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FEBRUARY 1935

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NEW THEATRE

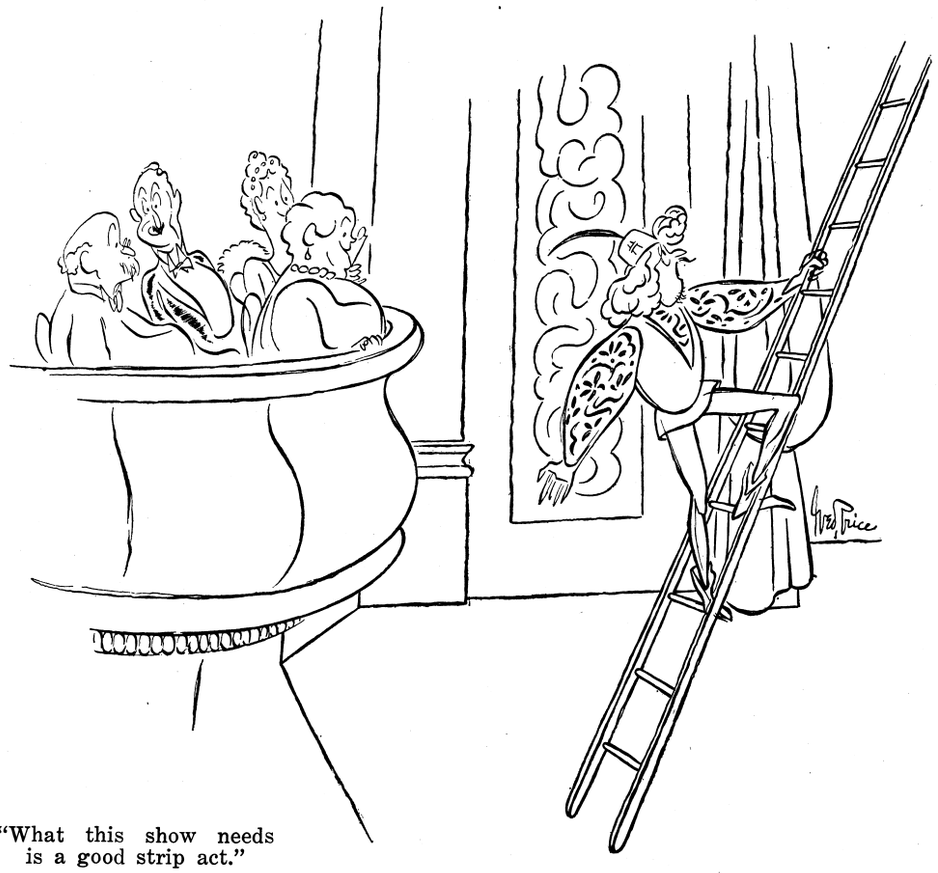
FEBRUARY, 1935

ALL readers of NEW THEATRE are directly concerned in the recent establishment of a means by which they can directly participate in the building of a strong new theatre of definite social basis and direction.

If you have been thinking seriously about it, you know beyond the possibility of self-deception that in the United States, as well as in other parts of the world, fascist tendencies are growing. They threaten, here as elsewhere, not only the work of radical artists, but all the cultural achievements that humanity has so slowly and laboriously built up throughout the centuries. And inseparably linked with fascist developments, through their inevitable jingoistic programs, is the danger of another and far more devastating world war, which would destroy most of us, along with our material and cultural achievements. Thirdly, and actually in the front-line of the battle against fascism and war, is the issue of censorship of the arts. It has been expressed most sweepingly thus far in the drive initiated by high church clerics through the Legion of Decency.

The innocent-seeming drive for "purity" is already taking on political and social aspects; pro-military and anti-labor as well as anti-radical films are approved; anti-war movies and those with hints of socially progressive ideas are condemned; Soviet films of high artistry and absolutely "pure" moral tone are described by Cardinal Dougherty as "lascivious filth" which must be driven out. Thus though many well-intentioned people have lent their support to the "decency" drive, we can already foresee its reactionary direction towards an appeal for a strict system of Federal Censorship. And after the films, the stage where the direct influence of the film censorship and tentative efforts at municipal supervision are already felt. After the stage, literature. After literature—the consequences are endless, until free speech is entirely a thing of the past.

THE theatre—its audience and its active workers—have been quickened to these issues. In 1932, when the League of Workers Theatre was first formed, the American theatre operated as though it were little more than the cold-blooded business of entertainment. Since then it has felt the weight of great social forces. Strong social and anti-fascist plays have been successful on Broadway. The Theatre Union's third production is playing to packed houses. The workers theatres have become a real force and are reaching wider audiences.



"What this show needs is a good strip act."

Little Theatres, socialist and church dramatic groups throughout the country are writing constantly for plays with pertinent social content.

Most significant, in the past year many professional theatre workers have, as individuals, affiliated with the League of Worker's Theatres, not that it has been designed primarily for their purposes, but because they wanted to express their support of its program. In many cases they have participated directly in these new theatres by directing and teaching and acting. They have been welcomed as artists and technicians who brought the best of the established stage-craft to be applied to the dramatization of fresh new themes of current interest. These professionals in return have gained social understanding and the inspiration and excitement of the growing audiences of these new theatres—an enthusiastic, actively interested, responsive audience the like of which has never been known before in America.

Thus the facts of the social situation have already provoked theatrical expression of a radical, progressive opinion in all branches of the theatre. The original program and forces of the League of Workers Theatres, designed primarily to build theatres of action, was not wide enough to embrace and coalesce the manifold forces now at work in the professional and amateur theatres. What became necessary was a new and broader organization to coordinate all the constructive, socially conscious elements in the theatre, and to rally the vast masses of audiences as yet unaware of the dangers which confront us.

SUCH an organization is now being formed. Already close to it are many of the outstanding leaders in the American theatre. Their advice, talents, and time will be channeled through this new group into furthering the work of theatres which affiliate themselves. A national organization, it will assemble the finest repertory of plays available, publish advice on all branches of theatre craft, give to isolated theatres direct contact with the new direction in theatre art, and build sustaining audiences of a true mass nature from coast to coast. Further details as to the exact structure of this new group will appear in NEW THEATRE.

The name of this new organization is the "New Theatre League" and it incorporates into its structure the old League of Workers Theatres and, in addition, expands to include all members of theatre groups and audience who want to stand behind this simple program: *For mass development of the American theatre to its highest artistic and social level. For a theatre dedicated to the struggle against war, fascism, and censorship.* Actors, stagehands, playwrights, directors regardless of other political or artistic differences we say to you: You belong with us. Join the New Theatre League at once! (Write its national office at 114 W. 14th St., N. Y.) Come into the leadership. Come into the membership.

Footlights across America for a united theatrical front against censorship, against fascism, against all imperialist drives for war!

THOSE who saw the Group Theatre's production of Clifford Odets' play *Waiting For Lefty* realized that they were watching a new kind of theatre. They welcomed it with a wild enthusiasm and zeal rarely seen in the American theatre. This kind of theatre has been long awaited and fulfills a great need. There have been plays from the Theatre Union playwrights and from John Wexley that have stated our position, and there have been actors in the revolutionary theatres who have infused their plays with the fire of their convictions, but in *Waiting For Lefty,* for the first time in the whole collective of the theatre, there is clear, strong, zestful and human affirmation blended with social understanding and professional dramatic competence. The playwright, the actors, the director, know what they are saying and how to say it. The Group is emerging from its period of groping artistic introspection. The results of four years' collective work in a sound theatrical method are here applied to express their continually maturing revolutionary convictions.

The fact that actors from the Group participate in New Theatre Nights is an indication of the widespread attraction professionals find in a theatre in which they can express their convictions about a social system which starves and degrades its workers. At the same performance of *Waiting For Lefty,* a cast of Equity players, many of them from the *Sailors of Cattaro* company, acted the fine courtroom scene from *They Shall Not Die.* The Social Repertory, a group which hopes to become permanent, will soon present *Can You Hear Their Voices?,* its first professional production. On their own initiative, other actors have formed a professional group at the Theatre Collective. They propose to secure for themselves the training and experience which Broadway denies them,—even when it offers them jobs. To pay their way, they are presenting a program of one-act plays on Sat. February 2, at The Fifth Avenue Theatre. Phillip Stevenson's fine play *God's In His Heaven,* and *A Letter from the Village* (A Soviet Comedy) will be given. *God's In His Heaven* and *Waiting For Lefty* will be performed on February 3rd at the Civic Repertory Theatre, for the benefit of NEW THEATRE. Actors who have not seen the "New Theatre Night" performances should come down to see what others in their profession are venturing in the field of the theatre.

THE Stage Associates, who have just announced their intention of joining together in a permanent company, are urged in particular to view the performances of these plays. The Stage Associates have declared that "they have no messages, no program of propaganda; all they want to do is to present themselves in some plays." They include some of the most intelligent and talented newcomers to Broadway (Mildred Natwick, Burgess Meredith, Katherine Emery, Aleta Freel, Leslie Adams, James Stewart, Harry Fonda, Frieda Altman and Barbara O'Neil). NEW THEATRE applauds their decision to work collectively, the only basis for growth in the theatre. However, it believes that at this time next year they will be a little ashamed of the program which they have announced in their first press release. Many of them are actors who have done comparatively well on Broadway, and in forming a collective theatre they have taken a radical step. In turning their backs upon the type-casting and commercial hiring-and-firing system they are protesting against the artistic and economic despoilation of the theatre by profit economy. The Stage Associates will soon be faced with the serious problem of choosing scripts and deciding upon the type of audience to whom they will appeal. They will discover that plays do not exist in a void, that these plays have significant social implications. As the social crisis becomes more acute these implications will loom larger and become inescapable. The Stage Associates will have to decide whether to support jingoism, fascism and cultural reaction in the theatre and so pander to the beneficiaries of the present order or they will have to take stock of their position and, in self-respect and integrity, combat, through the medium of the theatre, such destructive forces.

THE purpose of the Dancers Emergency Association is to unite all dancers engaged in the practice of contemporary dance in their struggle for economic security and to encourage a broad understanding of the dance through performances and study. In this period of economic crises, private patronage cannot provide the means to satisfy these needs. Therefore, as a non-political, non-sectarian organization of dancers, it demands that the government assume its responsibility to unemployed dancers and to the culutral needs of the general public.

It demands:

Positions for teachers in Settlement houses, schools and colleges, playgrounds, women's clubs, etc.;

Sponsored public performances by groups and soloists;

Dance centers in various localities with supervisors of our own selection, accompanists, adequate facilities;

A dance theatre suitable for performances with studios, and a dance library;

Government subsidy with immediate passage of the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill;

No discrimination because of race, color, single status, foreign born or political affiliations. Esthetic freedom of expression, administrative control by workers on projects.

The Dancers Emergency Association includes dancers in modern, ballet, acrobatic, tap and line, and specialty dancers belonging to Chorus Equity.

A delegation with Tamiris as spokesman recently visited Miss Gosselin of the C.W.A. to ask for the formation of a Dance Project. They were put off but told that Miss Wilcox is now enlarging her project of Dance, Music and Drama. Demands will be pressed for immediate realization of this project which should employ those now on Home Relief and those not on relief but in need of jobs. These jobs with adequate salaries should be given to technically equipped unemployed professionals.

The Dancers Emergency Association has endorsed the program for the creation of a Municipal Art Center to be administered by the workers themselves. This Center, proposed by the Artists Union, would include dancers, actors, scenic designers, playwrights, musicians, technicians, costumers, architects, sculptors and artists.

NEW THEATRE

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Broadway, Inc. vs. the Unions

The Theatre as a Business

By BLACK TAYLOR

GATHER round, you theatre-workers, and get a load of what Morton Eustis, in *B'way, Inc.,** says is wrong with the American theatre:

> "Too many actors, too many musicians, too many stagehands, electricians, carpenters, truckers, designers and playwrights, too many theatres, too many producers, too much of a muchness of everybody—except audiences."

In a word, Overproduction. Plough them under. Don't slaughter them; let 'em starve. (Eustis implies that CWA is too good for them.)

Why so few audiences? Eustis quotes Marcus Heiman, President, United Booking Office, Member of the Labor Committee of the National Association of Legitimate Theatres, testifying at the public hearings on the Theatre Code last spring:

> "I understand that 94% of the population have incomes of less than $3,000 a year. Our prices range from a minimum of 50c and $1 to a maximum of $3 and $3.50. Therefore only 6% of the population can afford to attend the legitimate theatre with its present admission prices. If we could reduce our operating cost, we could automatically reduce our admission prices, so that we could attract all, instead of a relatively small percentage, of the population."

Wage cuts, fewer workers doing more for less money. Not a word, you notice, about raising the incomes of the 94% to the point where they can afford tickets. Not a word from Heiman about the long-shot producers playing for a coupla million on a production, or the ticket scalpers, or the theatre-owners. It's the New Deal in the Theatre. Put the workers through the wringer.

"There is a greater need for a strong employers' organization now than ever before," says Eustis (Page 134). Break the strength of the theatre unions, make them be "sensible" about wages, hours, regulations and working conditions, so that the producer can survive—so that, as Eustis doesn't say, every hole-and-corner Wonder Boy with an angel in one pocket and a script in another can try to pull another Jed Harris; so that "respectable" dealers in dramatic delicatessen, like Brock Pemberton, can go in and out of the market whenever they choose, with no responsibility to the theatre as industry or as art. Toward the end of the book, when he is working toward his union-busting conclusion, Eustis says of the Theatre Code hearings:

> "Fundamental problems the Code never even attacked. And the powerful unions were powerful enough to prevent the Code Authority or the Government from altering their basic constitutions. When they threatened to 'withdraw' from the Code—as they almost all did at the revised Code Hearings in Washington—if certain projected measures were made a part of the new Code, the Government was forced to back water, or—if 'forced' is too strong a word—it 'chose' to take another way out."

Life Begins at 8:40

The unions "forced" the employers and the Government to give up the pet idea of compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. The theatre unions are dry behind the ears. They've been gypped by experts for thirty years. They wouldn't fall for that one.

Eustis makes the usual assumption that he is the impartial reporter and diagnostician. But chapter titles like *Show Business, Theatre With a Union Label,* and *Scene Designing For Profit,* betray his perhaps unconscious anti-union bias.

THE book's appendix, which comprises 156 of its 356 pages, gives texts of Theatrical Contracts. With the exception of the Standard Contract with the Theatre-Owner, all are union instruments. A standard form of incorporation, whereby a producer may duck payment of all debts incurred in a production, is missing. Throughout the text of the book, the Appendix is referred to as if it were the Theatre's Chamber of Horrors.

As Eustis tells it, play production, which was "a simple, delightful process" involving about four or five thousand dollars in 1910, became a complicated hold-up for $20,000 per play in the late nineteen-twenties. How? Why? Eustis slaps the theatre-owners and the ticket brokers on the wrists and then comes down heavy on "the unions."

