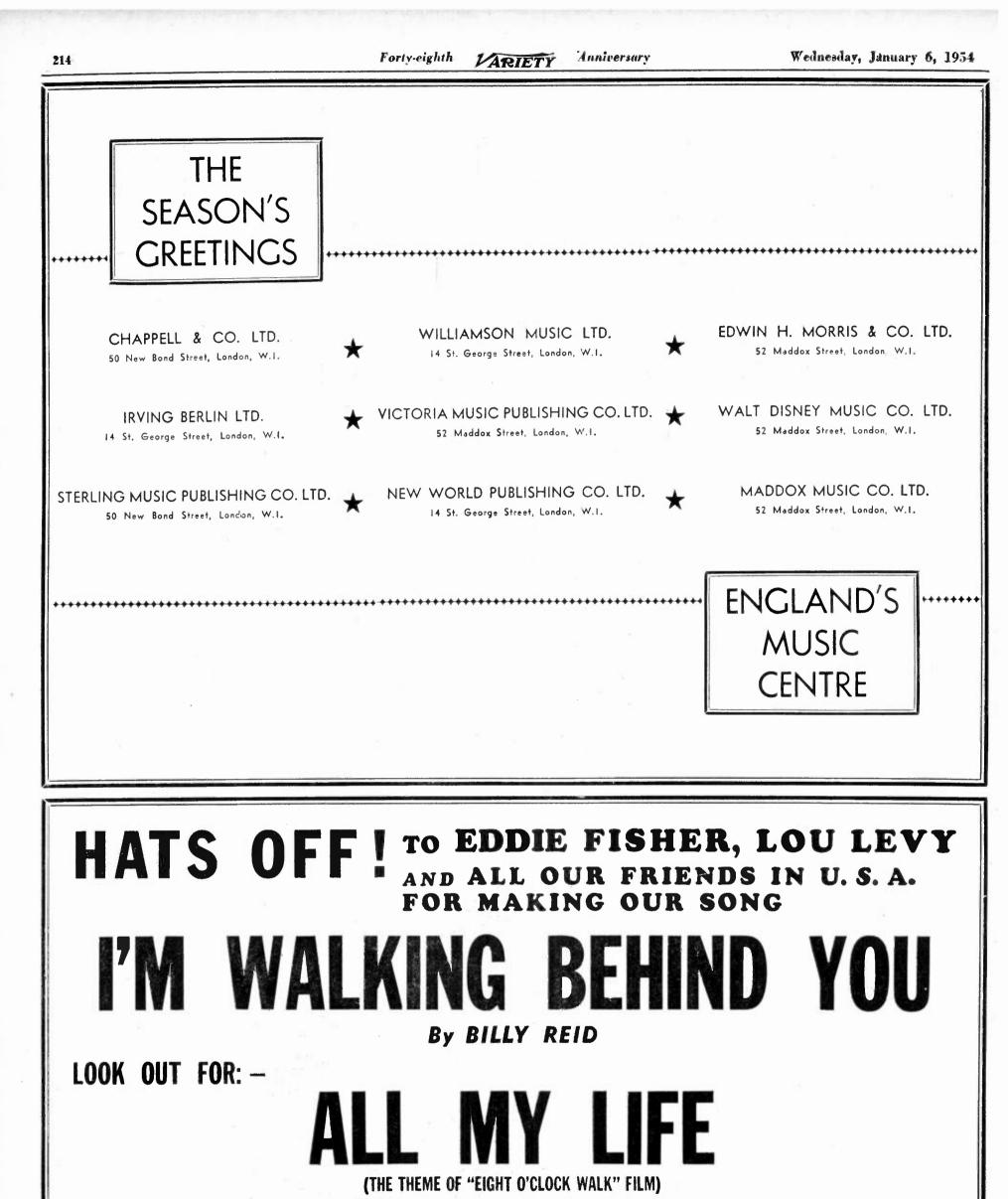
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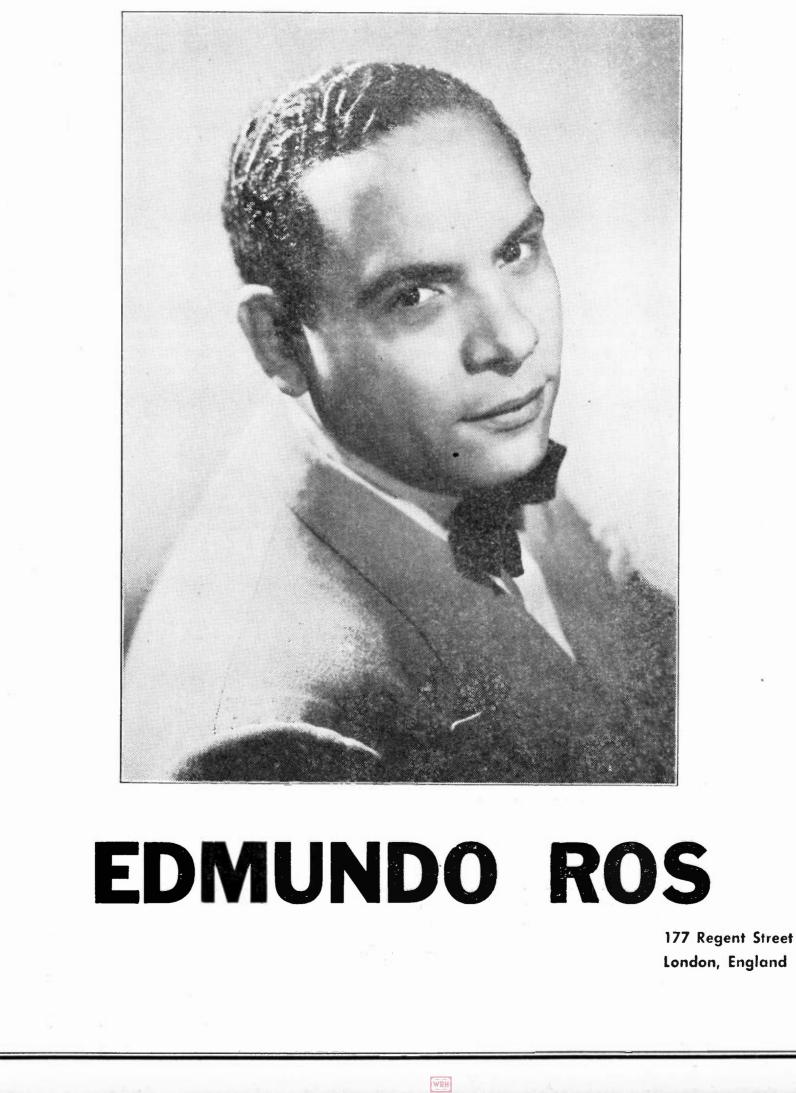
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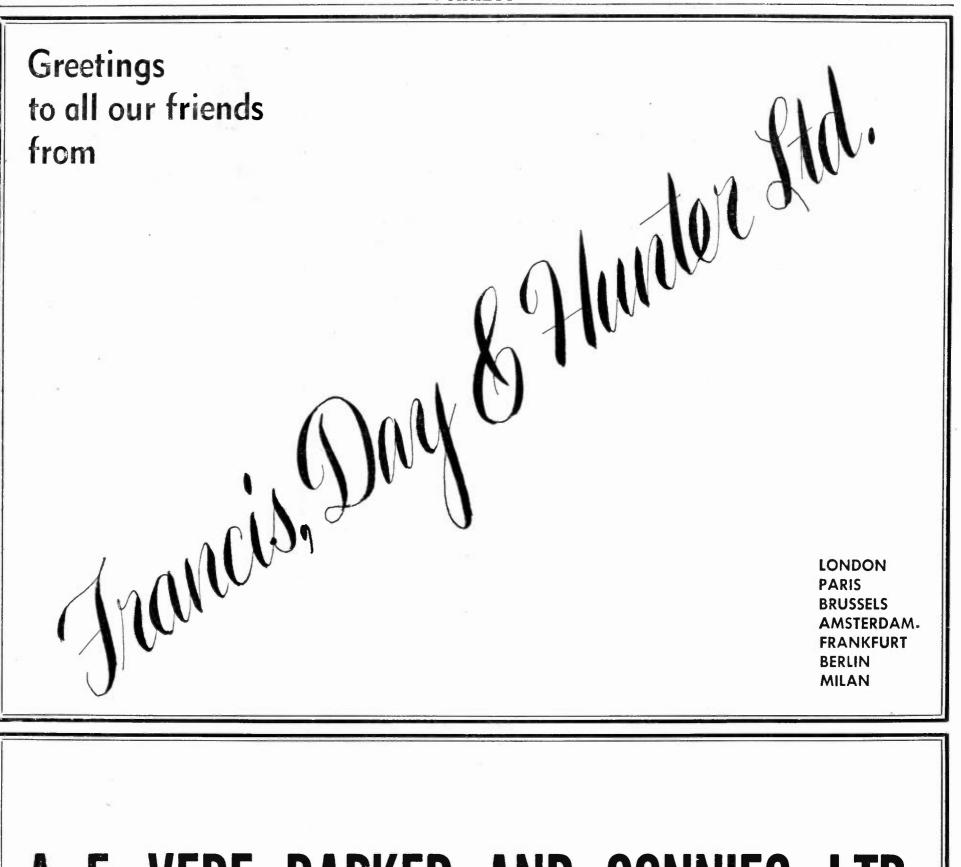
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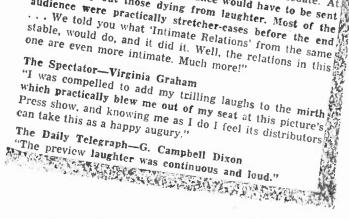
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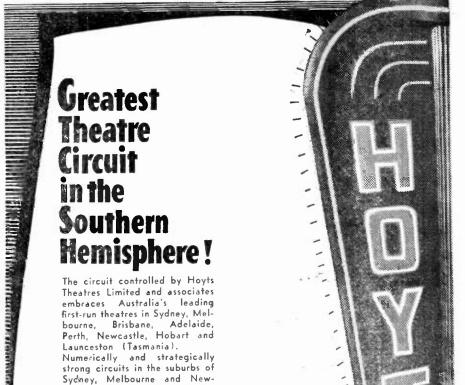
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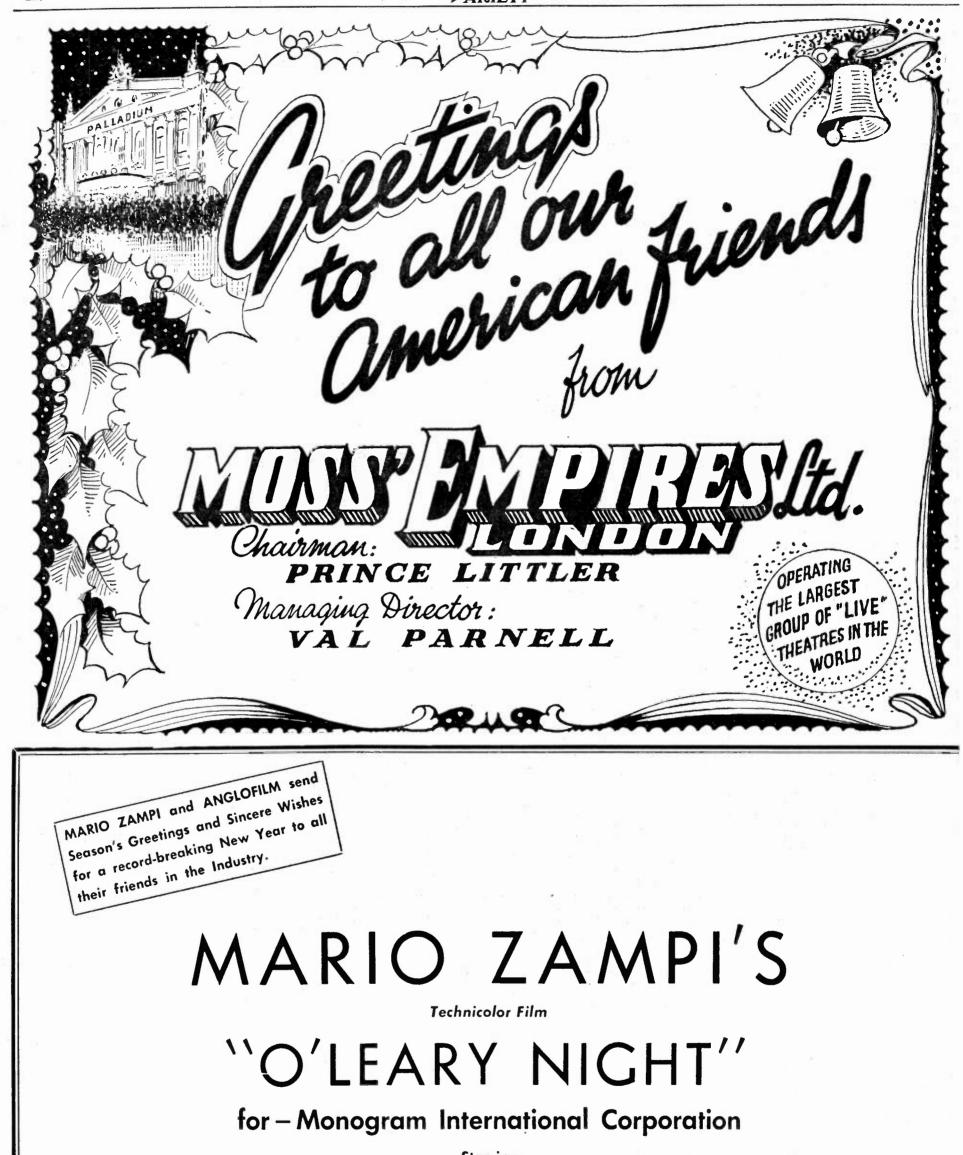
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#### **Rio's Carioca**

Continued from page 202 facturers for suppressing running boards and discontinuing produc-tion of four-door convertibles; gone also are some of the genuineness and spontaneity, some of the warmth and friendliness of the people in the streets. Shortage of coin the streets. Shortage of coin caused by inflationary prices for all essential commodities, inadequate salaries, transportation and housing difficulties have soured the Carioca. He tries hard to for-get his troubles and even to laugh at them during these three days. Mostly he succeeds-but not quite.

To Squirt or to Smell One particular gadget usually arouses the visitor's curiosity. It's a small glass or metal spray containing a mixture of ether and cheap perfume and its original purpose was to afford the fun of squirting the icy concoction on some unprotected part of the anatomy of a member of the oppo-site sex. This inoffensive gim-mick, used only during Carnival, has almost become a social prob-

number of people have acquired the habit of spraying the ether on their hankies, inhaling it and get-ting pleasantly high, although more often than not they're liable to go to sleep in the midst of the pandemonium.

some kind even if it's just shorts or a admissible at any other time), but by far the most popular are pants for the dames and skirts for the is when the queer-of which there is a large number in Rio-really comes into his own. Some are made up so carefully and painstakingly that it's impossible to tell them apart from the real Mrs. McCoy. They throw a series of notorious dances in a downtown legit house. An especially famous event is the fashion show on Carnival Monday where costumes (mostly feminine) worth anything up to \$2,000 are

traipsed around.

must with the upper strata.

Tuesday's big event are the floats, presented by Carnival clubs and subsidized by the city. Motifs are mostly humorous with particular slant on political satire. but many cars are allegorical, devoted Most people use a costume of ome kind even if it's just shorts r a bathing suit (something in-dmissible at any other time), but however, does not begin until 5 the or 6 in the morning. Then-after to all those jailed during Carnival on swains—the cheapest way to all those jailed during Carnival on change your personality. And that minor offenses, such as drunkenness, indecent exposure, etc., are released—Rio, reluctantly and per-haps a little red in the face, goes to sleep

Int'l Film Fests

Continued from page 202 :

selves, as everyone knows, they are

often gay social events which serve a useful purpose in enabling mem-

bers of the industry to meet in

pleasant surroundings representa-tives from other countries. On the

other hand, they are undoubtedly expensive luxuries. Although fes-tival authorities invite representa-

tives to attend as their guests, it

means several days away from one's normal duties, substantial

lem due to the fact that a large de luxe costumes have made this a to hold them up so that they may qualify for entry at Cannes.

> I have said enough to exlain why the International Federation is determined to bring film festivals under control and reduce them substantially in numbers. The Federation has been in existence only four years. In this short time it has performed quietly and modestly some very useful work. Its efforts to regulate film festivals has become recognized throughout the world.

#### **Aussie Steamed**

= Continued from page 202

brought on by rigid currency and import controls and (currently) a soundly based prosperity largely resulting from judicious longrange government planning.

During these years, the film industry has proved an indispensa-ble part of the social fabric. While overall attendances have fluctuated to some degree, the theatre-going community has cheerfully met the small price adjustments made necessary by increased overhead. and trading results in general have remained satisfactory.

Unquestionably Australian film tastes have become more cosmopolitan. As a film market the Commonwealth is still preponder-

antly pro-American but Britis product also scores strongly, at surprising ground has been won I hand-picked product from Franand Italy.

New York Address:

c/o MAURICE EVANS

**50 WEST TENTH STREET** 

**NEW YORK 11** 

In part this may be due the government's migration polic which in the past five years h filtered into Australia's pre-w population of 8,000,000 a flow British and European migran nearing 250,000.

My estimate of 1954 is that will prove a bigger revenue pr ducer than 1953 for distributo and exhibitors — assuming fil quality remains constant — f these reasons:

- (a) Money value after years of inflation has been largely stabilized.
- (b) Substantial tax concessions aiding industry and the individual have made more money available for amusements.
- (c) Unemployment has virtually vanished.
- The abolition of entertain-(d) ment tax in New South Queensland and Wales, South Australia has made motion pictures a lower-priced recreational commodity.
- CinemaScope will enliven interest in film entertainment and win hundreds of thousands of adherents.

**Heartiest Season's Greetings** from K. & P. PRODUCTIONS LEON KIMBERLY **HELEN PAGE Specializing in Comedy Ice Attractions Booking Through:** Leon Kimberly Variety Agency Member of the Agents' Association Ltd. Triumph House, 189, Regent Street LONDON, W.1, ENGLAND

Cables: KIMBERLY VARIETY LONDON



### SEASON'S GREETINGS TO MY FRIENDS BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC FROM SAM WANAMAKER

**CO-PRODUCER "THE COUNTRY GIRL" BY CLIFFORD ODETS** "THE SHRIKE" BY JOSEPH KRAMM ("WINTER JOURNEY")

"PURPLE DUST" BY SEAN O'CASEY, "FOREIGN FIELD" BY MARY HALEY BELL, AND "THE BIG KNIFE" BY CLIFFORD ODETS IN WHICH HE IS CURRENTLY STARRING AT THE DUKE OF YORK'S THEATRE.

Next Production Scheduled Is:

### "THE ROSE TATTOO"

**By TENNESSEE WILLIAMS** 

WRH

# Season's Greetings

#### from

# HAROLD DAVISON

### It was our pleasure to present **STAN KENTON** AND HIS ORCHESTRA

on their recent European tour, where he successfully appeared in Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland and England.

### We are now looking forward to presenting WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

for their European tour commencing April, 1954.

### ALSO REPRESENTING THE TOP MUSICAL TALENT IN EUROPE

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Suite 8, Egmont House, 116, Shaftesbury Ave. LONDON, W.1., ENGLAND

### **Those 'Smart Noodles' By Arrangers** Seen Spoiling Gravy for Cleffers

#### **By PAT BALLARD**

Looking back over 30 years, when the old Putnam Bldg. was the last stand of the shoestring music publishers and even the top-rung houses were little short of glorified lofts, many changes have come and gone-except that a simple, tuneful melody wedded to easy-to-dig



words has always pleased the custom-ers out of town, whereas it has become the fashion for Broadway Poobahs to go for tricky tunes and lyrics that were loaded with four-syllable words and had inner-rhyme poisoning. Only the late Larry Hart was on top of that end of the business. The music printers got rich on "smart" songs that never got off the shelves. And then came the "Day of the Arrangers." We remember well one of the top melody writers of the 20's tearing his

Pat Ballard

wig when he first heard the orchestration of one of his simple, potential million-copy tunes. "All I hear is noodles and no tune," he rightfully bellowed, and the bands got famous but it became tougher and tougher to get songs to sell copies. One of the wisest of small publishers at in a rickety chair in a spook-infested cubicle across from the old Lindy's and picked simple "wholenote" tunes with titles so homey only the millions of outof-towners would spark to them via their little quarters. He also sent 5G checks to a selected list of performers with air time. Within a few weeks the copy sales deluged his low-rent stockroom.

#### Can't Wipe Out Payola

In our opinion this gent knew the business, and in spite of the dozens of attempts to "wipe out the payola" (like doing away with sex), the above method of promotion has never been beat since acts were furnished spending money to carol a pub's pet plug from coast to coast to nice, live audiences. While we know he never took a dime, our old pal Jesse Crawford could play a new song, with slides, at the Paramount, and 5,000 copies would be sold within 2 hours. Jesse played 'em simple, without noodles. It could well be that future historians, balancing their typewriters on Mars, will caption the History of the Rise & Fall of Sheet Sales, "TOO MANY NOODLES SPOILED THE GRAVY

A song that violated all the rules of range, "Tennessee Waltz," would have had-and probably did have-tough sledding across the tin ears of hit song-pickers. But the gal over the washtub out in Ohio whose heart was touched by the song, and whose burden was made lighter by the magic helm of a good pop lyric, could have told right away that here was a great tune that probably will live long and profitably. We listened to its first radio rendition and noted that a chorus was played exactly as written after the singer had sung it exactly as written. No noodles. No arrangers' opium dreams that took the basic chords and thereupon constructed a brand new (and lousy) melody

There are few arrangers in double A in ASCAP, but they are great fellows when they realize that the poor tune writer probably sweat blood over the exact sequence of notes that finally made the song, and then treat the composition with respect instead of collaboration. One of the co-writers of "That Old Gang of Mine" told us that the tune was re-written many times and it took about two years to get the song just right. Van & Schenk introduced it, as written, with only fine harmony added, which never hurt any song, and the list of hits that were made without "improvements" by the artists, arrangers and special material writers would fill many pages in some future saga of pop songs.

#### Straight From the Heart

So now the amateurs who usually write at least one song straight from the heart are making more copy sales than the pro's, whose hearts have been slowly hardened by the quick switches the song biz has taken in the past 30 years. From a simple song like 'Margie'—rememberable from the first time heard—the cycle has come back to easy tunes which lie mostly in the intervals of the chords (a trick Ray Henderson parlayed into a million bucks, like many before and after him) and we're watching Broadway as source material while the hills o Tennessee yield the kind of corn people have always loved and always will love until they get brittle and jaded and out of touch with real human emotions.

#### The Record Goes 'Round and 'Round (A Plague in 3 Acts)

By ARNOLD SHAW:

(V.P. & G.P.M., Hill & Range Songs)

(Instead of scenes, this plague has P.C.'s, i.e., phone calls. For best effect, all three acts should be performed simultaneously, preferably in a deep echo chamber.)

#### Act I. "Smash"

- Setting: Writer's studio. The walls are papered with a de luxe edition of the Complete Works of Tschaikovsky. Wall phone.
- Phone Call 1. (To publisher.) How's the family? Just finished a hit! Greatest song I've written! It's tremendous! ( Clap of thunder.)
- P.C. 2: How's the wife? (Softly.) Did HE\* like it?
- P.C. 3: How're the kids? (Breathlessly.) Is HE really going to cut it? Do you know with whom? How big's the band? I hope they all get a good night's sleep. Tell HIM to take care of himself. (Writer collapses on a couch of unrecorded songs.)
- P.C. 4: And how are you? (Delicately.) How did it come out? Is it strong? (With phone shaking.) Is he going to release it soon . . . maybe . . . I hope . . .
- P.C. 5: (Bursting into tears.) going to get other records? me\_to us—to my family! You mean you aren't How can you do that to We'll starve with that record!

\* One of seven revolving deities whose turnings decide the destiny of mortals on the planet Copisella.

#### Act II. "He flipped!"

- Setting: Publisher's office, papered with returns from the rack. Battery of phones connecting with the record companies.
- These are special one-way phones. Publisher can call but has to wait for reply via 4th rate parce' post.
- Phone Call 1. How's the wife? I got a smash. You'll flip, I hope.
- How's the family? Sure, you can hold it. As long as you like. It's yours exclusively. I've already forgotten that I own it. I've got the most exclusive set of songs in the business, so exclusive no one knows they exist. Just let me know two days before you bring it out so I can show copies to other A & R men.
- P.C. 3: How're your kids? (Uneasily.) Did it come out great? I mean, just great or real great? You think it will sell? Terrific! How soon are you going to regreat? You think lease it? No, I'm not pressuring already. No, I'm not planning to show it to anybody. Really, take my word, believe me! (Publisher collapses on couch of unreleased masters.)
- P.C. 4: How are you feeling? (Breathlessly.) It's coming out next week? Sensational! Somebody said they heard it on the air yesterday. I know it couldn't be. Everything's all set. We've ordered 4,000 Vinylites, full page ads in all the trade papers, and my whole staff leaves for 27 cities next week. This is it!
- P.C. 5: I'm sick . . . That's the record I waited 10 months and a week for! My wife doesn't get her mink and I'm getting a divorce.

#### Act III. "Flop"

- Setting: A & R Man's office. The walls are hung, row upon row, with paintings by Dufy. Utrillo, Soutine and Vlaminck. Every inch of the ceiling is also covered with modern French paintings. In the centre of the room reaching from the floor to the ceiling, like a giant totem pole, is a pile of unplayed demos.
- P.C. 1: (To record distribution.) How's the family? Like my new release? Can't miss!
- P.C. 2: (To record distrib.) How's the wife? I don't hear the jockies playing our new release. When are you going all out?
- (To disk jockey.) How's the wife, family, kids? P.C. 3: And how are you? (Laughing.) And how's our new release? Real change of pace, don't you think? Dynamite, eh? Well, we figure this one would start slowly. But when it takes off, just watch it! (Kissing the phone.) Counting on you! You really did it on my last record, you did, really, you did. (Collapses on a

### **Disks' Continuing Aim To Build New Stars**

By EMANUEL (MANIE) SACKS (V.P. of RCA and G.M. of RCA Victor Record Dept.)

The entertainment world may change in many ways, but the task of the showman does not: his is the always diffi-cult assignment of tracking down and developing new

In all ages, the public yearns for entertainment. And always the established stars grow old, are not able to work as often or as effectively, and, ultimately, must be replaced.

talent

Actually, the showman has a dual responsibility. He must provide the proper material and vehicles for the established stars while at the same time finding replacements to take the place of those currently enjoying the public's favor.



The problem of finding tomorrow's

stars involves more than merely their discovery, although that is hard **Manie Sacks** enough. For they must also be schooled, encouraged and developed.

Today the demand for new talent is greater than it has been in many years. Television-both local and network programming-has created a vast new market for talent. In addition, the great postwar expansion of the record industry has paved the way for additional talent opportunities on recordings.

Television demands new faces. But the way of the newcomer is extremely difficult. A virtual sellout of time and the costs of programming tend to rule out all but the established stars

It is relatively much less expensive to launch a newcomer on records. At RCA Victor we have established a special fund for the development of new talent.

Recordings, promotion and advertising, and personal appearance tours may cost more than \$30,000 for only one untried performer. Yet the risk is unavoidable if new stars are to be built for the public.

In large measure, the current boom in record sales is due to the fact that the industry has not been self-satisfied. We have built new stars and created new things on recordings-and we have increased volume at all levels of the trade.

The added hits that our new talent has made possible have brought added store traffic and a dividend in extra sales, and this has benefited both new and old artists. New names have provided new excitement and new consumers for records.

Actually, all other branches of the entertainment world also have benefited. Many of these new stars—artists who first became household names on records—have gone on to broaden their audience through television, radio, personal appearances and motion pictures.

It is doubtful, however, if many of these new-talent names would have had the opportunity for stardom if they had not first come to public attention through means of one or more hit recordings.

#### **Great Buildupper**

From the standpoint of the artist, recordings are of tremendous influence and importance:

1. Through a recording, radio and coin machines expose an artist to a nationwide audience.

2. With more than 24,000,000 phonograph players in American homes today, a hit record provides a unique opportunity to build a large and loyal following.

3. Recording success opens up career opportunities in television, radio, motion pictures, and clubs and theatres.

4. Revenue from records goes on forever for the artist: the estate of Enrico Caruso has received more revenue from his recordings than the great tenor received during his lifetime.

Today the world hungers for music. And the recording industry has an unparalleled opportunity to satisfy this hunger with outstanding musical entertainment.

The industry has made great strides in the postwar period. These forward advances have included:

- 1. A better product-a non-breakable product;
- 2. Better sound;

3. Better players, available at a price the public can afford;

4. Introduction of Extended Play recordings, making it possible to appeal to the in-between record buyer—the consumer who didn't want the single selection, but either didn't want or couldn't afford the album;

5. The 'new sell' in records—new techniques which have revolutionized retail practices, bringing "island displays," the power of self-selection for the consumer, and production of eye-appealing album covers which are in themselves point-of-sale displays.

How a horse-picker (probably not too good at it) can expect to sit in the Turf and pick tunes for the poten-tial 2 or 3,000,000 sheet music buyers in this broad and essentially simple-hearted nation of ours, passes the understanding of this scribe.

The artists & repertory men take bows on their hits but if you add up their misses their halos look less glossy. The simply truth is, of course, that nobody has yet quali-fied for the title of "Sixth Sense Sammy" when it comes to picking potential hits. But the ones with real faith in simplicity and a sincere belief in the songs they do pick seem always to make the most dough, year in and year out, although too many of them die young or buy a farm in outer Oshkosh Flats. From the past 30 years we know less than a half-dozen seasoned hit-makers who are still in the racket, and they walk the streets with the bewildered look of the punk fighter who originated the quip "Wha hoppen?

3

So, pick 'em simple, with one-syllable words, and shoot the first arranger who tries to slip in an augmented ninth chord, whatever that is, if anything. And look out for the guy in the high boots and dungarees who steps aside to let you pass through the corridor of the Brill Building. He probably has another "Tennessee Waltz" in his pocket, scribbled on the edges of an old Sears Roebuck catalog page.

couch of old trade paper charts.)

P.C. 4: (To record distrib.) How's the family? Well, it's really moving now, don't you think? Not as fast as the last one. But we expected that. It's the slow starters that rack up the big sales. Rather see it build slowly and get a long ride than go straight up and drop dead overnight. This is really going to be a big one! You watch it. You'll see. A gold record! Can't miss! Don't you think? I hope ... (Climbs to top of pile of unplayed demos, takes one off top, climbs down, and puts it hopefully on playback machine.)

(As the curtain descends slowly, a group of trade paper reporters troop across the stage like a Greek chorus. Facing the audience, they mournfully chant: "You can make some of the people buy all of the time, you can make all of the people buy some of the time, but you can't make all of the people buy all of the time." As their voices echo and re-echo, a phone starts ringing, then another, and still another. In rapid succession, we hear:

Writer to publisher: Just finished a hit! ..... Publisher to A & R exec: Got a smash to play for you! A & R exec to distrib. It'll sell a million!

Distrib to deejay: Can't miss! (Offstage, in the distance, we hear laughter that grows and grows in volume until it is deafening. It's the recordbuying and song-buying public ...)

Today approximately 75% of the industry's sales are inpopular music. The teen-ager is the major customer for these pop selections; it is the teen-ager who rushes out to buy the latest hit-to listen and dance to the selection ir his home.

Undoubtedly our population increase in the years since World War II has helped to expand the market for music The sharp rise in our teen-age population-due to the increase in marriages and births during the World War I period—is an important reason for optimism about the long-range outlook on record sales: it is expected that the teen-age population, which was 22,000,000 in 1950, will rise to about 30,000,000 by 1960 and 35,000,000 by 1965.

Nevertheless, the recording industry cannot expect to realize to the full the opportunities that an increased population and better sound through hi-fi recordings, are making possible unless the trade continues to live up to it responsibilities in the development of new talent.

The present recording stars are our foundation, and the are essential for continued sound volume. But we mus find and develop new talent-the superstructure for ou business today and the foundation of our business to morrow.

1. 化最高级的复数分配的 金属的

# **'New' Music Biz Faces The Crossroads**

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#### Songwriters' Suit Vs. BMI, Publishers' Backseat Role Spotlight the Transitional Problems

Never a dull moment in show biz and especially is this true of the music business.

An industry, whose day-to-day existence has been never one of passiveness, in recent years has witnessed even more internicene intrigue than exists in the Kremlin.

The whole transition of popular song publishing and hitmaking has undergone radical changes which, as has already been noted over the years, put the record business in the driver's seat of an entire creative industry, so far as songsmithing and publishing are concerned. It reached its climax, of course, with the long-expected suit by the Songwriters of America, an "informal" group of dominantly ASCAP writers, against BMI, the networks, and the two major record companies, RCA Victor and Columbia, alleging conspiracy to the detriment of the writer-and publisher-members of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. The plaintiffs in the \$150,000,000 triple-damage suit made it clear that they were not suing, however, on behalf of the publishers. The ASCAP publishers were equally vehement in that insistence. Despite the recently aggrandized role of the record and the disk jockey as the King of Tin Pan Alley, they tile, the old guard, dominantly, of the publisher-members of the ASCAP board of directors) felt "there's never anything gained by suing."

The ASCAP songsmiths, sparked by Arthur Schwartz, himself a former attorney, scored this do-nothingness on the part of the publisher as typical of the craft, and that while the writers were stagnating and experiencing growing economic constriction because of the paralysis of timehonored trade practises between publishers and diskeries.

"Disk jockeys, trade paper pollsters. jukebox operators, some of whom can't even spell and to whom records are about as emotional as a pack of cigarets which come out of another type of vending machine. record companies, recording artists—everybody but the music publisher, who used to be pretty good at that, nowadays picks songs," in the words of one veteran music publisher. "And don't tell me that in the final analysis the public really picks 'em. We know that. But we used to have a pretty concept of quality and values in songs that we published. We picked a song, invested as much as \$1.000-a-day overhead in our exploitation machinery to properly project this type of song for best audience reception, and the record companies would properly 'cover' the songs. not only one-way but frequently both vocal and instrumental if they agreed with our judgment. But not so today."

#### **Geniuses and New Sounds**

"Today," he continued, "we don't dare publish a song until some artist perhaps likes it, or the whim of an a&r 'genius' decides it should be done with ecso chambers, or a 'cracking-your-knuckles' type of arrangement. And then if some disk jockeys in Cleveland and Boston. Nashville and Baltimore, or if from somewheres in left field the record appears to be 'breaking for a hit,' then we are in business. A record should be a by-product of publishing; not the sparkplug of songwriting and publishing. Anyway, that's the way it has evolved today."

that's the way it has evolved today." In the new spheres of influence, therefore, new angles have asserted themselves with cut-ins and favored publishing tieups and under-the-counter "royalty" payoffs, with accent on the platters.

This, of course, is by no means a 1953 manifestation it is merely an evolution of the postwar record boom where an interpretation has proved a giant jackpot payoff to (1), the artist; (2), the writer; (3), the diskery; (4), the publisher. Put that in any sequence, but dominantly, of course, it's most directly returnable, in immediate values, to the artist.

to the artist. A capsule reprise of sudden-name artists and their parenthetic titles, omitting the label identification, best tells the answer. There are instances galore. To spotlight a few, Johnnie Ray "cried" himself from \$75 to \$7,500 a week with "Cry"; Frankie Laine's "Mule Train" to "I Believe" and "Hey Joe"; Eddie Fisher's "Any Time," "Wish You Were Here" to "With These Hands," "Many Times" and "Oh, My Papa"; Rosemary Clooney's "Come On-a My House" to "Botch-a-Me"; Les Paul-Mary Ford's "How High the Moon," "Good Old Summertime," "Meet Mr. Callaghan" to "Vaya Con Dios"; Vera Lynn's "Yours" and "Auf Wiederseh'n Sweetheart"; Eartha Kitt's hybrid Anglo-Frenchy boudoir version of "C'est Si Bon"; Frank Chacksfield's "Limelight" to "Ebb Tide"; Sunny Gale's "Wheel of Fortune" (Derby) only to be eclipsed by Kay Star's Capitol version, just as Jane Froman's "I Believe", which she originated on her TVer was passed in sales by Frankie Laine. Julius LaRosa, the "Humility Kid," with "Eh Cumpari" and "Anywhere I Wander." Les Baxter's "April In Portugal," Richard Hayman's "Ruby," Leo Diamond with "Off-Shore," June Valli's "Crying In the Chapel," and Joni James' jackpot with "Why Don't You Believe Me," "Your Cheatin' Heart," "My Love My Love" and "Have You Heard?" are others. Miss James and Fisher are the 1953 disk champs. Latter's "Oh. My Papa" looms a 1,000.000-platter hit and his "I'm Walking Behind You," "Downhearted," "With These Hands" and "Many Times" are his past season's clickeroos.

#### By ABEL GREEN

back to "Dardanella" as the last really big smash instrumental. In this respect, no matter the attitude of the publishers towards the diskeries and deejays the latter have been derring-do in projecting instrumentals into popular smashes.

Despite the Charles Chaplin antipathy and open boycott in some quarters, the London label treatment by Frank Chacksfield of "Terry's Theme" from "Limelight" projected that into an unexpected U.S. hit. Richard Hayman's "Ruby" theme; Hayman and Jerry Murad's version of "The Story of Three Loves" (from the classic Rachmaninoff's "Variations" on a theme of Paganini on Mercury); Hugo Winterhalter-Henri Rene's "Velvet Glove"; Liberace's "Three Loves"; Leroy Anderson's "The Typewriter" and his predecessor "Blue Tango"; the new Gordon Jenkins "Seven Dreams" album; the Liberace-Paul Weston album of "Concertos For You"; Alfred Newman's soundtrack from the CinemaScoped "The Robe" (Decca); Mantovani's sleek violin treatments of "Charmaine." "Swedish Rhapsody." "Melba Waltz" and the like—all these are samples of the instrumental disks' smash comeback. Others are Les Baxter's "Gigi," "Suddenly," "Under Paris Skies" and "April in Portugal."