> "When you superimpose on that already laden structure (of production) a thousand and one union rules, requiring the producer to pay the prices and accede to the demands, however fantastic they may be, of his employees; further weight it down with all sorts of dishonest practices in which both managers and unions are involved, and then add the inevitable uncertainty of the theatre, you have a burden calculated to break all but the hardiest Atlas."

Dramatists "and would-be dramatists" have a sort of union and therefore rate a chapter. It begins with a few familiar chestnuts, such as:

> "the majority of plays, no matter by whom produced or acted, are bad plays and were bad plays before they ever went into rehearsal. Probably nowhere else in the world do good plays have a better chance of being produced than in New York." etc.

Someone's been spoofing Eustis. Even "commercial" producers stand on the sidewalk and boast about the good plays they've read but won't produce because there's no money in them. Perhaps Eustis plugs his ears and runs in terror when a realistic Broadway producer begins describing the mental characteristics and the dramatic preferences and phobias of the limousine trade that is rolling up to his door. Most playwrights write plays to make money, says Eustis, and, conveniently forgetting his earlier remarks about producers, proceeds to kick "would-be dramatists" around. Thanks to the Dramatists Guild, says he, "the playwright is the pampered child of the entire industry, protected by contract from almost every conceivable ill—except his own stupidity, cupidity and inexperience—and granted the power of dictator where almost everyone else, including the producer who takes the financial gamble, is a menial. (Ask any playwright what's wrong with this picture. Or ask almost any producer.)

Eustis argues that any playwright can dictate to any manager. The fact is, of course, that a quarrel may cost the manager only the $500 option money, whereas the playwright stands to lose the product of from twenty to forty years experience and study and from six months to two years work in actual writing. The producer can, and often does, gag the playwright. He forces the playwright to distort and falsify his play, using the threats of non-production, "it'll flop," or more subtle cajoleries in the names of art or economy.

The actors receive the kiss of death from Eustis. He says they must be in the theatre for love because there is so little money in it for them. But there is a great deal of money for a few actors in each generation

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* *B'way, Inc., the Theatre as a Business,* by Morton Eustis, Dodd Mead & Co., N.Y.C $2.00.

(and, please, Mister, do you know of some other occupation that has more jobs than workers?). The profit motive lures actors no less and no more than other workers.

> "The chief concern of the real actor is the chance—so rarely offered him—of acting a good part in a good play. If he could play such parts consistently, no matter whether they were 'star' parts or not, he would ask little more of the theatre. . . . Lower down on the acting tree, however, you find thousands registered as actors who cannot expect, or even hope, to make a living wage in the theatre. The majority of them have no theatre talent or training and many of them have no desire for permanent employment. But by acting occasionally—and generally very badly—they gratify their exhibitionism or their desire to be hangers-on to the fringes of a glamorous art. These 'actors,' who by far outnumber the real thespians, clutter up the profession and are a burden not only to themselves but to the true artists of the acting world." (Actors: when you're called a thespian, look out!)

There's a short word for this sort of generalization. It starts with F and ends with m. Eustis plugs it hard. He urges Equity to close its membership books. He praises the United Scenic Artists Union for its closed membership books and its $500 initiation fee, overlooking the fact that this policy of exclusiveness is suicidal here, as it is throughout the trade union movement. It is already hurting the scenic artists and other theatre unions. The growing number of designers, painters and technicians kept outside may be used as scab material by the managers when the need arises. Inside the unions, employment and earnings are below decent living standards. Union wage scales are being undercut and regulations waived. Members are dropping out.

EUSTIS' contention that stage technicians receive big pay may be refuted by recent statistics for the United Scenic Artists: of the 384 union members in 1933, 192, or 50%, earned less than $500 each for the year; 253, or 66%, earned less than $1,000; 323, or 84%, earned less than $2,000. Of the 290 journeymen members, 91% earned less than $2,000.

Eustis runs the facts and figures of the theatre through his fingers, but he seems unable to add them up properly. He quotes Lee Simonson's computation that the Music Box Theatre paid its landlords about $1,000,000 in the first two years of its operation and yielded about $7,500,000 in eight years, or nearly seven and one-half times its original cost. He quotes pages of fantastic profits made by all sorts of capitalists and middle-men in the theatre, but he fails to see, he in fact denies, that the world crisis of capitalism caused the crisis in the theatre. He ignores or is unaware of the action and inter-action and the merciless contradictions of capitalist society acutely intensified in crisis. He does not see the solution that lies before him on every page of his book: that the theatre can

(*Continued on Page* 30)

Stanislavsky's Method

Part Two; From notes

By M. A. CHEKHOV

THE first thing in teaching the Stanislavsky method is to make the student actor use it by going through the kind of exercises which were described in the first part of this article. It may be impossible, and it is not important, during this practical work, to have him understand the theory behind it. In the early part of the teaching the director has to modify his instructions and explanations to suit the individual actor. But, when emotional and physical control are achieved and the actor has understood the technique in relation to his own work, then he is ready for and needs a full and comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of the system. This, then, is the point at which to give the student reasons and explanations and a review of the system in its entirety. Since these were given in the first section of this article, with the instructions for exercises, we will not take time to review them here.

We will consider instead some of the concrete and controllable elements of what is usually referred to mystically as "the creative state." They are discussed broadly since they are part of the process of any creative work, writing, painting, composing, as well as acting.

CONCENTRATION

The first and absolutely essential element is concentration: strong and undeviating attention to the work at hand. When the artist's attention is distracted, he stops functioning as an artist. When the actor on the stage lets his attention become diffuse, he loses all hold upon the audience. Now at every minute of the day a man's consciousness is attacked by a multiplicity of stimuli. Whatever he sees, hears, touches, tastes and smells, competes for his notice. The attention, whether consciously or casually directed, focuses upon certain of these sense impressions, while the rest form a background that is almost disregarded.

Children's attention is of a reflex kind: they are attracted fitfully by sounds, colors, objects. Outer impressions control their attention. But a mature person can direct his attention as he determines.

For an artist the relevant is the connection between interest and attention. Of course when one is interested in a thing, a certain amount of attention to it is implied. But the reverse is also true: when one forces concentration on a thing, interest begins to appear. It is generally assumed that an object or idea has to have interest first, in order to receive attention from a person. But an object or idea *will become interesting* if one deliberately concentrates on it. For instance, concentrate on some object which ordinarily has no interest for you. Study a matchbox. It will begin to take on a new aspect, you will note details, a diversity of associations will come into consciousness. Finally *your attention will create an interest in it.*

This principle is very important, for one of the distinguishing features of an artist is ability to see the world freshly and differently. When he masters his concentration so that he can fix it at will on any idea or object, he will be able to work when he wants to on any subject he determines, without being distracted, without waiting for "inspiration," and he will find that from the starting point of concentration, interest and relevant imagination will grow.

In trying to concentrate on an object, it is fatal to try "not to see," "not to think about" distractive impressions. This directs the concentration to the things one is "trying to ignore." One has only to focus on the object itself, and the distracting elements disappear. Suppose you have a fit of laughing and you want to stop. If you put your mind on something quite irrelevant to your laughing it will stop of itself. But if you try "to stop laughing," the giggles will grow on you, because in concentrating on this act of will, you concentrated on laughter.

IMAGINATION

EVERY work of art is to a certain extent the product of imagination. To portray life without an element of fantasy is to make a photographic copy, not to recreate it. The more photographic a work of art, the less its value and its power to influence other people, and the less forcefully the creative idea is conveyed. Imagination being, therefore, one of the necessary and most important elements of creative work, the artist has to work to develop it just as he works for concentration.

Imagination, broadly, is the union and combination of diverse elements into a whole which does not correspond to reality.

The materials of imagination are always taken from life. No one can think of an altogether new sensation, a new feeling, a new *thing*. Imagination consists in associating known objects, uniting, sperating, modifying, recombining them. And the bolder the artistic imagination, the greater the power of the work. (The scientist, the architect, any craftsman, uses imagination; the scientist by combining phenomena to discover natural laws; the mechanic or architect combine data to find more stable forms of structure.)

The fantasy of the artist always has for its aim the expression of feelings and actions springing from them. And here he must be reminded of an old truth: if on the one hand, the quality of his imagination depends on his ability to combine his material so as to express theatrically and boldly the idea behind his work, on the other hand it also depends on the richness of the material which is under his control. This material is not in textbooks. He must learn to draw on life, study, seek out the most diverse aspects of it, create for himself conditions in which he will be exposed to manifold expressions of it—and not wait until life by chance thrusts some striking scene under his nose. And in whatever field he works, the artist must study all branches of art. The actor, for example, can utilize painting, sculpture, music.

NAIVETE

The quality of fantasy is conditioned by naivete. Now children and savages display more creative imagination than grown people in civilized surroundings. It is not a matter of natural endowment; it is the result of the fact that children and savages have very little exact knowledge. Their concepts are not systemized, and so they can combine the elements of their environment without worrying about whether such a combination has any counterpart in reality. They are guided by feelings only. A child, for instance, can invent or believe in a submarine kingdom, water spirits and fairies, since he does not know whether life is possible for human beings under water. And the fantasy of modern times is barren compared to the lore of the primitive. In other words, the savage and the child are naive and credulous, and that is why their fantasy is free and abundant.

This shows the place of naivete in the creative fantasy of the artist. The modern cultured artist, brought up on exact sciences, must cultivate those very qualities which a child or savage manifests freely. He must develop them by conscious effort and exercises.

That naivete and artistic achievement are inseparable is confirmed by the biographies as well as by the work of important artists.

HERE are exercises for the three qualities under discussion. In practice, they cannot be separated although this has been done for purposes of analysis:

Exercises for Concentration:

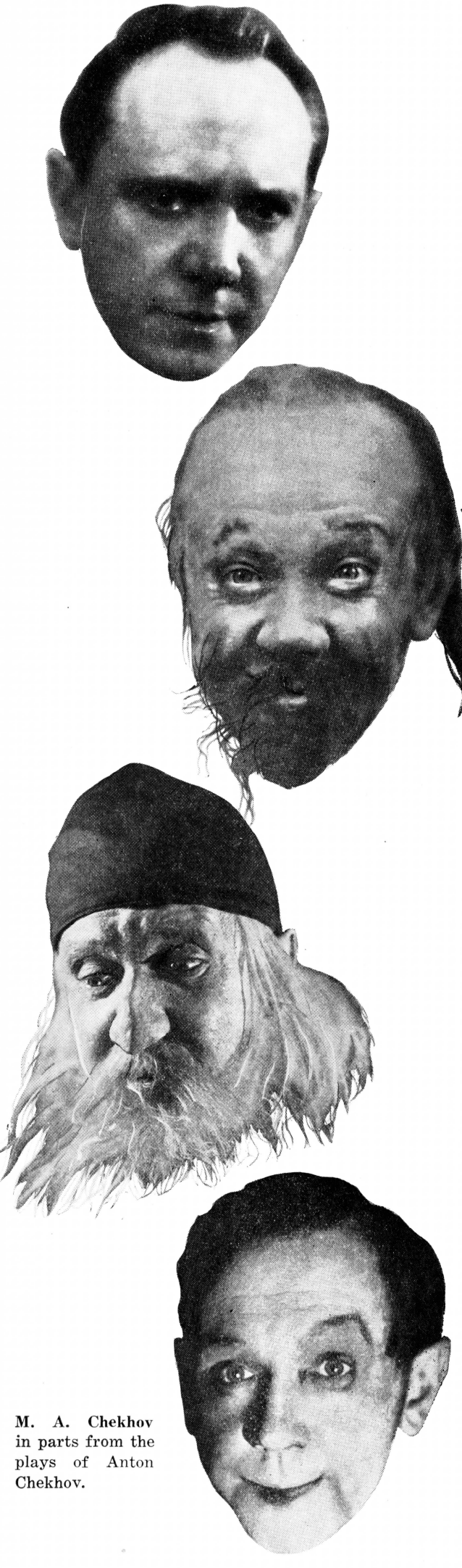
1. Study the wallpaper pattern so that you can describe or reproduce it accurately.
2. Listen to a sound.
3. Do an arithmetic problem mentally.
4. Select and follow a single sound out of a confusion of noise.
5. Do several activities in succession: look at the pictures in a magazine, listen to music, dance, do arithmetic problems. Then turn rapidly from one activity to the next, making sure that the transference of attention each time is complete and genuine.
6. Note, in a few seconds, as many details as possible of someone's clothes.
7. Concentrate upon an idea or problem. Five or six people ask questions which must be answered without having the attention waver from this idea.
8. Master the contents of a book while others talk, laugh, and try to break up the concentration.
9. Concentrate on a tune in your head while other music is being played.

Exercises for Imagination:

1. Look for resemblances between objects and people; between people and animals.
2. Concretize musical words in fantastic images.
3. Given one word, or two, extemporize on them; do the same exercise within a predetermined mood.
4. One person makes a series of sounds of different kinds, those who do the exercise sit with their backs to the first person and weave the sounds into a continuous story.
5. Break up into sections some route you follow frequently; imagine a story connected with each section; weave all those stories into a single plot.
6. Take a person whom you know little about; try to picture his life in full detail.
7. Let someone give you a word; try to fixate the impression, that is, your first reaction to it; then try to convey this impression in whatever way you can. Take any word: e.g., clock; try to break away from the crude concept of it, see what your imagination will bring forth at the first perception of it. The images will be striking and unexpected; a turret with a clock upon a magic turret, the image of some pitiless forces—the inevitable hour, or perhaps it is linked with an event in your life and will recall that. Learn to fixate such subtle, fugitive images of your fancy, and they will serve your creative expression.
8. Try to discover beauty everywhere: in every posture, position, thought, scene. This exercise is very important. A creative person must be able to see and extract beauty from things which a non-creative person overlooks entirely; and he must see beauty first, not deformity.

[The above is adapted by Molly Day Thacher from the translation done by Mark Schmidt for the Group Theatre, with whose permission it appears here. Part I appeared in the December issue, copies of which are still available. Chekhov wrote these notes in 1922 when he was working in the Second Moscow Art Theatre Studio under Stanislavsky. We are anxious to get the opinions of actors and directors of the workers and professional theatres about the value of these articles as applied to their work. We hope in the near future to publish two very necessary additions to this paper: one an interpretation and modification in more pertinent and American terms of the entire system; the other a critical Marxian analysis of Stanislavsky's philosophy and his contribution to actor's training by Zahara, director of the Vakhtangov Theatre.—*The Editors.*]

M. A. Chekhov in parts from the plays of Anton Chekhov.



M. A. Chekhov in parts from the plays of Anton Chekhov.

The Artef on Broadway

By NATHANIEL BUCHWALD

A WELL-KNOWN theatrical producer and the owner of one of the biggest "hits" on Broadway, who may be embarrassed if his name is mentioned in this connection, happened to stumble upon the Artef, attended the premiere of *Recruits* and—has never got over it. During the three months' run of the play he hardly missed a week-end pilgrimage to what he considers "the most marvelous outfit on Broadway." To him, and the scores of professionals he has induced to see *Recruits,* the Artef is a thrilling discovery. It has become that to thousands of playgoers who at a dollar top have seen and thrilled to one of the most captivating shows in the theatre.