#### The Continental Kick

The Yank penchant for Gallic influences continue, and there are variations with generous borrowings from Italy, not to mention the trend towards British pop labels, notably the Vera Lynn, Frank Chacksfield, Anne Shelton and Mantovani brand of interpretations. The smash Les Paul-Mary Ford "Vaya Con Dios" (Capitol) takes care of the Spanish trend too.

Cole Porter's homegrown "Can-Can" score produced a French postcard coupling. "Allez-Vous En" and "I Love Paris," that is on the crest. Eartha Kitt's "C'est Si Bon." Vic Damone's "April in Portugal," Julius LaRosa's "Eh Cumpari" are samples of the quasi-United Nations influences on pop songs.

After VARIETY cracked "wha' hoppened—no 'Humility' songs," Ruth Wallace quickly hatched "Dear Mr. Godfrey" ("sung with great humility") on the Monarch label, and in another topical idiom Mercury was readying an album of Christine Jorgensen songs with such obvious titles as "There'll Be Some Changes Made," "She's Funny That Way," "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered" and "I Wanna Get Married."

The disk biz reversed itself somewhat by veering away from the wierdies and the gimmicks and getting more on the beam with melody. This figured largely in the renaissance of RCA Victor's prowess in the pop field after a couple of years when it looked like Columbia's Mitch Miller couldn't make a wrong move. Capitol and Mercury were also ahead of Victor in the pop sweepstakes and, paradoxically, just as David Kapp exited RCA Victor as the a&r topper (Joe Carlton succeeding) he left behind a backlog of clicko platters by Eartha Kitt, Eddie Fisher, the Ames Bros. and Perry Como. Carlton has continued the upsurge, under direction of Manie Sacks, staff veepee of the parent Radio Corp. of America who also assumed the post of v.p. and g.m. of the Victor record division. Incidentally, Sacks got a third veepee tag when David Sarnoff designated him as his aide within the NBC operation.

#### The Petrillo Angle

Just as AFM prexy J. C. Petrillo achieved an accord with the British on a precedental Anglo-American band swap, a new union hassle on the home-front snarled the diskery business. The recording companies have a good backlog of wax works but Petrillo's demands for a higher recording rate and an upped contribution to the Music Fund had union-disk relations up in the air at year's end. The possibility of a recording ban, however, was diminished by Petrillo's okay to work without a pact.

The possibility of a recording bar, however, with our postished by Petrillo's okay to work without a pact. Ted Heath, Ray Ellington or Jack Parnell look like the first British bands to swap with the Yanks going over for English dates, and it's figured that Louis (Satchmo) Armstrong will be the pioneer in-person invader into British jazz circles.

On the subject of a record's impact on a personality, Percy Faith wrote a cornball ballad, "My Heart Cries For You," which Frank Sinatra turned down at Columbia at a time when he wanted a "hit record" desperately. Maestro Faith became inhibited about the whole thing, too, and as-sumed the nom-de-disk of Peter Marks for authorship of "Cried For You," Mitch Miller, Col's a&r topper, however, had beaucoup faith in it. He had Guy Mitchell in mindthe singer took his professional billing from Miller's first name in the same degree that Hubert Prior Vallee's adthe late great saxophonist Rudy viedoeit counted for the Yaleman's professional handle—and re-leased it. It made Mitchell a star and then followed in rapid succession "Sparrow in the Treetop," "My Truly, rapid succession "Sparrow in the Treetop," "My Truly, Truly Fair," "Belle, Belle, My Liberty Belle," "Pittsburgh Pennsylvania," selling more than 5,000,000 biscuits all told. In turn. Sinatra's surprise histrionic hit in the Columbia picture, "From Here To Eternity," has projected him anew on disks, first with the title song from that Columbia film, and also with "South of the Border" and "I Love You." With accent on song performances, which is one factor in the ASCAP-BMI hassle, the Society's public relations were stepped up to spotlight this or that songsmith's birthday or anniversary, and thus radio-TV programming accounted for periodic barrages of Gershwiniana, Cohan music, and the like. Mrs. Gus Kahn (Grace LeBoy), herself a songsmith, went a step further by personaling this or that show and thus kept her late husband's catalog alive. Ditto Mrs. Gus (Lillian) Edwards. Margaret Whiting pe-riodically salutes her famed dad, the late Richard Whiting. A Hoagy Carmichael "birthday" salute came to pass, and of course there are the periodic "memorials" with the passing of some songwriting great. Otto Harbach lead the salutes to Peter DeRose and Fred Ahlert, including their respective mediates and salutes the passing of Free respective medleys; same occurred with the passing of Emmerich Kalman in Paris; and Al Jolson's anniversary usually reprises musical tributes which rebound to the performing rights credits of his corps of songsmiths. Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" remains the blue ribbon seasonal song with its 8.000,000 Bing Crosby and other platters, although Johnny Marks' "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" hasn't done badly with its 4,000,000 records, year after year, of which the Gene Autry (Columbia) version remains the standout. It is seasonally reissued and rerecorded, and this year saw Perry Como doing a straight version thereof. There are, of course, the freak upstarts like Jimmy Boyd's "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus." which Irving Berlin—at the time that ASCAP writers were taking umbrage at the "hillbilly invasion'—endorses as a thoroughly original idea and "it deserves to be a hit, as such." in his opinion. (It was at this time that the Broadway type of songsmith took exception with Patti Page's "Tennessee Waltz" which Berlin, too, thought was no different than "I'm Dancing With Tears In My Eyes." written by an ASCAP writer and in the same idiom in another era.)

There have been freak revivals, too. Pee Wee Hunt's "Oh!" (Capitol) was essentially a deejay kickoff, and dates back more than a quarter-of-a-century to (the new late) Byron Gay and Arnold Johnston. Gay's big hit during his lifetime was "The Vamp."

On the subject of Crosby and Christmas song, his Berlin rendition, along with "Silent Night," "Adeste Fideles" and "Jingle Bells," have combined into some \$20,000,000 Decca disk sales. Crosby and son Gary have repeated their last year's "Sam's Song" duet with another novelty treatment of "Down by the Riverside," and Decca's justreleased album of "Le Bing." with Crosby singing French (including some excerpts from his currently releasing "Little Boy Lost," Paramount film shot in France), looms as a solid item.

as a solid item. The album sweepstakes are up and down. RCA Victor, which invested over \$200,000 in "Call Me Madam" and realized more than 100' c profit from the Irving Berlin-Ethel Merman musical, found itself able to produce the "original" cast album with everybody excepting Miss Merman, who is tied to Decca. Victor put up \$187,000 of the "Me and Juliet" show and again RCA veepee Manie Sacks hit the jackpot as a show investment, along with the album rights, this time having no strings attached. The Rodgers & Hammerstein musical has paid off its \$325,000 investment within weeks, and the RCA-NBC plugging, via radio and TV spot commercials, is largely credited for putting that show across. By the same token, Victor's disking by Eddic Fisher of the title song from "Wish You Were Here" is generally credited for projecting that "mixed notices" musical 'the critics were almost unanimously agin it, excepting John Chapman of the N. Y. Daily News), into a Broadway hit, including a healthy second-season run.

#### The Golden Circle Album

Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" (Decca) is the only "golden circle" album, i.e., exceeding 1.000.000 sale, although the original cast version (Mary Martin-Ezio Pinza) of "South Pacific" hit over the 500,000 sales mark.

An Album of another calibre that Decca is merchandising well is the Merman-Martin medley from the Ford 50th Anniversary Show which Leland Hayward staged (over both CBS and NBC video networks) and which got Hayward an "advisory" \$50.000-a-year contract with NBC-TV. Capitol is clicking with the Cole Porter "Can-Can" original album score and so is Columbia with "Kismet." The neglegrade music business has come click come

Inal album score and so is Columbia with "Kismet." The packaged music business has seen some slick samplings on all labels. Decca's "Seven Dreams" (Gordon Jenkins) is a good sciler. RCA Victor's Glenn Miller "memorial limited edition" (S25) and Arturo Toscanini "Beethoven's 9th Symphony," also "limited edition" (S52), have been standout. Unlike limiting Toscy to 5.000 albums, Victor wisely decided to limit the Miller package to as many as it will scil first time out (it has gone over 100,000 albums at \$25 per).

Other distinguished albums included Columbia's \$100 set of favorite short stories read by such name authors as William Saroyan, Somerset Maugham, Edna Ferber, the Sitwells, Katherine Anne Porter, John Steinbeck, Truman Capote, Christopher Isherwood, John Collier and Aldous Huxley.

"This I Believe," also Columbia, edited and narrated by Ed Murrow, comprised excerpts from the bestseller of the same. RCA Victor also took another bestseller, "Show Biz." with George Jessel narrating the cavalcaded lightlights of 50 years of show biz on wax.

#### Upsurge of Novelty Hits

Parallel to the comeback of the instrumental record has been the upsurge of the novelty or small groups. The 3 Suns like the Ink Spots and Mills Bros. long have been standard but the Ames Bros. with "You, You" (Victor), the Four Lads with "Istanbul" (Columbia), the Four Aces with "Stranger In Paradies" (Decca), The Mariners with "I See The Moon" (Columbia), the 3-D's (Don Cornell-Alan Dale-Johnny Desmond) with "Heart of My Heart" (Coral). The Hilltoppers with "P.S.—I Love You" and "To Be Alone" (Dot); The Gaylords' "Tell Me You're Mine" (Mercury) are typical. The religioso cycle has been very much to the fore this year too, a natural postwar evolution. Crisis always sparks this type of ballad. Tallulah Bankhead signed off with Meredith Willson's "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You" but not it took more "popularly appealing" ballads, with oblique secular overtones, to really project the ecclesiastic cycle. Notable among these have been "I Believe" (Jane Froman-Frankie Laine), "Crying In the Chapel" (June Valli). "In the Mission of St. Augustine," "One Step Toward the Lord," "Invisible Hands," "I'm Walking Behind You" (Eddie Fisher), "Vaya Con Dios" (the smash Les Paul-Mary Ford version). "With These Hands" (Eddie Fisher), "Robe of Calvary" (both Jill Corey and Jane Froman), and others. The songwriter, taking a page from the music publisher, soon discovered that the publisher is a figurehead in the normal relations of getting a tune into the air via a platter. The diskeries created an open-door policy to songsmiths. They presented their wares directly and, if

#### King of Tin Pan Alley

The King of Tin Pan Alley is the deejay and the record is the sceptre with which he can knight any artist, songwriter or publisher. Of course, what's "in the groove" is what counts, as there is case history galore. Jo Stafford and Nelson Eddy first waxed "With These Hands" and while it caught on, after a fashion in England, and thus attracted Eddie Fisher's interest—more specifically that of RCA Victor's Manie Sacks who had faith in the number, and had to override his sales executives that this would be a good selection for the Fisher style despite its solemnity of the ballad—it took that interpretation to really make it a smash. The Mitch Miller-Percy Faith-Felicia Sanders parlay on

The Mitch Miller-Percy Faith-Felicia Sanders parlay on Columbia with "Song From Moulin Rouge" put that film excerpt into the field and furthered this year's vogue for instrumentals after a period when the industry looked

(Continued on page 228)

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

### So You Want To Be A Music Publisher

#### **By JOHN ABBOTT** (Director, Francis, Day & Hunter, Ltd.)

London

and inspiring business, either as a writer or employee, for preference around for some cute business man the head of a professional depart- who has made his money in some ment, sooner or later may come the other kind of industry. One, who urge to be your own boss. You also has probably read in some have seen it happen a dozen times magazine of the huge profits to be -a simple plaintive ditty with the made from a successful song, and old love appeal launched on the feels that he would like the thrill radio and records bringing its of being connected indirectly with lucky publisher and writer thou- the entertainment world. Anyway, sands of dollars, and like the gold he figures that if it is not a sucprospector in the days of '49, you cess he can always write off any reason "why shouldn't it be me."

publishers who started with small he may get a lot of fun. beginnings and made the grade now able to take it easy with transatlantic trips, wintering in the sun-shine of Florida, the Bahamas, or South Africa as the case might be, sitting on the boards of various societies and directing the policy of the music business, and you figure that, after all, they are getting on in years and in due course should make way for the younger man.

Summing up your assets vou have comparative youth, initiative, experience, contacts with all the worthwhile artists, recording managers which go to make up the "know-how," and perhaps a little Your friends have assured rash. you of their full support. and, so, finally after much thought you will say "Let's go."

There are, of course, a few de-tails to be settled first. As a music publisher, songs are essential, and this is where your experience and judgment serves you. You know just what the public wants, and, therefore, how to pick them. If you are a writer some may be supplied by yourself, but having decided you want to be a real publisher, and not just a writer publishing his own compositions, you will be prepared to listen to anything with merit. Directly the word gets around that you are in the market there will be callers knocking at the door ready to supply the de-mand for a cash consideration on account of future royalties-they feel this is necessary to ensure that their valuable mss will not too long on a dust-covered shelf.

#### A Suitable Office

Secondly, comes the question of suitable office accommodation, which must be in the recognized suitable Tin Pan Alley quarters. The ad-vantages are that you will be in congenial surroundings, hearing the latest news, and able occassion-ally to waylay an artist or recording manager who has strayed into the neighborhood. The offices the neighborhood. The offices should be simply but tastefully furnished with an impressive desk piano and gramophone, but most important to round off the picture is an efficient and attractive secretary; one who will know how to greet the welcome visitor and stall off the undesirables with the old story that the boss is out, or in con-ference. As this kind of help takes a long time to train, the simplest thing will be to steal one from some other publisher.

But the most important

know that it is always the publish-If you are in this soul lifting ers' privilege to pick up the check. To solve this problem look losses against his income tax as-You will look around and see sessment, so what can he lose, and

#### The Great Venture

This having all been settled you will now be ready for the great venture, and you can hardly wait for the crowds who will be flocking to your office to congratulate you and wish the firm long life and success. By the way, don't forget to have a photograph of the offices taken to be exhibited 20 years hence to show the modest beginning.

You will begin your new life of work and worry and find a few snags. One of the first things that will shake you is that the profession seems somewhat overcrowded and too many songs fighting for a place on the hit parade. Also, your artists, recording managers and disk jockeys, although still friend-ly, will not be quite so enthusiastic about that certain winner and will begin to find reasons why they can't do it.

You will, of course, join some organization to collect your per-forming fees, but here again it dawns upon you that a long time is going to elapse before the cash starts rolling in from this source likewise, from gramophone and. royalties. These will come in time, but whilst the corn is growing there is a danger that the horse may starve unless there is a good hay-pile in the loft. Also, the angel may get a little restive.

But nothing will daunt you and there will be a smile and a handshake for all as you wait for the silver lining—that big hit that is going to put you right on the map -and as a model of courage plus hard work you will be a pattern to

any industry. Therefore, if you have decided that is what you want to be my good wishes, and the best of luck for your success—but don't say you haven't been warned.

#### **U.S. Tunes Dominate** Austrian Hit Lists; Sheet Music Slumps

Vienna. No domestic hit was produced by Austria in 1953. Orchestra leaders and pianists depended almost entirely on new American and German songs, thus, royalty distribution by AKM (Austrian society of authors, composers and publishers) will suffer another heavy setback, as far as the in-visible trade balance is concerned. "Moulin Rouge" tops the year's list with "Granada." "Vaya Con list with "Granada." "Vaya Con Dios" is just out and does not come under the 1953 accounting. "Half As Much," "Tennessee Waltz." "Blue Tango" and "I Be-lieve" rank about even, while "Limelight" did not catch the foreu of the public fancy of the public. Despite the fact that a copy costs only about 25c., sales of sheet music are low. Costs of printing can only be covered by AKM royalties. Disk sales are, however, far better for Brunswick. Parlophon and Philips. Two Swiss vocalists (Vico Torriani and Lyss Assia) and Leila Negra, a Negro songstress from Hamburg, Germany, hit in Austria this year. Latter was discovered by an Austrian pianist and brought



LAWRENCE WELK and his CHAMPAGNE MUSIC 123d Consecutive Week, Aragon Ballroom, Santa Monica, Calif. Exclusively for Coral Records JOEY'S THEME Backed by CONEY ISLAND

### As in U.S., Disks Are New Kings Of Brit. Music Biz

London. "Sheet music might just as well printed on wax these days.' be they're saying in Tin Pan Alley. and that in a nutshell sums up the British music biz in 1953 and shows the shape of things to come in 1954. For it's the records that have sold the tunes-which is a state of affairs long accepted in the U.S., but only just now make ing its full impact on the British tune scene.

And it's the stars who have sold the records-in which connection the success road has virtually been the Laine that has no turning. Frankie Laine registered the year's biggest hit with "I Believe, the disk sales of which are heading for 500,000 at the turn of the year. And this in a country that, only five short years ago, a record was a best-seller if it sold 10,000!

As for sheet-sales. "I Believe" has cleared 300.000 copies—which is likely to be beaten by the latest Laine tune, "Answer Me." Retitled "Answer Me, Oh, My Love" because the Lord in the original billing offended the BBC. The Laine record of the song in its American form cannot be broadcast except on the sponsored Radio Luxembourg wavelength, but it's soaring into the topselling brackets without the aid—hitherto regarded as vital-of the BBC.

Top songwriter of the year over here is Bob Merrill, who trotted out a string of hits starting with "Doggie in the Window" (sheet-music sales of which were over 250,000 here), and continuing with "Red Feathers," "Look At That Girl" and "Chika-Boom." Early in the New Year, they're starting

work over here on his latest opus, "Cuff of My Shirt." Of the home-grown product, Harry Leon and Mark Malloy supplied the only Coronation song that really made the higtime with that really made the bigtime with "In A Golden Coach (There's A Heart Of Gold)," which they have followed up with a tear-jerker fast making the grade as the year ends — "When You Hear Big Ben (You're Home Again)." Britisher Billy Peid cleffed "Walking Behind You" and "Bridge of Sighs." Odd factor of the year has been the realization that the price of a song-copy makes no difference to the sales. Most copies here are sold for one shilling but, in special cases, the price is doubled. This increased price did nothing to lessen the tremendous sales of the year's biggest melodic successes-the "Limelight" theme and "Song from Moulin Rouge." The latter clocked up 200,000 copies at two shillings (28c), and there's a new "Swedish Rhapsody"—which has already passed the 100,000. While the record-buying public still goes for vocalists (of whom Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Eddie Fisher and Nat (King) Cole are the top Americans, with Vera Lynn. Dickie Valentine, David Whitfield and Tony Brent leading the British

### The Small Publisher Today

#### Tin Pan Valley Moves Back to the Brill Bldg. on Broadway

#### By ABNER SILVER

writing songs there were only a handful of publishers and all were big. There was Witmark with Al

Cook as Pro-fessional Manager. The staff writers were Victor Herbert, Ernest R. Ball, J. Kiern Brennan. Al Dubin, Paul Cunningham, the Rule Bros., and yours truly. I was starting just and was signed



with Alex Gerber as a team, but with Alex Gerber as a team, but strangely enough, my first three big hits were with Benny Davis; "Angel Child," "Say It While Dancing," and "When Will the Sun Shine for Me." Waterson. Berlin & Snyder had the best staff in the uning. It consists of the first staff in the & Snyder had the best staff in the business. It consisted of Irving Berlin, Walter Donaldson, Joe Young & Sam M. Lewis, Harry Ruby, Edgar Leslie, George W. Meyer, Jean Schwartz, Bert Grant. Grant Clarke, Fred Ahlert, Pete Wendling, M. K. Jerome and Cliff Hees Hess.

Take the Dreyfs Case. When Max first started as Chappell. he de-cided to play it smart and different. He went after Broadway shows rather than pop songs. He had a great idea, with no competition. One by one he signed up every show writer. He discovered and en-couraged a great many of them. Once they clicked he would start music companies for them as co-owners. To mention a few, there were Gus Kerker. Louis Hirsch, Gene Buck, Ray Hubbell, Jerome Kern, Vincent Youmans, Rodgers & Hart, Oscar Hammerstein 2d, Cole Porter, Sigmund Romberg, Dorothy Fields and others. Simulgreat orchestrator, the Russell Ben-nett type. The result—Broadway producers beat a pathway to his door. That's how Dreyfus made his millions.

Shapiro-Bernstein with Dave Oppenheim at its helm had a briliant writing staff: Harry Carroll, Ballad MacDonald, Bob Kaiser, (King) ("Mary Earl"), and Joe Goodwin were but a few, and they were hitting on all cylin-ders. The Windy City was the habitat of Gus Kahn and Isham Jones who kent turning out bit Jones who kept turning out hit after hit, placing them with New York publishers. Later on Gus Kahn strictly freelanced but al-ways remained in Chicago.

Remick was headed by Mose Gumble and Joe Kert, Raymond Egan & Richard A. Whiting, Al Bryan and Harry Warren were contract writers, among others, and George Gershwin was a \$25-a-week piano player, and Irving Caesar was writing with him.

At Leo Feist, Phil Kornheiser was general manager. Staff writers were Percy Wenrich. Fred Fisher, Howard Johnson, Abel Baer. Al Piantadosi and Ira Schuster. Harry Von Tilser with Ben Bornstein as P.M. turned out smash after smash -words and music-some with Andrew D. Sterling and others. His brother, Will Von Tilzer (Broadway Music) also was a big operator in those days. His writing staff con-

I remember when I first started | companist and was already writing hits Charles Tobias Sam Coslow, Con

Conrad. Russell Robinson and Cliff Friend were freelancing. Al Hoffman, fresh from Seattle, drummed his way into songwriting. In preradio days songs were exploited by dance bands, vaudeville, song slides, cabarets, burlesque, amusement parks and summer resorts like Coney Island and the Rocka-The songwriters in vaudeways. ville had to jump on other writers inasmuch as publishers would grab any song they featured in their acts. The star attractions at the time were Gus Edwards, Ernest Ball, George M. Cohan (who produced and sang in his own Broadway shows). Joe E. Howard, Jack Norworth, L. Wolfe Gilbert, Ana-tole Friedland and Paul Cunningham. Gilbert started the idea of "Song Writers Night" at the Mt. Morris Theatre up in Harlem. It wasn't long before MGM. Warner Bros., Paramount and 20th Century-Fox got into the music business, either by buying up or starting their own firms. It was a new era.

Now let's turn the revolving stage to the present day picture. True enough most of the big firms are prospering. They are bound to have their quota of hits and should they not they can always sit back on their ASCAP catalogs.

#### **Click Newcomers**

Some of the newcomers have established themselves also, such as Leeds Music (Lou Levy), Howie Richmond, Hill & Range (Aberbach Bros.), Bobby Mellin and Redd Evans. Has the small publisher a chance? Today a publisher is as big as his song, although it may be a long time between drinks. In the past few years some of our biggest smashes came out of small offices in the Brill Building. Village Music published a fox trot called "Till I Waltz Again With You," the hit of the year. Perry You," the hit of the year. Perry Alexander waited 12 years to pub-lish "Cry." Only a couple of years ago Johnny Marks' "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and Gene Goodman's "I Saw Momny Kissing Santa Claus," each with small of-fices, boomed. The well-liked Benny Bloom clicked "With These Hands." Larry Spier zoomed into business with "Little White Cloud." Brandon Music, located in Chicago. business with "Little White Cloud." Brandon Music, located in Chicago, joined ASCAP about a year ago and in that one year has done astoundingly well with such smashes as "Pretend." "Why Don't You Believe Me," "You Belong to Me," and "Gambler's Guitar." Ard-more Music, which never had a hit, printed "Vaya Con Dios." The new Cadence Records and its pubbery bowed with "Eh Cumpari." Nat Tannen. "the 54th St. Hillbilly," was all smiles with "Hey Joe." Frank Loesser, who has office space on the same premises, is fast becomthe same premises, is fast becom-ing a major publisher with "Just Another Polka," "Anywhere I Wan-der," "Rags to Riches" and the "Kismet" score's "Stranger in Paradise." George Pincus Music Co. is off to a flying start with Paradise." George Flicus Music Co. is off to a flying start with "Native Dancer" and "The Jones Boy." J. J. Robbins' "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" score did OK with Marilyn Monroe. Signet Music cashed in on "Tell Me Why." Valley Music, a small out-of-town pub,

from the start, and one that keeps raising its ugly head, is finance. You have probably heard or read stories of the oldtimers who started on a shoestring. They combined the jobs of pianist, book-keeper and plugger in the evening. It was possible for them when all that was necessary was a modest credit with a printer, and having got his current opus off on the way to success with the aid of a few plugs from vaudeville, revue or cabaret artists, to induce the jobbers to take a supply of copies for cash at seven days. Today, it is a long, costly and painful process. Artists, recording managers, disk jockeys, and all who go to make life a grand sweet song have to be seen and entertained. The grand-fathers of the music industry riding around in horse cabs could be here. She had worked as a cigarette girl in Hamburg. Top Aus-trian singers are Ernie Bieler and genial spendthrifts for about \$10 an evening, but today nothing but Rudi Hofstetter. Among the orchestras, Ludwig Babinski and Johannes Fehring are the best. the best restaurants and clubs is good enough to entertain your clients, and you probably already

(Continued on page 290)

sisted of Albert Van Tilzer, Lew Brown and Charles McCarron. Today, the catalog is very valuable.

Joseph W. Stern cornered the market publishing "Gay 90" hits: "Bird in a Gilded Cage," "Take Back Your Gold" and "The Man in the Flying Trapeze," etc. When Stern passed on, the firm name was changed to Edward B. Marks. L. Wolfe Gilbert with "Robert E. Lee" and others to his credit, acted as prof. mgr.

Jack and Irving Mills were just getting started. They published songs by such unknows as Harold Arlen, Dorothy Fields, Duke El-lington, Sammy Fain, Jimmy Mc-Hugh, Mitchell Parish, Hoagy Car-michael and Irving Kahal. The brothers were out in search of a catalog. Ten years later they bought Waterson's catalog for peanuts. Abe Olman demonstrated sheet music in McCreery's. Billy nuts. left court stenography to Rose was Irving Berlin's personal ac- small New York publishers.

topped every list with "Crying in the Chapel." Milton Kellem Music the Chapel." Milton Kellem Music showed great promise for the fu-ture with "Tonight Love." The Gale Boys did exceedingly well with Nat Cole's "Somewhere Along the Way" and Tony Bennett's "Con-gratulations to Someone." George Paxton started the year off with "There's No Tomorrow." At the same time Weiss & Barry hit the bull's-eye with "Please Mr. Sun." Speaking of country songe a few Speaking of country songs, a few year's ago Nashville, Tenn., was fast becoming the capital of Tim Pan Alley. As a matter of fact Lindy was considerig opening a restaurant there. Lately the pic ture has changed.

Now such Brill Bldg. hillbillies as Larry Coleman, Joe Darian Norman Gimbel and George Sand ler have written such sockos as A Porgie's "Changing Partners,' Sheldon Music's "Ricochet" ant "Papaya Mama," and Village' "Tennessee Wig-Walk."—and Por write "Barney Google." Harry Akst gie, Sheldon and Village are al

### 50 Years of the German **Performing Rights Society**

#### **By ROBERT STOLZ**

Berlin. Let's look back a few years! There is a heavily damaged building in the centre of Berlin 1945. Not only the window-glass is missing, there is also no chair. no table, no typewriter. A handful of de-termined people walk or ride on bikes over debris and remnants of Spanish riders through the badly hit capital. One takes along a chair, another one brings his typewriter. Tables and stoves are being transported on wooden carts, work starts again; the work of GEMA, the German ASCAP.

On entering the premises of GEMA today, eight years later, one no longer thinks of those days. Perhaps, one may think that the Society is celebrating this year its 50th anniversary of foundation as the first German Performing Rights Society, by Richard Strauss.

GEMA is today one of the greatest Performing Rights Societies in the world and has reached the climax of its success. Regardless of the effects following two terrible wars and despite the splitting of Germany which also forces GEMA to limit its activities to the territory of the Federal Republic in Eastern Germany the govern-ment prohibited all further activi-ties of GEMA and appointed a new society—the income has steadily increased from year to year. In 1952 a record amount of 21,000,000 DMark (nearly \$6,000,000 U. S. dollars) was reached in the small territory of the Federal Republic. This is a sum not achieved even in the fatal days of the "Gross-deutsche Reich." But this increase is justified. It proves that GEMA has succeeded in adjusting to changed postwar conditions, to raised costs of living and to the increasing number of musical per-formances. In addition, GEMA has twice as many members to take care of as before the war.

#### Good Market for Foreign Music

There is also another fact which must not be overlooked: Germany of today is receptive for music from all over the world. Proof of this are the following authentic figures of shares of foreign Performing Rights Societies in the GEMA income of 1952. The undermentioned percentage shares in individual accounting items went to foreign countries:

 
 Film Music
 53.5%

 Broadcast Music
 35.0%

 Record & Tape Industry
 28.0%
 Classical Music 13.0% Other Performances ... 17.5%

Gradually German composers are beginning to make a name for themselves abroad: the list of serious music by living composers is headed by Werner Egk. Boris Blacher, Karl Holler and Wolfgang Fortner. Composers like Reger, Busoni, Bruch, Strauss, d'Albert and Reznicek have never ceased to appear on the concert roster of foreign countries.

In the field of light music innumerable successes have been scored by Eduard Kunneke and Robert Stolz, melodies by Zeller, Becce, Arden, Grothe, Eisbrenner, Bohmelt, Mackeben, Melichar, Dostal, Jary, Schmidseder and Erwin Fischer; many of them have recently left the Austrian AKM in GEMA. German hit song com-posers were able to score suc-cesses abroad. "Auf Wiedersehn" ("Auf Wiederschn Sweetheart") by Storch, "La Le Lu" and "Haben Sie nicht 'ne Braut fur mich" ("Have You Got a Girl for Me") by Gaze, "Du, Du, Du" ("You, You, You") by Olias or "L'amour" by Stolz are only a few examples for new German numbers which, next to evergreens like "Capri-Fischer" ("Fishermen of Capri") by Winkler, "Tango Bolero" by Llossas, and many others of the interna-tional repertory, enjoy greatest popularity Responsible for this develop-ment are the German composers and their efficient publishers. The preparatory work for the "export" as well as the "import" of music was done by GEMA. After the war the Society lost no time in establishing contacts with its affiliated societies abroad and in the meantime it has succeeded in obtaining a release of the royalty accounts COLUMBIA RECORDS

of German authors in foreign countries, the greater part of which had been confiscated as "enemy property," in France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Argentina and Brazil.

#### 'Schwarzspieler'

For all those who wish to play music without paying royalties— they are called "Schwarzspieler" (unauthorized performers) in Germany-times are bad. The activities of GEMA officials have been so thoroughly organized after the war, that each show, even in the smallest village, is reported. By intricate system of contracts an with all agencies and with the numerous German clubs and societies, GEMA has at the same time succeeded in reaching a good understanding with the producers of shows. Although it may have seemed until a year ago, as if the reluctance expressed in connection with the collecting of royalties, and the lack of understanding in wide circles as to the requirements of authors, could unfavorably affect the functions of GEMA, the contrary atmosphere in Parliament is now prevailing, due to intensive explanations and skillful negotiations. Each representative of the Society, and particularly general manager Erich Schulze, are today considered "persona grata" with government and Parliament.

GEMA hopes that with the passing of a new copyright law which is to replace the old, insufficient law, many of the difficulties which GEMA is still facing, will then be eliminated. Again it is Schulze who, verbally and in writing, has stood up for the realization of the wish of German authors and for the adjustment of German laws to the revised version of pact agreed

upon in Brussels, 1948. Far from taking a rest until the lawful settlement of pending questions. GEMA has tried in the past years to clarify in Court all new problems which have arisen with the increasing "mechanical music" against "live music." Only very recently a fair success was scored. The German federal court decided that public broadcasts over loudspeakers of record music protected by copyright are subject to the au-



This word causes more heartaches than many of the prevalent diseases, for songwriting is a disease that many people suffer from and in most cases it's incurable. That's why so many amateurs are taken in by song sharks.

Almost every mail brings a publisher manuscripts from all over the world; and from the largest publishing house right down to the smallest, the person in charge of opening mail has been instructed to mark any envelope resembling a manuscript "refused." This practice exists because most of the publishers feel it is dangerous to look at these manuscripts because of lawsuits. Secondly, many of the amateurs request the return of their manuscript if the publisher is not interested. However, they neglect to enclose necessary postage. Therefore, to look at such manu-scripts would cause the publisher a loss of time and money which could never be reearned even if he did eventually find a hit song among the material sent in.

With the amateur in most cases, songwriting is an avocation. They don't seem to realize that there are many, many writers who make their bread and butter writing songs. These writers, in many cases, have spent years studying their trade. They know the intricacies of harmony and modulation. Naturally, a publisher would pre-fer to take a chance on a song written by someone who knows his To recognize a hammer trade. doesn't make you a carpenter, and the great majority of amateurs haven't come to this realization. They tell a story about the late Otto Motzan, who, when asked by the Naturalization Judge the population of the United States, an-swered, "130.000,000 songwriters."

#### 'Another Irving Berlin'

Whenever I attend a gathering or go to some vacation resort and it becomes known that a music publisher is in its midst, I am almost certain to be confronted with one or more people who know "another Irving Berlin," but the publishers won't listen to his stuff.

Last summer a number of amateur songwriters came to see me and most of them told the same story-"we spent our last nickle to come here because everybody in our town told us if we can get Eddie Fisher or Perry Como to thor's consent, i.e. that in the ter-ritory of the Federal Republic "mechanical music" just as "live music" will in future be subject to number of the subject to about this situation, but what can we do about it. I admit that among "refused."



### **One-Record Phenoms Says Vet Brit. Publisher**

#### By REG CONNELLY

London. I was perturbed to read a story in a recent American music trade paper, about a music man who had recorded a parody on the trials and tribulations of the American music publisher, and couldn't help thinking that this was the complete extreme from the type of man I had in mind for the title of this article. Conditions may be difficult and confused, but surely they can never be helped by an act of self-ridicule.

When I think back to the early 1920s and first visits to New York. Paris, Vienna and other famous music centres, the two things that remain most ineffaceably in my memory are the great music men and the great music. In Berlin, everywhere the strains of "Madonna." Dr. Robert Katcher's great melody, later to become world famous as "When Day Is Done." In Vienna, melodies of Lehar, Kalman and Stolz to set your ears tingling. In Paris, Padilla's "Valencia." And in New York, Texas Guinan in a night with a fiddle player giving a thrilling rendition of Berlin's "Always" while dear old Vincent Lopez introduced cus-tomers at Casa Lopez to our own "Show Me the Way to Co Home" Show Me the Way to Go Home."

But, it didn't take long, or much seeking to discover wherever these great tunes were, somewhere in the background there was a pretty good "music man." It seemed to me then, and in fact right up to the end of the last war, such men paid far more attention and exer-

the songs that are submitted and never looked at, there may be a million record and copy hit. However, if we were to undertake such an exploration, it would cost plenty of money with no assurance that (no matter how big a song you happened to find in the mail) the cost of finding it would ever be reirned.

Everybody has some time during his or her life written a song. have—you have. But publishers also receive mail from mental in-stitutions and from prisons.

The publisher feels badly over the fact that he is helpless when it comes to opening all mail contain-Unfortunately, ing manuscripts. the sharks and gyps are reaping a harvest as part result of this. So,

cized far more consistent judgment, than is the case nowadays. And it certainly paid off. It became fash-

ionable in the postwar period to talk of "breaking the monopoly of the big fellows" and "giving the little guy a chance to get in." Surely the truth is, that the so-called "big fellows" were only big and only publiched consistently big and only published consistently big hits when they had ability. And by the same reasoning, who was ever able to keep down, or out, the "little guy" who is "little" only in the sense he's new. If he has that same ability and music sense, then the music world is his oyster. for there are many farflung fields remaining to be conquered.

Looking back, over the years, there's never been a time when something really worthwhile has not broken through to set the world's ears tingling, and toes tap-ping. Often it's from an obscure source, and there has been a struggle to secure just that amount of attention for it, necessary to get the public's full approval. In the end, though, the result is always the same. You can't keep a good man with a good time down man, with a good tune, down,

#### 'Moulin Rouge' and Jolson

What more romantic story can there be than the "Moulin Rouge" song—a background theme by French composer Georges Auric, written as part of a film score which, due to that unforgettable lilt, was destined to prove of inestimable value to the elaborate star-studded film itself.

In 1929, people in English pro-vincial towns were making down payments to secure a record by a guy named Jolson, of a song called "Sonny Boy," which swept the world and lingered long after the film was forgotten, and 24 years later, another American singer, Frankie Laine, with much the same dynamic quality of the great Al, made similar song history in Eng-land with "I Believe." This time the medium is a record, of which incidentally, the sale is the hitherto unheard of total in this country of 500,000. Thereby hangs a significant tale. The record, used in its intended medium, is a far more potent and useful ally for the good music man, than a film, because the hit record is, in the home, and can be played and enjoyed without any extraneous conflictions such as films or plays present.

I remember last year being in the office of a famous New York publisher, and he pulled a manu-script from a drawer saying, "Tell the what you think of this." I told him. It was by a well-known writer, but notwithstanding this the pub-lisher said, "We'll take it to — and see what he thinks. If he'll give us a record, so well and good, if not-the hell with it."

That, to my mind, is an utterly wrong approach. If there is a composition I believe in and have a hunch has that little touch of magic, certainly the fact I might or might not be able to convince a record man would not affect my decision to accent av relact it. Con decision to accept or reject it. Can you imagine one of the top music men in the 30s finding himself with a great song he believed in letting the question of taking it or turning it down hinge on whether or not the top crooner of



FRANKIE LAINE

liked it or not?