Yet the Artef has been in the theatre field now for six years and has gained a high standing as the most accomplished group in the revolutionary theatre. The language of its productions, Yiddish, and the fact that its scene of operations has been a long distance away from the amusement mart, account for the tardiness of the Broadway denizens and visitors in discovering this most stimulating and close-knit aggregation of acting talent, producing enterprise and revolutionary zeal. Away from Broadway where lights are dim and fire-traps plentiful, where Jewish workers gather in their clubs and neighborhood folk seek amusement in their own idiom, the Artef and the individual *Artefniks,* as members of the group are fondly nicknamed, are known and liked by many, many thousands. For the Artef has been producing not only "regular shows" at regular playhouses and at modest admissions, but has made good theatre available to workers in their own neighborhoods, performing sometimes upon bare platforms, sometimes upon improvised stages and always to admiring audiences. Even in the revolutionary theatre field it is not generally known that the Artef has to its credit a score of short plays and skits of the *mobile* type and that neighborhood bookings of Artef groups and individual concert performers have been more numerous than its performances of full-length plays. When the Workers Laboratory Theatre was still in its formative period, the Artef was already known as a vigorous and creative *mobile* theatre as well as a producer of full-length plays in the "orthodox" manner.

Nor does Artef's pioneering end here. As a revolutionary theatre it blazed the way to audience organization. The Theatre Union has built its system of "benefits" and organization bookings essentially along the lines developed by the Artef. Indeed, the very name of Artef (an abbreviation of *Arbeiter Theater Ferband,* meaning "Workers Theatrical Alliance") reflects its close tie-up with organized bodies of workers. Structurally, the management of the Artef is nothing but an executive committee deriving its authority from a kind of theatre-lovers' association in which are represented upward of one hundred trade-union, educational and fraternal organizations. It is to them that the Artef belongs and it is from among their midst that the Artef Players were mobilized. Structurally, then, every fraternal branch, workers' club, Women's Council and parents' group in the left-wing labor movement is a *constituent member of the Artef.* As organizations, these are also the potential and actual clients of the Artef Theatre, and it is from its own organization membership that the Artef derives most of its benefit bookings.

Added to this, there is a body of individual subscribers numbering about three thousand and steadily growing. Organization bookings and subscriptions account for the bulk of the Artef audience. Even now, with its large and ever-increasing box-office clientele, bookings and subscriptions take up about sixty per cent of the capacity of the Artef Theatre.

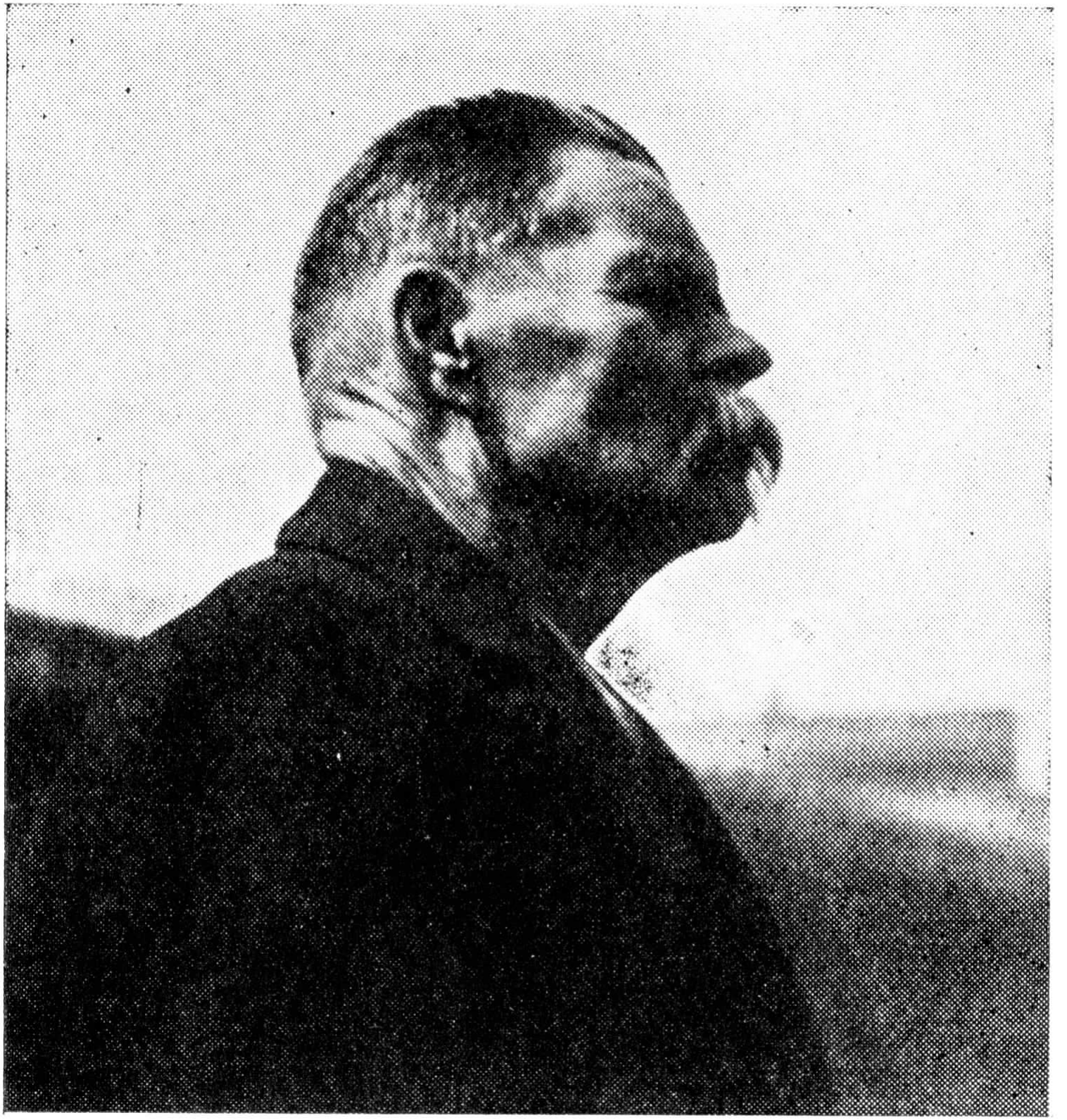
SO much for the organizational side. On the artistic side the Artef has the advantage of a well-trained acting *collective,* unified by long association and bound together by a common idea: to use the theatre as a weapon in the fight for a better world. The advantage of a permanent company plus an animating social purpose lift the Artef artistically above all other so-called Art Theatres in this country. The qualitative growth of the Artef collective has been amazing. Both individually and as a group they increase in stature with each new production. It is only a year ago that Artef produced *Yegor Bulichev,* the first drama of Gorki's revolutionary trilogy. In every department, acting, staging and setting, it was a production of high merit, acclaimed as such by critics and audiences alike. Yet the second Gorki play, *Dostigayev,* now current at the Artef, is so much superior in the consummate acting of a number of performers (notably Goldstein in the title role, Low as the Mother Superior, Russler as the young nun, Drut as the maid with revolutionary ideas and Brissman as the professional "saint") that one wonders when they had time to develop to such a remarkable degree.

Maxim Gorki

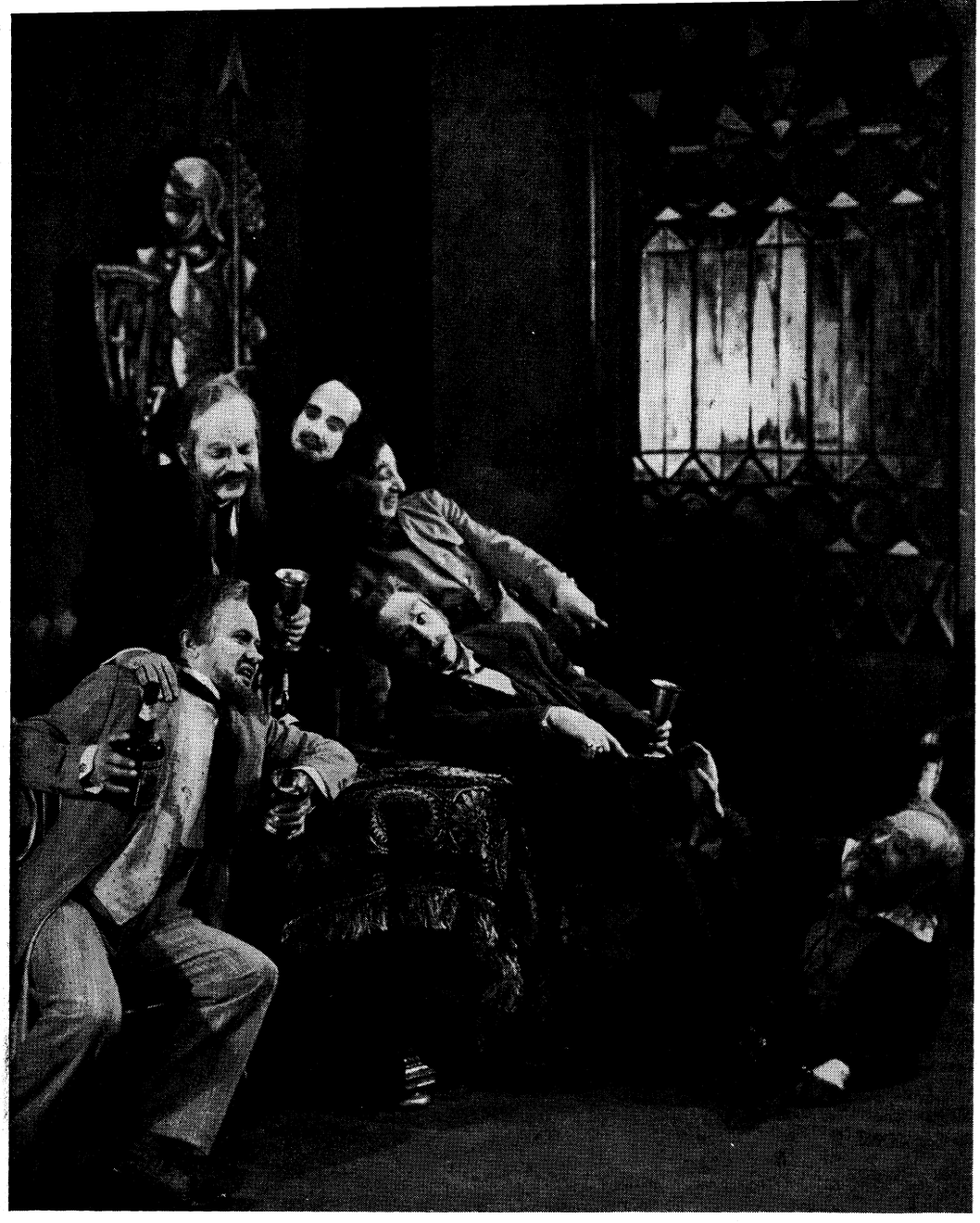
A goodly portion of the credit for the excellence of the Artef Players is due their art director and regisseur Beno Schneider, a pupil of the great Vakhtangov and a talented and imaginative master in his own right. He is not merely a director who drills his actors and puts them through their paces, he is a teacher and patient maker of actors. Under his tutelage the Artef Players have learned much and unlearned even more. The hang-over of "Second Avenue" is well-nigh gone and gone, too, is the empty formalism and mechanical "technique" taught the Artef players in their studio years when the group was known as the Freiheit Dramatic Studio. With immature players Schneider managed to produce a few plays in a dazzling manner, moulding the actors as he went along. He did for the Artef what Stanislavsky tells in his memoirs *My Life in Art* about his work with the Moscow Art Theatre:

> "I continued making use of the former, simplified methods of directing, i.e., in my office I wrote the mise-en-scene and played all the parts so that the young actors copy me until my acting penetrates them and becomes part of them. . . .
>
> "Upon their shoulders fell a difficult task and responsibility, beyond the strength of the actors who did not yet possess sufficient experience and knowledge. But for its existence the theatre had to have success, and since the young actors were not ripe for it, we had, on one hand, to hide this immaturity and on the other to seek aid from the other co-artists in the production. . . . When the theatre had a talented designer, costume and setting became the core of the production. To the extent that the theatre had talented regisseurs, their inventions created a success, overwhelming the spectators with the extravagance and novelty of production and at the same time hiding the mistakes and the inexperience of the actors." (Translated from the Russian edition.)

One of Schneider's most dazzling productions in the Artef repertory, *Ristokraten,* was precisely of this nature—"overwhelming the spectators with the extravagance and novelty of production and at the same time hiding the mistakes and the inexperience of the actors." That was six years ago, in 1929. Now Beno Schneider is able to put his pupils to the severest test and have the gratification of their acquit-



Maxim Gorki



From Dostigayev by Maxim Gorki, dir. by Benno Schneider.

ting themselves with high credit in a play like *Dostigayev.* I mention the Gorki play rather than the unbelievably beautiful and lovely *Recruits* because the latter derives much of its sparkle and irridescence from the regisseur's inventions and compositions, while the former is vibrant, live acting, pure and simple.

As a play *Dostigayev* may not possess the cohesive quality of a dramatic plot or the focus of a central character, as in *Yegor Bulichev,* but there are infinitely more subtle social implications and dramatic values in it, which, by way of content, make *Dostigayev* weigh and mean more than *Bulichev.* Here the interregnum of the revolution, when the bourgeoisie under Kerensky made a futile attempt to harness the forces of the mass discontent into the chariot of bourgeois democracy, is presented not in terms of events, not by way of artificial plot and "intrigue," but in terms of character and mood and that composite and elusive something which is social atmosphere, the "spirit of the times." Deliberately Gorki built his play out of sheer character, and his characters—out of dialogue, out of revealing speech. Gorki stood Galsworthy's formula that "character is situation" on its head. As a Marxist and a great writer he knows and feels that a dramatic social situation is the maker and precipitant of "character." Beginning with the wily Dostigayev and ending with his stupid and stolid son, every character in Gorki's new play becomes significant and poignantly self-revealing precisely because the social upheaval acts as a powerful reagent. All the criss-cross social passions and divergent interests of the intermediate period of the Kerensky regime are brought into sharp focus in their human reflectors, the Dostigayevs and Nestrashnys, the Mother Superior and the young nun, the mouthing demagogue, Zvontzov, and the clear-headed, plain-spoken Bolshevik Ryabinin. Gorki gives us in *Dostigayev* the human "feel" of the Kerensky period, its social values in terms of character and mood. As to plot and dramatic action,—well, history supplied that.

THE Artef production of *Dostigayev* is superb in its portrayal of solid, three-dimensional character. Goldstein's portrait of Vasily Dostigayev is nothing short of a masterpiece of "socialist realism." While making the industrialist thoroughly real and individualized, Goldstein at the same time makes him marvelously clear as a symbol of opportunism and compromise. Ready to climb on the band wagon in the event of Bolshevist victory, Dostigayev is ever preoccupied with the idea of "placing a stumbling block on their difficult and untried path." It is in the sense of the greatest menace to the revolution and not in the sense of the chief dramatic role that Dostigayev is the central character of the play. In the Kerensky epoch Gorki quite properly put the accent on the opportunist and compromiser. It is to the honor of the Artef that this figure emerges also artistically as the most impressive of the whole array of competently portrayed and socially significant *characters.*

There is not space to dwell at length on other admirable performances in *Dostigayev.* The direction of the play is as subtle in its overtones as it is clear in its design. Schneider had the good taste and the fine artistic sense to forego fetching stage effects and dazzling theatricals, something he likes doing and is very clever at. He concentrated entirely on character and on spinning out of mood and thought a dramatic texture of all-pervading "spirit of the times," with all of its ominous social forces at play, with the impending revolution as the dominant, hopeful note in a welter of agony and confusion. Zolotaroff's sets furnish a fitting frame and background for this penetrating play of social character and *stimmung.*

One wishes one had more space to dwell on the shortcomings and the handicaps of the Artef; its deplorable tendency, of late, to neglect the work of the *mobile* type and the danger of its attaining a state of "splendid isolation" and tearing itself loose organizationally from its mass basis; the lack of worth-while American plays in its repertory and the discouraging prospect of continuing to subsist on foreign plays alone: the lack of cooperation between the Artef and the revolutionary Jewish Writers organization, the Proletpen, which is in some measure, at least, responsible for the lack of adequate scripts by local revolutionary writers; the handicap of operating on a part-time schedule with an acting company on a volunteer basis and the difficulties and dangers attending the projected transition to a professional, full-time theatre. These and many more difficulties besetting the Artef make the life of this splendid organization not as easy and romantic as might seem from a distance, and it would be well to discuss them at length. But then again, the Artef is an important enough institution for NEW THEATRE to allot it more space in subsequent issues.

From **Dostigayev** by Maxim Gorki, dir. by Benno Schneider.

Ladies of the Revolutionary Dance

By EMMANUEL EISENBERG

IN a remarkably short period it has become a convention of rebuke against the revolutionary dance that it suffers from obvious enslavement to the forms and patterns of bourgeois technique. The complaint has been exceedingly mystifying to many; they are earnestly convinced that there is an absolute abstract foundation of sheer training and skill and that this can be exercised toward any chosen end. Does not content determine form, they want to know, and must not an authentic revolutionary concept automatically produce its sound objective and architectural counterpart?

As one of the more persistent of the complainants I should like to attempt a justification of the stand that there is such a thing as bourgeois technique which is distinguishable from other potential techniques and which is harmfully and preposterously irrelevant as the basis of a revolutionary approach to the dance.

The majority of revolutionary dancers are extremely recent converts to the cause —and there is nothing the matter with this, except as a partial explanation of their inevitable and unyielding methods. They present themselves as *ladies*; they have the aspect and psychology of ladies; their behavior is always that of ladies.

Many studied at the Wigman school; more with Martha Graham; some with Irma Duncan; a few with Humphrey-Weidman, Tamiris, and Fe Alf. In each instance of break and departure the dancer believed that her days of estheticism, preciosity and self-expression were happily past. Having a trained body capable of moving with any agility or delicacy or intensity, she could proceed to adapt this infinitely useful instrument to choreographic depictions of hunger, oppression, charity, hypocrisy, uprising, strike, collectivism, racial fraternity. The transition from a dance called "Mater Dolorosa—Quo Vadis, Anacreon?" to a dance called "Song of the Worker" had been accomplished with shining facility through a sudden intensification of energetic movements, a glow of red in the costume, a brief but hearty session of practice at clenching the fists.

Now this is no attack on the titles of revolutionary dances, although they are artless enough in their gigantic scope and frequently do the embarrassing job of expressing more of a dancer's ideas than her actual movements. Nor is it a dissatisfaction with costume and theme, two sore points on which I have expanded before in the pages of NEW THEATRE and which deserve further extended treatment of their own.

The point is that the revolutionary dancer has made no pictorial-theatrical or political-cultural progress whatever, although internally the new locale and horizon may have affected her immeasurably. As a performer on the stage, she looks exactly like her avowedly bourgeois sister, with the simple and negligible difference that she appears to have gone off on a labor-slumming holiday and is showing her liberal-sympathetic audiences what those interesting working people think about and go through. She is essentially presenting a character dance; she is someone pretending to be somebody else through mood assumption and soul-state, for, by the cultural conditioning of a training and a style, she is still and unmistakably the Lady of bourgeois ideals.

TECHNIQUE is fundamentally a formalization of the cultivated instincts and impulses of any given period. And in such anatomical-representational arts as the dance, an ideal standard figure has corresponded with uncanny precision to the social philosophy of each era. The soulless manikin of the ballet, with utterly inhuman ethereality on the one hand, and fantastically overdeveloped gymnastic dexterity on the other, served wonderfully as a symbol of isolated diversion for the aristocracy during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And the romantic dream-obsessed Lady, with a "free" (though sometimes muscularly disciplined) body, and a Mind unfettered enough to explore the profoundest recesses of her Soul, is surely the ideal standard figure which the predominantly middle-class culture of the last forty or fifty years has produced and has handed over with necessary intactness to the revolutionary dance movement.

Observe this dancer as she moves about the stage. (I refer to the performer in the feminine for the simple reason that soul-expression has a particular fascination for the unoccupied *bourgeoisie*. The epicene male, revealingly enough, has been almost the only kind attracted to the dance during its middle-class reign.) Her hair hangs free to her shoulders, her garments flow in unbroken line from hip to ankle, her feet are bare to show you that she is unbound in any way. Carriage is the truest index to psychological state—and the mock-elegant erectness of her spine, the firm gentleness and delicacy of her head on a tautly arrogant neck, the gracious serenity with which she sways or merely occupies space, all bespeak the dignity and secure community position of the spiritual-intellectual Lady. Observe the play of her wrists, the lift and slump of her shoulders, the recessive agitation of her torso, the linear tensity of hips, buttocks and thighs, the calculated purities of geometry in the pedal movements, the sheer indulgence of her presence on the platform.

If I seem to have given arbitrarily qualifying phrases to actions which are understood as normal physiological functions in the dance, it is not with the intention of disparaging any of the accomplishments in pictorial form but of underscoring the ideational foundation on which all technical development rests. For it is nonsensical and valueless to deplore that a dancer's spine is erect, that she can exercise her wrists with exceptional suppleness, or that she can lift herself wholly in the air while resting on her elbows,—and then expect indignation. These are good things within a good framework. They are befuddling and exacerbating hangovers of symbolic bourgeois idealism when the performer is clearly not one who has been trained to strive toward any identification with her audience, whose whole presentation has been a kind of impersonal neurotic confidence into a curtained confessional, whose approach and behavior have been that of a cultured, superior and withdrawn lady, momentarily and graciously on display.

GENERALIZATIONS, always dangerous, are particularly to be avoided here, and I hasten to anticipate some of the sure exceptions that will be offered in protest. Suppose the statement of the ideal standard figure really applied to the bourgeois dance, how would this explain the highly abandoned maënad, the impish gamin, the grotesque clown or the disembodied fantasy-creature who are often the subjects of their compositions? None of these would seem to be indicative of the Lady. But they are. On the one hand she is exposing her "human" and subliminal Freudian preoccupations, always a "respectable" compulsion; on the other hand, she is offering a small group of "different" and vagrant portrait-fancies for the comprehension and delectation of a restricted and precious audience. The test of the *haute bourgeoisie* is her loathing of popular appreciation. She may be saint, clinical case and pagan—just as it is the classic privilege of aristocracy to be vulgar—but she begins and ends by being a Lady.

Now where, the revolutionary dancer will impatiently break in, have you ever seen this Lady in action in any of our programs? For one, we are invariably a group, thus destroying the individual soul-dance; then, we are always to be found in a state of electric vitality; further, we enact themes we can prove the audience to be concerned with; finally, an unshakable vision conditions all of our characteriza-

tions and redirects all our movements into a new set of patterns.

The contention remains. Training and technique have molded the dancer to the point where her whole picture of suffering —for an example—is founded on bourgeois neuroses. The symbols of discontent, misery and unrest are still derived from psychoanalysis and iconography, two definitely related forms of world-escaping opiate. The movements of rebellion and protest are absolute parallels to those romantically circular and inspirationally upward-straining gestures of "release" which characterize bourgeois nonconformity and individualism. The satiric body style in revolutionary dancing not only lacks distinguishability from the precise equivalent in the bourgeois dance (vide Martha Graham, Angna Enters, Agnes de Mille, Charles Weidman) but even fails to achieve as sharp a social edge as theirs. And the new-found vitality and militancy are additionally reminiscent of the ideal standard Lady because their wide-eyed stepping Toward The Light is psychological-aspirational and so unspecific as to be interpretable by any vision one selects.

I am aware that the sheer pointing out of origins in style and similarities in movement proves nothing in itself. My effort is to account for what I feel is the grave and almost unrelieved failure of revolutionary dancers to win over any true new audience. Their agitational titles and infrequent story-telling interludes avail them very little indeed, since the opening and closing movements present the entrance and departure of distant, selfconscious Ladies—and all the body manipulation has been based on obscure foreign symbols from a romantic-individualist world.

ANY diagnosis of this kind seems to demand the suggestion of a cure: and here I am at a real loss. The counteragent to bourgeois training in the dance is scarcely a hurling of oneself groundward on all fours and an extravagant series of simian faces in the name of the revolution or the proletariat; yet this would appear the alternative to so dreary, juiceless and outmoded a figure as the Lady. But no one has yet dared to be so cocksure a prophet as to predict the form the novel, painting, music and the drama will or should take after revolution, and I am relieved to be equally unoppressed by the urges of vaticination? What the other arts have succeeded in doing, however, is in finding a partial language of communication with people which promises eventually to speak to all the workers of the world. Let revolutionary dancers ponder their failure to create genuinely receptive and responsive audiences. Let them grow aware of the extent to which their physical artistic functioning has been affected by sickly bourgeois concepts, let them strive to rediscover the essential and universal instincts and impulses of the body which are not related to class labels and class ideals—and let them then create the technique and methodology for a dance which we can all have the natural empathic urgency to join, even if we are without training and sitting spectatorially in an auditorium.

Will Hays: Puppet Dictator

By TOM LANGLEY

THERE is a widespread belief, which has been carefully cultivated by bourgeois magazines and newspapers, that Will Hays is dictator of the movies. If we wish to understand the whole problem of film censorship, we must fight against this illusion and analyze Hays' career and his relation to *the real dictators* of the movies.

The campaign for public censorship of the films is more than twenty-five years old. As soon as the movie industry began to emerge from the nickelodeon stage, it had to face the attack of the churches; and that attack has kept up, intermittently, ever since. In 1921, however, the drive for censorship of the movies reached its maximum intensity. The Appleby Bill for the Federal Regulation of Motion Pictures was introduced in Congress, while in the Senate, the Myers Resolution called for an investigation of the movie industry. Most important of all, the New York State Motion Picture Law went into effect on August 1, 1921, making New York the fifth state to censor the films (soon to be followed by Virginia and Florida).

There are several reasons why the censorship wave should have reached its height in 1921. The post-war hysteria of reaction stimulated the demand for government control of the tremendous propaganda apparatus of the movies. This demand was given impetus by the open "immorality" of the pictures and the degeneracy of the actors (most strikingly revealed by the Arbuckle scandal at the close of 1921), which especially aroused the various church organizations. Finally, the great expan-

sion of the movie industry made it a happy hunting ground for the politicians, who therefore supported the campaign for public regulation of the films.

The heads of the industry were prepared to go to any lengths to stave off national or state censorship. The "immoral" pictures were the best money-makers; and the movie chiefs saw no reason why they should substitute the dubious comforts of morality for the profits of sin. But there was a far more basic motive for the movies' opposition to censorship. Government regulation might result in publicizing the growing trend toward monopoly within the industry; and such publicity was what the movie heads wanted least of all.

They decided that the only way to avert public regulation was to set up an organization of their own which would serve the double purpose of breaking up the campaign for censorship, and of hiding the monopoly character of the industry. It would serve the first purpose by setting up an ostensible "censorship within the industry"; and it would serve the second purpose by attracting all public attention to itself, and diverting it from the movie companies.

To head this organization, a man of the utmost respectability and of great political influence was needed. Only such a man could be accepted by the churches as a guardian of public morals, and by the politicians as a liaison and contact man. At the suggestion of William Fox, himself a staunch Republican, the heads of the movie companies finally selected Will Hays, then Postmaster-General of the United States. On March 4, 1922, Hays, having resigned his cabinet position, became president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association of America.

A SHORT examination of Hays' life will show why he was chosen for the position of movie "czar."

Born and raised in Indiana, he worked himself up through the ranks of the Republican Party step by step. He was a Republican precinct committeeman before he was 21, and thereafter advanced swiftly. In 1914 he became Indiana State Chairman, and finally, in 1918, National Chairman of the Republican Party.

He had hopes of being nominated for

President in 1920; but despite his disappointment, he worked hard for the election of Harding. He was rewarded by appointment to the Postmaster-Generalship.

Hays' religious career was just as orthodox as his political one. A member of the Presbyterian Church, he was also for a period a Sunday School teacher. Though always active as a lawyer and politician, he took care to build up a reputation as an energetic supporter of the church. In 1920, while Republican National Chairman, he was ordained Elder of the Presbyterian Church.

The social opinions of Hays can be deduced from his Republicanism and Presbyterianism. We don't have to resort to deduction, however. On January 5, 1920, at the time of the infamous Palmer raids, Hays declared:

> "This criminal thing, the I.W.W., or whatnot, which seeks the overthrow of government, is a traitor and should be treated as such. There is a remedy—it is taken against the wall—standing." (N. Y. Times, Jan. 6, 1920)

Obviously, the churches and patriotic organizations welcomed a man with such orthodox political and religious convictions, as "censor" of the movies. The bankers also were glad to have him as their contact man with the politicians and the, as yet, independent movie producers. As Republican National Chairman, Hays was well-known to the capitalists of the country. He handled their campaign contributions. From Harry F. Sinclair, for example, he received $260,000 ($75,000 cash outright and $185,000 Liberty Bonds "loan"), a transaction which he lied about to a Senate investigating committee, only to retract in later testimony.