The song's the thing and the message is inescapable. Where Where there are good music men, there you'll find inevitably good music and songs, and it's just as true to-day as it was 30 or even 50 years ago. They appear to be fewer and further between in these democratic days, because the issue often becomes confused by the numbers of lesser and "pseudo"-music men scrambling for the coveted prizes. Occasionally, life being what it is, they win one, too. But that the good music man, with wisdom and song sense, can take that in his stride, confident in the knowledge by diligent searching, suddenly once again he'll recognize that diamond in the rubble, and will know immediately the warmth and ex-citement a privileged few of us have known so often, the thrill of which time in no way diminishes. In conclusion, to borrow a para-phrase of Irving Berlin "There's

Direction

no business like music business"-G. A. C. to the real men of music.

### Tschaikowsky's 'Terrific Arrangement' Of Freddy Martin's 'Tonight We Love'

#### By CARL HAVERLIN

(President, Broadcast Music Inc.)

Where does popular music end, and what we at BMI call "concert music" begin? The listener who called a radio station after a performance of the First Tschaikowsky Piano Concerto to ask where he could buy a copy of that "terrific arrangement of Freddy Martin's 'Tonight We brought home a rather shattering fact—the two-Love' faced wall, with musical snobbery on one side and musi-cal unawareness on the other, was a-tumblin' down.

"Musical Appreciation" has, for the past 50 years held rigidly to the contention that there are two kinds of music. Despite the fact that during the times of Mozart and Haydn, music was either good or bad, too many of us have been taught there is "popular music" and "serious music." And this musical prejudice is a long time dying. But today, with the weapons of mass communication, radio, television, motion pictures and phonograph records, the kill is coming!

And where does the popular music business fit into today's picture? It is no longer a separate isolated entity. It is rather a substantial bridge between formal classical music and the tunes that ordinary folks sing, whistle, work. play and dance to. Through the efforts of the enlightened on both sides of the bridge, the once formidable gap is closing.

Concert halls now harbor a diverse selection of musical styles, idioms and performers. One evening at Carnegie Hall you might hear Woody Herman's orchestra playing Stravinsky's "Ebony Rhapsody," and on the next, the Philharmonic playing Robert Russell Bennett's effective sym-phonic arrangement of Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess Suite." At this moment, the man in the street is whistling the hit song "Stranger in Paradise," based on a theme from Borodin. Tomorrow he will be shopping at the rec-ord effort for the "Polyatsian Dances." ord store for the "Polovetsian Dances."

All the meetings and crossings over in the once dis-All the meetings and crossings over in the once dis-parate fields of concert and popular music are too many to mention. Let's just list a few. Several seasons ago, Artie Shaw brought a full symphony orchestra into a Broadway night club with a program of contemporary concert music. Further down the same street, a film featured Jose Iturbi playing boogie-woogie. Dave Brubeck, a stu-dent of Milhaud, is now a leading jazz pianist, while Mel Powell, who played piano for Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller, has recently completed studies with Hindemith and is teaching music at a New York college. One of the most popular boxoffice attractions in the country today is Liberace, whose latest album is one of themes from the great piano concertos. The biggest song of 1953 was written by George Auric, one of France's outstanding serious com-posers, a member of the famed "Six." Les Baxter, whose magnificent arrangements of popular songs are consistent bestsellers, is also the composer of "Le Sacre du Savage," a tone poem of high merit. Alec Wilder, writer of "While We're Young," "I'll Get Along" and other popular songs, recently had his "Carl Sandburg Suite" premiered on CBS' "20th Century Concert Hall."

#### It's a 2-Way Street

There are still a few who deplore the popularization of the classics. But the fact is that sales of the original work generally rise in direct ration to the popularity of the adaptation. If any one group can take a major share of the credit for making household names of Chopin, Ravel, Khachaturian, Tchaikowsky, Grieg and many other great masters of concert and operatic literature, it is the fraternity of popular music craftsmen in this country. Some of the, shall we say, more conservative elements

in the music business have bemoaned the fact that there are too many new sounds around today-too many "gim-micks." The employers of the so-called "gimmicks" have an answer. If, they say, French horns are going to make a song sound better and sell records as well, we'll use French horns. And the same goes for harpsichords, zithers, cellos, bassoons, lyric sopranos and glockenspiels. Moreover, they state with much righteous indignation, if most of these devices were good enough for Mozart, Bach, Berlioz, Wagner, Richard Strauss. Debussy and Hindemith, why not for the man who drops a nickle in the jukebox? Why not indeed?

And so, where for years the established pattern for the presentation of a popular song was the standard five brass, four saxes and rhythm, today we have nearly all of the harmonic and tonal implements once familiar only to the concert-goer. The "new sounds," which were new only to mass audiences, have ridged the barrier between concert and popular music.

#### Virtuosos All

The music business today is not only big business, but musically literate profession. The re cord-

### Valuable Copyrights Into PD

Within the next couple of years a flock of major copyrights will be moving into public domain. Following is a list of some of the tunes (with composer, publisher and original copyright date) whose 56-year copyright term has recently, or will be expiring in the next year or two. The list is culled from the "VARIETY Music Cavalcade," compiled by Julius Mattfield:

"El Capitan," John Philip Sousa; John Church Co., 1896. "A Hot Time In The Old Town," Joe Hayden and Theodore M. Metz; E. B. Marks, 1896.

"Sweet Rosie O'Grady," Maude Nugent; Jos. W. Stern & Co., now E. B. Marks, 1896. "To A Wild Rose," Edward MacDowell: P. L. Jung, 1896.

"Asleep In The Deep," Arthur J. Lamb; H. W. Petri & F. A. Mills; Julie C. Petri, 1897. "Danny Deever," Rudyard Kipling & Walter Damrosch;

John Church, 1897. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," Paul Dukas; Durand et

Fils, 1897. "The Stars And Stripes Forever," John Philip Sousa; John Church, 1897.

"The Fortune Teller," Harry B. Smith & Victor Her-bert; Witmark, 1898. "Recessional," Rudyard Kipling & Reginaid DeKoven;

Anna DeKoven, 1898. "The Rosary," Robert Cameron Rogers & Ethelbert Nevin; G. Schirmer Jr., 1898. "When You Were Sweet Sixteen," James Thornton; Wit-

mark, 1898.

"Hands Across The Sea," John Philip Sousa; John Church, 1898.

"Hearts and Flowers." Mary D. Brine & Theodore Moses Tobani; Carl Fischer, 1899. "If You Were Only Mine," Harry B. Smith & Victor Herbert; Witmark, 1899.

"Maple Leaf Rag," Scott Joplin; John Stark & Son, 1899.

"My Wild Irish Rose," Chauncey Olcott; Witmark, 1899. "On The Banks Of The Wabash Far Away," Paul Dresser; Howley, Haviland, 1899. "Stay In Your Own Backyard," Karl Kennett & Lyn

Udall; Witmark, 1899.

"There's Where My Heart Is Tonight," Paul Dresser; Howley, Haviland, 1899.

"A Bird In A Gilded Cage," Arthur J. Lamb & Harry

Von Tilzer; Shapiro, Bernstein & Von Tilzer, 1900. "I Can't Tell Why I Love You But I Do," Gus Edwards & Will D. Cobb; Howley, Haviland, 1900. "Tell Me Pretty Maiden," Owen Hall & Leslie Stuart;

Witmark, 1900.

"Ma Blushin' Rosie," Edgar Smith & John Stromberg; Francis, Day & Hunter, 1900.

#### **'New' Music Biz**

#### Continued from page 225;

clicking with an artist or an a&r (artist & repertoire) exec, they could publish on their own, or place their songs as they see fit to best trading advantage.

The modus operandi of favored artist relations with favored music publishers and/or songwriter is best illus-trated by the Bob Merrill cycle who, for a time, shaped up as a "one-man Tin Pan Alley." Aligned with Georgie Joy, whose son Eddie also has Guy Mitchell and Mindy Carson (Mrs. Eddie Joy) under personal contract, Mer-rill's songs thus were judiciously channeled for best im-mediate kickoff. "If I Knew You Were Coming I'd Have Baked a Cake" was his kickoff some three years via Eileen Barton on National, but mostly via the Guy Mitchell-Mitch Millor (Col) pipeling he has registered on Colum Mitch Miller (Col) pipeline he has registered on Columbia. However, Patti Page's "Doggie In the Window," on Mercury, was even more standout, including a lampoon version by Homer & Jethro ("Hound Dog In the Win-dow" for Victor).

As in the case of "La Vie En Rose," which was a long As in the case of "La Vie En Rose," which was a long time coming to its deserved international fruition as a universal hit, including a completely new lyric idea than the contrived "You're Too Dangerous, Cherie"—nothing really happened until the American lyric version re-tained the original French title and gave it a Yank treat-ment—so did "April In Portugal" have the same ex-perience. This (original) Italian melody was called "Whis-pering Serenade," including when on the original RCA Victor release of the foreign waxing; but when Freddy Martin's Victor disk kicked off "April au Portugal" Martin's Victor disk kicked off "April au Portugal" (translated into its English counterpart) it really snowballed.

"C'est Si Bon" likewise snowballed although the perhaps boudoir version by Eartha Kitt, combining a sort of "fractured French treatment with English, topped them "Tractured French treatment with English, topped them all. And incidentally, put Miss Kitt into the diskstakes limelight. The same s.a. appeal given her "Santa Baby" coupled with the Greek royalty visit to Hollywood, pro-jected this as the top "new" Xmas song of '53. Dean Martin finally made his first Hit Parade platter with "That's Amore," lybrid Italo-American ballad, from one of the Martin & Lavis pictures Derry Comeis "You of the Martin & Lewis pictures. Perry Como's "You Alone" has an Italian flavored lyric, and Vic Damone

### Disk Biz Beaucoup High, High Grosses and Hi-Fi

#### By HERM SCHOENFELD

For the disk biz, 1953 was a year of high grosses and high fidelity. Total platter sales soared 15% over 1952 to the \$225,000,000 marker and, according to current estimates, the upbeat is expected to continue through 1954 to bring the industry's total to \$250,000,000. One of the basic factors in the resurgence of disks into a key spot in the home entertainment picture, despite the rear-satura-tion of television, was the swelling bally for hi-fi equip-

The expansion of hi-fi into the mass consumer market shaped up as the same kind of big lift to the disk industry that 3-D, widescreen and stereophonic sound was for films and that color promises shortly to be for video. It was another dimension in disk showmanship that's paying off on all levels of the music business.

On all levels of the music busiless. During the coming year, sales of hi-fi equipment are slated to go well over the \$200,000,000 marker. The im-pact of the hi-fi kick on top of the 24,000,000 phono ma-chines now in circulation is being felt immediately in over-the-counter sales, especially in the hypercritical long-hair field which has grown rapidly from a  $10^{\circ}$  pre-war to a current 30% cf the total market. The continuing growth of the high-fidelity movement, which has made the nation phono conscious again, has been one of the prime factors in the industry's solid optimism about the industry's growth in the next few years.

#### Columbia's '360' Pioneering

It took the top disk and phono manufacturers to take hi-fi out of the hands of the hobbyists and turn it into an advertising catchword and a multi-million sales potential. The audiophiles nursed hi-fi as their special baby for the past 20 years until Columbia Records took the plunge early in 1953 into the mass market with a completely assembled, moderately priced unit. At the outset, Columbia prexy Jim Conkling tentatively estimated that the com-pany's "360" machine might sell around 50.000. Before the end of the year, Columbia's only trouble was meeting the demand.

Shortly after Columbia made its move, the other com-panies followed suit in a general rush for the hi-fi Klon-dike. Powerful corporate entities, such as RCA Victor, Philco. Zenith and a flock of other companies, provided additional selling horsepower to widen the hi-fi impact. Victor, as an example, entered the field on all levels with assembled sets for the ordinary consumer and hi-fi components for the expert who could spend over \$1,000 on a deluxe, multi-speaker, high-powered setup.

The new disk trade body, the Record Industry Assn. of America, helped to exploit the hi-fi pitch with promo-tions aimed at selling more phonographs. The formula was simple and basic: more machines equal more disk sales. The RIAA aim is to get phonos into every U.S. home and activate all machines now in circulation. A big hypo in this direction during 1953 was the spread

A big hypo in this direction during 1953 was the spread of low-cost disks. RCA Victor's introduction of 45 rpm extended play platters, virtually a two-for-one price deal, was an instantaneous click that was picked up by every other label. Within a year of its debut, the EPs sold 10,000,000 platters at a total retail cost of \$15,000,000. In the LB fold Columbia Victor and Decase also uncerted the LP field, Columbia, Victor and Decca also reported climbing sales for its low-priced longhair lines.

When Pocket Books, the distributors of paperbacked books, entered the lowpriced field with a line of 35c pop disks, the industry really began to take notice. While the new Bell label is still to prove itself after only a couple months of operation. the potential of some 180,000 outlets in drugstores, subway counters, chain stores and other rack outlets, promised to make a powerful dent in the old distribution methods of the disk industry. The era

of the 3-5,000,000 bestseller may be at hand. The other majors are still watching the Bell operation closely to see if it goes over and RCA Victor has even put a similarly priced label on its planning board, possibly for this year. Manie Sacks, RCA veepee and general man-ager of the disk division, is exploring its feasibility although this project may be delayed by the advent of Vic-tor's new "Label X." another Sacks project designed as a competitive commodity in the indie disk field. In any case, the year ahead may see a radical reshuffling

of the disk industry's pattern. What was okay for serv-icing some 15,000,000 machines at the end of the last war is now proving to be inadequate for the new mass market horizons looming for the disk industry.

his father. Norman Brooks, a Canadian road company of Al Jolson, got attention with "Hello Sunshine" because of the freak aping of the great Jolie's style. Because Ray Anthony's Capitol disking of the "Drag-

net" theme clicked, there followed a wave of other radio and TV programs' "themes," none achieving the same impact. On the other hand, Stan Freberg's clever parody of "St. George and the Dragonet" (backed with "Little Blue Riding Hood," also clicko), resulted the same basic tune—the straight dansapation version and its parody being concurrently on the bestsellers. Freberg repeated his unique disk showmanship with broad comedy ver-sions of "C'est Si Bon" and "Dear John and Marsha Letters." From Dizzy Gillespie to Wally Cox is a far cry, but the belated wave of bop jokes and the penchant by TV's "Mr. Peepers" to indulge in "crazy mixed-up kid" cracks caused RCA Victor to record him. Cox did not click on wax. Jackie Gleason, on the other hand, is a video comic with a Petrillo penchant who has made his slick salon musical treatments pay off in album form on the Capitol label. Milton Berle and Georgie Jessel are also ASCAP writer-members but, other than appearing at intra-Society functions for fun and fraternal cheers, their general impact on the Hit Parade scene is more AFTRA than ASCAP. Ed Sullivan, the Lincoln-Mercury skipper of "Toast of the Town," saluted ASCAP and other music biz greats in his "story" cavalcades (Porter, Rodgers & Hammerstein, et al.), and, as result, has been made an honorary member of the Society. Necrology of 1953 included Louis D. Frohlich (Schwartz , successor to Nathan Burkan, founding attorney for 8.1 ASCAP; Fred E. Ahlert, under whose ASCAP presidency ABCAF; Fred E. Ameri, under whose ASCAP presidency the new TV contract was expedited; Em.nerich Kalman, Peter DeRose, Arthur Fields, J. S. Zamecnik, Theodora (Dolly) Morse, Marty Symes, Walter Bullock, Nicolai Berezowsky, Jack Glogau, Vladimir Bakaleinikoff, Frank La Forge Rex Ricarrdi.

ing companies have come to rely upon fine musical minds to produce their popular records. Mitch Miller, for in-stance, is not just an outstanding A&R man, but one of the world's greatest concert oboists. Men like Camarata, Percy Faith, Hugo Winterhalter, Henri Rene, Les Baxter, Dick Hayman and other leading conductors and arrangers, are familiar with all types of music. They have the training and taste to make our popular music better than it has ever been before.

The record buyer today not only buys "Song from Mou-In Rouge," but Percy Faith's recordings of popular clas-sics as well. He buys Winterhalter's "An American in Paris," Camarata's "Woodland Sketches" and Mantovani's albums of concert favorites. He buys Chopin and Rachmaninoff and Bach and Sessions too. Those names are no longer strange, for the melodies are familiar, and the sound of a symphonic arrangement is no longer too "deep" or too dull!

Through the efforts of many of the more intelligent, talented and responsible composers, lyricists, arrangers, re-cording directors and musicians, popular music in the United States has matured more in the past decade than during its entire history. The ear, mind and heart of the American public has been opened to all of the treasures of our musical heritage. Not only have jazz, folk music and popular songs become very respectable parts of our culture, but concert music has been made materially and psychologically accessible to everyone.

has also leaned in that direction. But dominantly it has been the French influence.

Toward the end of the year, the Germanic cradled "Oh, Mein Papa" came to the fore, especially via Eddie Fisher's Victor disclick. Eddie Calvert's British-waxed version which Essex, an indie label, imported pioneered "Papa" in the U. S., but the Fisher vocal version soon outstripped it. "You, You, You" is another hit deriving from Germany as is "Many Times.

There have been freak or flash-in-the-platter music biz highlights of greater or lesser impact. Rosemary Clooney, who went from "Come On-a My House" to a Rosemary Paramount film contract, teamed with Marlene Dietrich in "That's Right, Don't-A Fight (Have a Piece of Fruit)," which never got the most glamorous grandmother in show business on the Hit Parade but raised some eyebrows because of the double-entendre origin that was paraphrased into this novelty record attempt. Jimmy Boyd's smash 2,000,000 sale with "I Saw Mom-

my Kissing Santa Claus" for Columbia last year started a kid cycle. This year Col's Mitch Miller came up with a kid cycle. This year Col's Mitch Miller came up with 10-year-old Gayla Peevey doing "I Want a Eippopotamus for Christmas." Other novelty Xmas song treatments were Louis (Satchmo) Armstrong's "Cool Yule" and Stan Freberg-Dave Butler's two-parter of "Christmas Dragnet." Brucie Weil was a one-shot near-sensation with "God Bless Us All" on Barbour, a brand owned by











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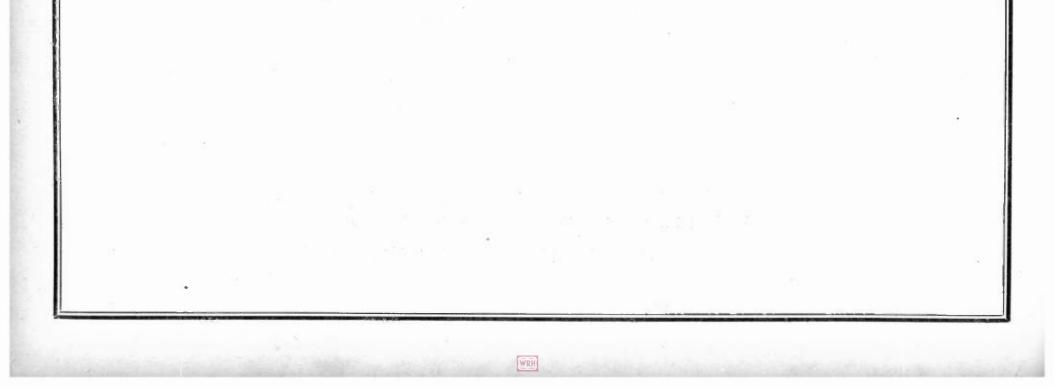


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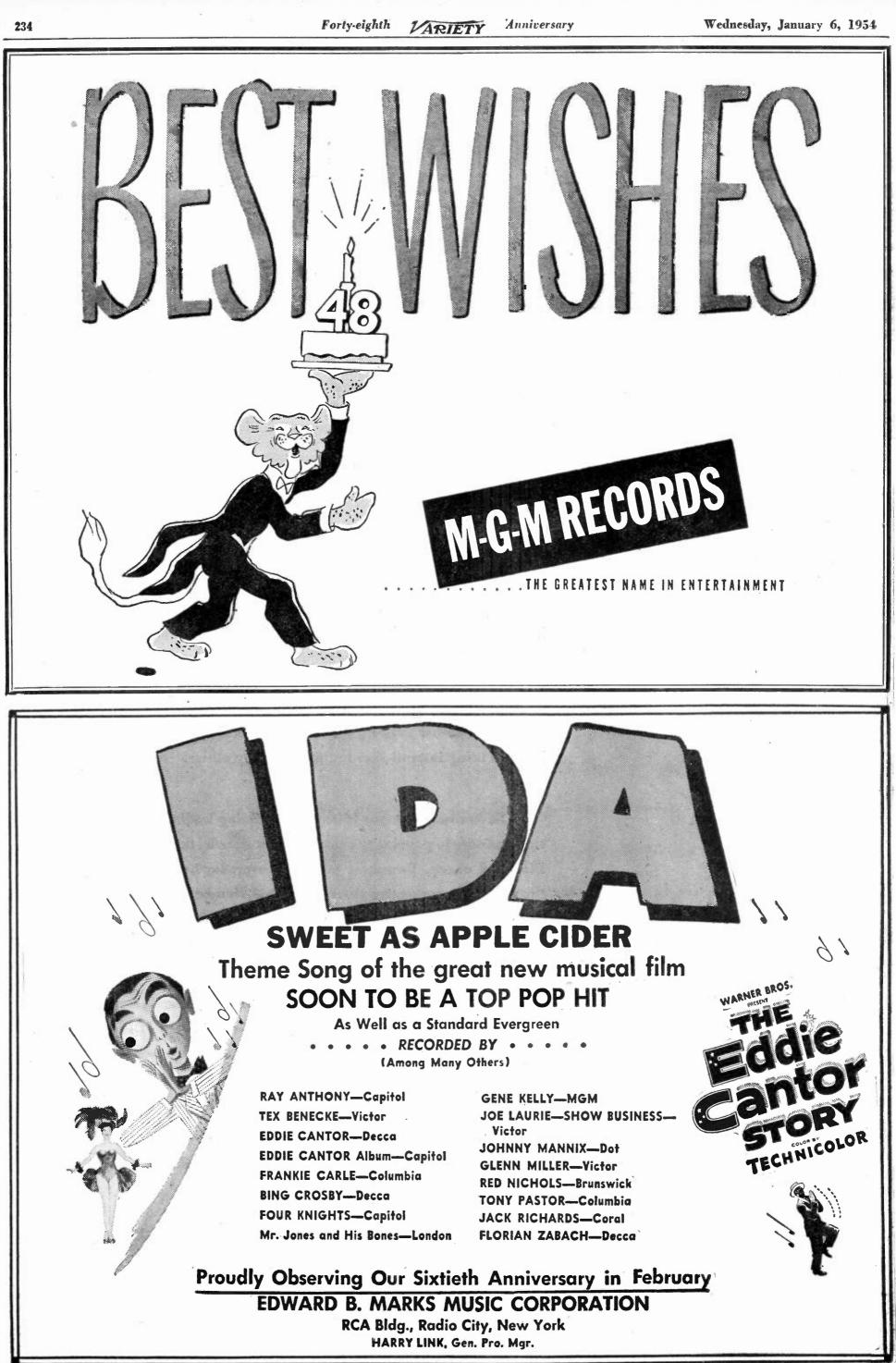
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the products and promotions that help expand the record business and make a good profit for you and for us. We

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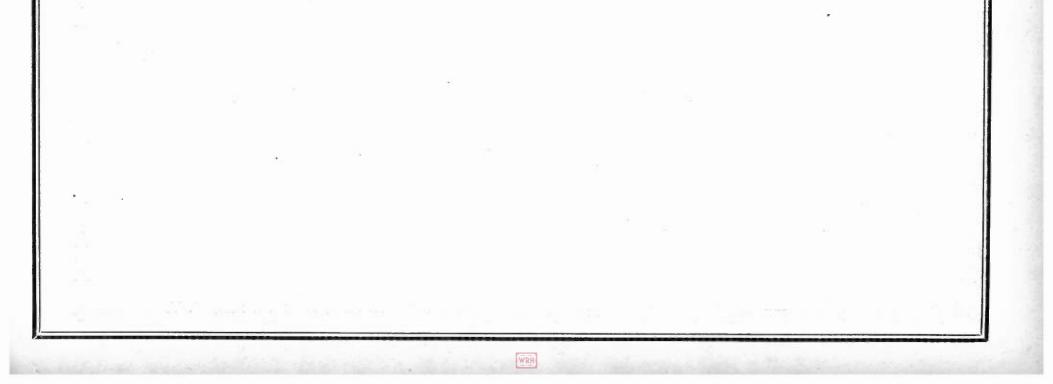
try—and generally we succeed. Columbia originated "Lp"—built the world's largest long play catalog developed more new artists and new repertoire than any other label—created the Columbia "360," the first high fidelity phonograph for the mass market—and now "X-D," the world's first 3rd dimension of sound for the home. Columbia moves fast. Why don't you move with Columbia!

"Columbia,"-"@" Reg. U. S. Pot. Off. Marcas Pegistradas. "360" Trade Mark.

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

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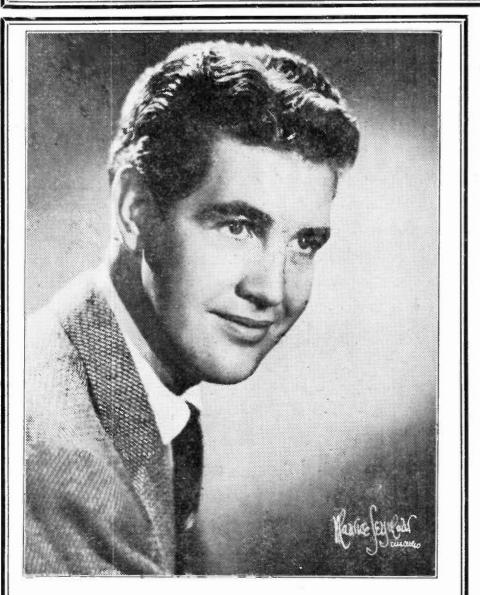
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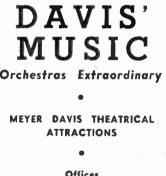
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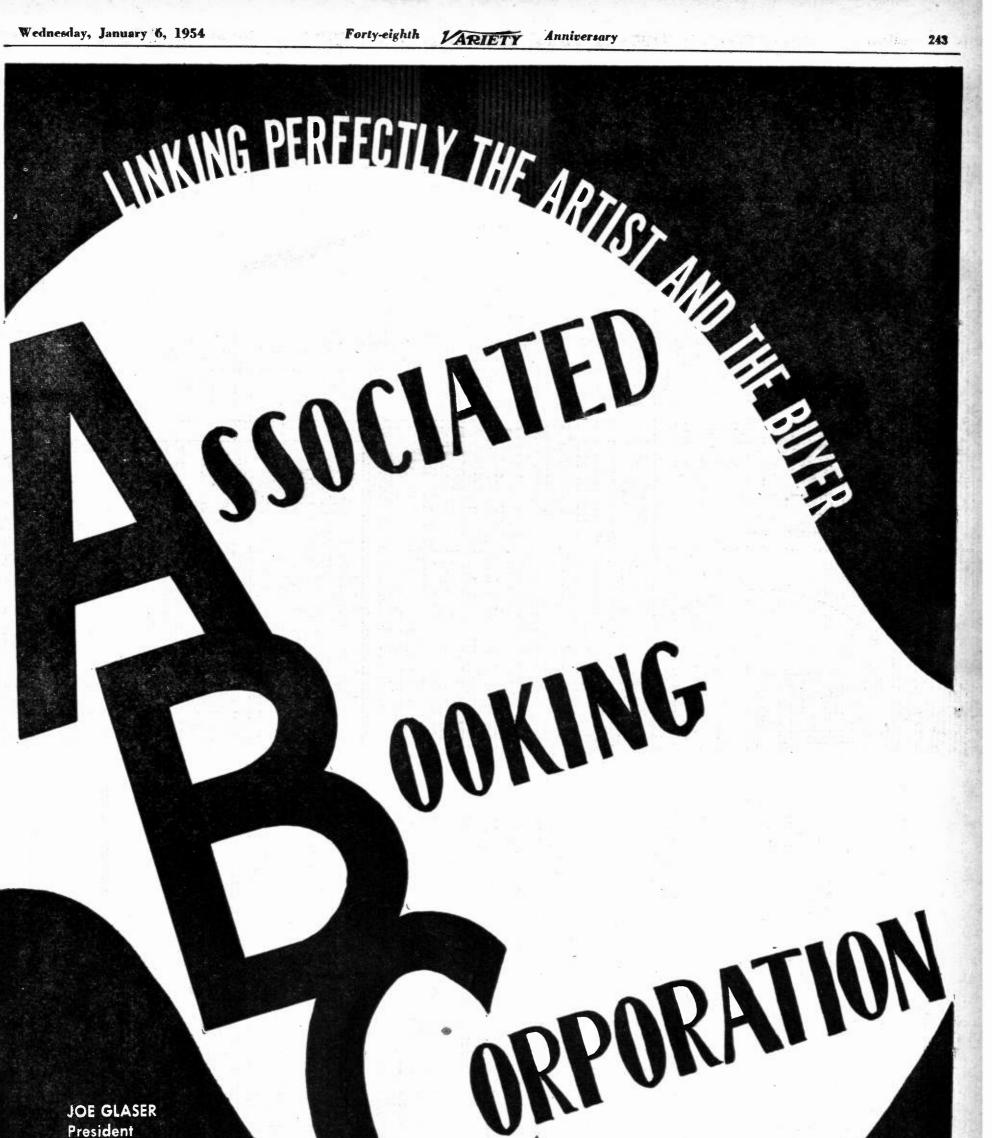
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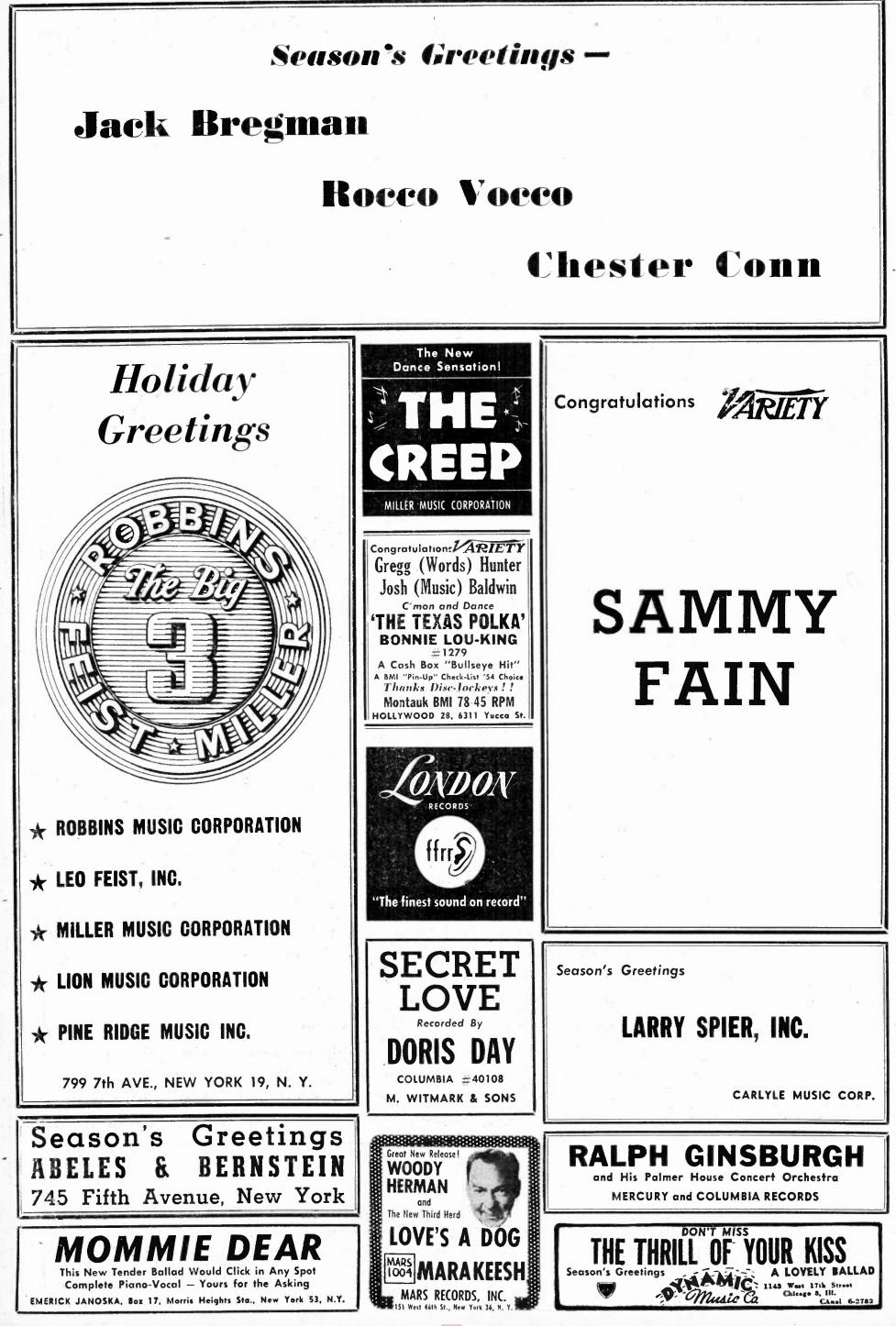
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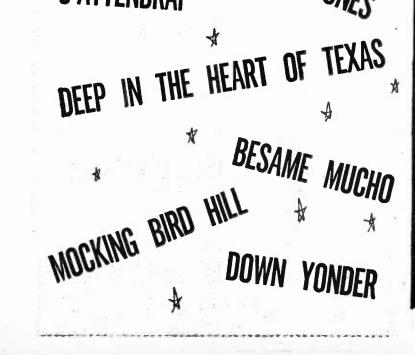
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#### VAUDEVILLE 246

### Show Biz—How She Is Spoke **On N.Y.-Paris-London Wheel**

#### By LOU WALTERS

and show business in dear Paris and fogbound London . . .

By show biz I don't necessarily mean legit, films, or the nightclub, but the business as a whole. In In Parts the marked differences America, of course, the aim of between one class of theatre and every actor is to be seen on the • TV or motion picture screens. I know many a star and budding theatres levoted to the femme reartist who is laying off in New York or Hollywood in preference to working in St. Louis or Chicago; have played stageshows for many many a glorious star who makes one picture a year when he might work 40 weeks of cafes and the-

atres. The Las Vegas hotels are filled with actors who'd rather work three weeks at \$10,000 per than for 30 weeks' at \$5,000 or \$6,000. For in these dear United States our leading stars keep an eye on one another, and the gath-erers around the tables of the Hillcrest Country Club wouldn't demean their standing by appearing on a stage. They want to appear on a screen.

But in Paris and London the stage is the thing, and the stage of the vaude house or the smart nightclub is equal in importance TV screens. In fact, in both these cities, TV is hardly out of its diapers.

The London Palladium is a shining example of showmanship. Here Val Parnell plays the world's great stars, for perhaps 20 weeks of straight vaude, then about 15 weeks of a revue type of show with balance of season devoted to the peculiarly English pantomimes. Stars like Danny Kaye, Bob Hope. Gracic Fields, Frankie Laine and others will, for some reason best known to themselves and Val Parnell, play the Palladium but balk at the Palace. Any British screen or radio name will eagerly accept a Palladium date, or in fact a spot at any of the other London or provincial vauderies. Towns there the size of Manchester, N. H., or Gary. Ind., have one or two houses dedicated almost entirely to this branch of amusement-and this in a country that has perhaps onefourth of the talent or the paying capacity of the U.S.

Vaudeville at the Palladium is a thing of beauty. It usually gets off with a line of 16 girls and the leading artists of Europe present their specialty; then, after a brief 10-minute intermission, the second half of the show, which generally consists of the headliner and per-haps one or two other acts, takes There are two shows a night, over at 6:30 and 9, for a moderate ad-mission ranging from 75 cents to \$2; no picture, not even a newsreel, and no show runs longer than four weeks; usually a complete change weekly, or an occasional two-week run at most four weeks with a Hope or Kave.

Is it because Parnell's a better showman that his shows look bet-I don't think so. We've good ter? showmen in America.

Is it because Parnell sticks to his

My impressions of the differ- atre business-the legit stage, the America, specifically New York. vaude theatre and the motion pic-ture house--each of which, when it has a good show, does good busi-When they have a bad show ness. they don't try to bolster it by mixing with some other ingredient; they try to get a better stageshow to sell.

> another are even more obvious. The "music halls" like the Folies Bergere, Casino de Paris and other vue type of show play this formula year after year and never deviate. The Bobino and ABC Theatres years. The pic theatre plays straight pictures and legit stays years legit.

> So it's my contention that the difference between Europe and America is that in Europe they stick to their lasts and take an occasional beating because they feel that it isn't the fault of the policy but of the show. In other words, a theatre with a B picture isn't helped by a few inexpensive acts, any more than an indifferent stageshow is helped by a lousy movie.

#### Policies Hang On

There is consistency in Europe. The Palladium policy has been going on for years and years, so has the Folics Bergere, and so have most of the other houses. Here in America I have seen theatres that play Martin & Lewis one week, and Joe & Blow the next, or a show with Jack Benny, Rochester and a whole slew of stars, and the next show a run-of-the-mine vaude bill. So what happens? The audiences go for the stars because they are getting a terrific buy, but when the show drops the attendance drops.

There is, of course, an exception: The Music Hall at Radio City, where brilliant showmanship by Leon Leonidoff and Russell Markert and expert staging and imag-ination take the place of artificial stimulants and headliners; where an imaginative stageshow is com-bined with a good motion picture and where the grosses make your mouth water.

And finally to the nightelubhere and in London and Paris. Cafes in London are a peculiar institution that open at 10 p.m. or later. The show usually consists ot one artist, not too often a head-liner either. Sale of liquor is stopped at 2 a.m. Food is usually better than in most restaurants and vou are supposed to be a member to enter. They go on year after year, presumably making money or they wouldn't stay open. Maybe the low overhead helps; small or-chestras of six or seven men, an act that gets from \$200 to \$750 a week is the attraction, except for an occasional British chi-chi artist Noel Coward or Bea Lillie, like but these are the very rare excep-tions rather than the rule. There is no wild scramble for headliners. Maybe that is why they stay open. The policy is pretty apt to stay the same week after week, so one knows what one is getting.