THIS, then, was the man who became movie "dictator" at a salary of $150,000. His main function was to break up the drive for public censorship of the films. He began by trying to convince the opponents of the movies, that the producers were altruists whose sole purpose was to protect the morals of the American people,—and preserve capitalism. A few days after he had assumed his position with the movies, he declared in a newspaper interview:

> "The motion picture is already the principal amusement of the great majority of the people; it is the sole amusement of millions; it may well become the national stabilizer. In this country we speak fifty languages but the picture of Mother is the same to all—the picture is the quick road to the brain through the eye. The picture is the great influence. England sold the war to her colonies with the picture.
>
> "You take a little baby three days old, and he squalls and yells and gets all red, and you shake a rattle in front of his nose and he shuts up. What he wanted was amusement and you give it to him with the rattle. Now, unless you give the American people amusement—they'll get—no, no, not just exactly that—but you know what I mean." (N. Y. Times, March 7, 1922)

This justification of the movies as a stabilizing force was repeated by Hays in many speeches and articles.

Time after time, he declared that the movies performed an important service to capitalism. In the *Review of Reviews* for January, 1923, for example, he said:

> "The motion picture has carried the silent call for virtue, honesty, ambition, patriotism, hope, love of country and of home, to audiences speaking twenty different languages but understanding in common the universal language of pictures. . . .
>
> "During the trying times of soldiers in camp and during the lull in battle, motion pictures maintained that all-important factor —the morale."

With the cleverness of the experienced politician, Hays had chosen to emphasize the one feature of the movies which recommended them to the churches and jingo organizations which were behind the censorship drive. We notice that Hays, in the two statements quoted, makes no mention of cleaning up the "immorality" of the pictures. In fact, Hays quickly showed that the last thing he intended to do, was to meddle with the morals of the movies. One of his first acts as "czar" was to revoke the ban against Arbuckle's pictures.

This was too much for even Hays' own Presbyterian Church to swallow. Its General Assembly, which met in May, 1922, was enlivened by several attacks upon Elder Hays:

> "A report of a subcommittee of the Sabbath Observance Committee declared:
>
> "'Will Hays sold his birthright as a Presbyterian Elder for a mess of motion picture pottage.'
>
> "The chairman of the Subcommittee, the Rev. G. A. Briegler, wanted to know why Hays had not barred the making of films by Arbuckle, Valentino and 'actresses whose nightgowns were found in the home of William Desmond Taylor'." (N. Y. Times, May 21, 1922)

Though Hays did not succeed in completely stopping the church agitation for regulation of the movies, he rendered it harmless by knocking its political support from under it. The first real test of Hays' ability to protect the movies from legislative interference was the Massachusetts Referendum on State Motion Picture Censorship. In 1922, it resulted in an overwhelming vote against censorship. The efficiency with which Hays had carried on the campaign is shown by the fact that 552,000 voted against censorship while the vote for the successful candidate for governor was only 468,000.

Events since 1922 have further demonstrated Hays' essential function in the motion picture industry. He formed a Public Relations Department, which was supposed to cooperate with different national organizations. But these organizations soon found that their suggestions were being politely pigeon-holed; and several, notably the Parent-Teachers Association, withdrew in disgust. Only the most reactionary groups, like the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, and the D.A.R., have been able to receive any real cooperation from Hays.

In 1925, Col. Jason Joy, the Executive Secretary of the Department of Public Relations, was instructed by Hays to work with the National Committee for Better Films. He tried to popularize a series of slogans such as "Selection, not Censorship," "Boost the Best, Ignore the Rest," and "Patronize the best, that the best may pay." In other words, it's your fault if you don't get good pictures, and the movie producers can't do anything about it.

HAYS has tried to produce some faint appearance of "censorship within the industry." His organization has drawn up a widely-publicized Code which is periodically revised. Most of the prohibitions contained in this Code of morals are regularly disregarded by the motion pictures. The whole pretence of self-censorship is regarded as a farce by those in the industry. One has merely to read through the regulations of the Code to realize how little they affect the product of the Hollywood studios. Only those prohibitions which deal with the treatment of social institutions are observed.

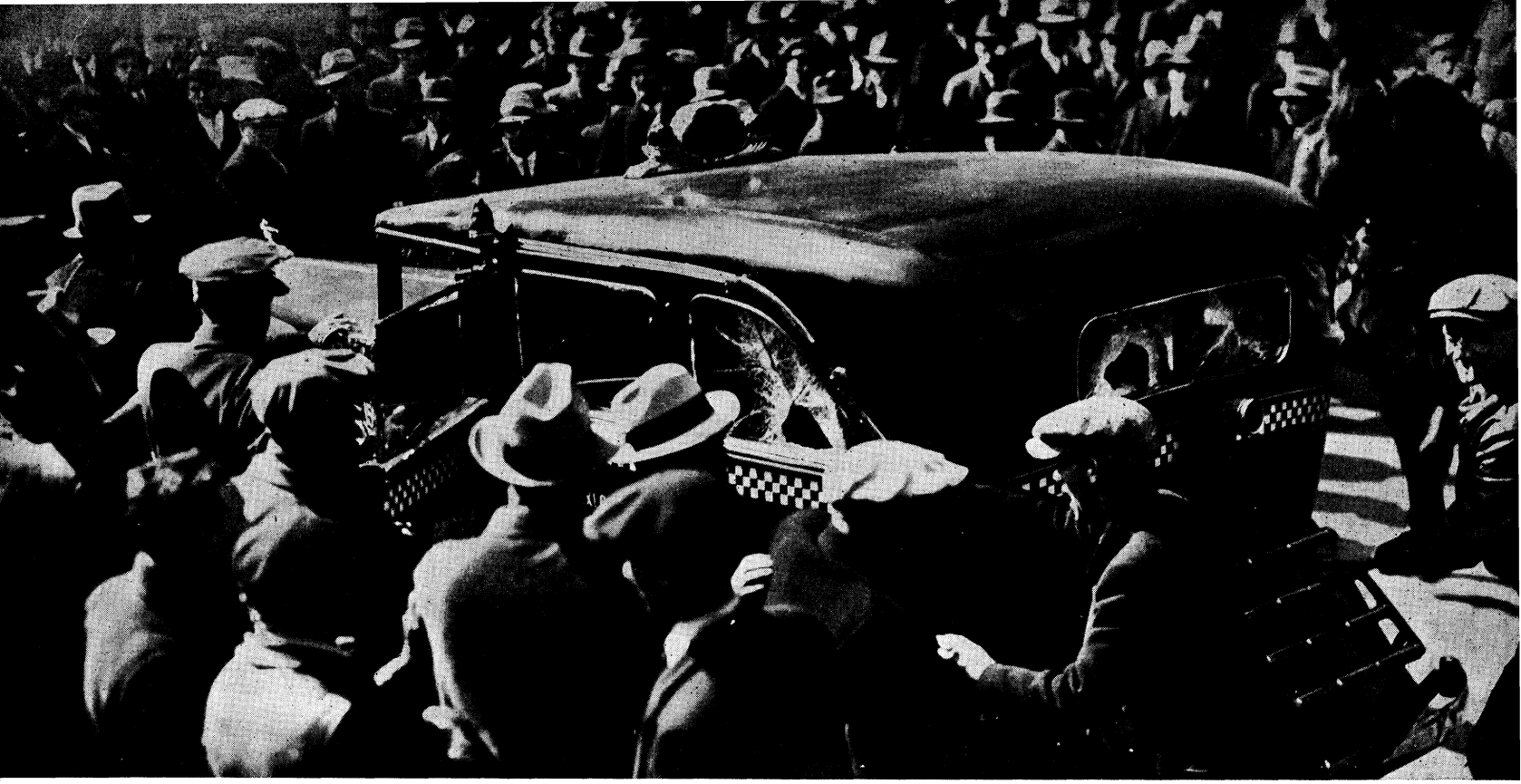
So far it would appear that Hays' sole function has been to avert public censorship of the movies. But, as we indicated at the beginning, he serves a second function. His organization, by masquerading as a monopoly, has served to hide the real monopoly structure of the movies. The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association has borne the brunt of the indignation and the investigations; while the Chase National Bank has pocketed the profits. Also, Hays has served as the contact man for the bankers. When, for example, they were trying to force Fox out, they sent a message to Fox *through* Hays.

We see then, that Hays, far from being an omnipotent dictator, is little more than a puppet. It is stupid to blame him for the evils of Hollywood, as the liberals do. He cannot be held responsible for the reactionary ideology of the movies, any more than he can be held responsible for Mae West. Will Hays, though he draws a fancy salary, is the servant and not the master. The master is Wall Street.

Knowing this, we shall know how to regard the present censorship flurry, and the Legion of Decency. Like the drive of 1921, the 1934 campaign is partly the result of a wave of reaction, which is growing steadily. As in 1921, Hays has tried to meet the challenge of the churches by emphasizing the conservative and "stabilizing" influence of the movies. He has come out openly and proclaimed that if it had not been for the movies, the crisis would have driven the American people to revolution.

Practically nothing has been done, and nothing will be done, to eliminate "immorality" from the movies. The titles of a few pictures have been changed, and marriages have been inserted into others to sanctify the bedroom scenes; but the essential features, against which the churches are ostensibly fighting, still remain. We have had, and will have, an intensified pro-capitalistic, pro-militaristic, and anti-radical bias in the movies. The Legion of Decency may fade into obscurity very soon, but the wave of reaction in the movies will continue to mount.

[*Prepared by the Pen & Hammer Club*]



Acme Photo

WAITING FOR LEFTY

A Play in Six Scenes, Based on the New York City Taxi Strike of February, 1934.

By CLIFFORD ODETS

As the curtain goes up we see a bare stage. On it are sitting six or seven men in a semi-circle. Lolling against the proscenium down left is a young man chewing a toothpick: a gunman. A fat man of porcine appearance is talking directly to the audience. In other words he is the head of a union and the men ranged behind him are a committee of workers. They are now seated in interesting different attitudes and present a wide diversity of type, as we shall soon see. The fat man is hot and heavy under the collar, near the end of a long talk, but not too hot: he is well fed and confident. His name is Harry Fatt.

FATT: You're so wrong I ain't laughing. Any guy with eyes to read knows it. Look at the textile strike—out like lions and in like lambs. Take the San Francisco tie-up—starvation and broken heads. The steel boys wanted to walk out too, but they changed their minds. It's the trend of the times, that's what it is. All we workers got a good man behind us now. He's top man of the country—looking out for our interests—the man in the White House is the one I'm referrin' to. That's why the times ain't ripe for a strike. He's working day and night—

VOICE: (*From the audience*). For who? (*The gunman stirs himself.*)

FATT: For you! The records prove it. If this was the Hoover regime, would I say don't go out, boys? Not on your tintype! But things is different now. You read the papers as well as me. You know it. And that's why I'm against the strike. Because we gotta stand behind the man who's standin' behind us! The whole country—

ANOTHER VOICE: Is on the blink! (*The gunman looks grave.*)

FATT: Stand up and show yourself, you damn red! Be a man, let's see what you look like! (*Waits in vain.*) Yellow from the word go! Red and yellow makes a dirty color, boys. I got my eyes on four or five of them in the union here. What the hell'll they do for you? Pull you out and run away when trouble starts. Give those birds a chance and they'll have your sisters and wives in the whore houses, like they done in Russia. They'll tear Christ off his bleeding cross. They'll wreck your homes and throw your babies in the river. You think that's bunk? Read the papers! Now listen, we can't stay here all night. I gave you the facts in the case. You boys got hot suppers to go to and—

ANOTHER VOICE: Says you!

GUNMAN: Sit down, Punk!

ANOTHER VOICE: Where's Lefty? (*Now this question is taken up by the others in unison. Fatt pounds with gavel.*)

FATT: That's what I wanna know. Where's your pal, Lefty? You elected him chairman—where the hell did he disappear?

VOICES: We want Lefty! Lefty! Lefty!

FATT: (*Pounding*) What the hell is this—a circus? You got the committee here. This bunch of cow-boys you elected. (*Pointing to man on extreme right end.*)

MAN: Benjamin.

FATT: Yeah, Doc Benjamin. (*Pointing to other men in circle in seated order*) Benjamin, Miller, Stein, Mitchell, Phillips, Keller. It ain't my fault Lefty took a run-out powder. If you guys—

A GOOD VOICE: What's the committee say?

OTHERS: The committee! Let's hear from the committee! (*Fatt tries to quiet the crowd, but one of the seated men suddenly comes to the front. The gunman moves over to center stage, but Fatt says*:)

FATT: Sure, let him talk. Let's hear what the red boys gotta say!

(*Various shouts are coming from the audience. Fatt insolently goes back to his seat in the middle of the circle. He sits on his raised platform and re-lights his cigar. The gunman goes back to his post. Joe, the new speaker, raises his hand for quiet. Gets it quickly. He is sore.*)

JOE: You boys know me. I ain't a red boy one bit! Here

Acme Photo

I'm carryin' a shrapnel that big I picked up in the war. And maybe I don't know it when it rains! Don't tell me red! You know what we are? We're the black and blue boys! We been kicked around so long we're black and blue from head to toes. But I guess anyone who says straight out he don't like it, he's a red boy to the leaders of the union. What's this crap about goin' home to hot suppers? I'm asking to your faces how many's got hot suppers to go home to? Anyone who's sure of his next meal, raise your hand! A certain gent sitting behind me can raise them both. But not in front here! And that's why we're talking strike —to get a living wage!

VOICE: Where's Lefty?

JOE: I honest to God don't know, but he didn't take no run-out powder. That Wop's got more guts than a slaughter house. Maybe a traffic jam got him, but he'll be here. But don't let this red stuff scare you. Unless fighting for a living scares you. We gotta make up our minds. My wife made up my mind last week, if you want the truth. It's plain as the nose on Sol Feinberg's face we need a strike. There's us comin' home every night —eight, ten hours on the cab. "God," the wife says, "eighty cents ain't money—don't buy beans almost. You're workin' for the company," she says to me, "Joe! you ain't workin' for me or the family no more!" She says to me, "If you don't start . . . "

(*The lights fade out and a white spot picks out the playing space within the space of seated men. The seated men are very dimly visible in the outer dark, but more prominent is Fatt smoking his cigar and often blowing the smoke in the lighted circle.*
A tired but attractive woman of thirty comes into the room, drying her hands on an apron. She stands there sullenly as Joe comes in from the other side, home from work. For a moment they stand and look at each other in silence.)