In Paris we find the Lido with its excellent American type revue. For the five or six years it has been open, the show policy has remained the same, with never a star but good consistent beautiful shows. good looking girls, good costumes, good acts, good management and a fair price. It seats 600 and is SRO most nights. The Nouvelle Eve, an overpriced establishment but with a good show, does well in spite of the high tariff. Here, too, the show is of the same consistency, the same policy-a revue of girls

the same money for a poor show that they do for a star-studded one? If I serve roast beef I charge more than for chicken. If I feature steaks my audience doesn't settle for sandwiches.

Now it happens that because of TV and Miami Beach and Las Vegas the salaries of the stars willing to play for me are so high that if I fill up I barely break even. I don't want to pack them in and make one-tenth of what I pay my actors, or lose several thousand a week. So I put together a show, consistently good show, or at least a consistent one. I fill it with pretty girls and good actors and the imagination that I and my staff can conceive. And it satisfies a great majority of my customers.

It isn't necessary that I be on Broadway and 48th st. to be consistent. There is, for instance, the Ruban Bleu, the Blue Angel, the Versailles and the Village Barn, each with a consistent policy, each with attractions large enough to draw a reasonable audience, but not so expensive that to stay in business the room has to be packed both shows.

So in short, I believe in consistency in show business. Get a policy and stick with it. Stick with it ong enough to give it a good try. Whatever your policy, make it as good as you can in your price class. Don't cheat on your show, your policy or your customers. I believe that wherever there are four walls, that if you find a policy, a good policy and stick with it, you will do business, without offering premiums of added motion pictures or "unnatural" headliners, or dishes or any other come-on.

### Pigalle Hypo In **Bal Tabarin Buy**

Purchase of the Bal Tabarin by former acrobat Jean Bauchet is giving rise to hopes that resumption of operation will revive the Pigalle section to its former preeminence as a tourist trap, from which it has been slipping of late.

Trade expects that the spot will reopen with the spectacle-type shows. Because of corporate alliances, it's anticipated that Pierre Louis-Guerin and Rene Fraday will handle the production aspects of his spot. They are among the top nitery producers in Paris.

Baucher operates cafes in Mareccech. Morocco, and is connected with the Clerico outfit which runs the Lido and Empire Theatre, here. Guerin and Fraday have long produced for this outfit.

Baucher's purchase of the spot at auction for \$80,000, topped a bid by a circus owner for \$75,000. It been feared that this cafe had would be converted to other uses, but that seems unlikely at this point.



### Soph's Golden Jubilee Salute

=By SOPHIE TUCKER ===

It's been an enchanted year. The time has all passed so quickly, these 50 years in show business, that I can hardly believe that I, Sophie Tucker, a big gawky gal from Hartford, Conn., have been celebrating my Golden Jubilee from coast to coast, surrounded by friends and co-workers in my profession—old friends, new friends, friends in all walks of life, friends from both sides of the footlights. It's been a rich and rewarding year. It's been a joyous, exciting year and I am thankful for it. And thankful for the Unseen Hand above which has given me these years of life and sustained me and given me strength and health to carry on at the top of my career in the twilight of my days.

Let me repeat to you, therefore, what I said to my friends who were able to attend the Golden Jubilee dinner at the Waldorf recently:

Success! Is it really fame and gold? You won't know the answer until you're old. And look down the road where the years have fled, Then up the little stretch that lies ahead.

I'll tell you what success is. It's the smile of a tot In an orphanage, or on a cripple's cot. If you've brought that smile of happiness, Then you have achieved what I call success.

No, success isn't glory or money in banks. Success is the mumbled words of thanks That the aged and helpless try to express For some little kindness. Yes, that is success.

Success is the gratitude in the eyes Of a friend who has fallen, and whom you've helped to rise; A friend whom you've given some reason to bless Your name and your memory. That's truly success.

Success is the prayer of those in need. Regardless of color, or race, or creed, For the one who has answered their cry of distress. If that prayer is for you, then you've had success.

And if I have carned just a little of these, To add to my treasure of life's memories, Then I have something worth more than all I possess, Then I humbly can say-yes, I've had success.

Not with gold and with glory will my trunk be packed When the Big Booker Up Yonder closes my act. All I'll take with me then will be these souvenirs Of the real gold in my Golden 50 years.

### **Borscht Circuit May Price Itself Out of Time**

#### **By HENRY TOBIAS**

(Producer-Director, Totem Lodge, Averill Park, N. Y.)

VARIETY affectionately When the "Borscht Circuit" about 25 that Moss Hart started at Copake, As we know full well many stars of today—Danny Kaye, Milton Berle, Eddie Fisher, Jackie Gleason, Red Buttons, Sam Levenson, et al-started their careers in the Borscht Belt. In the early days Jennie Grossinger, the "Queen of the Catskills" and her public relations impresario Milton Blackstone, representing the then fast growing resort industry, resented the VARIETY tag and felt that an industry spending millions in show business should be treated in with more dignity and respect.

years ago, little did we suspect that the borscht & potatoes would develop into champagne & caviar. Don Hartman and Dore Schary at Grossingers. Danny Kaye enter-tained at White Rose Lake, Mil-ton Berle appeared regularly at the Family Jacobs' Almanac Hotel, and I started at Totem Lodge over 25 years ago. In those days there were no visiting stars. We social directors had to be producers, di-rectors, actors, writers, song-and-dance men, emcees, comedians,

There have been great changes in

juveniles, dramatic actors, scenic designers, electricians, stage managers and stagehands all in one. We had permanent social staffs which doubled in other jobs such as athletic directors, tennis pros, basketball players, lifeguards, waiters, bus boys, bellhops—with Arthur Murray dance partnering besides!

Those lucky to get bigger budgets could afiord complete musical company units, including stock scenic designers and costumers. We were masters of own shows with no sponsors or veepees to interfere. It was then that we could create experiment, and try out ideas. Many a song and sketch that I wrote and presented at my summer spot, I later sold to Earl Carroll, Billy Rose or Lou Walters for a Broadway show. The Shuberts were the first to realize that the Borscht Belt was ready for Broadway and brought Max Lieb-man's "Straw Hat Revue" to New York, introducing Danny Kaye. The "Show of Shows" and other top TV shows were launched with much of the material tried and tested during the summer, and many a great sketch and song still lies in the trunk of a social director, waiting for a chance to be shown on Broadway.

guns and doesn't ever vary from a stageshow policy? Methinks that that is likelier, because I insist that show business is certainly a matter of habit.

Is it because every important Broadway theatre is owned or controlled by the motion picture industry that one by one vaude the-atres turned into second-rate, second-run houses while the large picture palaces stole their audiences and their acts only to lose not only the acts but in many cases the audiences. In London, the largest cinema, the Empire, tried a combination picture and stageshow policy with dismal results, despite fine shows and good films. The difference between stage and pic shows and good films is clearly marked. Motion picture theatres play motion pictures and vaude-ville theatres play vaudeville—just as legit sticks to its live talent without trying to mix it up with the screen.

three

and pulchritude. The now defunct Bal Tabarin lost its business when its owner and impresario died. With a con-sistently poorer, less imaginative show the business declined, sure evidence of the fact that showmanship kept the place alive and not the occasional headliner which they tried to interject. And so I come to America. I haven't any argument against headliners. I wish I could get a Danny Kaye or a Wish I could get a Danny Raye of a Tucker or a Sinatra every two weeks, 52 weeks a year. But I don't and can't. Am I then to play a \$10,000 star one week and a \$1,000 attraction the next? Not if

In England, then, there are the I am sane or if my audience has hree "separate" branches of the-any sense. Why should they pay

#### **LUCILLE and EDDIE ROBERTS** The amazing and amusing stars of "WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?" Now Appearing: The Cotillion Room

The Roberts are currently playing a return engagement at the Hotel Pierre to Jan. 11th. They follow this with the Detroit Athletic Club and a brief trip to South America. Press Relations: Frances Kaye and Gig Rosenfeld MANAGEMENT: MUSIC CORP. OF AMERICA

#### **Musical Tabs**

Before Broadway felt it was ready for the Borscht Belt, I felt the Borscht Circuit was ready for Broadway and so I started reproducing Broadway musical comedy successes at Totem Lodge. During the '30s we did such shows as "Connecticut Yankee." "Good News," "Flying High." "Hold Ev-erything," "Girl Crazy," "Whoopee" and others.

Besides the big shows on Satur-(Continued on page 290)

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

### CHASE MUSIC

#### = By CHARLES WILLIAMS

Joe Evans and Eddie Kenny, vet song and dance impressionists, were not only laying off, but couldn't find their agent, Max Weber.

Weber was as elusive as an espionage operator, and when the boys finally trapped him in the phone booth at Lindy's, his alternate office, he gave them a fast barrage of digs and darts.

"Boys I hate to tell you this. Your act is dated like old Bourbon, but not as good. Ha, ho, ha, Not bad eh?

"You have a heart as big as a green pea, and just as hard as the can it came in," snapped Eddie.

"Save the puns and coffee for the act, Eddie. Listen I can get you a TV audition but you'll have to change the act. Put a girl in it."

"Aw Max, what could we do with a dame?" Saw her in half?"

"Boys you've got to dig this new show biz. Nobody wants to look at a couple of tired heel beaters doing nerve I got a gal that will pull you out of the rut. This rattles. chick has the Betty Grables, the Jane Russells and can really shake her corpse.'

"When can we see her?" asked Joe.

"I'll send her over about 11 tomorrow morning."

The boys were rudely awakened early the next morning by a visit from the hotel manager, Murphy. He used a pass key for the invasion. Murphy was a huge red faced Hibernian, who hated actors. trunk and kicked it tentatively. He strode over to their

"Well, if it ain't my favorite hotel manager, in the flesh, and not a moving picture," quipped Eddie.

"Kenny, you and 'no talent' are going to be a moving picture. Pay up, or out you go, but without the trunk."

"Aw give us a break, Murph. We'll dig it up." "Dig up a new line. I'll be up in the morning with a

padlock honey, and I won't be late.'

Joe got dressed quicker than Owen McGiveny.

"Hold the fort Eddie. I'll go out and make a touch." A few minutes later Eddie heard a light tapping on the door. He opened it, and a beautiful thing sidled in. She had more curves than Carl Erskine, but no control.

"Hello baby," she cooed. "Max sent me over. I'm Dodi Brown." Eddie shook hands with her. but she wouldn't let He suddenly found himself seated beside her, waiting g0. for the next pitch.

"Max tells me you're a dancer, Miss Brown."

"That's right," sighed Dodi. "Ballet, belly and toe. 3-D in fact.

"Are you working?" gasped Eddie.

"No. I just closed with a Rodgers & Hammerstein show.'

"Does an R & H show ever close, Dodi?"

"Only to give the stagehands a rest." She kissed Eddie long and hard. He broke her hold and got on his feet, full of gooseflesh.

"Rehearsal tomorrow morning at 11, here, Dodi." A few minutes later Joe breezed in. "Anything new Eddie?'

"Yes Joe, Max dug up a gorgeous doll for our act.

"That's great. It will be more fun laying off with a broad in the act. How do you like the new kicks, asked Joe, pointing at his feet. Imported from England. They even squeak with an accent.'

"Who are you breaking 'em in for?"

"I got them at the Stroller shoe shop on 42d Street."

"Are they giving shoes away, Joe?"

"No, but the holes in the soles of my old shoes were giving me misery."

"Go on 'Bones I'ze a listenen'."

"As I passed the store, somebody gave me a shove and in I went. The clerk asked me my size, I took off my old shoes, put on the new shoes, the clerk went back to wrap up my old shoes, I went out the front door into the subway and here I am. For 10c I got a short ride, and a new pair of shoes, genuine leather."

"And if you're caught, you'll get a long ride, and a pair of handcuffs, genuine steel." "I'm going to send them the dough from the first job we get." Joe slipped off the shoes and handed them to Eddie.

"You wear the same size as me, try 'em on. You'll love 'em. Eddie slipped into the new shoes, and took a few steps. "Very smart, worth \$10 easy. "Those postcards helped me out yesterday, Eddie. I

put them in my old shoes to cover the holes." Invitation to Sing Sing "What postcards?"

postcards your Mother sent you last week, Those **UWO** remember? She said to say your prayers and go to confession, and on the other one, she said your old man was He's walking slow, but going fast sick.

### The Blackface Acts

VARIETY

(This is one of the many interesting chapters from the vet author-comedian's new book, "Vaudeville: Honky Tonks to the Palace" (Holt; \$5), just published and recipient of critical raves.

The blackface performers were the first acts in variety. The Negro as a comic figure was popular after the Civil War, and besides it was an easy thing to put on "black," a pair of big shoes, and old misfit clothes-no outlay for

wardrobe, and when you were in blackface you at least felt like and

After a while many performers "washed up," or took off the cork, and and naturally the smart ones tried to

Joe Laurie Jr. break away so they would be "differ-

ent" and so get better dough and billing. When vaude was in its Golden Age, blackface again be came popular. Nearly all the singles started to do black-face, but it wasn't like the oldtime minstrels who tried to portray a character; these new minstrels just put on "black' 'and talked "white." No dialect, didn't even try, in fact some of them told Hebe stories in blackface! For what reason they blacked up will never be known, except to hide some awful-looking pans! Just like many Jewish boys did Irish and Dutch in early days of variety, all the boys, Jewish. Irish, German and Italian, took up blackface comedy. It became a craze. Maybe it was because a guy in blackface could get away with many things he couldn't in whiteface. People figured you were an "actor" when you had black on. And besides, working in whiteface demanded a personality, which many of the guys didn't have, but when blackened up with a big white mouth they looked funny and got over easier. They dressed in regular street clothes and didn't even try to do characterizations. The old minstrels wept!

There were still a few oldtime minstrels who did the Negro dialect and mannerisms and portrayed the Negro as he was. The tops in our memory were Jim McIntyre and Tom Heath, who did many acts in vaude, trying to keep up to date, but "The Georgia Minstrels" was the classic of them all, and as far as me and Aggie are con-cerned the greatest of all the blackface acts! No slapstick, just fine characterizations and bellylaughs. They were the oldest two-man act in vaude—teamed in 1874. They very seldom spoke to each other, except for business reasons. They lived in different hotels when possible. One was a bottle man and the other liked champagne.

They were without a doubt the deans of all blackface They were in variety and vaude most of their proacts. acts. They were in variety and vaude most of their pro-fessional careers—took a few detours in minstrel and one Broadway show ("The Ham-Tree"), but always came back to their first love, vaudeville. Tom was the straight man while Jim played the comic. A guy by the name of Butler was McIntyre's first partner. While playing a honkytonk, Butler had to leave town suddenly. There are a lot of stories why; some say he was shot at by the natives of San Antonio because he were a high hat others say he was San Antonio because he wore a high hat; others say he was shot at becouse of woman trouble. Anyway, Tom Heath, who was on the same show, joined Jim McIntyre and they stuck together all through the years, unto their deaths. Jim McIntyre went first on Aug. 18, 1937, and Tom Heath followed him Aug. 19, 1938.

Fox & Ward were together even longer than McInytre & Heath, but were not as well known. They did an ordinary blackface act and became popular because of their long partnership. When they were together 50 years, for the Keith Circuit) for \$350 a week. They were fine gentlemen, never argued, and played out the string together

The big-hit blackface act to follow McIntyre & Heath were Conroy & LeMaire-Conroy, a fine comic with a high squeaky voice (a la Tom Heath, but no copy), and George LeMaire, one of the greatest straight men in show biz. They changed their act every few years, but "The Pinochle Fiends" was one of their best.

Kaufman Bros. (Jack and Phil) were an old team who depended more on their fine singing voice than on their comedy. Irving joined his brother when Jack died. Irving Kaufman, I believe. has made more recordings than anybody in show biz-thousands of them under all kinds of names. You may know him best as the man who sang the French commercial on radio about Chateau Martin wine.

Dan Quinland & Kellar Mack (later Quinland & Richards) were two old minstrel men who did a very funny act called "The Traveling Dentist." Dan was one of the greatest of all interlocutors, stood over six feet, had a booming voice, a fine vocabulary, and was a handsome guy (even when he was in the (Us) Haynes & Vidoq did a swell blackface act. Wood & Shepherd were one of the greatest blackface musical acts. As for the single men in blackface, there were hundreds of 'em. Jack Norworth (later Nora Bayes & Norworth) started in show biz as a blackface monologist and singer; he called his act "The Jailhouse Coon." Al Jolson (Jolson, Palmer & Jolson) did the part of a bellboy in the act in whiteface and didn't get over until J. Francis Dooley (& Sales), on the bill with them, suggested that Al blacken up. He did, and from then on Al did black; no dialect-just did a northerner's idea of a Negro dialect. His brother Harry also did blackface later. One of the greats was George (Honey Boy) Evans (got his nickname through singing Norworth's song, "Honey Boy"). He did a corking monolog and was a headliner for years, and also starred in shows. Lew Dockstader, the famous minstrel in whose shows many of the great entertainers served their apprenticeships, was one of the tops of the blackface singles. He later took off the cork and worked in whiteface. Eddie Cantor, who worked in blackface all through vaude and in the Ziegfeld "Frolics," worked in whiteface in the "Ziegfeld Follies" and shows, but by some trick of the plot always finished the show in blackface. There are a lot of blackface acts I wrote you about and will tell you about under different headings-two-man acts. entertainers, monologists, etc. But here are a few names that come to mind that were real good: Bert Swor, Rawls & Von Kaufman, Ben Smith, Emil Subers, Swor & Mack



#### **By PETER LIND HAYES**

"Lazybones" Johnson was depressed. The reason for his unhappiness was obvious to anyone who had ever been victimized by the "cycle" phase of the theatrical profession.



Peter Lind Hayes

Character men, especially in motion pictures, are constantly fearful of the pendulum that swings them into prosperity for several months and then just as suddenly departs and leaves them on their uppers in the cardroom of an actors' club, "waiting for a call." At times a cycle will last long enough for a character actor to get \$11 in his own name. In 1938 and '39 several "gangster types" practically retired on the paychecks they re-ceived from Warner Bros. A year later men were having their noses

fighters in gory spectacles about the prize ring. At M-G-M "English types" made so much money playing several

butlers they promptly went out and rehired their old ones. "Lazybones" Johnson, however, had a different problem. He was a "Negro butler type" and it was no longer con-He was a "Negro butter type" and it was no longer con-sidered wise by sensitive casting directors to "take a chance" with a character actor that might offend a minor-ity group. "Lazybones" had been fine as Sam The Pull-man Porter in "Murder Train," and who could ever forget that triple double-take he did the first time he saw the ghost in "House-Haunting." The audience had literally screamed at his bulging eves and trembling legs. Stepin Fetchit and Hamtree Harrington had both admitted that Fetchit and Hamtree Harrington had both admitted that "Lazybones" was the best double-take man in the business

You can't eat double-takes, though, and "Lazybones" was beginning to get hungry. He hadn't worked in over a year, and he was now pacing the floor of his agent's office complaining bitterly about his future. and

"Look, Manny, I gotta make some money man! . . . I'm flatter than a flat-top and you jus' gotta get me a job."

Manny impatiently flicked the ashes from his cigar and said, "Baby, if I tol' ya once I tol' ya a hunerd times, your type is thru in pichers. Now if ya get a act togedder I can book ya at the Golden Wheel in Columbus, Ohio. The boss is a fren of mine and if ya make good there I can book ya in joints all over the middle-west!"

"But, Manny-what am I gonna do? I ain't got no act man and I just never worked in a saloon since I was a porter 20 years ago."

Manny shrugged his shoulders and with his hands in the air said, "Wadda ya' want from me, baby? Ya' sing a little, dance a little, put it all tagedder and ya' got a act! But remember it's gotta be a novelty . . . that's what sells t'day . . . novelties! that's what the people want. Now if ya' don't cook up a novelty I can't go out on a limb and send yo' all the way to Columbus, so now go home baby and cook up a novelty!" "Lazybones" left Manny's office in a complete quandary.

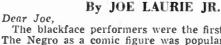
He had to think up a novelty. His imitation of a banjo was good but that had been done to death. His dancing was mediocre and there was certainly nothing novel about his singing voice. What could he do that would capture the imagination of an audience in Columbus, Ohio? All that night he sped frantically from one nightclub to another vainly seeking an inspiration for a "novelty." Finally he returned to his hotel room and fell into a

troubled sleep. He tossed and turned the whole night through but at 9 o'clock in the morning he jumped from his bed and shouted, "I've got it! I've got it!" Quickly he put on his clothes and ran to the nearest drugstore. He purchased a large bottle of calamine lotion and from the drugstore he went to the grocery store and bought a two-pound sack of flour. On the way home he stopped in the dime store and bought a large box of chalk. Back in his room he concocted a strange combination of all three. He worked them together until they jelled into a sticky kind of paste, this he placed in a jar and, with spirits high, boarded the Sunset bus for Manny's office.

'Lazybones" was beside himself with excitement. He was fairly shouting at Manny, "Manny, wait till you dig this, Man this is it! . . . now you just relax for a minute and you gonna' see the greatest novelty of the year!" At this point "Lazybones" disappeared into Manny's bathroom and prepared himself for the audition. He re-

moved the lid from the jar containing the strange concoction and proceeded to spread the contents all over his hands and face. When this was done he threw open the bathroom door and bounded into the presence of Manny. Before Manny could utter a word "Lazybones" was down on one knee and in a croaking voice sang, "NuaaaHaaa Mammy! Mammy! . . . the sun shines east, the sun shines west. . .

Manny lurched forward in his chair, jumped to his feet and screeched, "What in the hell are you doing?" "Lazy-bones," completely unabashed, stood up and with a big said "You wanted smile on his face novelty and this is it, I was doing Al Jolson in White-Face!'



Anniversary

Forty-eighth

looked like a professional actor!

went into orther characterizations-Irish, Jewish, Italian-but the minstrels who went into vaude and had a rep as blackface comics stuck to their makeups and identification. the early days of variety everybody was trying to get away from the cork because there were so many of them,

"Eddie started to perspire. your old shoes now?" "Joe, listen. Where are

"In the Stroller Shoe Shop."

"And where are my Mother's postcards now?"

"In my old shoes in the Stroller Shoe Shop."

Eddie turned white. Joe, what happens when the clerk finds my Mother's postcards with this address in your old

"Why you'll be arrested for stealing my new shoes."

"That's it, yelped Eddie. He slipped off the new shoes and threw them at Joe. "Here, take 'em their yours."

"No, you can have them. They pinch me." squeaked Joe. "I don't like that word 'pinch'." Both boys started Both boys started packing furiously.

The door opened, and Weber hustled in.

"Good news, boys. I got a club date for you tonight, \$200 double, less commission."

"Great, now I can pay for the shoes," said Joe. "Who is it for, Max?"

"The yearly dance and banquet for the Stroller Shoe Co."

Joe quickly handed the shoes to Weber.

"Give them these shoes as a door prize, we're hittin' the road."

In a flash the boys were gone, leaving Weber holding a pair of hot shoes.

(the original of Moran & Mack), John Swor & West Avery, Spiegel & Dunn, George Thatcher, Bill Van, Neil O'Brien (who did singles, doubles, and sketches), Pistel & Cushing, Jay C. Flippen, Jack George Duo, Lew Hawkins, Lou Holtz. Al Herman, Hufford & Chain, John Hazzard (who later wrole "Turn to the Right"), Mel Klee, Kramer & Morton, Mackin & Wilson (Francis Wilson years later became a Broadway star and the first president of Actor's Equity), Amos 'n' Andy (who went under the name of Sam 'n' Henry), Coakley & McBride, Hugh Dougherty (who did one of the first stump speeches), and many, many more.

While on this subject, when Frank Tinney (one of our greatest blackface comics) played London, he was a terrific hit. He had to make out an income-tax return and when the British authorities saw an item of \$750 for burnt cork (used for makeup), an English gentleman of the income-tax bureau came to visit the comedian. 'My dear Mr. Tinney, we just can't understand your item of \$750 for burnt cork; surely it doesn't cost that much for plain burnt cork?" Tinney looked at him with a typical Tinney look (like a kid that's been caught stealing jam) and said. "But my dear man, I use champagne corks!"

The oldtime blackface acts are now washed up; there isn't a blackface act today in show biz (except when the Elks put on a minstrel show), but they are not washed up in your memories, sez Your pal, Lefty.

Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

### Smith & Dale, Mike Bernard and a Pair of Shoes

A Further Account of the Trials and Tribulations of Two Boys From New York's Lower East Side—From Their Life Story, 'Stage Struck'

#### As Narrated by AARON FISHMAN

When Joe Smith and Charlie on a ladder that ran along a rail, for you." Dale, down on the east side of New York, first ran into each other they were actually on bicycles. From that strange, quarrelsome encounter emerged the famous comedy team and with it the business of arguing-a format of humor which they have successfully employed for over a half a century.

On their trek along the vaudeville trail, via the Atlantic Garden, 'Tony Pastor's and the Palace, they early came across one of its colorful characters-Mike Bernard, the great ragtime pianist. Bernard was then playing for the vaudeville acts at Pastor's on 14th Street, and box. was as big a favorite with the audiences as were the acts themselves. The theatre was intimate because of its small size: the music pit had a rail around it that was big enough for only a piano. Mike Bernard was the one-man orchestra.

It was down at the Lowenstein Club on Henry Street that Smith & Dale met Bernard one Sunday afternoon when the members congregated for their pinochle and poker games. Joe and Charlie had just become members and were getting acquainted. Bernard had some funny ideas of his own. He wore his kid gloves when he sat down to play pinochle and did not remove them even when he was eating a salami sandwich served him while playing.

After the game, he removed his gloves, walked over to the piano. played several ragtime numbers, then changed to Bach and Beethoven-he was that accomplished. Will Lester introduced the boys to Bernard, and when he learned that they could do a buck and wing and could sing he offered to teach them a song he had just written. He placed a professional copy on the piano, started to play, and began to sing-

"She is my ragtime star, when she does the possumala

The boys all near and far . . ."

He stopped playing. "Say!" He turned to Joe and Charlie. "I'm doing a piano act at H. R. Jacob's Theatre on Third Avenue next Sunday night. How about you and Lester here forming a trio and as-sisting me in my act? The boys liked the idea and so the foursome lost no time in getting down to framing and act.

"That routine sounds pretty good to me." Mike beamed. "We'll call it Mike Barnard & His Raglin Trio. "We'll call Meet me tomorrow at 10 at E. T. Paull's, my publisher on 28th Street, to rehearse.

"We can't get there until after 3:30," Joe told him.

ean," Charlie explained," we're working at Childs."

"A couple of hash slingers, hey?" chuckled Mike.

"Gotta eat while waitin' for a job, no?" Joe apologized.

picked out a shoe box and hopped off the ladder. "I got here a pair of shoes that'll

fit you like wallpaper on the ceil-Try on the left shoe. ing. Try on the left shoe. "What's the matter with the right

shoe?" Joe asked. "Nottin'," the clerk grinned. "You'se getting funny?" Joe "You'se getting funny?" Joe tried on the shoes. "They fit just like you said." He kept walking

up and down on the bare floor. "Hey! walk only on the strip of carpet!" the clerk yelled at him. "I'll take these shoes. How much

are they? Three dollars and a half."

"I'll give you \$3." "Nottin' doin' pardner." The clerk put the shoes back in the

"What's the matter...a one-price shoe store in a basement?"

'To you it is!" "Come on Charlie." Joe called and they both started to walk out expecting the clerk to call him back. It was a custom to bargain in shoe stores that had no price tags. To the boys' surprise, the clerk did not call him back. When Joe and Charlie were outside, Charlie remarked, "Those shoes are worth three fifty. Go back and pay him that. I'll wait here.

Joe went back and held out the three and a half dollars, as he hesitatingly said, "Here... give me those shoes" those shoes

Ground Grippers on the Lam

The clerk stared at Joe. "What's the matter pardner, you'se not hearin' so good? The shoes you'se want are now \$4. Take it or leave Joe walked out and slammed the door. When he told Charlie what had happened, Charlie told him." Those shoes looked classy him. on you and they're worth even \$4 Make believe you gave him a 50c. tip." Joe returned to the store Joe returned to the store once more.

"Here's the \$4, you robber! Now give me those shoes.'

The clerk looked at Joe with a "Pardner. those sneer. shoes were \$4. They are now \$4.50!. and if you walk out and come back again. pardner, those shoes will cost you \$5!"

Joe yelled. "I'll tell your boss what you're trying to pull on me!!" "Tell him!" the clerk yelled

back. "he's my brother-in-law." Joe looked the clerk in the eye elligerently. "Listen." he hissed, belligerently. 'this ain't a shoe store, it's a fence!

'Yeh? so jump over the fence, and don't slam the door when you go out!

When Joe told Charlie how the clerk tried to trick him again, Charlie too was sore now. "Joe you wait here ... I'll get those shoes would soon come into existence.

A few minutes later Charlie walked down into the basement store. The clerk came over to him.

"Mister," began Charlie, "what happened to that fellow I came in with? I told him I'd be back here and to wait for me."

"Oh that guy ... I wouldn't sell him those shoes for spite. I know he's nuts about them shoes. He'll be back again and it'll cost him \$5, don't you worry."

"You're right," Charlie agreed, "That the way to handle cheap guys. I only met him the other guys. day, but now, I got his number. oh by the way, I need a pair of shoes. Let's look at the same pair of shoes you showed him." Charlie tried on the shoes and kept stamping on the strip of carpet. The clerk felt the tip of the shoe.

"They're too short for you." "Nah!" Charlie answe

"Nah!" Charlie answered, "They're just right. I'll cut my big answered, toe nail, break them in for a day and they'll be honky-dory." Charlie gave the clerk a big smile. "Wrap em 'up, I'll take 'em. How much are they?'

"For you my friend," the clerk smiled back," the shoes are \$3.25, and if you happen to see that cheap skate, tell him what you paid for the shoes."

Charlie paid him and gave a quarter tip. The clerk was very pleased with himself. "Thanks, pleased with himself. and when you come here again, ask for Morris."

Two minutes later Joe walked into the shoe store. Morris walked over to him.

"Aha!" he laughed." you came for those shoes, yes?" "No." Joe said, "I came for a shoe horn that comes with those shoes.

Sunday night at the H. R. Jacobs Theatre on Third Avenue Mike Bernard & His Raglin Trio were a hit and after the per-formance Mike came into the trio's dressing room. "Boys, we've got a good entertainment act." The boys felt enthused.

"How much are we getting?" Will Lester asked.

"Nothing, this is a breakin', and next week we're going to play a club in Jamaica."

"And how much are we going to get for that?" Charlie asked. "That's another break-in, Mike

replied. "Come on fellers." concluded Joe, "let's break out."

And that was the windup of Mike Bernard & His Raglin Trio. They did not know it yet, but there as-sembled—Joe Smith, Charlie Dale and Will Lester—were three of the historic Avon Comedy Four which



### **VIOLINSKY UNEXPURGATED**

of his layoffs that he is writing a book entitled "Laying Off Under Four Presidents," is probably one of the most quoted comics in show business. He's known in the trade as a comic's comic; his most appreciative audiences are in the profession.

Despite his record layoffs Violinsky has his pride. He wouldn't accept a loan of \$1,000 because "the party wasn't reliable." His devotion to the bangtails is wellknown, but finally he adopted a system of beating the bookies on the first four races-he showed up in time for the fifth. Some days, he beat the bookies completely. He got worried one time before a 14horse race when the trainer told him that there were only 13 other nags to worry about. But he rareworried since his bookmaker ly

### Kansas U.'s Show **Circuit Bigsize Booking Agcy.**

Kansas City.

A kingsize vaude and booking agency has developed at the U. of Kansas, which is furnishing programs to over 5,000 highschools and towns in a five-state region. The extent of this entertainment operation was revealed in a recent report of the show circuit's director. Guy V. Keeler, the school's cor.cert and lecture manager, from his office on the campus at Lawrence.

The operation is on a self-sus-taining, non-profit basis, but for much of Kansas and bordering towns of nearby states it is the major source of live entertainment. Keeler has as many as 40 persons on the road during the school year filling engagements that range from informative lectures to magic, music and drama.

The average weekly payroll for the department, which functions as part of the university's extension service, runs to \$6,000. The performers travel the territory in a fleet of 10 cars and small trucks owned by the university.

Support for the program is de-rived from highschool and civic sponsors, who pay a minimum of \$22.50 for each show. A more deluxe unit will run as high as \$100. The schools in turn reap their income from students who pay admissions ranging from 10c to 25c. Much of the program is worked out with students who help as part of curricular work or extra-curricular activities.

The state school takes the view that while it's entertainment, it also slips in a good deal of educa-tion. The man with the dog and pony act also tells youngsters how to train their own pets. The reptile expert also shows quick first-aid for snake bite—the approved medi-cal practice, that is. Some acts, such as ballet and musical units. are instructive in themselves. Safety, too, gets a large whirl from this department.

Almost the entire range of vaude is represented by the school's supply of performers. There is plenty of magic, trained animals, glass blowing, archery, Swiss bell ringing, musical instruments, tab plays. as well as more sedate lecturers and commentators. In some cases the more current and cultural acts are presented on a civic subscription basis, a townsman getting a series of 10 lectures for \$10. Man behind the K. U. show circuit is Keeler, generally known as the Barnum of Mt. Oread (mound on which the school is planted). He has been at it about 30 years, coming to the university from a coaching job from nearby Atchison, Kans. He adds his share as a per-former to the program by appear-ances before luncheon and civic clubs. Much of the program involves established professionals, who are valued for their instructional work. Playing the K. U. circuit means three and four shows a day for the troupers in three or four towns. The pattern is a show at "Podunk" at 11 a.m., hop to "Squeegee" for another at 1, at "Punkin Corner" another at 1, at "Punkin Corner" dy, who was recently named na-at 4, and maybe the Town Hall at the next town at 8.

Solly Violinsky, who is so proud | generally carried him at the track -and frequently had to carry him back.

Violinsky was once asked to entertain at an affair for disabled vets. He was glad to accept . . . they can't walk out on me.

The comic had a short tenure in Hollywood, where he observed, "No matter how hot it gets in the daytime, there's no place to go at night." He was fired in two weeks by Metro and he protested that they couldn't possibly find out how little he knew in two weeks. It was during this period that his wife wired him that she was lone-some for him. Please send money so that she could go out. He wired back, "Lonesome for you too. Send money so that I can come home."

Violinsky is proud of the fact that he has layed off in every medium. He started laying off in the vaudeville days, but soon found laying off in radio more profitable. He's now laying off in television. He also has a good record of laying off in the songwriting business. member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, the organization sent him his ASCAP buttonhole emblem. He wired back. "Received emblem for the buttonhole. At present haven't got a coat—please advise." Among others, Violinsky has writ-ten "When Frances Dances with Me."

'Big' Money

Violinsky is a vaude vet who used to play a piano and violin si-He recalls that he multaneously. ised to make big money . "The bills were larger in those days.'

Violinsky is one of the more famous former residents of Bing-hamton, N. Y., where he can walk down the street, look everybody in the eye, knowing that they don't hate him. He realizes that it's "be-cause I never played that town." Once when he was planning to visit his hometown he was asked whether he would fly there. Violin-sky said, "Who want's to get to Binghamton that quick.

Violinsky is conceded to be one of the more successful layoffs. His first hiatus was so long that it was not until his fifth year that he found out his agent was dead. So that his layoffs shouldn't be a total loss, Violinsky took to songwriting. He's specializing in writing private hits. At any time, he carries at least 10 tunes on his own hit parade. Even his father was musically ahead of his time. Once looking at Solly's royalty state-ment from ASCAP, the senior Violinsky yelled "Solly, Stop the Music." Years later this became the name of a radio and television program. One of the proudest moments in Violinsky's life was the time he was compared to the late George Gershwin. It was pointed out that although Gershwin died, his music lived. In Violinsky's case, Violinsky lived, but his music died

His most affectionate recollection stems from the time he was employed to play piano in a sportive He was so good establishment. that everybody used to stop to applaud.

Years ago, Violinsky and several songwriters were sitting in Lindy's discussing song titles-the majority, including Violinsky, was in favor of short tags. Al Bryan, the writer of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier." said "That was a long title, and I couldn't have made it any shorter." "Oh yes you could." replied Solly, "you could have said "Don't Col"." Don't Go!' Solly went broke playing cards at the Friars Club, and on the way home he met Bugs Baer, another card player, who was walking pretty fast. Solly said, "Where are you going, Bugs?" Bugs said, "This is my bridge night." Solly said, "Wait for me, and I'll jump off with you."

Their wardrobe was sort of adequate, but Joe's shoes were badly worn-not good enough to dance in. The next day, after rehearsal at the publisher's, Charlie went with Joe down to the Bowery to buy a pair of shoes in Bernstein's basement store. Andy Geller, an-other stagestruck friend of theirs, worked there. (He quit show business eventually to become the millionaire shoe man Andrew Geller.)

"I want Andy to wait on me," Joe told one of the clerks. "He ain't here." the clerk an-swered, "he took off at three o'clock. He said he had to rehearse an act with a bloke named Billy Green," and giving Joe a squinty look. continued, "What's the matter, ain't I good enough to

wait on youse?" Charlie tried to ease the situa-tion. "Go ahead Joe, let him wait on you, he'll give you a good break."