JOE: Where's all the furniture, honey?
EDNA: They took it away. No instalments paid.
JOE: When?
EDNA: Three o'clock.
JOE: They can't do that.
EDNA: Can't? They did it.
JOE: Why, the palookas, we paid three-quarters.
EDNA: The man said read the contract.
JOE: We must have signed a phoney . . .
EDNA: It's a regular contract and you signed it.
JOE: Don't be so sour, Edna . . . (*tries to embrace her*)
EDNA: Do it in the movies, Joe—they pay Clark Gable big money for it.
JOE: This is a helluva house to come home to. Take my word!
EDNA: Take MY word! Whose fault is it?
JOE: Must you start that stuff again?
EDNA: Maybe you'd like to talk about books?
JOE: I'd like to slap you in the mouth!
EDNA: No you won't.
JOE: (*Sheepish*) Jeez, Edna, you get me sore some time . . .
EDNA: But just look at me—I'm laughing all over!
JOE: Don't insult me. Can I help it if times are bad? What the hell do you want me to do, jump off a bridge or something?
EDNA: Don't yell. I just put the kids to bed so they won't know they missed a meal. If I don't have Emmy's shoes soled tomorrow, she can't go to school. In the meantime let her sleep.
JOE: Honey, I rode the wheels off the chariot today. I cruised around five hours without a call. It's conditions.
EDNA: Tell it to the A & P!
JOE: I booked two-twenty on the clock. A lady with a dog was lit . . . she gave me a quarter tip by mistake. If you'd only listen to me—we're rolling in wealth.
EDNA: Yeah? How much?
JOE: I had "coffee and—" in a beanery. (*Hands her silver coins.*) A buck four.
EDNA: The second month's rent is due tomorrow.
JOE: Don't look at me that way, Edna.
EDNA: I'm looking thru you, not at you. . . . Everything was gonna be so ducky! A cottage by the waterfall, roses in Picardy. You're a four-star-bust! If you think I'm standing for it much longer, you're crazy as a bedbug.

Art Smith as Joe, Ruth Nelson as Edna
Group Theatre in *Waiting for Lefty* Civic Repertory Theatre, Jan. 6, 1935

JOE: I'd get another job if I could. There's no work—you know it.
EDNA: I only know we're at the bottom of the ocean.
JOE: What can I do?
EDNA: Who's the man in the family, you or me?
JOE: That's no answer. Get down to brass tacks. Christ, gimme a break, too! A coffee cake and java all day. I'm hungry, too, Babe. I'd work my fingers to the bone if—
EDNA: I'll open a can of salmon.
JOE: Not now. Tell me what to do!
EDNA: I'm not God!
JOE: Jeez, I wish I was a kid again and didn't have to think about the next minute.
EDNA: But you're not a kid and you do have to think about the next minute. You got two blondie kids sleeping in the next room. They need food and clothes. I'm not mentioning anything else—But we're stalled like a flivver in the snow. For five years I laid awake at night listening to my heart pound. For God's sake, do something, Joe, get wise. Maybe get your buddies together, maybe go on strike for better money. Poppa did it during the war and they won out. I'm turning into a sour old nag.
JOE: (*Defending himself*) Strikes don't work!
EDNA: Who told you?
JOE: Besides that means not a nickel a week while we're out. Then when it's over they don't take you back.
EDNA: Suppose they don't! What's to lose?
JOE: Well, we're averaging six-seven dollars a week now.
EDNA: That just pays for the rent.
JOE: That is something, Edna.
EDNA: It isn't. They'll push you down to three and four a week before you know it. Then you'll say, "That's somethin'," too!
JOE: There's too many cabs on the street, that's the whole damn trouble.
EDNA: Let the company worry about that, you big fool! If their cabs didn't make a profit, they'd take them off the streets. Or maybe you think they're in business just to pay Joe Mitchell's rent!
JOE: You don't know a-b-c, Edna.
EDNA: I know this—your boss is making suckers outa you boys every minute. Yes, and suckers out of all the wives and the poor innocent kids who'll grow up with crooked spines and sick bones. Sure, I see it in the papers, how good orange juice is for kids. But dammit, our kids gets colds one on top of the other. They look like little ghosts. Betty never saw a grapefruit. I took her to the store last week and she pointed to a stack of grapefruits. "What's that!" she said. My God, Joe—the world is supposed to be for all of us.

Art Smith as Joe, Ruth Nelson as Edna

Group Theatre in *Waiting for Lefty* Civic Repertory Theatre, Jan. 6, 1935

JOE: You'll wake them up.
EDNA: I don't care, as long as I can maybe wake you up.
JOE: Don't insult me. One man can't make a strike.
EDNA: Who says one? You got hundreds in your rotten union!
JOE: The Union ain't rotten.
EDNA: No? Then what are they doing? Collecting dues and patting your back?
JOE: They're making plans.
EDNA: What kind?
JOE: They don't tell us.
EDNA: It's too damn bad about you. They don't tell little Joey what's happening in his bitsie witsie union. What do you think it is—a ping pong game?
JOE: You know they're racketeers. The guys at the top would shoot you for a nickel.
EDNA: Why do you stand for that stuff?
JOE: Don't you wanna see me alive?
EDNA: (*After a deep pause*) No . . . I don't think I do, Joe. Not if you can lift a finger to do something about it, and don't. No, I don't care.
JOE: Honey, you don't understand what—
EDNA: And any other hackie that won't fight . . . let them all be ground to hamburger!
JOE: It's one thing to—
EDNA: Take your hand away! Only they don't grind me to little pieces! I got different plans. (*Starts to take off her apron.*)
JOE: Where are you going?
EDNA: None of your business.
JOE: What's up your sleeve?
EDNA: My arm'd be up my sleeve, Darling, if I had a sleeve to wear. (*Puts neatly folded apron on back of chair.*)
JOE: Tell me!
EDNA: Tell you what?
JOE: Where are you going?
EDNA: Don't you remember my old boy friend?
JOE: Who?
EDNA: Bud Haas. He still has my picture in his watch. He earns a living.
JOE: What the hell are you talking about?
EDNA: I heard worse than I'm talking about.
JOE: Have you seen Bud since we got married?
EDNA: Maybe.
JOE: If I thought . . . (*he stands looking at her.*)
EDNA: See much? Listen, boy friend, if you think I won't do this it just means you can't see straight.
JOE: Stop talking bull!
EDNA: This isn't five years ago, Joe.
JOE: You mean you'd leave me and the kids?
EDNA: I'd leave *you* like a shot!
JOE: No. . . .
EDNA: Yes!
(*Joe turns away, sitting in a chair with his back to her. Outside the lighted circle of the playing stage we hear the other seated members of the strike committee. "She will . . . she will . . . it happens that way," etc. This group should be used thruout for various comments, political, emotional and as general chorus. Whispering. . . . The fat boss now blows a heavy cloud of smoke into the scene.*)
JOE: (*Finally*) Well, I guess I ain't got a leg to stand on.
EDNA: No?
JOE: (*Suddenly mad*) No, you lousy tart, no! Get the hell out of here. Go pick up that bull-thrower on the corner and stop at some cushy hotel downtown. He's probably been coming here every morning and laying you while I hacked my guts out!
EDNA: You're crawling like a worm!
JOE: You'll be crawling in a minute.
EDNA: You don't scare me that much! (*indicates ½ inch on her finger*).
JOE: This is what I slaved for!
EDNA: Tell it to your boss!
JOE: He don't give a damn for you or me!
EDNA: That's what I say.
JOE: Don't change the subject!
EDNA: This is the subject, the EXACT SUBJECT! Your boss makes this subject. I never saw him in my life, but he's putting ideas in my head a mile a minute. He's giving your kids that fancy disease called the rickets. He's making a jelly-fish outa you and putting wrinkles in my face. This is the subject every inch of the way! He's throwing me into Bud Haas' lap. When in hell will you get wise—
JOE: I'm not so dumb as you think! But you are talking like a Red.
EDNA: I don't know what that means. But when a man knocks you down you get up and kiss his fist! You gutless piece of boloney.
JOE: One man can't—
EDNA: (*With great joy*) I don't say one man! I say a hundred, a thousand, a whole million, I say. But start in your own union. Get those hack boys together! Sweep out those racketeers like a pile of dirt! Stand up like men and fight for the crying kids and wives. Goddammit! I'm tired of slavery and sleepless nights.
JOE: (*With her*) Sure, sure! . . .
EDNA: Yes. Get brass toes on your shoes and know where to kick!
JOE: (*Suddenly jumping up and kissing his wife full on the mouth.*) Listen, Edna. I'm going down to 174th Street to look up Lefty Costello. Lefty was saying the other day . . . (*he suddenly stops*) How about this Haas guy?
EDNA: Get out of here!
JOE: I'll be back! (*Runs out.*)
(*For a moment Edna stands triumphant.*)
There is a black out and when the regular lights come up, Joe Mitchell is concluding what he has been saying:)
JOE: You guys know this stuff better than me. We gotta walk out! (*Abruptly he turns and goes back to his seat and blackout.*)

THE YOUNG HACK AND HIS GIRL—(*Opens with girl and brother. Florence waiting for Sid to take her to a dance.*)
FLOR: I gotta right to have something out of life. I don't smoke, I don't drink. So if Sid wants to take me to a dance, I'll go. Maybe if you was in love you wouldn't talk so hard.
IRV: I'm saying it for your good.
FLOR: Don't be so good to me.
IRV: Mom's sick in bed and you'll be worryin' her to the grave. She don't want that boy hanging around the house and she don't want you meeting him in Crotona Park.
FLOR: I'll meet him anytime I like!
IRV: If you do, yours truly'll take care of it in his own way. With just one hand, too!
FLOR: Why are you all so set against him?
IRV: Mom told you ten times—it ain't him. It's that he ain't got nothing. Sure, we know he's serious, that he's stuck on you. But that don't cut no ice.
FLOR: Taxi drivers used to make good money.
IRV: Today they're makin' five and six dollars a week. Maybe you wanta raise a family on that. Then you'll be back here living with us again and I'll be supporting two families in one. Well . . . over my dead body.
FLOR: Irv, I don't care—I love him!
IRV: You're a little kid with half-baked ideas!
FLOR: I stand there behind the counter the whole day. I think about him—
IRV: If you thought more about Mom it would be better.
FLOR: Don't I take care of her every night when I come home? Don't I cook supper and iron your shirts and . . . you give me a pain in the neck, too. Don't try to shut me up! I bring a few dollars in the house, too. Don't you see I want something else out of life. Sure, I want romance, love, babies. I want everything in life I can get.
IRV: You take care of mom and watch your step!
FLOR: And if I don't?
IRV: Yours truly'll watch it for you!
FLOR: You can talk that way to a girl . . . .
IRV: I'll talk that way to your boy friend, too, and it won't be

with words! Florrie, if you had a pair of eyes you'd see it's for your own good we're talking. This ain't no time to get married. Maybe later—
FLOR: "Maybe Later" never comes for me, tho. Why don't we send Mom to a hospital? She can die in peace there instead of looking at the clock on the mantelpiece all day.
IRV: That needs money. Which we don't have!
FLOR: Money, Money, Money!
IRV: Don't change the subject.
FLOR: This is the subject!
IRV: You gonna stop seeing him? (*She turns away*) Jesus, kiddie, I remember when you were a baby with curls down your back. Now I gotta stand here yellin' at you like this.
FLOR: I'll talk to him, Irv.
IRV: When?
FLOR: I asked him to come here tonight. We'll talk it over.
IRV: Don't get soft with him. Nowadays is no time to be soft. You gotta be hard as a rock or go under.
FLOR: I found that out. There's the bell. Take the egg off the stove I boiled for Mom. Leave us alone, Irv.
(*Sid comes in—the two men look at each other for a second. Irv. exits.*)
SID: (*Enters*) Hello, Florrie.
FLOR: Hello, Honey. You're looking tired.
SID: Naw, I just need a shave.
FLOR: Well, draw your chair up to the fire and I'll ring for brandy and soda . . . like in the movies.
SID: If this was the movies I'd bring a big bunch of roses.
FLOR: How big?
SID: Fifty or sixty dozen—the kind with long long stems—big as that . . .
FLOR: You dope . . .
SID: Your Paris gown is beautiful.
FLOR: (*Acting grandly*)Yes, Percy, velvet panels are coming back again. Madame La Farge told me today that Queen Marie herself designed it.
SID: Gee . . . . . !
FLOR: Every princess in the Balkans is wearing one like this. (*Poses grandly*)
SID: Hold it. (*Does a nose camera—thumbing nose and imitating grinding of camera with other hand.*)
Suddenly she falls out of the posture and swiftly goes to him, to embrace him, to kiss him with love. Finally:
SID: You look tired, Florrie.
FLOR: Naw, I just need a shave. (*She laughs tremorously.*)
SID: You worried about your mother?
FLOR: No.
SID: What's on your mind?
FLOR: The French and Indian War.
SID: What's on your mind?
FLOR: I got us on my mind, Sid. Night and day, Sid!
SID: I smacked a beer truck today. Did I get hell! I was driving along thinking of US, too. You don't have to say it—I know what's on your mind. I'm rat poison around here.
FLOR: Not to me . . .
SID: I know to who . . . and I know why. I don't blame them. We're engaged now for three years . . .
FLOR: That's a long time . . .
SID: My brother Sam joined the Navy this morning—get a break that way. They'll send him down to Cuba with the hootchy-kootchy girls. He don't know from nothing, that dumb basket ball player!
FLOR: Don't you do that.
SID: Don't you worry, I'm not the kind who runs away. But I'm so tired of being a dog, Baby, I could choke. I don't even have to ask what's going on in your mind. I know from the word go, 'cause I'm thinking the same things, too.
FLOR: It's yes or no—nothing in between.
SID: The answer is no—a big electric sign looking down on Broadway!
FLOR: We wanted to have kids. . . .
SID: But that sort of life ain't for the dogs which is us. Christ, Baby! I get like thunder in my chest when we're together. If we went off together I could maybe look the world straight in the face, spit in its eye like a man should do. Goddamit, it's trying to be a man on the earth. Two in life together.
FLOR: But something wants us to be lonely like that—crawling alone in the dark. Or they want us trapped.
SID: Sure, the big shot money men want us like that—
FLOR: Highly insulting us—
SID: Keeping us in the dark about what is wrong with us in the money sense. They got the power an mean to be damn sure they keep it. They know if they give in just an inch, all the dogs like us will be down on them together—an ocean knocking them to hell and back and each singing cuckoo with stars coming from their nose and ears. I'm not raving, Florrie—
FLOR: I know you're not, I know.
SID: I don't have the words to tell you what I feel. I never finished school. . . .
FLOR: I know . . .
SID: But it's relative, like the professors say. We worked like hell to send him to college—my kid brother Sam, I mean—and look what he done—joined the navy! The damn fool don't see the cards is stacked for all of us. The money man dealing himself a hot royal flush. Then giving you and me a phoney hand like a pairs of tens or something. Then keep on losing the pots 'cause the cards is stacked against you. Then he says, what's the matter you can't win—no stuff on the ball, he says to you. And kids like my brother believe it 'cause they don't know better. For all their education, they don't know from nothing.
But wait a minute! Don't he come around and say to you—this millionaire with a jazz band—listen Sam or Sid or-what's-your-name, you're no good, but here's a chance. The whole world'll know who you are. Yes sir, he says, get up on that ship and fight those bastards who's making the world a lousy place to live in. The Japs, the Turks, the Greeks. Take this gun—kill the slobs like a real hero, he says, a real American. Be a hero!
And the guy you're poking at? A real louse, just like you, 'cause they don't let him catch more than a pair of tens, too. On that foreign soil he's a guy like me and Sam, a guy who wants his baby like you and hot sun on his face! They'll teach Sam to point the guns the wrong way, that dumb basket ball player!
FLOR: I got a lump in my throat, Honey.
SID: You and me—we never even had a room to sit in somewhere.
FLOR: The park was nice . . .
SID: In Winter? The hallways . . . I'm glad we never got together. This way we don't know what we missed.
FLOR: (*In a burst*) Sid, I'll go with you—we'll get a room somewhere.
SID: Naw . . . they're right. If we can't climb higher than this together—we better stay apart.
FLOR: I swear to God I wouldn't care.
SID: You would, you would—in a year, two years, you'd curse the day. I seen it happen.
FLOR: Oh, Sid . . .
SID: Sure, I know. We got the blues, Babe—the 1935 blues. I'm talkin' this way 'cause I love you. If I didn't, I wouldn't care . . .
FLOR: We'll work together, we'll—
SID: How about the backwash? You're family needs your nine bucks. My family—
FLOR: I don't care for them!
SID: You're making it up, Florrie. Little Forrie Canary in a cage.
FLOR: Don't make fun of me.
SID: I'm not, Baby.
FLOR: Yes, you're laughing at me.
SID: I'm not.