"Sure, slip off your shoe pard-ner." the clerk added. Joe handed him the shoe. The clerk looked at the inside of the shoe, then hopped

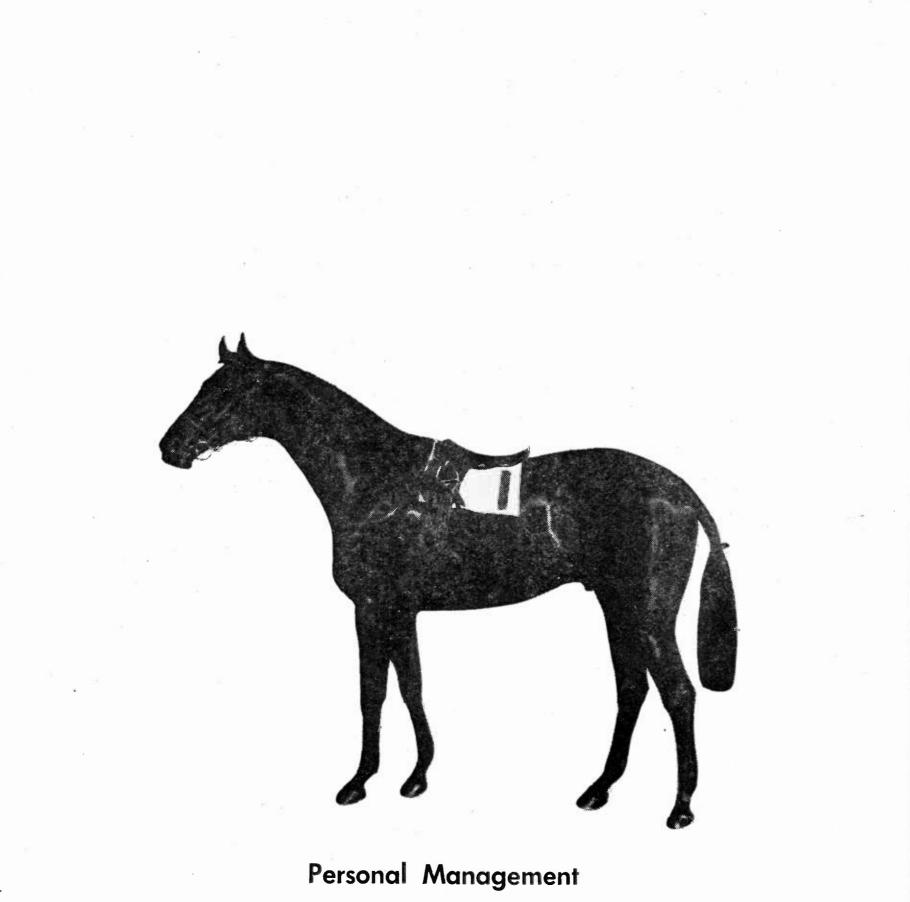
LEO DE LYON Direction: GENERAL ARTISTS CORPORATION

#### **Col Tops Broderick** For New England Mgr.

Joseph E. Broderick, formerly Boston division manager for Capitol Records, has shifted to Columbia Records as district manager in New England. He'll handle the Columbia, Epic and phono equipment lines.

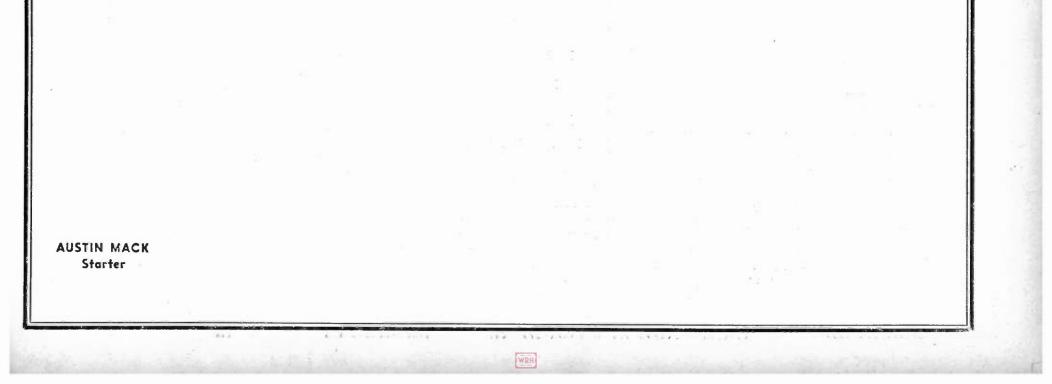
Broderick replaces James Drad-



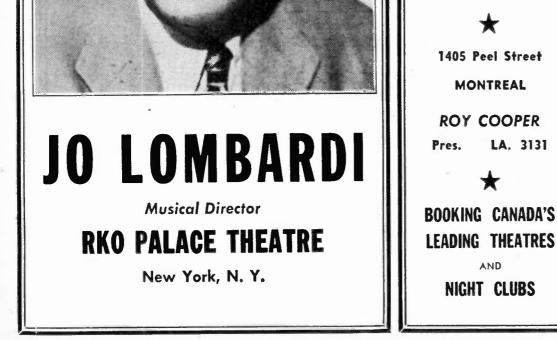


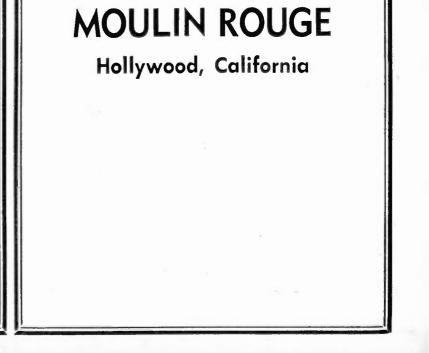
JOE E. LEWIS

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Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

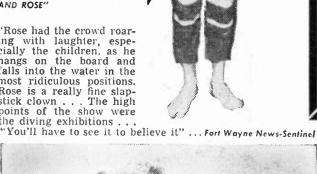
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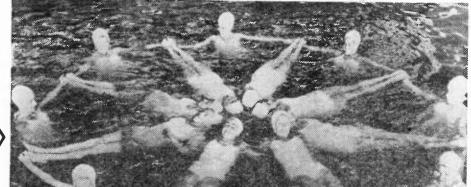
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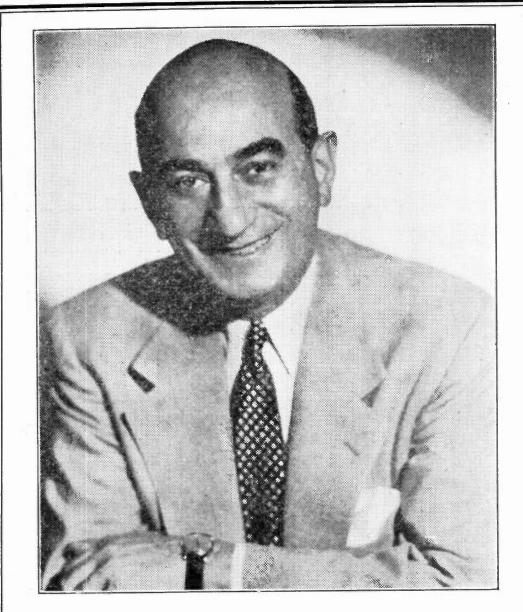




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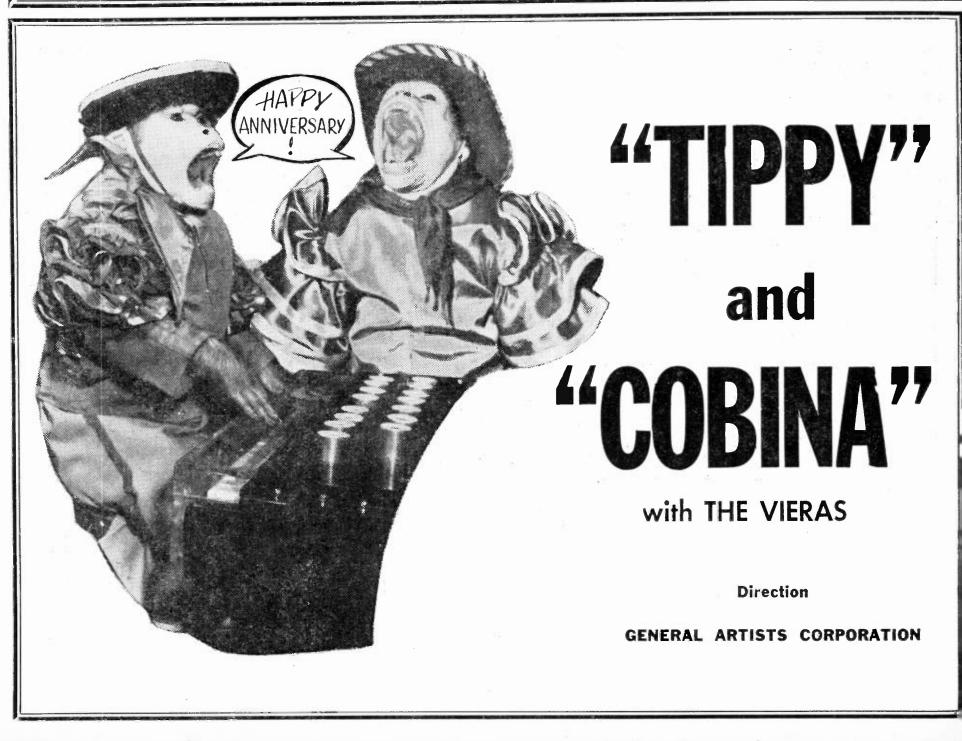
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Wednesday, January 6, 1954

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

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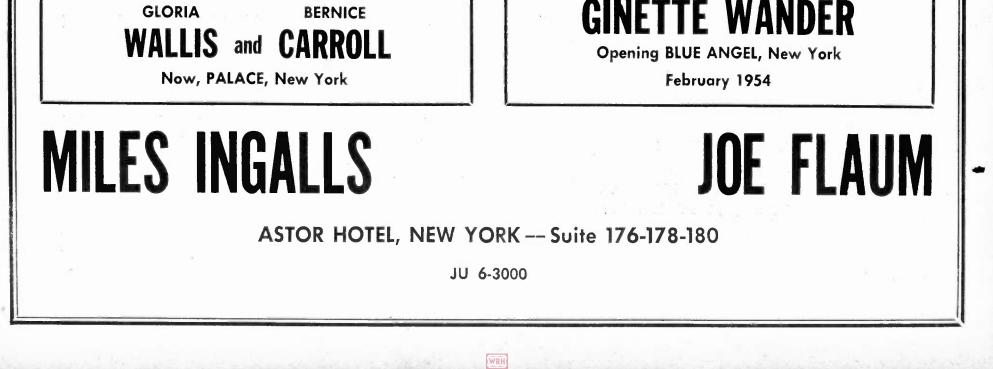
### GAUTIER'S STEEPLECHASE

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# **ROY SMECK**

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Management ASSOCIATED BOOKING CORP. JOE GLASER, President Special Material by Wm. B. Friedlander

THERE'S NO FOLK LIKE SHOWFOLK **W**<sub>E'VE</sub> said it before. We'll say it again. You showfolks get a big hand from us — with a big "Thank you!" for your past and present patronage.

But we're no more content than you are to rest on current laurels. So we're constantly improving our service, comforts and decor to merit your continued loyalty, your lasting conviction that there

are no Chicago hotels like The Ambassadors and

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FRANK W. BERING, Chairman of Board JAMES A. HART, President PAT HOY, Vice President & General Manager, The Sherman EUGENE BARRETT, Manager, The Ambassadors

### THE AMBASSADOR HOTELS HOTEL SHERMAN

CHICAGO

Wednesday, January, 6, 1954

# Season's Greetings

# 7 ASHTONS

#### Australian Risley Sensation

"This group comes to us from Australia. When we say they stopped the show at New York's Latin Quarter, you'll know they are terrific. As you watch the six men and a woman perform, you'll gape as you've never gaped before."

> Currently - Return Engagement LATIN QUARTER, New York

# CARSONY BROS.

#### International Acrobatic Trio

#### VARIETY Says:

"Most amazing bit, and seemingly impossible, is Carl balanced atop a cane, on one hand, upside down, with one of the freres wrapped around his middle. Customers are kept in a state of astonished shock."



# **CHOP CHOP and CHARLENE**

"Magic with a Slant"

With Thanks to My Boss TED LEWIS FOR 3 YEARS of "MAKING MAGIC"

# AMIN BROTHERS

International Risley Artists

Just Concluded, CIRO'S, HOLLYWOOD

Soon, PALMER HOUSE, Chicago

# **CAROLE FROHMAN**

#### "Miss Versatility of Song"

"Miss Frohman is young and beautiful and she can really sing."

Booked for 1954 - EUROPEAN TOUR

# CHAM-BER HUANG

Oriental Harmonica Virtuoso

Now appearing: HENRY GRADY HOTEL, Atlanta, Ga.

# ENNY COLLINS

# MAXIE and MILLIE

"Musical Nonsense"

**DU QUAINE and DANICE** 

Versatile Singing Star Just Concluded: SHOREHAM HOTEL, Washington, D. C.

"Artistry in Dance Interpretations"

#### LEW & LESLIE GRADE, LTD., INC. Eddie Elkort, V.P. Hans Lederer, V.P. Henry Dunn Frank E. Taylor Shelly Rothman 250 West 57th St. 8580 Sunset Blvd. New York 19, N.Y. Hollywood 46, Calif. JUdson 6-4190 CR 1-5251 LONDON PARIS MILAN COPENHAGEN SYDNEY MELBOURNE SOUTH AFRICA

WRH

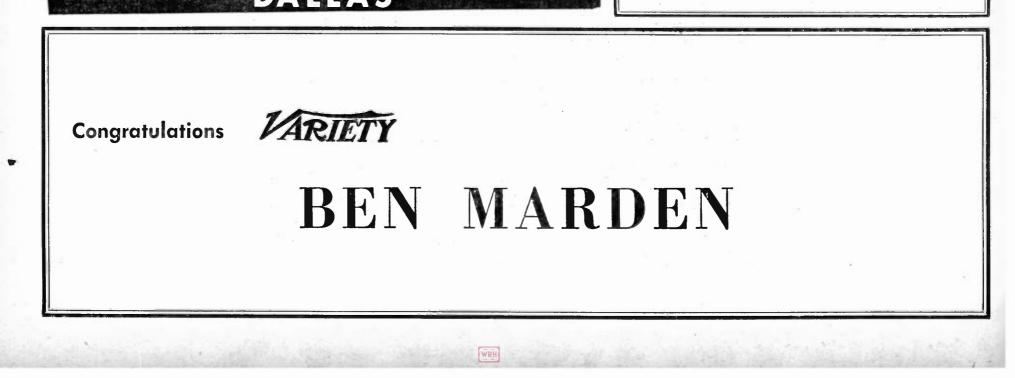
PAUL BRUNN, - Miami, Fla.



Personal Management FRANK FASKE Direction
WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY



258



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# The Fabulous





259



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

# WANTED: A Strutting Man, With A High Hat and Cane

"Jackie Barnett, Jimmy Durante's songwriter, who impersonates him in 'The Eddie Cantor Story,' would undoubtedly be first rate for the part in a biography of the famous Schnozzola, Maestro."

260

EDWIN SCHALLERT, Los Angeles Times.

"Jackie Barnett as Durante especially good."

Los Angeles Times.



"A young actor named Jackie Barnett proves a scene-stealer as the young Jimmy Durante."

> WANDA HALE, New York Daily News.

"Love Jackie Barnett as Jimmy Durante in 'The Eddie Cantor Story'."

> LEO GUILD, Hollywood Reporter.

# JACKIE BARNETT

Management: JIMMY DURANTE Personal Management: EDDIE JACKSON

**Drummer: JACK ROTH** 

Piano Player: JULES BUFFANO

#### THE INTERNATIONAL ORIGINAL NOVELTY

# **FEDI** and **FEDI**

"One Person Dancing Team" After 26 MONTHS at Casino de Paris, Paris A Sensational Success in America

**Currently: RETURN Engagement** 

#### PALACE THEATRE, New York

NIGHT CLUBS Latin Quarter, N. Y.—16 weeks Thunderbird Hotel, Las Vegas—3 weeks Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans—4 weeks Henry Grady Hotel, Atlanta—2 weeks Montmorte, Havana, Cuba—3 weeks TELEVISION Twice on Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town," N. Y. Kate Smith Show, N. Y. Cuba Television Radio-Canada Television St. Moritz Hotel, Three Rivers—2 weeks Casa Loma, Montreal—2 weeks Radio City, Montreal—1 week CANADA NIGHT CLUBS Bellevue Casino, Montreal—3 weeks Toronto Casino—1 week Cafe del' Est-1 week Plaza Hotel, Montreal-1 week Beaver Club, Montreal-1 week FAIRS Ernie Young's Fairs-6 weeks

BOOKED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1954

Canada and U.S.A. Fairs 14 Weeks and Many Other Engagements

THANKS AMERICA

Personal Management: EDDIE SMITH, 1697 Broadway, New York, N. Y.



### The Sparkling Lyric Soprano SARA ALLEN Continuing and now in 23rd CONSECUTIVE WEEK AT LILLIANA'S 68 Fifth Avenue, New York \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

Special Material by ELI BASS

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

The

# MUSICAL NADES with JACQUELYN

BURTELL

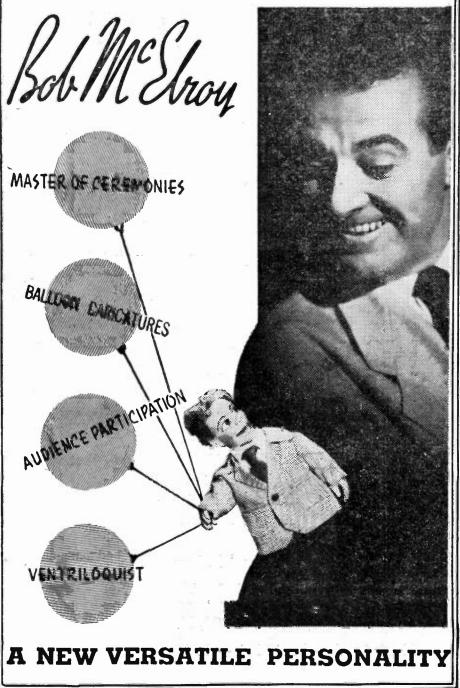
JAY SEILER

# **AMATO's SUPPER CLUB**

Portland, Oregon through January 16

×





# Just Concluded **STOCKMAN'S HOTEL**

Elko, Nevada

Thanks to JOE DANIELS

**Personal Management:** LEN FISHER 6 East Lake St., Chicago CEntral 6-7353

Anniversary

FISKE

# **CHARLES TRENET**

International and continentale artist from Paris. Now appearing "Blue Angel," New York. Starring "This Is Showbusiness," via CBS television, January 12, 1954. "La Mer," written and composed by Charles Trenet, a Columbia recording and still a world-wide seller.

# CHIQUITA AND JOHNSON

Internationally famous acro-dancing stars currently headlining at Frank Sennes' new "Moulin Rouge," Hollywood, California.

# **RUSS PEAK**

Hollywood's newest singing star, currently appearing at Frank Sennes' "Moulin Rouge," Hollywood, California.

# CARMENCITA PERN

South America's number one RCA recording star — "Anna" with Perez Prado's Mambo Orchestra.

# TONY AGUILAR

Mexican movie idol, soon making his American debut.

MARIO

Mexico's famous comedian who made his American debut earlier this season at the Hispano Theater, New York City.

LETICIA PALM

Mexican film star and still the Latin American top box office attraction.



Season's Greetings

#### MCA

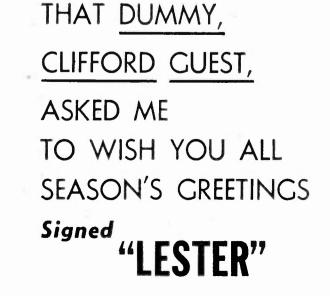


Your own U. S. Mail Carriers - first television debut on the Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy party via the ABC network, November 24, 1953.

**Exclusive Personal Management** 

#### WILLIAM L. TAUB

PLaza 5-5703 465 Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y. MEXICO CITY - LONDON - PARIS - BEVERLY HILLS



Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

# LOST MY HEAD

# forgot to tell ya —

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

1 . .

WRH



# All My Love, Pearlie Mae Bailey

Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

**SENSATIONAL** 



264





### **CHICAGO**

#### AMERICA'S LEADING

#### THEATRE – RESTAURANT



"... Senor Wences' act is a gem ... his embellishments are marvellous . . . So dexterous and sure is Wences that when it is all over, you are likely to get the feeling of having been in the presence of a supernaturally gifted illusionist, rather than a ventriloquist."

THE NEW YORKER ". . . Senor Wences is probably the world's sharpest and most polished entriloquist.'

N.Y. WORLD TELEGRAM & SUN "I hate all ventriloquists except one. He John Barber is SENOR WENCES."

DAILY EXPRESS "I was especially pleased to see again the impeccable SENOR WENCES, who is unquestionably the finest ventriloquist in the trade." Kenneth A. Hurren "What's On"

"The be-all and end-all of the ventriloquial art is embodied in Spain's SENOR WENCES." Ken Gordon

WEEKLY SPORTING REVIEW "Don't say you have heard the best ventriloquist until you've seen SENOR WENCES, who throws his voice around as if he were triplets"

SUNDAY PICTORIAL

#### SENOR WENCES

**RENO, NEVADA** 

McQuaig Twins Brewster Singers

#### **Variety Bills** Continued from page 264 ;

L'Aiglon Chuy Reyes Orc L'Aiglon Strings Charlie Farrell Latin Quarter Jane Morgan Bernard Bros The Stonys Veronica Bell Ruth Costello Ralph Young Piroska Ernie Amato Cortez Orc Campo Orc

Antone & Ina Sid Stanley Orc Allan Drake Antone & Ina Sid Stanley Orc Allan Drake Sans Souci Hotei Nicholas Bros Bob McFadden Arne Barnett Sacaras Orc Ann Herman Dcrs Roney Plaza Milt Herth Trio Jacques Donnet Orc

# LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Saxony Hotel

Bob Ellis Orc Flamingo Pearl Bailey Ming & Ling 5 Christobels 5 Felix Prod Barbara Perry Torris Brand Orc Last Frontier Mary Kaye Trio Buddy Lester Senor Wences Jean Devlyn Dncrs Garwood Van Orc Golden Nugget

J McHugh & S Billy Gray P Moore & B Lessey Frank Sinatra Copa Girls Ray Sinatra Orc Landre & Verna Stuart Foster Mapes Skyroom Carl Ravazza Jay Lawrence Mapes Skylettes E Fitzpatrick Orc New Golden Toni Harper Frakson Frakson Dewey Sisters

Montmartre Tronicana Sans Souci Olga Chaviano Walter Nicks Juliet & Sandor America Crespo Rosana Martin Trio Ilenri Boyer

### By Col. Barney Oldfield.

sold them the Winged Victory.

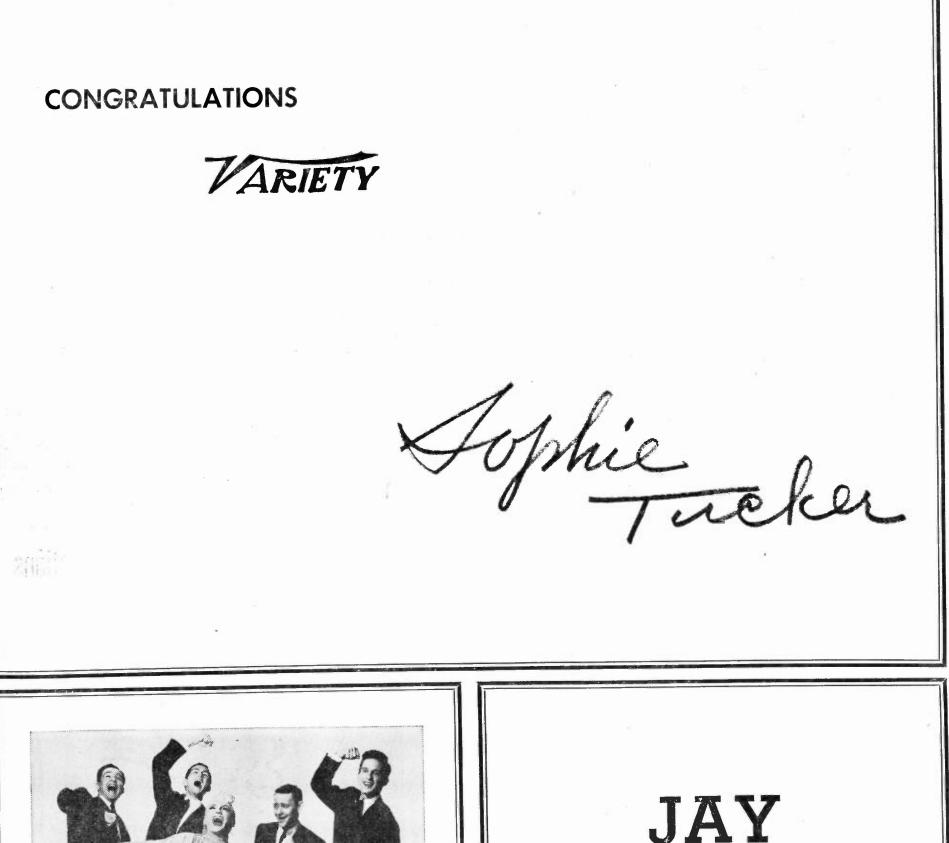
for sand

years ago.

the

turies as other countries do in decades, believe the French must have gotten the idea fairly recently -maybe from some of Caesar's Legions' camp followers, when he was considering all Gaul as some-thing which was divided into three parts.





WRH

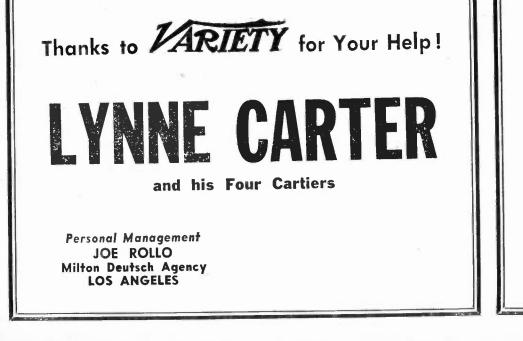
# MARSHALL

"The GOY Deceiver"

Direction

MARK J. LEDDY

LEON NEWMAN



Wednesday, January 6, 1954



# ARNOLD SHODA

## America's Most Brilliant Ice-Skater

#### NOW

### Starring at HOTEL NEW YORKER, N. Y.

Personal Management - ANGIE BOND, 54 W. 58th Street, New York City

#### DANCE TEAM BLUES By GOWER CHAMPION

#### Hollywood.

One night not long ago I had a wonderful dream.

keenly aware of the fact that they lined up at the rear of the room, in his big white Stetson, standing at attention. One of them Unfortunately. I woke shuffled uneasily at one point and a giant Nubian dragged him away.

playing Valse Bluette in perfect tempo, in spite of the fact that they had completed hot Dixieland I was dancing-with Marge-in licks before our act went on. And nightclub. The floor was large our movements perfectly, even and polished. The well-placed our movements perfectly, even spots kcpt me from seeing too much of the audience, but I was I saw a huge, redfaced Texan were hushed and quiet. Dimly, through the clear air (nobody was smoking). I could see the waiters in his hig white Clear

The musicians, five of them, were would grow to hate it. No chal- truss is showing. Stop I cannot.

lenge. Anything cloys when the realistic enough to face the fact that every silver lining must have a little tarnish on it somewhere.

Of course, when I say challenge this is the understatement of the year. Dancers are really at the tender mercies of patrons, waiters, captains, musicians and everybody else who populates the dank interior of a club. Take a comic, for example. If a drunk levels on him, 9 times out of 10 the gagman will end up with a bigger yock by letting his heckler have a little twinc and then jerking him up short whenever he pleases. So waddya expect me to do if I'm hoisting all Unfortunately, i woke up. Actually, if I were able to live up towards the steamy ceiling and in that dream forever I suppose I some ribald celebrant yells that my

WRH

sweetness is overdone and I am gravity take control of a trayload show biz, you put yourself on dis-

And if a perspiring waiter lets really gripe about an audience. In of dishes just as a juggler is going play and if anybody wants to lay through his windup trick, it is a simple matter to direct an Indian club out of its normal path so that waiter will never make that ghastly watching. Only it does mystify mistake again. Watching wa Personally I wouldn't object to the falling of crockery, but I have yet to meet a waiter or bus boy who could drop one in tempo. In a fit of honesty, though, I ment tax and never even watch the must admit that no performer can show he's been taxed to see.

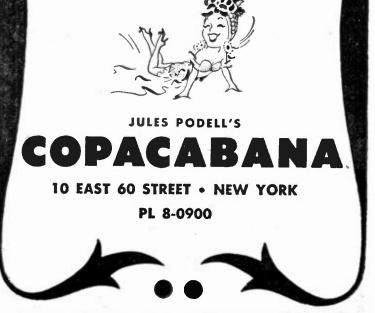


Always THE SMARTEST LITTLE SHOW THE DANCIEST MUSIC and THE FINEST FOOD in Jown!



### from "THE VENUS OF THE ICE" ANDRA McLAUGHLIN

Currently STAR of "Sinbad the Sailor" • EMPRESS HALL, LONDON •



Wednesday, January 6, 1954

#### Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

259



with

**RED** CAPS

# DAMITO JO

Just Opened CIRO'S Miami Beach 14 Week Engagement

Direction:

Just Concluded 18 Week Engagement EL RANCHO Las Vegas

#### **RCA-VICTOR RECORDS**

Latest Release "BLUE PACIFIC" b/w "FACE TO FACE"

# SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL MY FRIENDS IN SHOW BUSINESS TERRY STEVENS

Thanks to FRANK SENNES AGENCY, New York City

Circle 6-3108



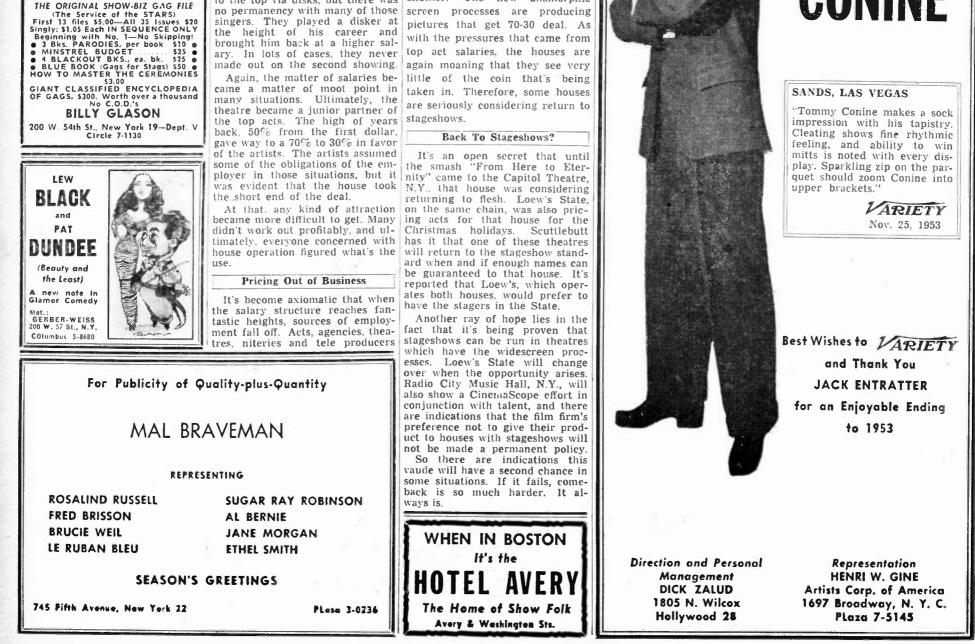
#### BUD BILL **CUNNINGHAM and AYERS** Currently LAURIER HOTEL, Lowell, Mass. MOUNT VIEW, Springfield, Mass. JAN. 18th (Thanks J. J. Sullivan) ESQUIRE, Montreal JAN. 25th (Thanks Roy Cooper) Personal Management: MILTON H. BLACKSTONE 565 Fifth Ave., N.Y.C. EL 5-1540

COMEDY MATERIAL

For All Branches of Theatricals

**FUN-MASTER** 

THE ORIGINAL SHOW-BIZ GAG FILE



# Vaude Can Get Its Second Chance If Industry Faces Hard Cost Facts

#### **By JOE COHEN**

the act to put theaters out of busi-bookers helped. But so did acts. A lot of soul-searching should be done by talent. The performer, who wails loudest at every blow struck at the theatres, has railed loudest at the circuits for letting target in fallow, and yet as a stages lie fallow, and yet, as a craft, has done least to help keep the theatres open.

The usual run of booker has complained that the acts have been are comparatively few of those. spoiled. At first acts started to rebel at the idea of doing four shows a day or more. In niteries, they told their agents and bookers, the most they had to do in one night was three shows at a stipend on a level with the theatre salary. With the advent of television, acts found that they even had to work less. For only one show they got what was tantamount to a week's cafe-theatre salary.

In the meantime, theatres had to develop new sources of talent. They pounced upon names brought to the top via disks, but there was brought him back at a higher salary. In lots of cases, they never made out on the second showing.

The past year has been one in have learned that there is such a which virtually everybody got into thing as pricing one's self out of the act to put theatres out of busi- business. The latest indication of trum are in the vaudeo genre. The top shows can only be bought by the bluechip sponsors, and there

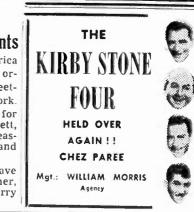
> The lopsided price structure has hurt vaude and video. It's hurting employment chances in niteries as well. A realistic look at the conditions prevailing at this time is needed if the live talent industries are to survive.

A major hope for some comeback in the talent field is seen by the fact that many theatres, having rid themselves of one form of rising expense, are being pushed by another. The new anamorphic no permanency with many of those singers. They played a disker at the height of his career and with the pressures that came from with the pressures that came from top act salaries, the houses are again moaning that they see very

#### Luntz Reelected Head **Of Associated Agents**

Associated Agents of America reelected Eddie Luntz as the organization's president at a meeting held last week in New York. Also taking encores in offices for another term are Irving Barrett. vice-president; Harry Stone, treasurer; Jimmy Daley, secretary, and Mickey Shaw, sergeant-at-arms,

Elected to the board were Dave Cohn, Juliet Heath, Sim Kerner, Oscar Lloyd, Eddie Ross, Harry Rudder and Joe Zweig.





The Exciting Dancing of



and I. William Anthony McGiure

and Otto Harbach celebrated in

### The Man in The Outer Office; A Plea For A Vet Road Man By NED ARMSTRONG

#### you are new in the game, but the there was a real glamor to the busielderly gentleman standing in your outer office because he would like to be company manager for your because he had a talent for greatproposed tour, was once Jack Barrymore's best friend.

He doesn't look like much today. He is thin, quite visibly an old man, evidence of feebleness and a slow way of catching on belie cess or failure. It was during an the strength and adaptability which still remain strong within him.

But when Barrymore was dying. he was one of a dozen who knew Jack when he was wonderful and when he was terrible who took the trouble to pen a heartfelt note of regret, and this was written on eight pages of hotel stationery from a small, one-night stand town in Ohio.

He's a manager, one of the special breed of oldtime managers who served the theatre a lifetime in the rank of corporal but never traveled without a star. In a life-time of a service to theatre, he never knew the meaning of working hours-once on a job, his day and night were yours.

In the younger days, when the theatre had a certain glory, there were many bright moments.

celebrated musical comedy queen once proposed marriage not knowing that the dapper manager was already married, and already had been married then nearly a dozen years. That was 40 years ago. Very few people on Broadway or in Chicago's Loop or around the Biltmore in Los Angeles knew the Sometimes, in the old days. wife. she traveled occasionally with her husband but she always remained in the hotel room, never visited the theatre (except to slip in on an anonymous pass) and in this way the legend arose that the quiet little manager was a bachelor.

#### **A Few Friends**

Of course, they did have a few friends in show business they saw friends in show business they saw socially once in a long while--a wardrobe mistress with the old Ziegfeld Follies was the wife's close friend, and there was a friendship with a theatre manager in Philadelphia always revived when one of the shows he managed played a pre-Broadway date there played a pre-Broadway date there. And now, standing in your outer office. dressed impeccably in dark tones, with stiff white linen at his throat, and a black homburg, who would guess that this man was once Chanin's most trusted employee, that he ran the Dillingham shows for the last eight years, that he frequently was responsible for sums of cash so huge that he could easily have dipped for 10% and no one would have been the wiser. At one point in his life he came very close to making an honest and well deserved fortune.

A famous showman who owned three theatres died bankrupt. Only two people in the city knew the inside story of the showman's fi-nancial distress-our elderly manager and a downtown banker. In the instance of a bankrupt estate, a receiver must be appointed, and this man, whoever he is to be, will receive  $5^{\prime}\dot{\epsilon}$  of all monies handled on the estate for as long as he holds the position.

this receivership. He took the sit-uation to a "friend," a man his former employer had "trusted." which made him a dependable cor-poral in the very quality which makes him a reliable and trust-The man was a celebrated producer of hit plays. "You are strong enough politically to obtain this receivership," he said. "All I ask is the job of man-ager." The producer laughed at him and ridiculed the offer. He told him he was a showman, not a real estate broker, and ordered him out of his office. Two weeks later the newspapers carried the story of this producer's appointment to the receivership of the big theatrical estate, and a dozen years this "trusted friend" drew down a fat annual percentage. He did not hire the old man now standing in your outer office as his manager on this deal, and that is why this

You wouldn't know it, because outer office knew Broadway when ness, when the producer was a man who rose to eminence in the field ness of one kind or another. This was in the days long ago when the majority of impresarios used their own money, or credit, and assumed full personal liability for each sucage when there were some celebrities, not many, but the few great ones were all fabulously gifted people and the true art of showmanship was surrounding one personality with a superior acting company, dressing the show beau-tifully, and giving it the utmost artistic flourish.

Because it was a different world the profits were greater, but the losses were staggering, since they were carried entirely by manage-ment. These were hard truths to ment. accept in those days, one thought the great moment would last forever.

Consequently, when one of the great managers got into financial trouble, his business manager (the man in your outer office) drew upon his own limited resources to help tide him over a rough spot. The rough spot didn't tide over. Fifteen years of earnings and savings were wiped out in this mistake of judgment—or was it the folly of loyalty? The impresario drank himself to death, leaving a wasteland of debts back of him and a few scribbled notes to his business manager: "God bless you, son. We'd never had made that last one without your help."

You probably thought you would hire a young man as company manager for the road tour. You've been told that there are some welltrained yougsters in the business today, certified public accountants. ex-lawyers, business efficiency experts. It is true, there are, and every one of them is a potentially fine manager.

#### **Background** Count

However, the man in your outer office knows every railroad passenger agent from here to the Coast by his first name and nearly every theatre manager from years back and he will guide your company from coast to coast without hitch. You can turn the entire tour over to him; he will book it, scale houses, and represent you as if it were his own show, his own investment. He may not be very good on small talk, since the people he knows are mostly people you don't know, nor on gossip, since the oldtime showman doesn't gossip. But when you are in trouble he will tell you, and when you want him, can always find him, for he will either be at the theatre or in his hotel room. The telegram on your desk every morning will carry the exact gross of the night before to the penny, and will not be inflated to make you feel good, nor

The man in your outer office waiting to see you about being made your company manager for the proposed tour knows enough about show business to have made him a millionaire several times The old man standing in your outer office, on this important oc-casion, realized that he was not politically strong enough to win this reading to win politically strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win which meda him standing in your strong enough to win this meda him standing in your strong enough to win which meda him standing in your strong enough to win which meda him strong enough to win the strong enou poral in the very quality which makes him a reliable and trust-worthy manager and is the reason he is seeking the job today.



#### **Current Road Shows** (Jan. 4-16)

Confidential Clerk (Ina Claire, Claude Rains, Joan Greenwood) (tryout)—Shubert, New Haven (7-9); Colonial, Boston (11-16).

Wash. (4-16). Dear Charles (Lili Darvas, Oscar Shubert,

**Evening With Beatrice Lillie** of him—he can't remember. Blackstone, Chi (4-16). We laughed in the Ziegfel Good Nite, Ladies-Great North-

rn, Chi (4-16). Guys and Dolls-Shubert. Bos-

ton (4-16). Harvey (Frank Fay) — Geary, S. F. (4-16).

Immoralist (Geraldine Page, Louis Jourdan) (tryout)—Forrest, Phila, (11-16).

Lullaby (Mary Boland) (tryout) Shubert, New Haven (14-16)

Mardi Gras (Lenore Ulric) (tryout)-Locust St., Phila. (11-16).

Misailiance—Cox. Cincinnati (4-9); Shubert, Detroit (11-16). Moon Is Blue-Keith, Dayton (4-(7-9);

6); Hartman, Columbus American, St. L. (11-16). New Faces-Biltmore, L. A. (5-

Oklahoma—Dade County Aud., Miami (4-9); War Memorial Aud., Ft. Lauderdale (11-13); Peabody Aud., Daytona Beach (14-16). Porgy & Bess-National, Wash.

(4 - 16)Seven Year Itch (Eddie Bracken) -Erlanger, Chi (4-16).

South Pacific (Jeanne Bal, Webb Tilton)—American, St. L. (4-9); Taft, Cincinnati (11-16).

Starcross Story (Eva LeGalli-enne, Mary Astor) (tryout)-Wal-nut St., Phila, (4-9).

Time Out for Ginger (Melvyn Douglas)-Davidson, Milwaukee (4-9); Harris, Chi (11-16).

Twin Beds-Nixon, Pitt (4-9). Wish You Were Here-Shubert. Chi (4-16).

#### Strawbridge Goes Equity

After 13 years of touring, Strawbridge Productions, offering plays for children, will become an Equity operation as of Jan. 8.

Group is currently appearing in New York at the Carnegie Recital Hall.



#### By EDDIE CANTOR =

Hollywood.

When I think back to the years I spent with Ziegfeld, a sadness comes over me-a sadness brought on by the fact that those happy days are gone

forever. A show business that was a joy; you loved every minute of it. You gave a performance that was your very best and went to sleep contented. You weren't troubled in your dreams about

**Eddie Cantor** 

what the Trendex would be the

next morning. When you told some-one "I'm with the Ziegfeld Fol-lies." you were proud. There was a ring in your voice that said, "I'm in the same Company with Will Rogers. Fanny Brice, Bert Wil-liams, Marilyn Miller and W. C. Fields." Compare that today with a performer telling you he has six sponsors and eight products. "What are they?" you ask, and for the life

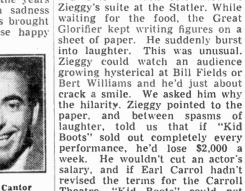
We laughed in the Ziegfeld days even when the joke was on us. It was in the Follies of 1918. Woodrow Wilson was the President. He was making too many trips to Europe. The Republicans and some Democrats were criticizing him. In one scene I announced the song title, "Presidents May Come and Presidents May Go, but Wilson Does Both." It was a big laugh. Imagine, then, the one night when I pulled the line and it layed there. I learned later I had been framed. Bert Williams used it before I got on—so did W. C. Fields—so did Rogers. The audience must have thought I was nuts!

And the night during the Follies of 1919. Van & Schenck were in the show. We shared a dressing room. An old vaudevillian came to visit them backstage. I was onstage. The vaudevillian was broke. Van & Schenck gave him 20 bucks each and a brand new overcoat. thought it was very generous of the boys until I discovered they had given away my overcoat.

The New York run at the New Amsterdam Theatre was always exciting, but the road-that's where we really lived it up! It was on tour where we'd meet our theatri-cal friends; the Marx Bros., Ben Bernie, Sophie Tucker, Bard & Pearl, Jessel, Belle Baker, Jolson. It was in Cleveland where Al took me to a Chinese restaurant. could handle chopsticks beautiful-ly. He tried to teach me, but I was so awkward-he tried and tried, and gave up in disgust, say-ing, "Oh. use a fork. There's nothing Chinese about you-you're so Jewish!"

Some Lower Mathematics

I'll never forget the night of December 3, 1923. We opened "Kid late! Boots" in Detroit. Smoothest open- Th ing night I ever experienced; the audience loved the show. Zieggy



performance, he'd lose \$2,000 a week. He wouldn't cut an actor's salary, and if Earl Carrol hadn't revised the terms for the Carroll Theatre, "Kid Boots" could not have opened. Five years after the opening of "Boots," we were in Pittsburgh for another opening, "Whoopee." It was another winner for all concerned. Tough one for me. I was on stage all evening except for changes of costume. Walter Donaldson and Gus Kahn wrote the

songs. They were receiving 5% of the gross. Playing to \$45,000 a week, it was a nice take. We were in Zieggy's suite again—this time at the William Penn Hotel. Gus Kahn removed my shoes, brought me some food, fixed a drink for me and was all attention. I asked him why. He answered, "Eddie, him why. He answered, to Ida you may be a husband, to Zieggy you're a star, but to Donaldson and me you represent  $5^{\circ}a$  of the gross. What time do you want your massage tomorrow?"

I remember one Follies when friend, Irving Berlin, wrote, my "A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody," "Mandy," and a bangup song for me, "You'd Be Surprised." I look back at the minstrel first act finale and sigh. I can see George Le-Maire, greatest straight man ever as interlocutor. Bert Williams and myself as end men. Van & Schenck singing "Mandy," and Marilyn Miller dancing—dancing?—floating across the stage while the au-dience oh'd and oo'd through the number. John Steel was in that show, and Johnny and Ray Dooley, and Ray's charming husband, Eddie Darling, who was my understudy. I missed one performance and Eddie Darling went on. I learned what a hit he was—you never saw anyone so sick make such a rapid recovery!

Gene Buck was not only songwriter for the Great Ziegfeld, but advisor, buffer and diplomat-keeping both Zieggy and his stars happy. Gene actually gave me the "Maxie The Taxi" character which I introduced in the "Follies of 1919." Can it really be that many years ago? Recently a New York taxidriver brought suit against me, my sponsor and NBC, claiming he wrote the "Maxie The Taxi" stuff in 1949. Taxidrivers are usually in a hurry. This bird is just 30 years

Those never - to - be - forgotten Ziegfeld nights when the en-trances were crowded with the stars and the showgirls listening to the devastating, cheer-provok-ing lines of Will Rogers!—lines that would be just as big today. "We never lost a war or won a conference," he drawled. "America is an open book—a checkbook" he'd say, and nothing could follow his act-nothing but the finale. The pantomime of Bert Williams -the robust humor of W. C. Fields-the songs of Fanny Brice

deflated to surprise you at the end of the week with a better total.

The old man standing in your cuit last summer.

You, as a young producer, know how hard it is to make an honest buck, don't you?

#### Altobell, Harrow Set New 'Stalag 17' Tour

Leonard Altobell and Charles Harrow have acquired the touring rights to "Stalag 17." Duo will send the play out on the road this month beginning with an engagement at the Nixon, Pitt. Jan. 18. Altobell's association with the on this deal, and that is why this old man is standing in your outer office. That nestegg would have protected him in his old age. The old man standing in your outer protected him in his old age.



GREETINGS Katharine CORNELL and Guthrie McCLINTIC

-they're all gone now, but I have my memories.

Today, with television, a fellow can have a big time, a big salary, a big rating and security—but the satisfaction, the joy of being part of the Ziegfeld tradition is no more. I could cry.

#### **Off-Broadway Debut** For 'See How They Run'

"See How They Run." a strong entry on the strawhat circuit in recent years, will be given its first New York production this month. Comedy is slated to be put on off-Broadway at the Spring Street Auditorium for three performances beginning next Wednesday (13). Play is being produced by Dick Fontaine.

WRH

# Why George M. Cohan Got Out of Vaude

#### By KAY ASHTON-STEVENS

Chicago.

A few weeks ago Gene Fowler and I were gabbing away the hours of his stopover in Chicago on his journey from the east to the west coast. He wouldn't talk about his latest book which Viking Press will publish in the spring, nor would he talk about his next book about which he is

already making notes. But he would talk about Joe Laurie Jr.'s book on "Vaudeville." And who isn't? Every graybeard I know is remembering a forgotten favorite vaudeville story because of him. Author Laurie could keep himself occupied for the next 10 years if he wanted to go through the country collecting them. Memory is a sometime thing. Sometimes it's right and

sometimes it's wrong. The years play tricks on memory and many a story has been ruined by fact.

When I knew George M. Cohan he loved to reminisce about his early vaudeville days with his family. He enjoyed telling me that he began edging away from vaudeville because of a notice Ashton Stevens once wrote about the Four Cohans at the old Orpheum in San Francisco. On this Sunday afternoon opening a woman suddenly rushed down the aisle with a riding whip in her hand and lashed the faces of her husband and the woman seated beside him. George told me Ashton described the scene and then went on to say:

"It was a hard act for the Four Cohans to follow!"

It became a Cohan-Stevens family joke. But Ashton never happened to write George's laughing reaction to that early vaudeville notice and so the printed record tells another story. This story is not as humorous but it is more The words that spill hot from Cohan's enlightening. young mouth prove the problems of the ancient vaudeville writer were different but no less difficult than the problems of the TV writer today.

The following is part of a full page interview written by Ashton for the San Francisco Examiner in 1904 just before the 25-year-old George M. made his first national hit with "Little Johnny Jones" with its great song: "Give My Regards to Broadway."

Ashton Stevens & George M. Cohan

Although this was the first time I had seen George M. Cohan at close range, I should say that there was nothing in his clothes or carriage that differed con-spicuously from the variety days. He wore black, double-breasted, broadly bound in silk tape, and dark reddish gloves. The suit might have been that of a vaudeville comedian or of a professional follower of the turf. His shrewd, Irish-American face was as composed as Willie Collier's. It was-at first glancethe discreet face of a messenger boy-only sublimated. His eyes, like John Drew's, are cut on the bias; and when he lifts the heavy lids he lifts his head too, and the whites make a large oval border for the strong blue. So subdued is the banjo tone which marks his stage talk, that you are almost willing to say there is none at all in his ordinary speaking voice.

I asked him about vaudeville and the skits, and he came straight to the point.

"As I told my father the other day," he said, "the only thing I'm proud of in vaudeville is that I got out of it. The houses are not all Orpheums and Keith's—not by a long way. There are only a few good houses, and the others I wouldn't like to talk about—right out loud."

While he lighted a cigaret, I asked if the work came hard.

"No; that's not it. When it comes hard it's apt to play hard. I never spent more than 24 hours on a sketch. If I had contracted to deliver one on the first of June I never sat down to write it till the last day in May. It wasn't the work, it was the ideas. Every good vaudeville skit is an awful waste of ideas. You give up everything you've got in that 15-minute act. "The Governor's Son' and 'Running for Office' were short variety skits and I had only to elaborate them into three-act pieces and they have lasted us four years in firstclass theatres.'

"But the royalties from your sketches-!"

"The way they used to pay me was the funniest joke in vaudeville," he went on. "A fellow would owe me \$500, and one week I'd get \$35, the next week 10, next 5 and the next nothing. After two years of writing sketches I quit. You might as well give them away. In fact, I did give one away to Filson, of Filson & Errol. I made him a present of it because I liked him. He wrote to thank me, and I wrote back and signed myself, 'Your private play-wright.' He must have taken it seriously, for prefty wright.' He must have taken it seriously, for pretty soon, when I fixed an act for somebody else, he said, "Ain't you going to give me the first chance at the stuff you write?" Yes, he was indignant. Hadn't he given me my first chance to show what I could do in the way of writing for somebody else? Hadn't he permitted me to write a piece for him for nothing? And hadn't I been an ingrate in selling the next one? Then there's Edmund Hayes. Five years ago I wrote 'A Wise Guy' for him and he's never played anything else since. What's the use! There's no money and no gratitude in writing.'

publisher now. I'm the original publish-your-own-stuff. Song publishers don't like that phrase.

'Are you starring just to be a star in 'Little Johnny Jones,' or to cut away from the variety show suggestion of the Four Cohans?"

"Just to be a star, I guess. Father and mother won't want to work much longer, and sooner or later I'm bound to be tried out alone . . . and . . . well, now I'm 25 and anxious to see if the public will stand for me in the centre, with mother and father in the 'support'."

"Shall you use your usual voice?"

Mr. Cohan's grin was lopsided. "You wouldn't believe it, maybe, but when I get on the stage I think I'm talking just as I'm talking now. People tell me that I twang the second I hit the stage, but I never hear the difference. Anyway, I'll do the best I can with it. I don't want to play Hamlet, but I must own there's not much satisfaction doing falls and slapstick work. But, of course, if the people won't have me in anything else I can always jump back to the falls.

"But you'd rather be an author?"

"Yes, for all my sorry experience writing for vaudewrite something good. I've been crazy to get out and write something good. I've been in this business since I was a kid. I wrote songs at 13. It was here in San Francisco, years ago, that I wrote my first song hit—'I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby.' I've never been out of the business. never been out of the business. I've never been to school. What little I know I've just picked up.

"I was a newspaperman once-for two days. solicited ads for a Buffalo paper and then was fired. And it was a free paper at that—they gave it away. I was forced to write for the family. Among variety people in those days it was an honor to be able to say that you had been appearing in the same act for 20 years. I tried to change that—for the Cohans, at least. I'm going to try something I've never tried before in 'Little Johnny Jones.' It will be a bigger show, and there'll be an attempt at a real little story."

He went away humming the last bars of his latest song: I'd buy everything that's choice,

I'd buy myself a voice, If I were on-ly Mis-ter Mor-gan.

### 'HOUSE SEATS' CAN SAVE THE THEATRE By NAT DORFMAN

There need no longer be fears about the state of the Broadway theatre. It's getting financially healthier all the time, thanks to an ever growing institution known as "house seats." For the uninitiated, "house seats" are choice locations set aside for friends of the producer, friends of the general manager, friends of the company manager, featured players' friends those of the director manager, featured players' friends, those of the director, manager, featured players' friends, those of the director, scenic designer, owner of the theatre housing the play, friends of the friends of all those already noted and, be-lieve it or not. for the working press. That would naturally include out-of-town critics, publishers who want to buy seats for themselves or their friends, drama reporters who want to buy seats for their friends, columnists who want to buy seats for their friends, feature editors who want to buy seats for their friends and the scales of scriveness on buy seats for their friends, and the scads of scriveners on the national weeklies and monthlies who want to buy seats for their friends. It is to protect this varied and wide array of "friends" who want "in" to see shows that house seats were born.

An evil. you say? Hardly, though it may appear so on the surface. Actually, it may be a blessing in disguise and in time make the living theatre impregnable to critical blasts, heat. wind, rain, snow, sleet, typhoons, hurricanes, tornados, Holy Week, the weeks before Holy Week, the weeks between Thanksgiving Day and Christmas, the weeks after New Year's when folks are recovering from over-celebrating, the dates when Federal Income Taxes become due, the dates when State Taxes become due, and all the other threadbare alibis gratuitously offered when business dips at the b.o. All of these economic disasters will in time evaporate before the phenomenon of "house seats," the definitive cure-all for everything that has ailed the theatre since critics came upon the earth to bedevil the artisans of the show shops.

How will "house seats" save the theatre? Simple. But first, let us trace the growth of the house seat. It all began innocently enough in the early 1920s during the days when the ticket brokers were permitted to buy the choicest seats for their customers, often as many as 400 a night for from 12 to 16 weeks. Thus, if a visiting fireman, generally a critic from the hinterlands, or some bigwig, wanted to see the show, the press agent or pro-ducer would have to go to his boxoffice treasurer, make his demands known and the treasurer, in turn, would see that some broker provided him with the locations desired. This, however, didn't always work out; very often tickets weren't available when you wanted them most, so an ingenious press agent prevailed upon his producer to set aside four to six seats for every performance to be used exclusively for the press. And this, dear reader, was the beginning of what has since grown into a gigantic industry unto itself—"house seats. It has taken several decades for the pace to quicken, but quicken it did. Producers, seeing how well the house seat idea worked out with the publicity department, began putting away house seats for his own use. The general manager and company manager subsequently cut themselves a slice of the pie. Dramatists and directors next made their wishes known, with stars and featured performers climbing the house seat bandwagon soon after. Indeed, actors' agents now put a special clause in contracts that specifies the number of "house seats" accruing to the per-former along with salary and billing notations. Since theatreowners have joined control of tickets with producers, it wasn't at all out of line that they should share in the choice pickings, so before a show even makes its bow on Broadway, a definite allotment is set aside for all hands involved. What do "house seats" run to? Depends on the size of the theatre and whether the show is a drama or musical. Anywhere from 75 to perhaps 200 seats a performance. But this isn't all. The vast army of Broadway angels are beginning to growl into their checkbooks. For their in-vestments they want "house seats," too. So stylish, you know. Nor will stagehands, musicians, ushers and door-

### **New Dramatists Waiting** For Atomic Inspiration

#### By NED ARMSTRONG

Death of Eugene O'Neill reminds that years have passed since the American theatrical scene has been galvanized by the emergence of a great new dramatic force.

Fine and important new dramatists have come up the past 20 years, and some have been deservedly successful. But the big excitement, the new horizon, the revelation of important new thinking-this has been a long time absent.

A New York drama critic recently suggested that the American theatre had come to the end of a creative cycle. The question then: what's next and when?

Traveling around the country, and wherever show people gather, The Great Pause-which means the past decade-

gather, the Great Fause—which means the past discussion again and again. Why the Great Pause? There are a variety of answers. Some insist that the old problems are passe, and as proof of this, point to subjects which were provocative 15 years

ago which appear soft and uninteresting today. Illustration: "The Children's Hour," once an incan-descent discussion of defamation and lesbianism which proved of mild public interest when revived last winter and sent on tour this fall.

If the shocker of 20 years ago doesn't shock any more, what subject would be a shocker today? What's left? What's new? Basically, good drama, the experts argue, is based on

general human behavior patterns, and usually, important new drama surges from the sudden bright reflection of some discovered attitude. All at once this new attitude is part of a tremendous current of thought. One or two persons are writing about it.

At a time when women were subordinate to men, Ibsen wrote a play instructing women to quit such bondage. This was a bombshell in 1880, but would hardly stir the emancipated female today.

Shaw was a witty and biting socialist who wrote with caustic brilliance on many timely subjects. Shaw survives, however, more because of great literary skill than he does as a dramatist or politician.

Saroyan was a bright moment, and parts of Saroyan deserve to be rediscovered. Tennessee Williams and Ar-thur Miller have greatness in them. But in none of these is there a complete new horizon.

One view advanced regarding the lull in dramatic cre-ativity concerns, interestingly enough, the atom bomb. This viewpoint suggests that the explosion of the

atom, and its potential threat to mankind everywhere, a scientific fact universally accepted, many of the old egomoral values which were the framework of drama for cen-

with the startling arrival of the atomic age in science, there has at the same time arrived, silent and unseen, a new attitude toward the once sacred notions of self-importance—the ego has had a big jolt, and the network of old moral values is momentarily a tangled mess.

This same argument advances the speculation that the atomic age, not confined to splitting the atom, has split the ego, and though this mental eruption is a huge silence with no telltale mushroom cloud, the force is terrific. the penetration depth profound, effecting the heart of mankind in a mighty way, largely directionless at this hour.

#### New Values

An animal in the woods, startled by a suspicious sound, freezes, and then bolts in the direction of safety. In all great cataclysms of new thought, there is the pause before the storm. People are intuitive about major changes. They wait.

The atom age started in 1945. This is 1954. We are now on the threshold of a new age of manmade power. Are we, emotionally, about to enter a new age of adjust-ment to this nuclear circumstance?

If so, this theory continues, we may be on the threshold of a whole set of exchanging values, only waiting for some major event, some crisis, to precipitate a general public acknowledgement of the new attitude, and the almost instant translation of this into terms of important new writing, part of which will be for the stage.

And, in the meantime, with no other recourse visible, the contemporary scene—the pause—concerns itself with repeats, imitations, rewrites and revivals.

Theatre people are incurable, and love to discuss these speculations. Has nuclear fission burned out the old bag of tricks?

If the split atom is the symbol of the new era into which we are about to enter, has the popped meson a posi-

tive or negative effect on the ego? When the familiar "his" and "her" values of dramatic writing become passe, what is left is "us"—that is mankind versus the latest threat to itself, the last scientific frontier.

Perhaps such a turn in national thinking could result in awakening a more mature and sober intelligentsia. Would this mean the tragic muse?

The age just passed was full of mockery and light laughter. The split ego could mean darker broodings. Then, again, a sober world could mean a trend to strong, honest spiritual regeneration with a creative cycle reflecting this.

Young Cohan stroked his chin with a glove and pondered aloud: "What are you going to do with people like that? They're the toughest customers in the world, those variety people. Writing a song is easier and makes more money. I got a telegram last night from Klaw & Erlanger asking me to write a song for Pete Dailey to sing in the forthcoming Amster-dam Roof Garden burlesque. I dropped it in the mailbox this morning."

"Good song?" said I tentatively.

"Good enough, I guess. It needs a lot of stage business.'

And beating the ragtime on his chair with his glove, George Cohan loosed his Bostonian tenorette on the positively first rendition of "You Won't Do Any Business If You Haven't Got a Band." He sang with his lids low, and now looked up to see how the song had hit its first audience.

"That song will sell," he said simply. "Im my own

A magazine wrote on O'Neill's death:

"For the stage . . . is still a window on a nation's cul-ture, and Eugene O'Neill opened that window wide."

What frantic producer, tired of unsuccessfully seeking the surefire "commercial" hit will do the play on his desk he thought certain to fail and wake up one morning famous and prosperous and the discoverer of the first important new author of the atomic age?

As the boys say: what are we waiting for?

tenders long remain mute. They also have "friends." In time, the entire house will be spoken for. With complete sellouts guaranteed, we will need no boxoffice, no ticket brokers, no ads in the newspapers and—no critics! A show will open and perhaps remain for centuries. Know what that means? New theatres by the hundreds to house the new attractions that will crop up and also remain until kingdom come. The movies can have their Cineramas, their CinemaScopes, their 3-D's; TV can have its color, but as long as the theatre can have its "house seats," we can breathe easily.

There's only one fly in the ointment to this optimistic dream. When you have a flop, you can't give "house seats" away. Wouldn't it kill you?

#### Forty-eighth Anniversary VARIETY

## **Steinway Recalls Great** Days of Music, Legit

#### By THEODORE E. STEINWAY

The Steinway story is a famil- eagles, and when Rubinstein came iar one in the American scene. An the next day there was reposing emigrant family arrived here in on father's desk a large imposing 1850, escaping from the turbulent conditions of Europe at that time. Settling in New York City, the men at once went to work at their trade, piano making. In a few years they had learned the lan-guage, become citizens of the U. S. and formed the partnership of Steinway & Sons. Three of them Steinway & Sons. bore arms for their new country in the War Between the States.

In the war between the states. In 1866 Steinway Hall was opened. That is, the old hall, on 14th St. There the great musi-cians of the time performed— Anton Rubinstein, Theodore Thom-as, Leopold Damrosch, Patti, Clara Louise Kellog and a host of others. Charles Dickens lectured there on his second visit to the United States.

Now, during the 1953-54 music season, we are celebrating the Centennial of Steinway & Sons. We can look back on long years of service to music and happy, excit-ing years of association with the great musicians and pianists of that Today, from our new Steinera. way Hall on 57th St., we contemplate a galaxy of stars from Anton Rubinstein, Joseffy, Paderewski, Busoni, Hofmann and the rest. down to the greats of today and the music student of our modern scene. Among today's stars we number Artur Rubinstein, Horowitz, Serkin, Casadesus, Dame Myra Hess and Guiomar Novaes. The recent tragic death of young William Kapell was a great loss to us all. Highly gifted, American-born and trained, Kapell represented the new American youth in the pianistic field.

#### No Tobacco Halls

There are, of course, many anecdotes and stories about the great pianists who were familiars in Steinway Hall. The story of Anton Rubinstein and his gold is a favorite in the family. When my father, William Steinway, brought him over to America in 1872, his contract required that he be not asked to play in "beer gardens or establishments where tobacco is sold" and that he should be paid in gold, as he mistrusted bankers

At the end of his fantastically successful tour there was about \$80,000 due him. Father called him in and said: "Mr. Rubinstein, there is due you on your tour about \$80.000. I can give you a draft on Rothschild in Frankfurt or Vienna, or Bleichroeder in Ber-lin." "No," said Rubinstein, "my In. No, said Rubinstein, my contract stibulates gold and gold I will have." "Very well," said father, "come back tomorrow morning and I will have your gold." So father borrowed the gold from the Pacific Bank—all good Amoving angles and double said American double eagles and

box weighing some 120 lbs. Rubinstein looked at the box, started to lift it, and shook his head and said: 'Mr. Steinway, on second thought I might be satisfied with a draft on Bleichroeder."

The first piano concert I heard was in Old Steinway Hall on 14th St. The first opera I saw was at the old Academy close by. When the Metropolitan Opera House opened in 1883 and Carnegie Hall in 1891. the center of music gradually moved uptown and I have been a steady visitor ever since. What great performances, what stirring drama and music we have seen and heard in those distinguished halls. Adelina Patti at the Academy of Music. The first "Parsifal" outside of Bayreuth at the Met. The opening of Carnegie Hall with our own Walter Damrosch conducting. The first performance of the famous Tchaikovsky B Flat Concerto for pianist Adele aus der Ohe. Pa-derewski's recital at the new Madison Sq. Garden to a jampacked house-the most sensational one-man attraction ever to show there. Joseph Hofmann's Golden Jubilee at the Met. The song recitals of that sweet singer, John McCor-mack, some of them at the Hippodrome, of tender memory

A life in musical circles leads in-evitably to the theatre. The sister muses of music and the theatre go hand in hand and so my own life in music has been immeasurably enriched by my love for the theatre and some modest work in it as

a rank amateur. There is no business like show business and I venture to say, that music is show business, too. Music and the theatre. Long may the great sister arts dwell together and grow closer. Music and the theatre -a good combination of worktime and playtime.

#### Pfeiffer to Use ATPAM Flack in 'Nite' Hassle

Jules Pfeiffer, who took over as sole producer of the touring "Good Nite Ladies" after splitting with his partner Danny Goldberg, has agreed to put on a member of the Assn. of Theatrical Press Agents & Managers to handle play's flackery. Decision followed negotiations with ATPAM brought on by failure of the management to hire a union pressagent and company manager. Hassle with ATPAM was brought to a head when show opened at the Great Northern Theatre, Dec. 26. No decision had been reached of the ord of hert work on Broif.

at the end of last week on Pfeif-fer's request that he be admitted into the union, in which case he would double as company manager.





HIRAM SHERMAN

#### **Ouakes**, Bombing, Strikes No Bar to Opera Tours; Navy to the Rescue Once By FRANCIS ROBINSON

(Met Opera Tour & B.O. Head) The Metropolitan Opera is the biggest thing that moves, except the circus. On the road, the world's foremost operatic organization more nearly resembles an advanc-ing army than a band of strolling players. In an operation so vast, teresting even via radio. The best there are bound to be mishaps of a corresponding size.

But-touch wood-the Metropolitan has not missed a performance on tour in this generation. The call has often been close, but even in a props. Ben Greet used to go about world where the show-must-go-on is the country prancing over verdant

more often than acts of God have and in any backyard large enough backed the company into a corner. The coal strike of 1946 caught Chicago with a two weeks' supply of A curfew was immediately coal. slapped on the city, with lights in public buildings from 2 to 6 p. m. only.

It was the Navy rather than the Marines that came to the rescue. Jack Manley, then manager of the little theatre in the Opera House and a lieutenant-commander in the Reserve, knew about six maritime ships which had been completed just at the end of the war and never used. Why not bring one of them up the river, tie her up alongside the Opera House and use her motors for power?

#### No Time To Bargain

In some of the fastest red-tape cutting in history, this was done. The Maritime Commission demanded a deposit of \$25,000 with the possibility of overcall but the gun was in the ribs and Sol Hurok and National Concert & Artists Corp., who were handling the Met tours at the time, were in no position to bargain. They coughed up with-out a whimper. Incidentally, it was the redoubtable Hurok and Marks Levine of NCAC who were largely responsible for the big tours of recent years. They were bold where the Met had to be conservative and underwrote the com-pany to the tune of staggering sums

If the railroad strike that same year had hit on schedule, the company would have been stranded at its most distant point, but a five-day reprieve barely covered the last date. That fateful 4 p. m., May 23, found the company, now compressed like cattle into one train, ambling through the beautiful farmlands of Virginia. The great Washington terminal lay silent and deserted. By some dispensation never explained nor questioned, the Met train was allowed to go through. It has been suspected the crew just wanted to get home. The stagehands, unable to make the midnight departure from Chattanooga, rode the last train into the Capital and finished the trip to New York by taxicab.

### Accent On Plays And Players, One Way To Cut Prod. Costs By RALPH T. KETTERING

Theatre changing world of entertainment. on it and audiences acceped it. In the motion picture we have seen the talkers, color and third-

dimension topped by large screen, Cinema Scope and Cinerama. All are surprising but no more so than what is happening in the When legit. costs climbed to almost im-



Ralph T. Kettering

ossible heights there was the usual cry of a dying theatre but those who have given their life to legit knew that someone would stand forth to solve this almost unsurmountable situation.

Came a man out of the west by name Paul Gregory with an idea. Shakespeare was right he con-ter.ded — the play was still the thing. If it could still be as im-portant today why not begin with

Charles Laughton had already teresting even via radio. The best seller still was a best seller. The Greeks, Romans and Chinese had found it expedient and profitable having with his classic troupe playlaw, the Met's record is unique. Frans with his classic troupe play-The humors of John L. Lewis i g Shakespeare at colleges, schools to accommodate his small com-pany. Why not again? pany.

As the years galloped along the stock and repertory companies that traipsed across our land used diamond-dye scenery with furni-

some of the baggage never reached the theatre and at 10 p. m. the ris-ing curtain revealed a Don Jose without so much as a toupee. Did the audience mind? Not a bit. It was a great night and surely one of the most exciting "Carmens" in the history of that hardy perennial. It is doubtful if the Met will ever

face greater disaster than on the 1906 tour. The entire company was in San Francisco the night of the earthquake and fire. Caruso was shaken out of bed and his wits. He would never sing in the Golden Gate City again, strange for some-But, in one fell swoo one who was born practically in the crater of Vesuvius. Deems Tay-lor likes to recall that Emma Eames' major preoccupation with the cataclysm was that she had to of the theatre but he has mini-go four days without her bath. Her mized the initial cost of producgo four days without her bath. Her colleagues were less impervious to the horror about them. In spite of the loss of everything the company not only refunded on every ticket but staged a mammoth benefit for the victims.

is a constantly ture, draperies and props painted

Then along came a man named David Belasco who insisted on being more realistic. His scenery must be the real thing. A bit later a man named Bel-Geddes picked up where Belasco left off. He built his productions to last forever. Houses became houses, warfs became warfs, sidewalks were real sidewalks, and costs began to rise as an important part of the entertainment. True, the play had to be written and it had to be good but the audience came to expect actual backgrounds.

We have all seen what happened. I am one who believes in high wages for everyone in the theatre. So did that young westerner Gregory. He believed the laborer was worthy of his hire. So, he went out and hired the best he could get. The wages of Charles Boyer. Charles Laughton, Agnes Moorehead, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Tyrone Power, Raymond Massey, Judith Anderson, Anne Baxter, Henry Fonda, John Hodiak and Lloyd Nolan did not stop him. He knew they were entitled to all they asked. And he knew that if the play was good he did not need expensive productions. Why not take the money you would spend on trappings and invest it in talent? Why not hark back to the Greeks, t Romans and the Chinese?

**Created A New Trend** 

So he changed the trend of our theatre. He found a way to solve production costs. He has created a new and living theatre.

And, it all began when he lis-tened to Charles Laughton read the Bible over the radio. It presented to him a germ of an idea which he was smart enough to de-velop into "readings." He did add a few props like the Chinese, and in his latest "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial" he even conceded to having a drop in back of his actors, but that was his "produc-tion" and it could be backed in a bus, a truck or any kind of conveyance.

Authors have been trying to solve the problem by writing plays with two or three characters and there will be some among you who remember that Owen McGivney, R. A. Roberts and some others presented a whole play by

But, in one fell swoop Gregory seems to have solved the problem that appeared impossible. He still carried crews, stage managers, supporting casts and other attributes tion — the thing that has been stifling the legit theatre.

The theatre is, indeed, a changing world. It will never die. It is as everlasting as music and poetry. All it needs is thought.





#### **JOHN BEAL**

New York 101 West 55th Street Picture Representation: Nat C. Goldstone Agency, Hollywood

#### **Costumeless** 'Carmen'

Houston was almost lost in 1947. The Texas City explosion which took 512 lives had filled the Hous-ton City Auditorium with evacuees. A week before the engagement it was not known whether they would be out-but they were, and on the open Sunday evening in Dallas the Met gave a benefit for the survivors.

Then there was the costumeless "Carmen" of 1948 in Atlanta. Spring floods and a washout had delayed the trains. In the shuffle,

#### **HELEN CRAIG**

New York Telephone Exchange LExington 2-1100

#### **Decline Of The West Seen In Fading** L.A. Legit Biz; Angelenos Puzzled By MIKE KAPLAN

Los Angeles The Chamber of Commerce has been sticking its chest out lately, contending that Los Angeles is now the third largest city in the country, on the basis of special census figures. On the subject of its standing as a legit center, however, both the Chamber and the lady down-town, who insists that this is "The Athens of the West," remain strangely uncommunicative.

This preoccupation with population figures is a civic pastime here abouts and it's probably understandable in a town where everything has to be described in superlatives. Los Angeles has the world's biggest service station, the world's biggest drugstore and, on a per capita basis, what appears to be the world's worst legit audience. About the only resemblance to Athens appears to be the Acropolis, a downtown restaurant which may or may not have been inspired by

George Givot. Since the Chamber is preening itself over a numerological victory over Philadelphia, a comparison of the theatre tastes of the two cities should not be considered unduly unfair. Granted, Philadelphia is on the eastern tryout circuit, which gives it an edge in terms of the number of legit productions available.

However, Philadelphia theatres were in operation only 35 weeks last year, as opposed to 51 in Los Angeles, and the local tally derives added benefit from the subscription season operated by the Los An-geles Civic Light Opera Assn. As proof, there's the case of "Carnival in Flanders," which barely reached a five-figure weekly gross in Philadelphia. Here, because of the considerable number of subscrib-ers who purchased season tickets in advance, "Carnival" averaged

\$36,000 per week for each of four weeks. Despite this addition to the season's total, Los Angeles ended its 51-week legit year with a gross approximately \$100,000 under that registered by the quondam third largest city.

#### Where Does The West Start?

The figures, of course, prove nothing—except, perhaps, that from the legit standpoint at least. Los Angeles would do better to pick a fight with a city its own size. Boston, maybe. Besides, the Hub has always claimed ownership of the title of "Athens of the West," al-though Angelenos will tell you that there's only one real west and that starts at the Los Angeles River and reaches to the Pacific. It is not true, however, that the phrase "gone west" has come to mean death because of what has happened to legit troupes that invade this area.

The reasons for the decline of the legitimate theatre in Los Angeles, which at one time supported more than a dozen full-sized houses during the year and supported them staunchly, are difficult to de-For one thing, there has been a steady deterioration in termine. termine. For one thing, there has been a steady determine in legit tastes until about the only thing a producer can be sure of is that he will enjoy a long run with "plays" like "She Dood It In Dixie," "She Lost It in Campeche" and "Motel Wives"—all of which make "Ladies Night In a Turkish Bath" seem like a Pulitzer Prizewinner by comparison.

The corporal's guard of legit veterans left in town have interesting, The corporal's guard of legit veterans left in town have interesting, though not necessarily accurate, appraisals of the situation. These range from the theory that Los Angèles is not really one big city but a conglomeration of about 20 hick towns to the remark that "there aren't any good plays anymore, anyway." Sandwiched in be-tween is usually the complaint that the only real theatres in town are in the downtown area and therefore inaccessible. The latter complaint wounds civic pride, which points to the fact that there are more automobiles in Los Angeles than anywhere else in the world The man in the street (there are approximately 50 such non-car

owning individuals in town), queried at random over a period of months, is less articulate. His responses range from "What is it?" to "Who needs it?" A few Angelenos, trapped as they left a legit theatre and asked why they didn't go more often, had much more cogent reasons.