(*They stand looking at each other, unable to speak. Finally, he turns to a small portable phonograph and plays a cheap, sad, dance tune. He makes a motion with his hand; she comes to him. They begin to dance slowly. They hold each other tightly, almost as tho they would merge into each other. The music stops, but the scratching record continues to the end of the scene. They stop dancing. He finally unlooses her clutch and seats her on the couch, where she sits, tense and expectant.*)

Jules Garfield as **Sid,** Phoebe Brand as **Florence.**

SID: Hello, Babe.
FLOR: Hello. (*For a brief time they stand as tho in a dream.*)
SID: (*Finally*) Good-bye, Babe.
(*He waits for an answer, but she is silent. They look at each other.*)
SID: Did you ever see my Pat Rooney imitation? (*He whistles Rosy O'Grady and soft shoes to it. Stops.*) *He asks*:
SID: Don't you like it?
FLOR: (*Finally*) No. (*and buries her face in her hands.*)
(*Suddenly he falls on his knees and buries his face in her lap.*)

BLACKOUT

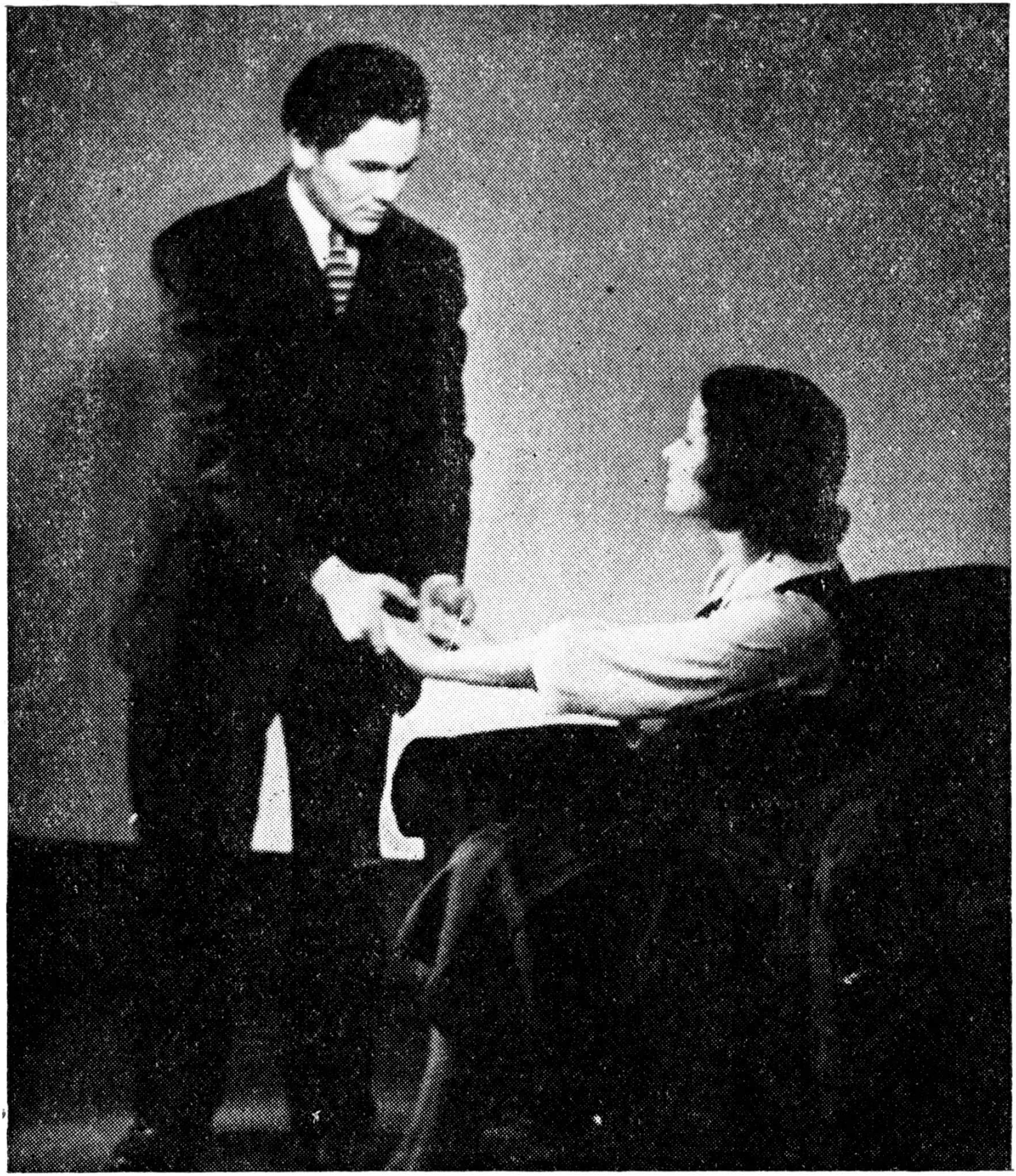
LABOR SPY EPISODE

FATT: You don't know how we work for you. Shooting off your mouth won't help. Hell, don't you guys ever look at the records like me? Look in your own industry. See what happened when the hacks walked out in Philly three months ago! Where's Philly? A thousand miles away? An hour's ride on the train.
VOICE: Two Hours!!
FATT: Two hours . . . what the hell's the difference. Let's hear from someone who's got the practical experience to back him up. Fellas there's a man here who's seen the whole parade in Philly, walked out with his pals, got knocked down like the rest —and blacklisted after they went back. That's why he's here. He's got a mighty interestin' word to say. (*announces*) TOM CLAYTON!
(*As Clayton starts up from the audience, Fatt gives him a hand which is sparsely followed in the audience. Clayton comes forward.*)
Fellers, this is a man with practical strike experience—Tom Clayton from little ole Philly.
CLAYTON: (*A thin, modest individual*) Fellers, I don't mind your booing If I thought it would help us hacks get better living conditions, I'd let you walk all over me, cut me up to little pieces. I'm one of you myself. But what I wanna say is that Harry Fatt's right. I only been working here in the big town five weeks, but I know conditions just like the rest of you. You know how it is—don't take long to feel the sore spots, no matter where you park.
CLEAR VOICE: (*From audience*) Sit down!
CLAYTON: But Fatt's right. Our officers is right. The time ain't ripe. Like a fruit don't fall off the tree until its ripe.
CLEAR VOICE: Sit down, you fruit!
FATT: (*On his feet*) Take care of him, boys.
VOICE: (*In audience, struggling*) No one takes care of me.
(*Struggle in house, and finally the owner of the voice runs up on stage, says to speaker*:)—
CLAYTON, Where the hell did you pick up that name! Clayton! This rat's name is Clancy, from the old Clancys, way back! Fruit! I almost wet myself listening to that one!
FATT: (*Gunman with him*) This ain't a barn! What the hell do you think you're doing here!
VOICE: Exposing a rat!
FATT: You can't get away with this. Throw him the hell outa here.
VOICE: (*Preparing to stand his ground*) Try it yourself . . . When this bozo throws that slop around. You know who he is? That's a company spy.
FATT: Who the hell are you to make—
VOICE: I paid dues in this union for four years, that's who's me! I gotta right and this pussy-footed rat ain't coming in here with ideas like that. You know his record. Lemme say it out—
FATT: You'll prove all this or I'll bust you in every hack outfit in town!
VOICE: I gotta right. I gotta right. Looka *him,* he don't say boo!
CLAYTON: You're a liar and I never seen you before in my life!
VOICE: Boys, he spent two years in the coal fields breaking up any organization he touched. Fifty guys he put in jail. He's ranged up and down the east coast—shipping, textiles, steel—he's been in everything you can name. Right now—
CLAYTON: That's a lie!
VOICE: Right now he's working for that Bergman outfit on Columbus Circle who furnishes rats for any outfit in the country before, during, and after strikes.
(*The man who is the hero of the next episode goes down to his side with other committee men.*)
CLAYTON: He's trying to break up the meeting, fellers!
VOICE: We won't search you for credentials . . .
CLAYTON: I got nothing to hide. Your own secretary knows I'm straight—
VOICE: Sure. Boys, you know who this sonovabitch is?
CLAYTON: I never seen you before in my life!!
VOICE: Boys, I slept with him in the same bed sixteen years. HE'S MY OWN LOUSY BROTHER!!
FATT: (*After pause*) Is this true? (*No answer from Clayton.*)
VOICE: (*To Clayton*) Scram, before I break your neck!
(*Clayton scrams down center aisle. Voice says, watching him*:)
Remember his map—he can't change that—Clancy!
(*Standing in his place says*:)—
Too bad you didn't know about this, Fatt! (*After a pause*) The Clancy family tree is bearing nuts!
Standing isolated clear on the stage is the hero of the next episode.

BLACK OUT.

THE YOUNG ACTOR

A New York theatrical producer's office. Present are a stenographer and a young actor. She is busy typing; he, waiting with card in hand.
STEN: He's taking a hot bath . . . says you should wait.
PHILIPS: (*The actor*) A bath did you say? Where?
STEN: See that door? Right thru there—leads to his apartment.
PHIL: Thru there?
STEN: Mister, he's laying there in a hot perfumed bath. Don't say I said it.
PHIL: You don't say!
STEN: An oriental den he's got. Can you just see this big Irishman burning Chinese punk in the bedroom? And a big old rose canopy over his casting couch . . .
PHIL: What's that—casting couch?
STEN: What's that? You from the sticks?
PHIL: I beg your pardon?
STEN: (*Rolls up her sleeves, makes elaborate deaf and dumb signs.*) No from side walkies of New Yorkie . . . savee?
PHIL: Oh, you're right. Two years of dramatic stock out of town. One in Chicago.



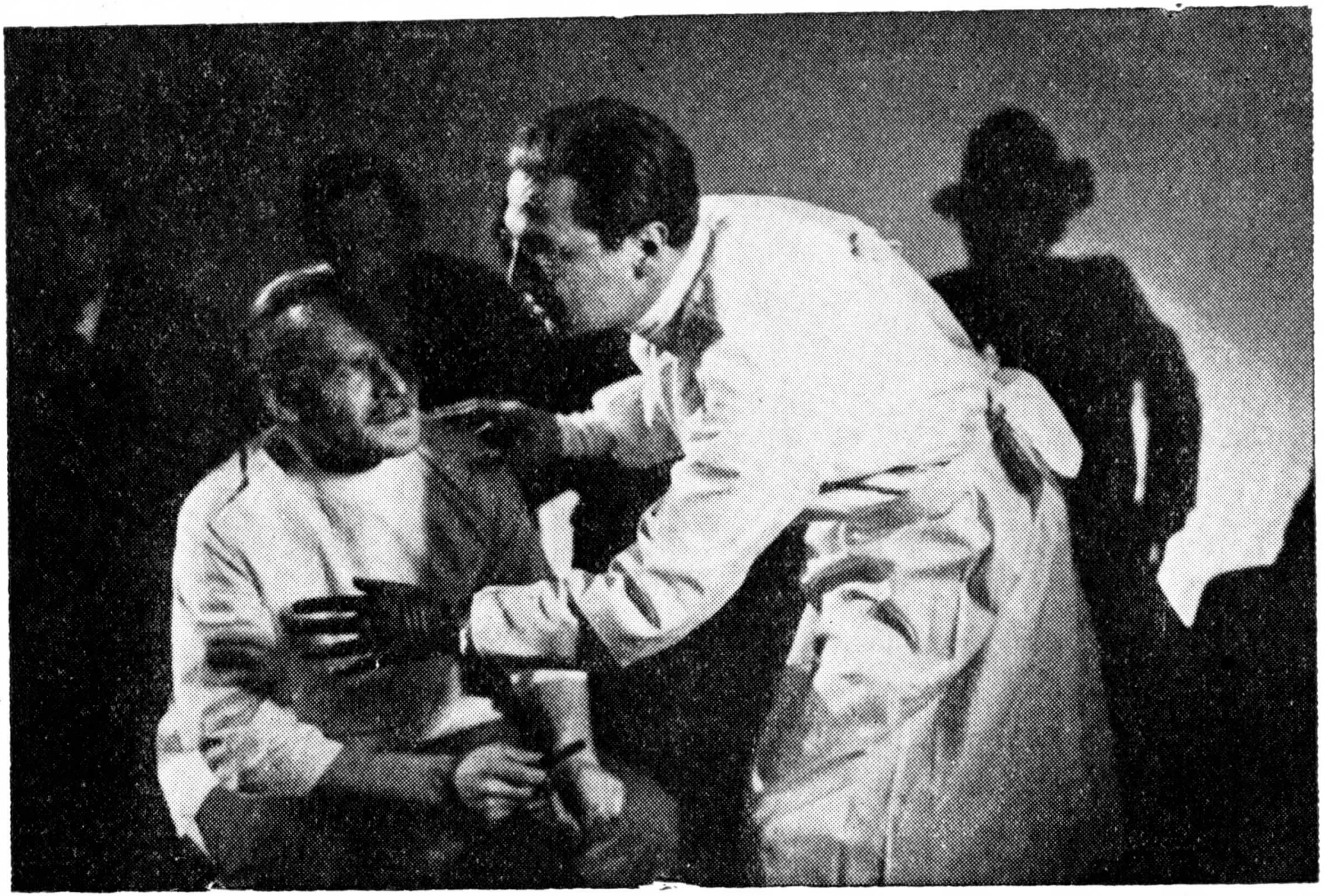
Jules Garfield as **Sid,** Phoebe Brand as **Florence.**