One of the difficulties is as old as the chicken-and-the egg routine. Patrons contend that they don't attend legit as frequently because the town doesn't get good road companies any more. Producers counter this with the claim that the quality of touring productions was maintained as long as business was good on the Coast; when it was no longer financially sensible to send good companies here, they tried to get by with makeshifts. The grosses, of course, kept going lower

Other things that appear to gripe the potential legit patron are the large number of "racket" theatres which utilize tyro talent and pose as professional houses, charging the usual professional scale, and the fact that local newspaper criticism makes no effort to protect the reader by distinguishing between amateur and professional production. Reviews are based upon the amount of advertising space purchased and the reviews are generally fullsome—in the pure sense of that abused word. Consequently, the newspaper reader is frequently suckered into attending (at \$3.60 per seat) what amounts to a pro-duction of the Wednesday Afternoon Club's Drama Group because it has received good notices in the lay press



### PARIS BY DAY **By BERNARD SOBEL**

Almost the last time I saw Paris I was giving my energies to establishing a branch of the original Ziegfeld Club in that famous city. Several months earlier I had managed to set up branches in Hollywood, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston with the aid of Camille Lanier, Frances Upton, Virginia and Meredith Howard and other glorified girls who were anxious to honor the memory of the great producer and to aid an imperative charity.

Paris, however, was my most important objective. The girls had accustomed to vacationing there from time to time, beauties like Avonne Taylor who adorned the old steam-room at the Ritz, the grand stairway at the opera, the swanky night clubs and the boule vards. Yes, plenty of our girls went over there, but how could I find them, collect them and get them to help me?

As I stood perplexed in front of the desk, ready to sign up for my room at the Crillon, these questions were unexpectedly solved. Somebody's hands closed over my eyes and when they released my vision, I looked around and saw Claire Luce, former "Follies" star, Paris revue favorite, and for many years one of my best friends.

Quickly, I told her of my hopes ad plans for a Ziegfeld Club in and the French capital, an international meeting place that would be particularly useful for collecting funds and gaining memberships.

"The best way to collect people,' said Claire, pontifically, "is to give a party. Give them free food and drinks and they'll gather around you like flies."

About 10 days later the guests assembled. Mary Garden came, all-engaging and all-aglitter with bracelets, spangles and necklaces. Richard Watts Jr., vacationing, was there, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Vance Storrs, of the New York Theatre Program Co., several stray Ziegfeld girls and a sizable group of English royally. Beth Leary graciously assisted the hostess in receiving the guests, and Louis Bromfield, sud-denly inspired, directed the attaches to bring in a piano. Around this noble instrument the guests speedily assembled and the place took on the glow of April in Paris, June, January or any month, for that matter, associated with the glorified girls

Bromfield lead the singing, and the first number, of course, was "A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody." Irving Berlin's immortal synthesis of verse, sensation and femininity. Sweetness and light prevailed. Nostalgia brought smiles and tears. Hearts beat rhythmically. Then Hearts beat rhythmically. something happened, something dreadful. A bunch of intruders barged into the hallowed area. Not crashees. Not drunks crazed by Penrod. Not guests who had mistaken their way, but officials of the Ritz, managers, assistant managers, secretaries and bellhops. They were fighting mad, shouting like gendarmes and waving their hands as if quashing a riot.

#### **Ritz on The Fritz**

What was wrong? The answer was very simple. The dignified Ritz management declared that the party would have to come to an The music was improper. It end. was disturbing. The singing was sacrilegious. It would disturb the guests, some of whom might be playing solitaire, having a mas-

# **Shubert Empire Control Clouded** In Will Filing; Multiple Affair?

Although Milton Shubert has the trusts set up under the will. emerged as the late Lee Shubert's heir in the operation of the Shubert interests, the practical pattern of control is not yet clear. As with most things relating to the Shubert empire, little was known specifically about the division of authority between Lee and J. J. Shubert.

According to the published terms of Lee's will, Milton, a nephew, was named as head of his 80s. organization. But the Shubert setup was believed to have been an equal partnership between the two brothers, with no formal division of authority. In general, Lee handled affairs in New York and J. J. looked after matters on the road, with Lee the more prominant and more potent of the brothers.

It is not yet clear whether Milton will be an equal partner with J. J. In any case, the determination of practical, day-to-day authority may be a matter of personality, aggressiveness, etc. Also, since Lee's will named as trustees and executors not only Milton, but also Lawrence Shubert Lawrence. another nephew and manager of the Shubert theatres in Philadelphia; Sylvia Wolf Golde, a niece, and William Klein, his attorney, of Klein & Weir, the control may be a multiple affair.

However the situation may work out it's expected that some changes will occur in the Shubert organization. Certain executives who had Lee's confidence but were not on good terms with J. J., are figured likely to be affected. And, perhaps most important of all, there has thus far been no indication of the status of John Shubert, only son and heir of J. J. He is generally regarded as the best liked, most respected and one of the most able of all the Shuberts.

#### No Clue to Value

Lee's will gave no clue as to the value of his estate or the Shubert empire as a whole. Besides naming Milton head of the organization and setting up the trustees and executors of the estate, it left \$100,000 each to Milton, Lawrence, Mrs. Golde and Klein, It also left Milton, Lawrence and Mrs. Golde a life income from one-sixth of his residuary estate.

Mrs. Marcella Swanson Shubert. Lee's widow, was given his house-hold, personal effects. library and works of art, plus \$200,000 taxfree. and a trust of \$150,000. from which she will receive the interest and one-tenth the principal annually. This is in addition to the large settlement understood to have been made on her at the time of their divorce in 1948. They were remarried a year later.

The United Jewish Appeal will receive \$25.000 and the Sam S. Shubert Foundation. established several years ago by Lee and J. J. in honor of their late brother, gets one-half the residuary estate, plus the remainder on termination of

The will stated that no provi-sion was being made for J. J., on the grounds that he has ample means of his own. It also failed to mention John, who is presumably provided for in J. J.'s will.

Lee Shubert died of a circulatory ailment Dec. 25 in Mt. Sinai Hospital, N.Y., after a brief illness. His age was given as 78, but he was believed to be in the mid-

#### **GEORGE WHITE FILES BANKRUPTCY PETITION**

Los Angeles.

George S. White, veteran Broadway stage and cafe producer, filed a bankruptcy petition in Federal Court here, listing unsecured debts amounting to \$100,780 and assets of \$1.400. His 1953 income, he said, was \$14,380.

Heaviest obligation was \$35,000 borrowed from the late B. G. "Bud-DeSylva. dy" Lightest was \$1. loaned by Max Dreyfuss. Also listed among the debts was a judg-ment for \$12,079, the result of an automobile accident in which two persons were killed in 1946.

#### Record \$24,300 Eve By Met Opera 'Fledermaus'

The Metropolitan Opera presented Strauss' operetta. "Fledermaus," in the Howard Dietz-Garson Kanin English version, last Thursday (31), for the fourth successive time as the New Year's Eve gala at the N. Y. house. Gross, at a hiked top of \$10, set a new Eve record for the house of \$24,300. (Orchestra seating was enlarged last summer).

Event was also signalized by the Met debut of famed ballerina Alicia Markova, who danced in the second-act ballroom scene in a special divertissement devised by Met choreographer Zachary Solov. Miss Markova is the first great ballet star ever to dance in an opera ballet at the Met.

Cast also included Roberta Peters. Eleanor Steber (latter singing her first Met Rosalinda), Jarmila Novotna. Charles Kullman, John Brownlee, Thomas Hayward, Clifford Harvuoth and Paul Franke. Tibor Kozma conducted.

#### 'Pacific' 34G, Kaycee Kansas City.

Annsas City, Only legit of any consequence to play here this fall was "South Pacific," which wound a week in the Music Hall Saturday (2) with pleasing biz to its credit. Third time in town, this time at a \$4.27 too, show garnered a nifly \$34,000 top, show garnered a nifty \$34,000 in six evening and two matinee performances.

Formerly it played at \$4.88 top.



EDITH ADAMS (Schultz!)

sage, taking a nap or-well, doing anything that guests might do. So the party would have to end at once.

But just when the situation ap-But just when the situation appeared hopeless and the company was about to break, some genius grabbed the manager, pulled him aside and began talking rapidly. Then for a few tense moments, all that could be heard was the crinkling of bank notes.

The party, as a result, was a success, so great, in fact, that I went on the next week to London, there to start a British Glorified Club. That project must also have been a success, for just as I stepped on the steamer, homeward bound, a messenger rushed up and handed me the following telegram from an international news agency:

"If you contemplate starting a Ziegfeld Club in South Africa, kindly advise so that we may cover story."

Thank you, dear Dick and Oscar, for giving me the most wonderful role of my career.

#### Forty-eighth VARIETY

### **Just How Pathetique Can You Get?**

**By EUGENE BURR** 

The kindhearted critic (which sounds like a flat contradiction in terms, but isn't quite) was having lunch with a longhair musician who sprinkled cadenzas and glissandos into the minestrone like a spoonful of parmesan; but finally he got off on a lick that was



Eugene Burr

closer to home. "The newspaper strike took you off a spot, didn't it?" he suggested sweetly. "You didn't have to do a review of 'Kismet'."

"Why shouldn't I want to do a re-view of 'Kismet'?" asked the critic belligerently.

The heckler answered a question with a question. "Did you like it?" "Well ." said the reviewer with

the definitive finality of a critic who hasn't yet discovered what's in his

own mind. "I thought so," said the heckler. "But a while ago you insisted that you like the stories of oldfashioned operettas. And, in 'Kismet,' after you dive through those droves of ... well, of imminently titivating babes which, I admit, is a tough thing to do) you'll find that the story of that pseudo-oriental flesh-fest is maybe, perhaps, just a little bit oldfashioned. I only mention it because the music is

theoretically by Borodin, and I was interested. . . ." "What I had in mind," said the critic with dignity, "were

the books of musical comedies, not operettas." "That isn't what you said," answered the heckler. "It doesn't matter to me-and I don't know much about it anyhow—but I do know that the so-called operettas that used to deal with composers and other such talent-cursed per-sons had books that were pretty sad. Those at least I do know about."

"There haven't been many of them recently," said the critic.

The heckler nodded. "The last one I remember was a clambake called 'Music in the Air' or 'A Song in My Heart' or something."

"'Music in My Heart' "? suggested the critic. "That's it," the longhair answered. "The one that was supposed to be about Tschaikowsky. If I remember rightly, you liked it. Or didn't you?'

"Well . . " said the critic again with authoritative finality.

'Anyhow," said the heckler, "you can't deny it was oldfashioned. The music was Tschaikowsky, so we can leave that out. But the tenor, who was also supposed to be Tschaikowsky, had about as much relation to him as a stale creampuff has to a plum pudding. And so had the story. There were times when, except for the score, you didn't know whether you were watching 'Music in My Heart' or 'Blossom Time in Moscow'."

He snorted and continued. "Why is it that libretto writers, every time they use the name of a composer in their scripts, think they have to write like a mimeograph machine? As soon as they decide to cash in on some poor dead guy who composed music, they pull out the same old plot and fit a new name to it. The composer's a virginal young gent (which puts it in the realm of fantasy right away) who falls in love with some glamorous gal who always turns out to be a soprano. She sort of likes him too, and his fresh young heart blooms under the sunshine of her toothy smile. But he has a very good friend, and his friend and his gal discover that they're soul-mates. So, on the night of his great musical triumph, the composer gives the gal to his pal, hides his cracked heart under a brave smile and an oldfashioned dress-shirt from Brooks, watches the happy pair go into matrimony and the wings, and then despairingly clutches a piano and immediately knocks off his greatest score. Sometimes it's 'Ave Maria' and sometimes it's the Pathetique. But it's always 'Hearts

"It's a good plot," said the critic with grim and deter-mined consistency. "At any rate, people like it." "The first 20 times, maybe," answered the heckler.

"After that, when they meet it under still another name, they begin to get sick of it. What gravels me most is the fact that, if librettists would only learn how to read, the lives of a lot of composers would provide true stories a lot more dramatic than this decaying lollipop." "For instance?" asked the critic.

"For instance, as long as we're talking about 'Music in My Heart' Tschaikowsky. He was no shy young idealistic genius who fell beautifully in love with a glamorous unknown; he was a lackadaisical fellow with a lot of ego, who studied law through sheer inertia because his family wanted him to, and who decided to write serious music only because of the encouragement of Anton Rubinstein, the musical lion of the day-and maybe because it seemed easier than digging through a bunch of lawbooks.

"His experiences with women had no connection with the standard operetta plot that was used on him. As a matter of fact, his experiences with women were on the sparse side, and a lot of people like to talk a lot about that. But he did have two outstanding gals in his life, and either one of them would make a more dramatic story than the phony that was put on the stage.

that took plenty of time—at any rate, it took enough time to allow his brother to find him and fish him out." 'You think that this is the basis of a musical romance?" asked the critic.

Anniversary

"Well, maybe not," the longhair admitted. "But if the producer could get hold of the tank they used in 'Wish You Were Here,' I have a hunch that Bobby Clark would be pretty funny in the suicide scene. And, if you don't like that, maybe the other gal in his life could provide the libretto.

Who was she?"

"She was a married woman named Nadezhda Filaretova

von Meck, and she was nine years older than he." "That's fine for a romance," murmured the critic. "And what do you do with her name? Use it as the trademark

for a new miracle drug?" "The thing's romantic," insisted the longhair. "Her hus-band was a very wealthy railroad contractor; and the year he died Mrs. von Meck started helping Tschaikowsky. She kept on helping him for years. At first she gave him com-missions to compose special music for her; but after a while she stopped kidding about it and just put him on an allowance of about \$3,000 a year-which wasn't grace-notes in those days. It started before he got married and kept right on after he'd left his wife. And it wasn't until 14 years later that they finally broke up. The lady began to go a little potty and imagined she was financially ruinedwhich strictly was not the case. But she thought so; so she cut off Tschaikowsky's annual take." "And he went to her and cured her through the power

of his mind," suggested the critic bitterly.

"He did nothing of the sort. He got sore-even the agh he was quite wealthy in his own right by that time- and broke off with her completely."

"And this," remarked the critic to the spumoni which had arrived by that time, "is what the man thinks is romantic. . .

"You haven't heard the best of it," the other insisted. "She did all this for him, and they wrote to each other all the time, and some of the letters were very interesting documents. But they never saw each other-never even once!

"You mean," said the critic, "that this entire hot romance, that lasted 14 years before it broke up over her stopping his payments, was conducted entirely via the Imperial Tsarist Post?"

The longhair nodied, "But when he died years ater her name was on his lips!"

#### WHAT IS ENTERTAINMENT? By CHARLES O'BRIEN KENNEDY

There is some conflict of opinion as to the meaning of entertainment, some holding that it is spiritual diversion while others maintain that it consists solely of laughter. Roughly speaking, laughter is born either of joyousness

of the spirit or of desperation. The purpose of this screed is to caution the young who would embrace the hazards of laugh-production with more audacity than aptitude. Let the neophyte bear in mind David Garrick's opinion: "Comedy is serious business.

Perhaps one of the first mediums for provoking laughter was the funny story. Any old White Rat can testify that the first "Pat and Mike" story was told by Belshazzar at his memorable highjinks. One critic did not wait for the morning edition, but

scrawled his critique on the wall, thus ending Belshazzar's career as an after-dinner humorist. It must be said for the King that he did not follow in his father's footsteps and eat grass for a laugh.

Now, let us consider the perennial pun. This humorous vice has persisted from the reach of ages even though it was condemned by the ancients. Be that as it may, it does not deter certain comical fellows from tainting the air with the noisome fumes of these overripe witticisms. Some say in justification that for this beverified wittensms. Some which seems to affirm Stendahl's observation: "One does not kill a comedian—one buys him." But still they keep on with the grim persistency of the uninspired, regardless of Mark Twain's scathing opinion of repetitious comedy and Shakespeare's repute to institute to make the state of the second state. and Shakespeare's rebuke to insistent comedians

Now for some examples of physical comedy. A certain Roman Emperor was up to all sorts of games to stir the risibilities of his guests. To this end he put a number of starved crocodiles in his swimming pool with a narrow runway across the top. Here the jolly roisterers would gather to join in the fun as some lightly-clad damsels danced across the plank. Very often one would fall in and the spectators would split their sides as the saurians devoured the toothsome morsel without sugar or cream.

Time made people gentler and they sought more humane form of entertainment. For instance, there was the surefire trick of poisoning a victim's food and watching him writhe in his death agony. Torturing the village idiot was a mirth-provoking outdoor sport for the old and the young. In one of the more civilized countries there was much pleasure to be derived from visiting asylums where the intelligent could revel in the antics of the lunatic. They laughed, didn't they? What more do you want? As against this, the late Charles E. Van Loan once wrote: "The only way to cure a physical comedian is to kill him."

#### IT'S A SMALL WORLD 'Iron Curtain' Traps Midgets-Shortage **Of Short People for Show Biz**

#### By BURNET HERSHEY

"We may have the largest stockpile of atom bombs, as President Eisenhower told us recently, but the Soviets are today out in front in the stockpiling of---midgets!"

With all the impact of one of those East-West situations which periodically rock the halls of the United Nations, this critical pronouncement galloped right across the poker table where four agents-theatrical, not foreign-formed the essential decor for some of the biggest talk on a small subject heard on Broadway this season. "Yeh, we may have the H-bomb, but the U.S.S.R. has a world monopoly on midgets." One vaudeville agent, a man who appears to have survived in a business that didn't, was hammering home his point: not only did the U.S.A. have a shortage of short people, but that the Russians were to blame for this one, too. To a theatrical agent like Irving Tishman, who for 30 years has specialized in handling midgets, it was a blow at private enterprise, a repudiation of international commitments and a denial of essential artistic and cultural cooperation between nations. And, besides, it's a mean trick to do him and his associates out of a flock of commissions.

Fact is, Tishman wasn't kidding when he protests that the whole thing is a plot hatched in the Kremlin and that the "Iron Curtain" is cutting off the midget supply.

What he was trying to say is that most of the world's available midgets are today behind the Iron Curtain-scattered throughout eastern Europe, and the Soviets refuse to let them travel. In any case, as one of the players pointed out, McCarran wouldn't let them in, even if they could come.

Eastern Europe and the Balkans always had a larger midget population, per capita, than any region in the world. Some experts ascribed it to an accident of geology. They point to the "goiter belt" of Europe, that section where the water supply is deficient in iodine con-tent. This, they always claimed, indirectly contributed to undowfunctioning of the minimum for the section. underfunctioning of the pituitary gland which, in turn, produced midgetism. In recent years, American agents scouting the U.S.A. for midgets made the interesting but slightly blasphemous discovery that Texas had an unusually high per capita *midget* population as compared with other states! Deep in the heart of Texas was a goiter Deep in the heart of Texas was a goiter belt-no iodine!

Conceding the validity of the poker player's grudge against the Russians for cutting off their midget source, a further and more exhaustive inquiry into this matter-and without a subvention from UNESCO, too-revealed several other reasons for the midget shortage, all of them clearly realistic—and new. For one thing, a tremendous amount of clinical experience during the last 10 years has opened door to medical advances in the field of gland correction and control with beneficial consequences to those of the human race who were marked for midgetism. Most of us are aware that midgets are not born, but get that way because of the underfunctioning of the ductless glands, with the pituitary the principal offender and the thyroid its most active accomplice.

Vitamin combinations, new hormones and liver extracts have corrected this glandular unbalance. One noted endo-crinologist even came up with a prediction recently that advances in this field would at some not too distant date abolish the midget altogether from the face of the earth. That is, unless he were bred for exhibition purposes, like a species of dog or horse.

Perhaps before the scientists or even the Politburo get around to reducing the number of midgets available for the entertainment industry, our own homegrown, postwar economic currents will have swept many of the little peo-ple out of the show tents into normal pursuits. In fact, something like this has been going on since the first war years, with industry and trade absorbing part of the midget population. Some may remember how eagerly the airplane factories snatched up midgets and put them to work in the narrow spaces of wings and tails. "Operation Pee-Wee," one Sunday supplement called it, and the stories of these midget war plant workers kept many a public relations man on the payroll for the duration. It was one the few war plant stories that got in the papers.

#### **No Half-Pints Either!**

Many of the old midget acts, those who have been around for years, are in retirement, some of the performers being well over 50. Perhaps the best illustration is



Chas. O'B. Kennedy

"In the first place, there was a gal he thought he was in love with. He was no shy young genius at the time; he was 37 years old and already fairly well known. And he didn't have to give her up to his best friend and then race like mad to an upstage Steinway and dash off the Pathetique; he didn't write the Pathetique until 16 years later. And, as for the gal, he married her.

"Her name, incidentally, was Antonina Ivanova Milyu-kova—and try to write a lyric around that. They were married on the 6th of July, 1877; and by the next Octo-ber they'd separated. Some smart writer could do a job trying to reconstruct those three months. Most people, it's to be noted, agree that Antonina shouldn't be blamed for the smashup. That was supposedly due to what's been called, with the gentility that the Victorians liked to smear around in their dirty minds, Tschaikowsky's abnormality of temperament. After the marriage he became silent and glum; and he finally quit Moscow, where they were living, and hotfooted it to St. Petersburg. But he didn't set down and write a slab of great music about it. He tried to kill himself.

"This he did in his own quaint and special Russky way, He didn't go in for anything as dull and routine as shooting or hanging. He just waded out into a river on a frost night until the water was up to his chin; and then he stood there, waiting to catch pneumonia and die. It was a method

Now arises the question of "giving the public what it wants." When comics say "the public," do they mean that all people possess the same low tastes?

Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, openly rebuked Thespis for injecting gags into the classics. Now, Thespis was a showman (a very apologetic word at all times) and brazenly replied that it was no great matter if he spoke or acted in jest. Striking the ground violently with his staff, Solon replied: "If we encourage such jesting as this we shall quickly find it in our contracts and agreements." Hence the "jokers" in theatrical contracts in the pre-Equity days. By the way, Thespis is credited with the introduction of the monolog. No comment.

Does tragedy entertain? Oscar Wilde once said: "He must be a hard-hearted man who can read the death of Little Nell without laughing." This from the arch-come-dian of his time and the author of that great tragic poem, "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," only adds to our confusion while seeking a definition of entertainment.

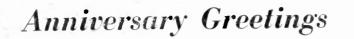
You see how hard it is to define entertainment. But there is one conclusion to be gathered: there is nothing more tragic than a comedian whom the Comic Muse has ignored or deserted.

the story of one of the better-known, latter-day midget acts-Buster Shaver with Ollie, George & Richard. This combo migrated to South River, N. J., and opened a liquor store And they're not selling half pints, either!

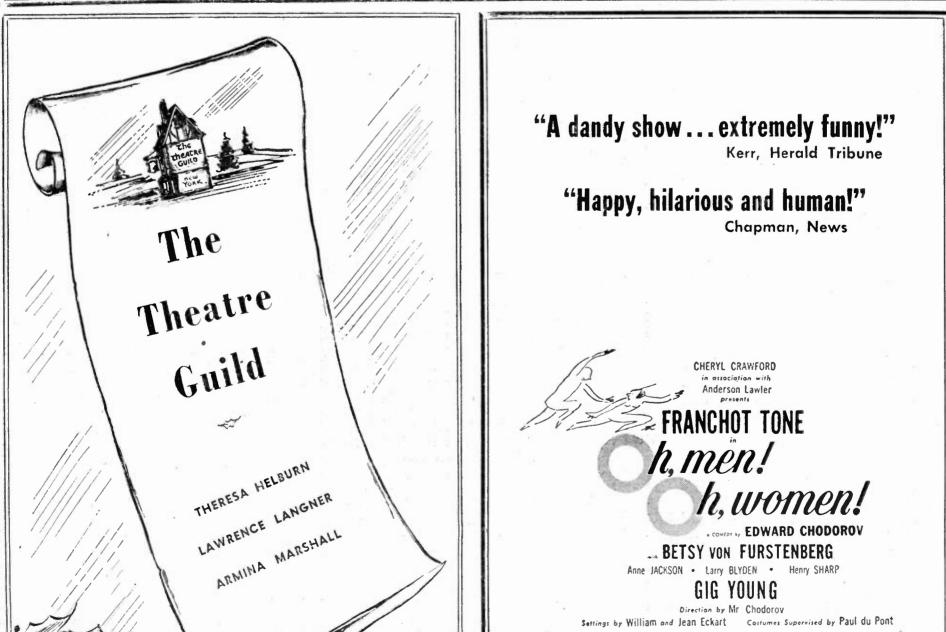
An occasional show of paternalism took the curse off a relationship which was often little more than mortgagee and chattel. It came about something like this: an agent would spot a midget, beat his competitor in making contact with the parents and close a deal to take their abnormal son or daughter off their hands for a specific weekly or monthly cut of the midget's earnings. The midget got only "pocket money"; his living expenses, clothes and medical bills were taken care of by the impresario. Naturally, a chiselling manager got away with murder when he slept them four in a bed and bought children's shoes for the adults.

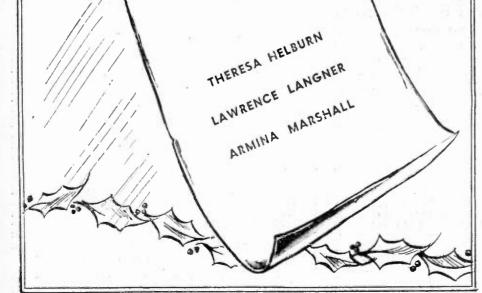
Only when it came to feeding them was the manager really in a tough spot. Doctors have established that the midget's metabolic rate being one and one-half times that of the normal individual he will eat and drink more. in relation to his size, than the average person. As a result, a midget may eat one-twenty-fifth of his entire weight at a sitting or drink enough liquids to provide him with a bath. One midget, under three feet, drank fifteen large beakers of ale in one evening.

So, if you know any young midgets bitten by the show biz bug, tell 'em to forget it. Philip Morris has a boy, and is holding on to him.

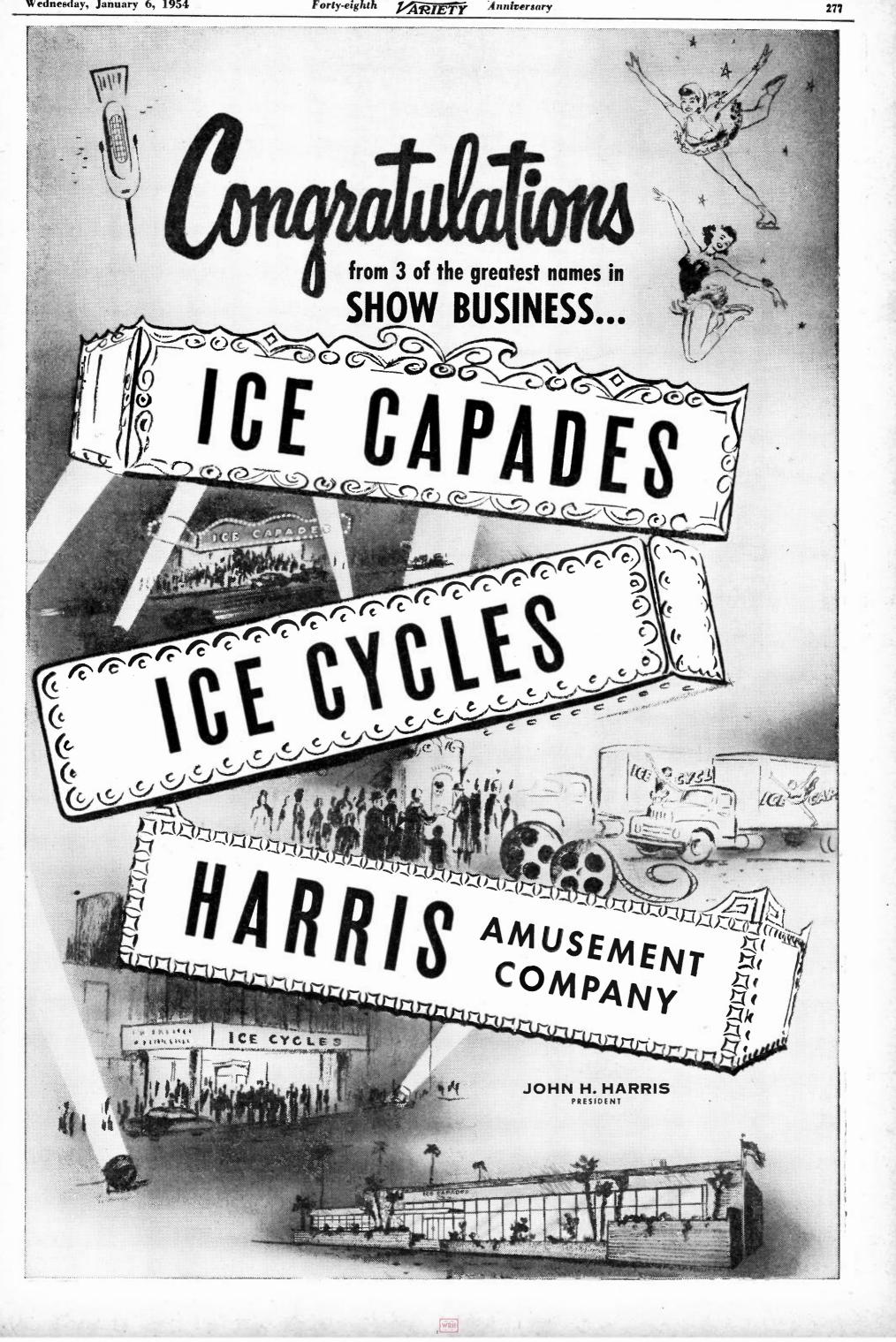


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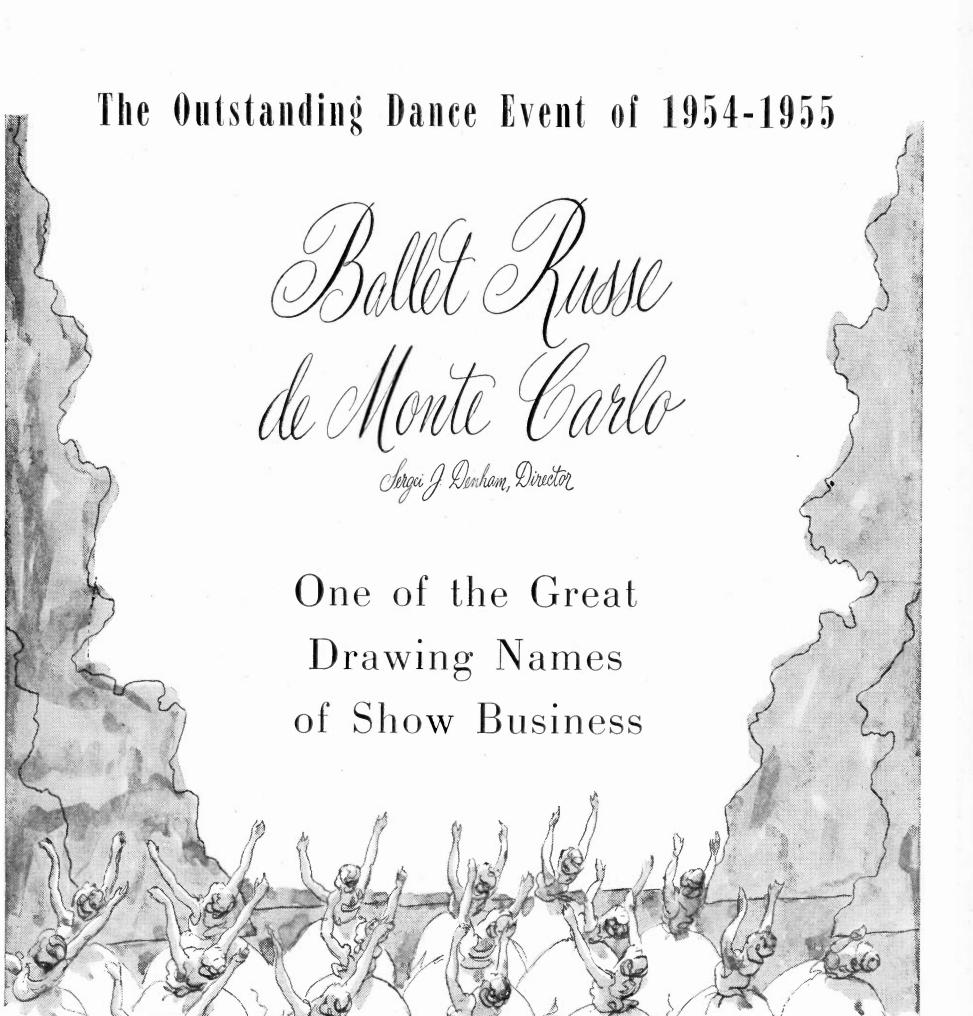
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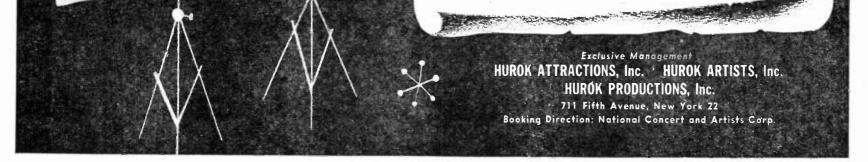


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	Britz brill creat Rob the full Am RO Dire all irep	OLD VIC in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in's great theatrical. company brings to North America the iant production of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," ted for the Edinburgh Festival and starring Moira Shearer and ert Helpmann. The company of 65 will feature a ballet troupe, and famous incidental music of Mendelssohn will be performed by a orchestra. JAPANESE DANCERS AND MUSICIANS arica's first view of the legendary theatre art of Japan. LAND PETIT'S BALLETS DE PARIS ct from triumphs in London and Paris, the company which broke records on Broadway returns to the United States in a stunning new artory with Colette Marchand and Leslie Caron as guest artist, tesy of MGM studios.
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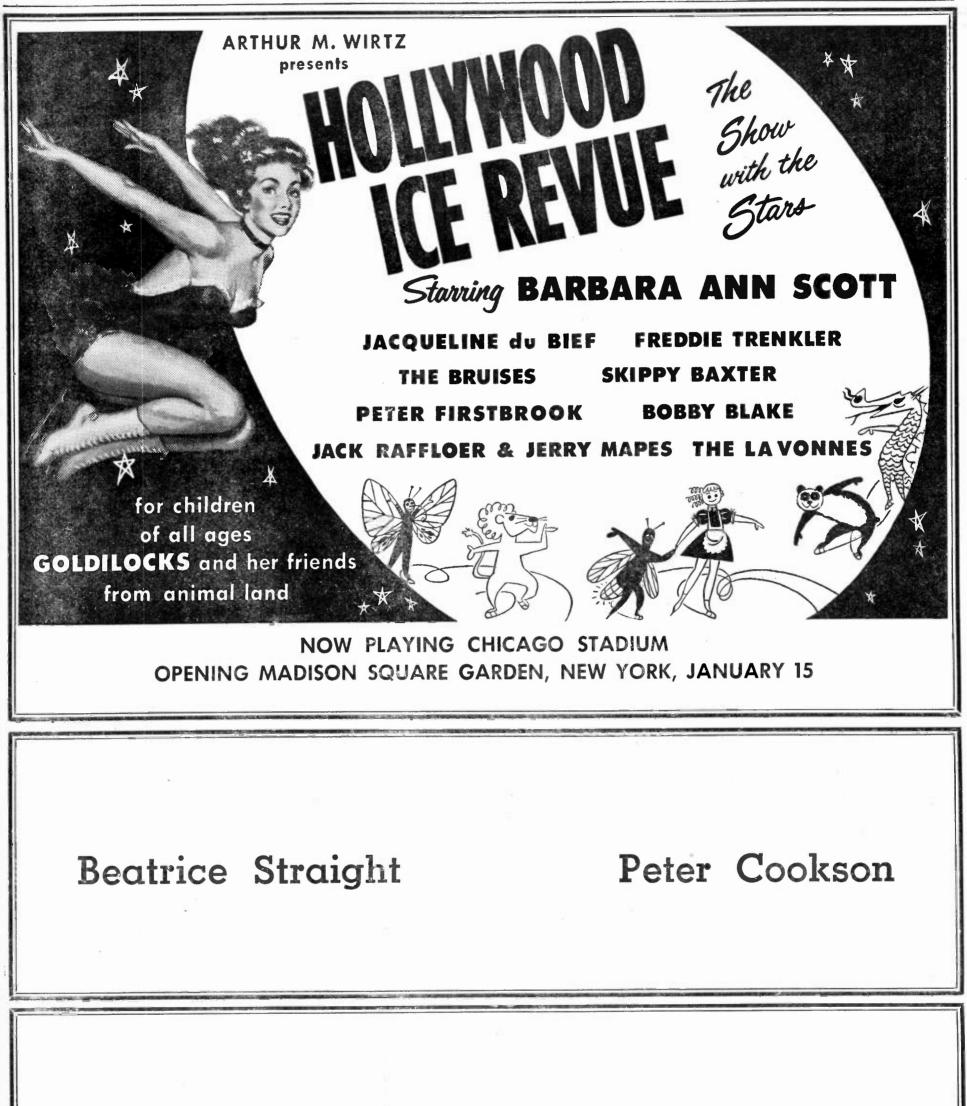
VIENNA CHOIR BOYS

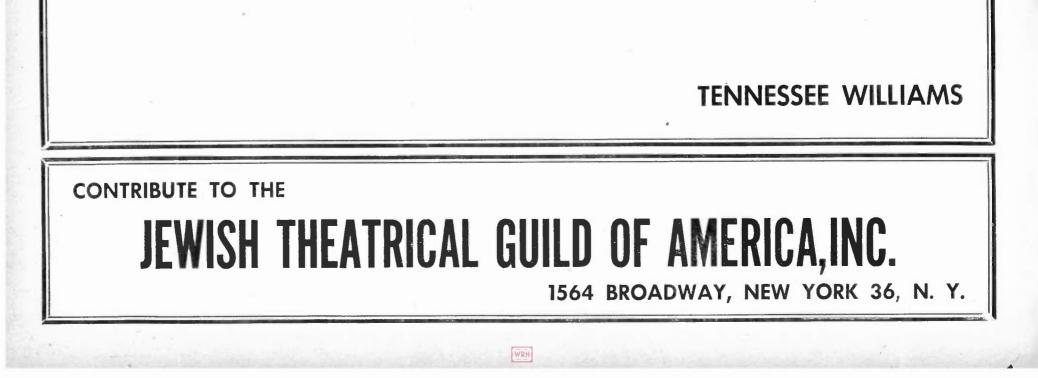


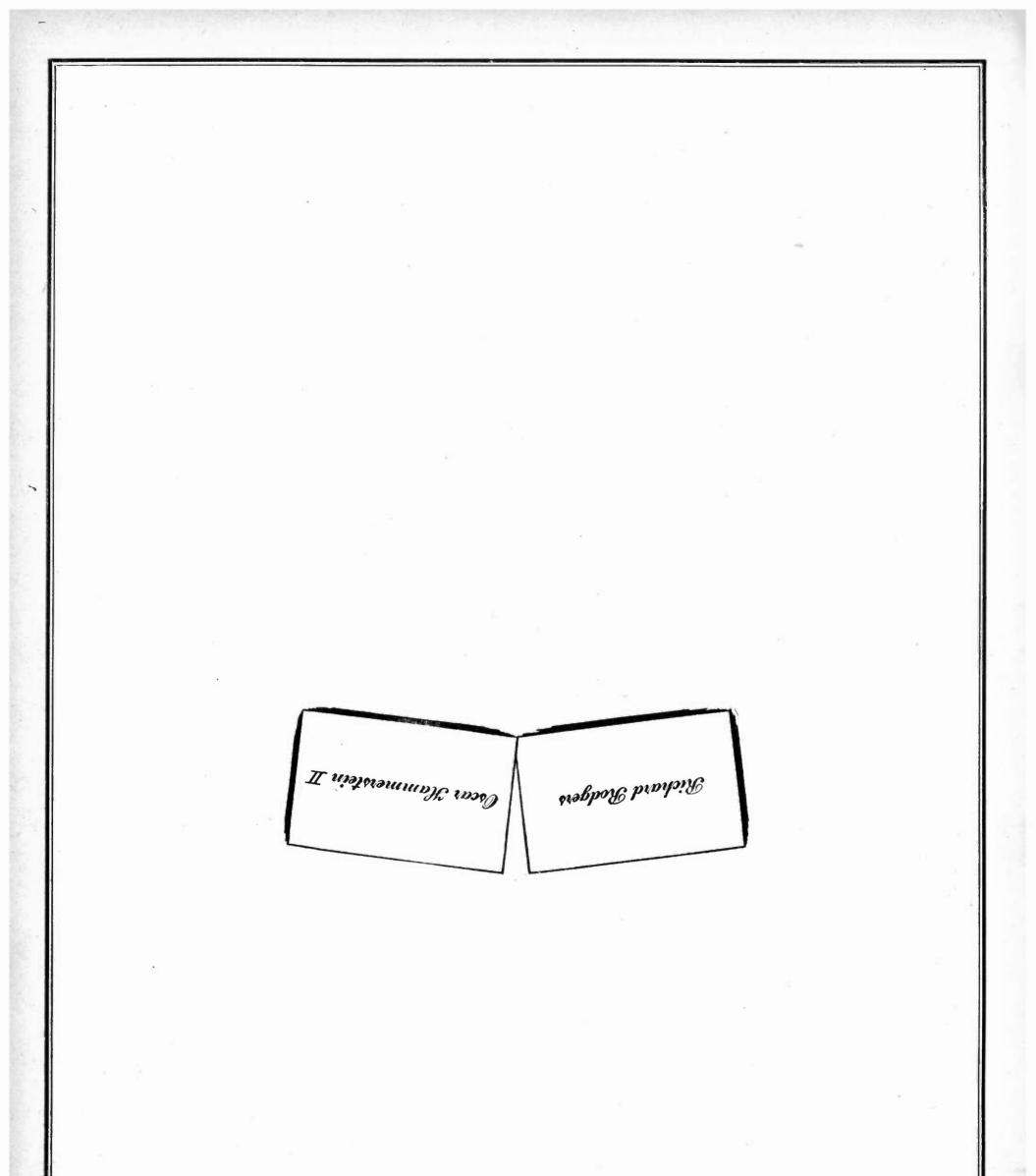
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Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

Wednesday, January 6, 1954







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- New Haven, Conn. Dec. 21 - Dec. 24—Christmas Vacation
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- Jan. 13 Jan. 20—The Gardens, 110 N. Craig St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
- Jan. 21 Jan. 31—The Arena, 3700 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio
- Feb. 1 Feb. 5-Maple Leaf Gardens, 60 Carleton, Toronto, Ont.
- Feb. 7 Feb. 14-The Forum, 2313 St. Catherine West, Montreal, Que. Feb. 16 - Feb. 23-Boston Gardens, North Station, Boston, Mass. Mar. 1 - Mar. 7-Rhode Island Auditorium, 1111 No. Main St., Providence, R. I. Mar. 9 - Mar. 14-Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo, N. Y. Mar. 15 - Mar. 21-Chondaga County War Memorial, Syracuse, N. Y. Mar. 23 - Mar. 29-The Arena, 410 West Kilbourn Ave., Milwaukee, Wis. Mar. 30 - Apr. 18-The Arena, 2900 Dupont Ave., S., Minneapolis, Minn. Apr. 21 - May 2-Civic ice Arena, 4th North and Mercer Sts., Seattle, Wash. May 3 - May 8-Vancouver Forum, Vancouver, B.C. May 9 - June 29-Annual Vacation Opens June 30-Winterland, Post and Steiner Sts., San Francisco, Calif.





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Dances by JEROME ROBBINS Settings by RAOUL PENE DU BOIS

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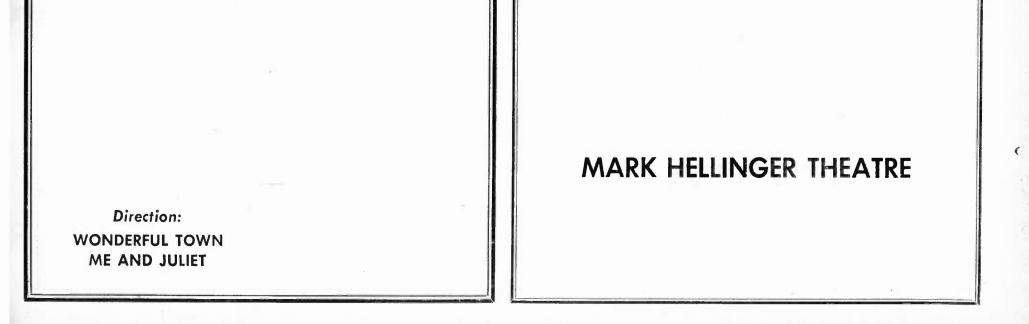
### "SOUTH PACIFIC"

In Association with RICHARD RODGERS, OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II and JOSHUA LOGAN

# Anthony Brady Farrell PRODUCTIONS

# GEORGE ABBOTT

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WRH '

Wednesday, January 6, 1954

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#### Plays on Broadway

In the Summer House An the Summer mouse Oliver Smith & Playwrights Co. produc-tion of drama in two acts (five scenes), by Jane Bowles. Stars Judith Anderson; features Mildred Dunnock. Elizabeth Ross, Logan Ramsey. Staged by Jose Quintero; incidental music. Paul Bowles; scenery, Oliver Smith: costumes. Noel Taylor; lighting, Peggy Clark; associate producer, Lyn Austin. At Playhouse, N.Y., opening nights). Mrs Fastman-Cuevas Judith Anderson

Loneliness, frustration and despair are the keynote of "In the Summer House," an impressionistic and strangely inarticulate drama Jane Bowles, which Oliver Smith and the Playwrights Co. have brought to the Playhouse. For the record, a captivated first-night audience, or at least the vocal portion of it, greeted even the scene curtains with prolonged applause, and there were bravos after bravos at the close, particularly for Judith Anderson as the smouldering emotional star.

"Summer House" is slightly selfconscious, rather incomprehensible and unsatisfying. Perhaps decadent is too strong a word. Call the play specialized entertainment, then; doubtlessly enthralling and even exalting for the initiates, but some-what rarefied and elusive for matwhat rarefied and elusive for matter-of-fact showgoers. At any rate, it seems a dubious commercial bet and is negligible film material.

Through the murky imagery of Mrs. Bowles' intermittently poetic prose, the general idea seems to be that we're all lonely, unable to reach out to those we love (invari-ably possessively) and fated to un-bannings and regret. The manhappiness and regret. The mannered story involves two widows on the California coast. Both are the California coast. Both are frightened, but one is domineering. trying to impose her intolerant standards on her terrorized daughter and, indeed, on life itself.

The other is timid, afraid to approach her spoiled impulsive daughter, on whom she is utterly dependent emotionally, and pathetically cowed by her. Both mothers and daughters are overcivilized, surface as she contrasts their neu-roticism with the exhuberance of

undedicated, that tends to be ex-Oliver Smith, who co-produced with the Playwrights Co., has sup-plied three eloquently decorative settings, each with a stunning sea-scape backdrop. One is the house and garden, with the symbolic sum-mer house where the sullen. harried daughter retreats from reality to daydream and read comic books. Another is a beach where a color-ful picnic is held. The third is a convincingly tawdry cocktail

lounge. Jose Quintero's Under unhurried direction. pressively Miss Anderson gives another of her seething, fire-breathing emotional performances. Mildred Dunnock, top-featured as the panicky nock, top-featured as the panicky other mother, is plausibly pathetic as always. Acceptable supporting performances are given by Eliza-beth Ross as the bullied daughter; Logan Ramsey as the youth she marries, also frightened but still curious about life; Don Mayo as a fourthy inst. Movien male animal: forthright Mexican male animal; Marita Reid as a member of his noisy retinue: Muriel Berkson as the headstrong daughter, and Jean Stapleton as a garrulous waitress. Paul Bowles, husband of the author, has supplied haunting inci-dental music, Peggy Clark's light-ing is expressive. Noel Taylor has designed the costumes and Lyn Austin is billed as associate pro-ducer. "Summer House" is a play to express strong reactions

to arouse strong reactions. It's obviously great stuff if you dig that sort of thing. But then, what isn't? Hobe.

#### The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker

Mr. Pennypacker Robert Whitehead and Roger L. Stevens production of comedy in three acts (four scenes) by Liam O'Brien. Stars Burgess Meredith, Martha Scott: features Thomas Chalmers, Una Merkel, Glenn Anders, Phyllis Love, Michael Wager, Staged by Alan Schneider: scenery and costumes, Ben Edwards, At Coronet, N.Y., Dec. 30, '53: \$7.80-\$6 top (\$12:\$7.20 opening). Laurie Pennypacker Nancy Devlin Pupils Betty Lou Keim, Kathleen Gately Ben Pennypacker Billy Quinn David Pennypacker Lewis Scholle Edward Pennypacker Non Dengel Aunt Jane Pennypacker Martha Scott Henry Pennypacker John Reese Wilbur Fifield Michael Wager Kate Pennypacker John Reese Teddie Pennypacker John Reese Grampa Pennypacker John Reese Grampa Pennypacker Glenn Anders Dr. Fifield Glenn Anders Sheriff Howard Fischer Pa Pennypacker Burgess Meredith Policeman James Holden

Imagine if Clarence Day had been a bigamist, with another wife

and a second large family in, say, Philadelphia—a sort of "Lives with Father" setup. That, approximate-

Father" setup. That, approximate-ly, is the dizzy premise of a fantas-tic farce. "The Remarkable Mr, Pennypacker," by Liam O'Brien, brother of film-legit actor Ed-mond O'Brien. With Burgess Meredith giving a hilarious performance as the fabu-lously uninhibited father commut-ing between two adoring house-holds, this improbable antic is sur-prisingly plausible and generally very funny. It is not a comedy to be taken seriously, for anyone who does so may find its seeming ir-reverence shocking. Nor m all y carefree night-outers, however, carefree night-outers, however, should find it consistently laughable and occasionally quite tender. It is a likely hit, partcularly for the family trade, and with probably only minor revisions, is a lively film prospect. Incidentally it gets Robert Whitehead and Roger L. Stevens. partnered under the ban-ner of Producers' Theatre, Inc., off

to a promising start. "Mr. Pennypacker" has a dandy first act. with one of the funniest curtains in recent memory. It opens the bustling household, with Martha Scott as the pretty, serene mother. Una Merkel as the prim aunt, eight pellmell children and an explosive, porkchop-whiskered

Grampa. Between visits from a young minister, who proposes to the eager eldest daughter, the lad's straight-(Continued on page 290)

#### **CLAIRE LEONARD Agency**

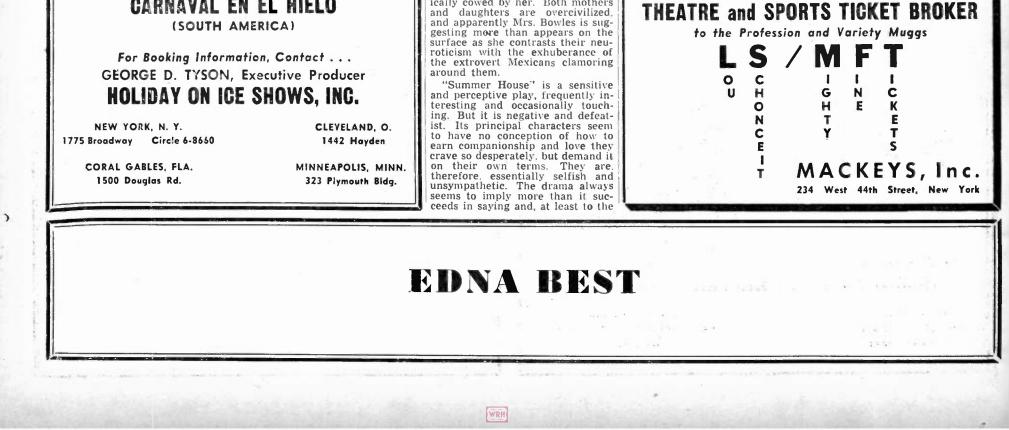
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with

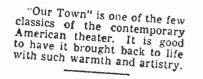
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American Theater, play by Thornow, sents "Our Town," a play by Thornow ton Wilder, directed by Charles W. ton Wilder, directed by Charles W. Theater. The Manager Edgar Buchanan Howie Newsome Elizabeth Kerr Mrs. Gibbs Tab Hunter Rebecca Gibbs Sturr Forking Faching Faching and the faching f	
Professor Willard Fay Roope Mr. Webb Balcony Fay Roope Woman in the Balcony There a Lyon Man in the Auditorium Stapleton Kent Lady in the Box Edward Schaal Charles Lyon Lady in the Box Edward Schaal Charles Schaal Lady in the Box Almira Sessions Lady in the Box Almira Sessions	Season's Greetings
Simon Stimson Almira Session Soames Paul Barry Mrs. Soames Stapleton Kent Joe Stoddard	

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down the line—each character is drawn for its individuality and innate qualities, without reaching for effects or playing peal. And all are work ed thoughfully and sensitively lence, movement and pause, in deference to the overall design of the play.

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#### CONGRATULATIONS

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# Actor's Man-Bites-Dog for Agent; **Extol Value As Catalysts of Deals**

#### By DAVID WAYNE

eration in the history of show business has been its inevitable caricaturing in the public eye.

Of course, I may err when I pronounce this a curse because in the fanciful temple we have constructed, the grotesqueness of our own unique machinations may, in the final result, bring more ticket-buyers to the turnstiles than if we behaved like the college of morticians.

After all, I never yet saw a fireeater portrayed on a carny ballyhoo poster as anything other than a menacing demi-god who could expectorate an inferno while lighting tapers from both ears, while includes while in reality he is a middleaged fellow with a girdle under his tights who was forced to swallow a lighted cigar butt to avoid detection during an adolescent experiment and thereby stumbled over his great talent in life.

We are all, in the entertainment industry, victims of our own handi-Our tub-thumpers have craft. succeeded in creating great stars— the royalty of the Americas—and stamped them as mysterious exotic 10 his analysis will include a beret,

The curse of every successful op- | creatures who nibble on humming birds' tongues rolled in money. By the same token, the creation of these gilded and veiled immortals has covered the normal task of the industry with the gauze of illusion, and thus the work of businessmen and artisans has blossomed into a sideshow that often rivals the dervishes under the Big Top.

Producers, directors, writers, advance men, press agents, ticket brokers, songpluggers, casting directors, stage managers, casting di-rectors, stage managers, office. boys, yesmen, story analysts, ex-tras, bit players, stunt men, doubles—they have all become sprayed with the legerdemain of the cinema and theatre and by this the cinema and theatre and by this time it is not possible to admit to your source of livelihood amongst strangers without being stared at like an ocelot on Shubert Alley. The agent, a trade I was holding

back for the punch, dominates this questionable aura and shares it with no man.

Average (Wrong) Concept

**CAB CALLOWAY** 

long foreign automobiles, casting couches, and cigars the size of a walking stick. Moreover he is likely to pinpoint the subject in question as an assassin of the Eng-lish language with a penchant for sandals, smoked glasses and loose women, all circling, in predictable spheres of rotation, Palm Springs, Las Vegas, Hollywood night clubs, Palm Springs, Las Vegas and Hol-lywood night clubs.

It is next to useless to attempt to convince the populace that agents are cloak and suit salesmen who are merely peddling the warp and woof of talent instead of a herringbone pleat. They are not, as we sometimes erreoniously assume, complete products of our business any more than Madman Muntz sprang from the loins of Henry Ford. Agents are executives with the world for an office, idea men with a blowtorch imagination. They are selling what they have to sell and if there were no such commodity as talent I will give you 8-to-5 that they would be convincing someone else they couldn't live without something else. One agency biggie that I know has always had his eye on a little seashell stand on the Tamiami Trail just outside of Ochopee, Florida, and likes to think he could turn an honest dollar there as well as in Culver City.

Whatever the agent may be, there is a strong tendency to give him scant credit for the creation of our little empire. There exists an overpowering urge to label him as a two-legged version of the little pilot fish who skitters along in front of the voracious sharks and leads them to goodies, a small fraction of which he is able to confis-cate for his own gullet. I for one will take the time to debate the issue since I already know that the portrait is not couched upon reality.

**A Creative Contribution** Agents have, by and large, cre-ated our business. True, they have

not personally constructed any great studios or set up tremendous releasing organizations. They have done a minimum of actual production on an individual basis, and I have yet to see one awarded the New York Critics' award for set-ting up the "Best Deal of the Year." Yet it is these same agents who have brought together some of the world's greatest talents. It has been agents who have accomplished the impossible by aligning elements of known opposing polar-ity, and by doing this ignited the sparks that led to New York and Hollywood's brightest successes. In brief, the agent is a catalyst. **World Without Agents** 

Without agents this would be a sorry industry indeed. It is unhealthy to lay down a rule that all talent cannot front their demands because I have met some who outsmarted me and may again, but it has been proved conclusively, and sadly in some cases, that the majority of actors, directors, writers, etc., are not to be trusted with The very temtheir own future. perament that gifts them with greatness can destroy them as easily when it comes to deals and dollars.

Agents, on the other hand, can be as cold and impersonal as an extinct cod. Their sole purpose in life is to make the best possible deals for their clients. As a consequence they are able to approach any negotiation with an objectivity that an actor finds quite impossible This very disassociation that allows them to make a client nibble on graham crackers in a cellar instead of putting his name on the tag end of a lucrative but detrimental contract, can also produce lifelong annuities and a flood of riches for talent with the sense to listen.

Naturally, there is a scattering of questionable agents as well as good agents, and little ones as well as big ones, and to lump them all together under one heading is the

same as saying that all the apples in Washington are sound and free from burrowings.

I have met some shady cobblers in my day, and I have sighted some butchers who weighed the sweetbreads and several of their fingers as well, but that does not mean that I can't get my shoes fixed by an expert or pick up some prime pork chops on my way home tonight.

No, the agent is one man the entertainment industry would be hard-pressed to be without, and if you doubt this statement consider whether you would care to face some gimlet-eyed studio executive cr theatrical producer and haggle about the price of a commodity— yourself. Chances are you would take the critique of your price as a personal insult and walk away in righteous indignation, thus sinking the deal.

The agent is the one way of counterbalancing a situation such as this and it is my prediction that he will be around for a long time yet--- as long as there are actors to act and vehicles to put them in. And when that day is only a faded memory I know there are still plenty of peoule who will want seashells.

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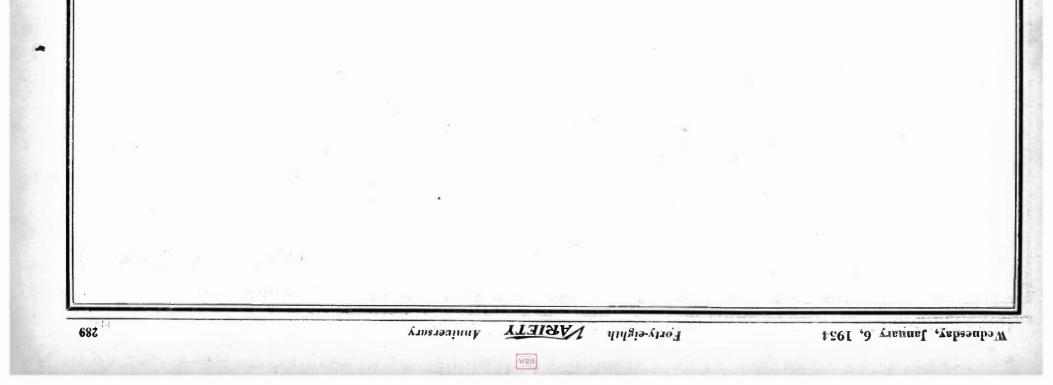
EVIE HAYES **STARRING** 

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### COLE PORTER



#### Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary

MARRIAGES

### **OBITUARIES**

#### FELIX SNOW

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Felix D. Snow, 66, leader in theatrical unions, died in Kansas City, Dec. 25 after a long illness. He had been hospitalized since Dec. 7 when he suffered a heart attack after attending the annual meeting and dinner of the Motion Picture Assn. of Greater Kansas City.

Snow was business manager of Kansas City Local 31 of the Inter-national Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes & Motion Picture Operators, and had held the post for several years. He was recently reelected to the position while con-fined in a hospital.

He also was third vice president of the International, having held a vice presidency in that organiza-tion since 1940. Three years later he headed the cleanup move in Chicago Local 110, in which gang-ster control was ousted and its operation returned to the union.

Snow was nationally known for bis Chicago service. He was noted as one of the most forthright and dependable K. C. union leaders. drawing a salute from the Kansas City Star in its editorial columns for his standing in the community for his standing in the community and theatrical and union circles. He was active in K. C. theatres from 1908 till the present.

Survivors include wife, brother and two sisters.

#### VIOLET MACMILLAN

Violet MacMillan, 66, legit and silent screen actress, died Dec. 28 in Grand Rapids, Mich. She was married to John H. Folger, industrial exec, who was her press agent in show biz.

In snow biz. Miss MacMillan was known as the "Cinderella Girl" after win-ning a contest to find a woman with feet small enough to wear a "Cinderella" golden slipper. She played a leading role in the orig-inal Breadway production of the inal Broadway production of the legituner, "The Time, The Place and The Girl." She also costarred with Lon Chaney, Blanche Ring, Trixie Friganza and Julian Eltinge. Her husband and a son survive.

#### FRED B. HAMER

Fred Booth Hamer, 80, silent screen director-actor, died Dec. 30 in Los Angeles. He was casting di-In Los Angeles. He was casting di-rector for D. W. Griffith in the filming of "Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance." He also directed such silent stars as Mary Pickford. Dorothy and Lillian Gish and Richard Barthelmess, Hamer thes-ped in "Broken Blossoms" and "Hearts of the World." At one time Richard Barthelmess, Hamer thes-ped in "Broken Blossoms" and "Hearts of the World." At one time static "little talk" in which Pa

Gene Morgan, 66, veteran Chi-cago rewspaperman with the Chi Daily News for almost 40 years. the last six of which were spent as in Downey. Ill., after a long ill-ness. A sister survives.

Dec. 28 after a two-month illness. He had an interest in the Kerrville Broadcasting Co., operators of KERV, of which his brother, Hal Peterson, is prez.

John Howard, former Para-mount sales executive and later West Coast district manager for Selznick Releasing Organization, died Dec. 27 in Santa Monica. He retired several years ago.

Mrs. Loretta Jones, 48, wife of Clem Jones, assistant director at Paramount, died Dec. 28 in Holly-

Mrs. Minetta Meyers, 56. wife of talent agent Edwin Meyers, died Dec. 27 in Hollywood.

Father of Pearl Primus, legit and nitery dancer, died Dec. 19 in New York.



laced preacher-father, a process-server, and a reporter, it presently server, and a reporter, it presently develops that a worried young stranger is a son from the other, unsuspected Pennypacker tribe. The impatiently awaited Pa arrives at this hectic point and brings down the curtain with one of the longest-delayed doubletakes in Decoducer bittom Broadway history.

After that, the undeniably re-markable Mr. Pennypacker is verbally assailed by all the outraged relatives and visitors, but pacing up and down, waving his arms and running his hands through his hair, he spouts a continuous stream of cockeyed logic and finally persuades everyone into accepting the situation.

Patricia Arno to Warren Bush, Gibraltar, Dec. 31. Bride is daugh-ter of cartoonist Peter Arno; groom he was stage director for the old Belasco Theatre in L.A. He retired from the film biz 20 years ago and became a real estate developer. His wife survives.

Susan Morrow to Gary Morton. Los Angeles, Dec. 17. Bride is an actress; he's a nitery comic. Lillian Fletcher to Charles Brackett, Tucson, Dec. 26. He's a producer and head of the Acad-emy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

#### BIRTHS

Charles V. Peterson, 52, radio executive, died in Kerrville, Tex... Base 29 often a two month illness advertising and alter a two months illness advertising and alter a two months illness and a state and a stat dvertising and sales promotion.

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Clark, daughter, Hollywood, Dec. 24. Father is veepee of the Gross-Krasne TV company.

bamboozles the sedate preacher into accepting his son's marriage into the wildly unorthodox family, but the scene is relieved a bit by a staggered parade of little Pennypackers running away from home. As always, every time the show seems about to subside into the humdrum, Pa crupts with another harebrain idea or the deliciously rambunctious children scamper on and uncork fresh humor.

Under Alan Schneider's skillfully broad direction, the performance animates the happily preposterous script. Meredith is believable and ingratiating as the irrepressibly garrulous Pennypacker, the offbeat "pioneer" who wears knickers, is up to this periled neck in pro-gressive causes and believes that in having two wives and large fam-ilies he's merely 50 years ahead of his time.

Miss Scott is charming and unobtrusively amusing as his sorely tried but devoted wife-on-thescene. Miss Merkel has conviction and a nice comic touch as the aunt who doesn't succeed in maintaining a semblance of order amid the pandemonium, and there are effective supporting performances by Thom-as Chalmers as the irate Grampa, Glenn Anders as the aghast preacher, Phyllis Love as the daughter in love and Michael Wager as her in-tended spouse.

A bevy of Equity juveniles are terrific as the Pennypackers chil-dren of assorted ages. Ben Edwards has designated a cluttered 1890s living room that any member of a large family will recognize as time-less, as well as the appropriate period costumes.

Broadway has a new hit in "Pen-nypacker" and a new playwright in O'Brien. Both are welcome. Hobe.

In Alemoriam 1953

NATHAN ABRAHAMS THERON BAMBERGER **IRVING BECKER** WALTER CAMPBELL

#### **Borscht Circuit** Continued from page 246

night the rest of the week. A embryo writers, producers, direcweekly program consisted of dramatic shows, concerts, campfires, amateur nights, masquerade balls, minstrel shows, quizzes and audience-participation nights such as indoor games and square dancing. We also had to arrange organized activities such as calisthenics. hikes, treasure hunts, water sports and tournaments. Occasionally we would bring up an act or twofor free-to supplement our reg-ular company. Little by little this proved so popular the boss realized he could save a lot of room and board by bringing in acts for the weekend. This was the beginning of the new trend.

The owner of Totem Lodge was the first to realize that in order to meet competition he had to give the guest something more than borscht and potatoes. All resorts offered meals and planned day and night programs and athletic facil-We were the first to install ities. professional motion picture equipment and show first run pix once or twice a week, sometimes before they hit Broadway.

The one big problem to lick at a resort is the weather, so Totem Lodge was the first to build an indoor swimming pool so that guests could enjoy their fun no matter the climate. And finally, in 1939 we introduced a regular policy of big names, booked through William Morris Agency. Almost every big name appeared Totem-Eddie Cantor, Sophie at Tucker, Joe E. Lewis, Milton Berle, Ritz Bros., Georgie Jessel, Harry Richman, Andrew Sisters and others. Of course in those days you could buy some big names for as little as \$500 a night, or less. One show featuring both Joe E. Lewis and Sophie Tucker cost us less than \$1,000. Now, only large spots like Grossinger's and the Concord Hotel, with an allyear-round operation and large capacity, can afford a Tony Martin, or Martin & Lewis.

#### Comics Pfd.

Other hotels which could not afford such budgets were booking lesser names such as Myron Cohen, Jan Murray, Jackie Miles, Joey Adams, Henny Youngman, Phil Fos-ter, Sam Levenson, Gene Baylos and Al Bernie.

The demand for comedians has become so great that one booker, Charlie Rapp, who handles many of the outstanding hotels in the Borscht Belt, guarantees the co-median three to four shows per weekend, such guarantees sometimes running into \$2,500-\$3,000 per per week. Another agency, Baum & Newborn, who handle several hotels in the Blue Borscht Circuit Hampshire, Adirondacks, Berkshires) have lined up a two-week, single-night circuit, traveling the acts from hotel to hotel each night and staggering the nights conveniently. When the new names graduate to higher brackets and more lucrative fields, as a result of TV or record clicks, such as Berle, Caesar, Buttons, Levenson and others, they eliminate themselves from the Borscht Belt, playing only an occasional date for sentimental reasons. The rest the comics then raise their of price. This has forced the hotel owners and bookers to look for newer faces and start developing younger comedians. Out of this op have sprung such new names

day night, the staff had to keep staffs and less guest talent. This tors, comedians and actors who can learn the hard way as we did in the old days. It looks that then and only then will the pendulum swing back from "Champagne & Caviar" to "Borscht & Potatoes."

#### **Brit.** Music Continued from page 226 ;

field), there is a parallel appreciation of non-vocal records that is undoubtedly due to the tremendous improvement in the standard of British instrumental playing.

Frank Chacksfield has made a name for himself on both sides of the Atlantic with his big-selling records of "Limelight," "Ebb Tide" and now "Golden Violins," while Mantovani is right up at the top with his "Moulin Rouge" and "Swedish Rhapsody." Ron Goodwin is another outstanding young con-ductor; so are Ray Martin and ductor; so are Ray Martin and Norrie Paramor.

When it comes to bands, the crew at the top throughout the year has been Ted Heath and his Music, which belted two records into the hits with versions of "Hot Toddy" and "Dragnet." In October, Johnny Dankworth-an outstanding young alto-saxophone player and leader of his own septet - launched out with a 20-piece band to challenge the Heath supremacy and the year ahead should see an interesting musical duel between these two fine combos.

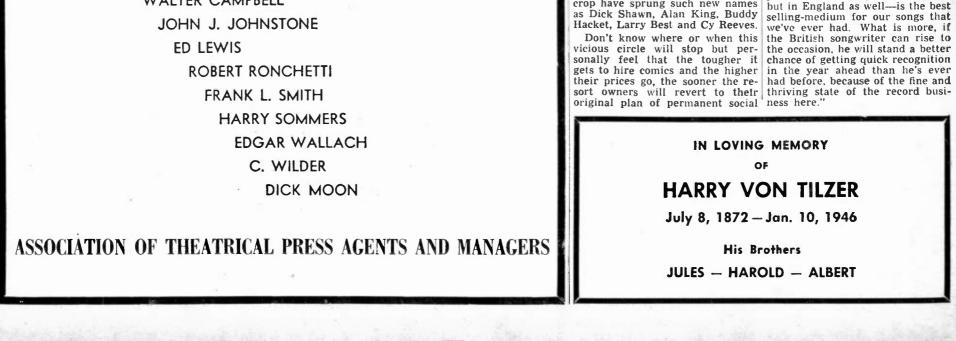
And talking of dance bands, it was hoped here that 1954 would see the breakdown of the barrier that prevents British and American dance orchs from playing each other's countries. When James C. Petrillo, of the American Federation of Musicians, chinwagged with Hardie Ratcliffe, General Secretary of the British Musicians' Union, in Paris during the summer, it was fervently hoped that the door would be opened to an interchange of bands. But nothing happened.

#### **Forecast Bright**

Even so, the general musical weather 1954cast is bright. The bands are doing good business. One-niters are paying propositions and every night throughout the year, dozens of bands climb into their coaches and play in the sticks to hordes of eager kids who are a carbon-copy of the American teenager. They scream for "The Champ," "Seven-Eleven," "How High The Moon" and the rest of the jazz repertoire and, in the next breath, yell for "Limelight" or "I Believe" or "Answer Me," so where are you?

As for the record companies, there are smiles all round. Decca has David Whitfield, Mantovani, Frank Chacksfield, Ted Heath, Vera Lynn, Edmundo Ros, etc., to rope in the shekels; newly-formed Philips is riding with the American Columbia catalog that gives them the Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Doris Day, Johnnie Ray best-sellers, etc.; the EMI group are okay with Eddie Fisher on HMV, Ray Martin, Tony Brent, etc., on Columbia and the veteran stric-tempo king, Victor Silvester, on Parlophone, and the smaller companies also have no grouses.

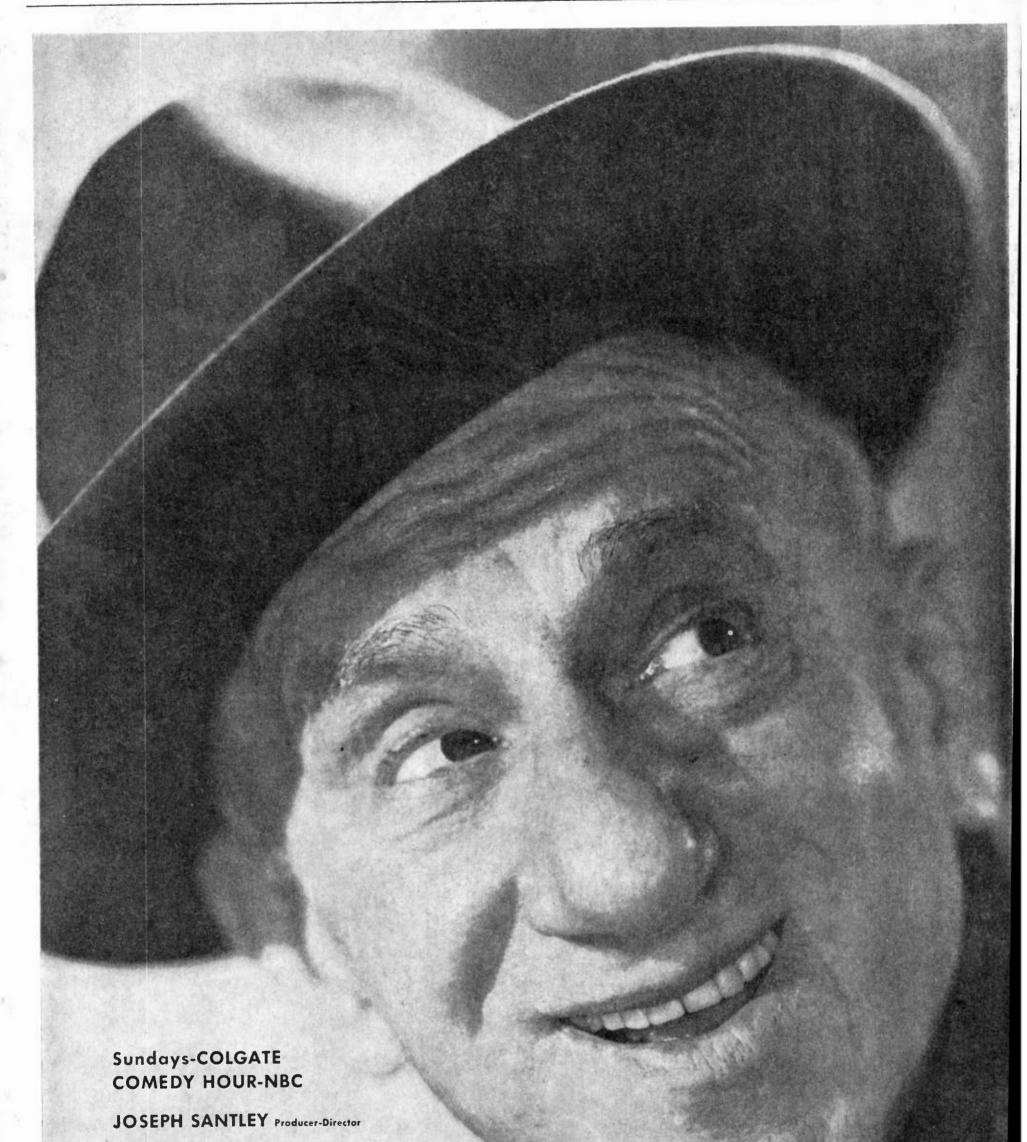
Finally, a music-publisher said: The outlook is very bright. The impact on the customers of the excellent records that are now being produced-not only in the U.S.



WRH

Forty-eighth VARIETY Anniversary





CHARLES ISAACS writer

JACK ELINSON Writer

JACK BARNETT Special Songs

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JACK ROTH The Rhythm

JULES BUFFANO The Keys