STEN: Don't tell him, Baby Face. He wouldn't know a good actor if he fell over him in the dark. Say you had two years with the Group, two with the Guild.
PHIL: I'd like to get with the Guild. They say—
STEN: He won't know the difference. Don't say I said it!
PHIL: I really did play with Watson Findlay in "Early Birds."
STEN: (*Withering him*) Don't tell him!
PHIL: He's a big producer, Mr. Grady. I wish I had his money. Don't you?
STEN: Say, I got a clean heart, Mister. I love my fellow man! (*About to exit with typed letters.*) Stick around—Mr. Philips. You might be the type. If you were a woman—
PHIL: Please. Just a minute . . . please . . . I need the job.
STEN: Look at him!
PHIL: I mean . . . I don't know what buttons to push, and you do. What my father used to say—we had a gas station in Cleveland before the crash—"Know what buttons to push," Dad used to say, "And you'll go far."
STEN: You can't push me, Mister! I don't ring right these last few years!
PHIL: We don't know where the next meal's coming from. We—
STEN: Maybe . . . I'll lend you a dollar?
PHIL: Thanks very much: it won't help.
STEN: One of the old families of Virginia? Proud?
PHIL: Oh not that. You see, I have a wife. We'll have our first baby next month . . . so . . . a dollar isn't much help.
STEN: Roped in?
PHIL: I love my wife!
STEN: Okay, you love her! Excuse me! You married her. Can't support her. No . . . not blaming you. But you're fools, all you actors. Old and young! Watch you parade in an out all day. You still got apples in your cheeks and pins for buttons. But in six months you'll be like them—putting on an act: Phoney strutting "pishers"—that's French for dead codfish! It's not their fault. Here you get like that or go under. What kind of job is this for an adult man!
PHIL: When you have to make a living—
STEN: I know, but—
PHIL: Nothing else to do. If I could get something else—
STEN: You'd take it!
PHIL: Anything!
STEN: Telling me! With two brothers in my hair! (*Mr. Grady now enters; played by Fatt*) Mr. Brown sent this young man over.
GRADY: Call the hospital: see how Boris is. (*She assents and exits.*)
PHIL: Good morning, Mr. Grady . . . .
GRADY: The morning is lousy!
PHIL: Mr. Brown sent me . . . (*Hands over card.*)
GRADY: I heard that once already.
PHIL: Excuse me . . .
GRADY: What experience?
PHIL: Oh, yes . . . .
GRADY: Where?
PHIL: Two years in stock, sir. A year with the Goodman Theatre in Chicago . . .
GRADY: That all?
PHIL: (*Abashed*) Why no . . . with the Theatre Guild . . . I was there . . .
GRADY: Never saw you in a Guild show!
PHIL: On the road, I mean . . . understudying Mr. Lunt . . .
GRADY: What part? (*Philips can not answer*) You're a lousy liar, son.
PHIL: I did . . .
GRADY: You don't look like what I want. Can't understand that Brown. Need a big man to play a soldier. Not a lousy soldier left on Broadway! All in pictures, and we get the nances! (*Turns to work on desk.*)
PHIL: (*Immediately playing the soldier*) I was in the ROTC in college . . . Reserve Officers' Training Corps. We trained twice a week. . . .
GRADY: Won't help.
PHIL: With real rifles. (*Waits*) Mr. Grady, I weigh a hundred and fifty-five!
GRADY: How many years back? Been eating regular since you left college?
PHIL: (*Very earnestly*) Mr. Grady, I could act this soldier part. I could build it up and act it. Make it up—
GRADY: Think I run a lousy acting school around here?
PHIL: Honest to God I could! I need the job—that's why I could do it! I'm strong. I know my business! YOU'll get an A-1 performance. Because I need this job! My wife's having a baby in a few weeks. We need the money. Give me a chance!
GRADY: What do I care if you can act it! I'm sorry about your baby. Use your head, son. Tank Town stock is different. Here we got investments to be protected. When I sink fifteen thousand in a show I don't take chances on some youngster. We cast to type!
PHIL: I'm an artist! I can—
GRADY: That's your headache. Nobody interested in artists here. Get a big bunch for a nickel on any corner. Two flops in a row on this lousy street nobody loves you—only God, and he don't count. We protect investments: We cast to type. Your face and height we want, not your soul, son. And Jesus Christ himself couldn't play a soldier in this show . . . with all his talent. (*Crosses himself in quick repentance for this remark.*)
PHIL: Anything . . . a bit, a walk-on?
GRADY: Sorry: small cast. (*Looking at papers on his desk.*) You try Russia, son. I hear its hot stuff over there.
PHIL: Stage manager? Assistant?
GRADY: All filled, sonny. (*Stands up; crumples several papers from the desk.*) Better luck next time.
PHIL: Thanks . . .
GRADY: Drop in from time to time. (*Crosses and about to exit.*) You never know when something—(*The Stenographer enters with papers to put on desk.*) What did the hospital say?
STEN: He's much better, Mr. Grady.
GRADY: Resting easy?
STEN: Dr. Martel said Boris is doing even better than he expected.
GRADY: A damn lousy operation!
STEN: Yes . . .
GRADY: (*Belching*) Tell the nigger boy to send up a bromo seltzer.
STEN: Yes, Mr. Grady. (*He exits.*) Boris wanted lady friends.
PHIL: What?
STEN: So they operated . . . poor dog!
PHIL: A dog?
STEN: His Russian Wolf Hound! They do the same to you, but you don't know it! (*Suddenly*) Want advice? In the next office, don't let them see you down in the mouth. They don't like it—makes them shiver.
PHIL: You treat me like a human being. Thanks . . .
STEN: You're human!
PHIL: I used to think so.
STEN: He wants a bromo for his hangover. (*Goes to door*) Want that dollar?
PHIL: It won't help much.
STEN: One dollar buys ten loaves of bread, Mister. Or one dollar buys nine loaves of bread and one copy of The Communist Manifesto. Learn while you eat. Read while you run. . . .
PHIL: Manifesto? What's that? (*Takes dollar*) What is that, what you said. . . . Manifesto?
STEN: Stop off on your way out—I'll give you a copy. From Genesis to Revelation, Comrade Philips! "And I saw a new earth and a new heaven; for the first earth and the first heaven were passed away; and there was no more sea."
PHIL: I don't understand that . . .
STEN: I'm saying the meek shall not inherit the earth!
PHIL: No?
STEN: The MILITANT! Come out in the light, Comrade.

BLACKOUT

Roman Bohnen as **Dr. Barnes,** Luther Adler as **Dr. Benjamin.**

INTERNE EPISODE—(*Dr. Barnes, an elderly distinguished man is speaking on the telephone. He wears a white coat.*)
DR. BARNES: No, I gave you my opinion twice. You outvoted me. You did this to Dr. Benjamin yourself. That is why you can tell him yourself.
(*Hangs up phone, angrily. As he is about to pour himself a drink from a bottle on the table, a knock is heard.*)
BARNES: Who is it?
BENJAMIN; (*Without*) Can I see you a minute please?
BARNES: (*Hiding the bottle*) Come in, Dr. Benjamin, come in.
BENJ: It's important—excuse me—they've got Leeds up there in my place—He's operating on Mrs. Lewis—the historectomy—it's my job. I washed up, prepared . . . they told me at the last minute. I don't mind being replaced, Doctor, but Leeds is a damn fool! He shouldn't be permitted—
BARNES: (*Dryly*) Leeds is the nephew of Senator Leeds.
BENJ: He's incompetent as hell!
BARNES: (*Obviously changing subject, picks up lab jar.*) They're doing splendid work in brain surgery these days. This is a very fine specimen . . .
BENJ: I'm sorry. I thought you might be interested.
BARNES: (*Still examining jar.*) Well, I am, young man, I am! Only remember its a charity case!
BENJ: Of course. They wouldn't allow it for a second, otherwise.
BARNES: Her life is in danger?
BENJ: Of course! You know how serious the case is!
BARNES: Turn your gimlet eyes elsewhere, Doctor. Jigging around like a cricket on a hot grill won't help. Doctors don't run these hospitals. He's the Senator's nephew and there he stays.
BENJ: It's too bad.
BARNES: I'm not calling you down either. (*Plopping down jar suddenly.*) Goddamit, do you think it's my fault?
BENJ: (*About to leave*) I know . . . I'm sorry.
BARNES: Just a minute. Sit down.
BENJ: Sorry, I can't sit.
BARNES: Stand then!
BENJ: (*Sits*) Understand, Dr. Barnes, I don't mind being replaced at the last minute this way, but . . . well, this flagrant bit of class distinction—because she's poor—
BARNES: Be careful of words like that—"class distinction." Don't belong here. Lots of energy, you brilliant young men, but idiots. Discretion! Ever hear that word?
BENJ: Too radical?
BARNES: Precisely. And some day like in Germany, it might cost you your head.
BENJ: Not to mention my job.
BARNES: So they told you?
BENJ: Told me what?
BARNES: They're closing Ward C next month. I don't have to tell you the hospital isn't self supporting. Until last year that board of trustees met deficits. . . . You can guess the rest. At a board meeting Tuesday, our fine feathered friends discovered they couldn't meet the last quarter's deficit—a neat little sum well over $100,000. If the hospital is to continue at all, its damn—
BENJ: Necessary to close another charity ward!
BARNES: So they say . . . (*a wait.*)
BENJ: But that's not all?
BARNES: (*Ashamed*) Have to cut down on staff too . . .
BENJ: That's too bad. Does it touch me?
BARNES: Afraid it does.
BENJ: But after all I'm top man here. I don't mean I'm better than others, but I've worked harder—
BARNES: And shown more promise . . .
BENJ: I always supposed they'd cut from the bottom first.
BARNES: Usually.
BENJ: But in this case?
BARNES: Complications.
BENJ: For instance? (*Barnes hesitant.*)
BARNES: I like you, Benjamin. It's one ripping shame—
BENJ: I'm no sensitive plant—what's the answer?
BARNES: An old disease, malignant, tumescent. We need an anti-toxin for it.
BENJ: I see.
BARNES: What?
BENJ: I met that disease before—at Harvard first.
BARNES: You have seniority here, Benjamin.
BENJ: But I'm a Jew! (*Barnes nods his head in agreement. Benj. stands there a moment and blows his nose.*)
BARNES: (*Blows his nose.*) Microbes!
BENJ: Pressure from above?
BARNES: Don't think Kennedy and I didn't fight for you!
BENJ: Such discrimination, with all those wealthy brother Jews on the board?
BARNES: I've remarked before—doesn't seem to be much difference between wealthy Jews and rich Gentiles. Cut from the same piece!
BENJ: For myself I don't feel sorry. My parents gave up an awful lot to get me this far. They ran a little dry goods shop in the Bronx until their pitiful savings went in the crash last year. Poppa's peddling neckties. . . . Saul Ezra Benjamin—a man who's read Spinoza all his life.
BARNES: Doctors don't run medicine in this country. The men who know their jobs don't run anything here, except the motormen on trolley cars. I've seen medicine change—plenty—anaesthesia, sterilization—but not because of rich men—in *spite* of them! In a rich man's country your true self's buried deep. Microbes! Less . . . Vermin! See this ankle, this delicate sensitive hand? Four hundred years to breed that. Out of a revolutionary background! Spirit of '76! Ancestors froze at Valley Forge! What's it all mean! Slops! The honest workers were sold out then, in '76. The Constitution's for rich men then and now. Slops! (*the phone rings*)
BARNES: (*Angrily*) Dr. Barnes. (*Listens a moment, looks at Benjamin.*) I see. (*Hangs up, turns slowly to the younger Doctor.*) They lost your patient.
BENJ: (*Stands solid with the shock of this news but finally hurls his operation gloves to the floor.*)
BARNES: That's right . . . that's right. Young, hot, go and do it! I'm very ancient, fossil, but life's ahead of you, Dr. Benjamin, and when you fire the first shot, say, "This one's for old Doc Barnes!" Too much dignity—bullets. Don't shoot vermin! Step on them! If I didn't have an invalid daughter—
BARNES: (*Goes back to his seat, blows his nose in silence.*) I have said my piece, Benjamin.
BENJ: Lots of things I wasn't certain of. Many things these radicals say . . . you don't believe theories until they happen to you.
BARNES: You lost a lot today, but you won a great point.
BENJ: Yes, to know I'm right? To really begin believing in something? Not to say, "What a world!", but to say, "Change the world!" I wanted to go to Russia. Last week I was thinking about it—the wonderful opportunity to do good work in their socialized medicine—
BARNES: Beautiful, beautiful!
BENJ: To be able to work—
BARNES: Why don't you go? I might be able—
BENJ: Nothing's nearer what I'd like to do!



Roman Bohnen as **Dr. Barnes,** Luther Adler as **Dr. Benjamin.**

BARNES: Do it!
BENJ: No! Our work's here—America! I'm scared. . . . What future's ahead, I don't know. Get some job to keep alive —maybe drive a cab—and study and work and learn my place—
BARNES: And step down hard!
BENJ: Fight! Maybe get killed, but goddam! We'll go ahead! (*Benjamin stands with clenched fist raised high.*)

BLACKOUT

AGATE: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, and don't let anyone tell you we ain't got some ladies in this sea of upturned faces! Only they're wearin' pants. Well, maybe I don't know a thing; maybe I fell outa the cradle when I was a kid and ain't been right since—you can't tell!
VOICE: Sit down, cockeye!
AGATE: Who's paying you for those remarks, Buddy?—Moscow Gold? Maybe I got a *glass eye,* but it come from working in a factory at the age of eleven. They hooked it out because they didn't have a shield on the works. But I wear it like a medal 'cause it tells the world where I belong—deep down in the working class! We had delegates in the union there—all kinds of secretaries and treasurers . . . walkin' delegates, but not with blisters on their feet! Oh no! On their fat little ass from sitting on cushions and raking in mazuma. (*Secretary and Gunman remonstrate in words and actions here.*) Sit down boys. I'm just sayin' that about unions in general. I know it ain't true here! Why no, our officers is all aces. Why, I seen our own secretary Fatt walk outa his way not to step on a cockroach. No boys, don't think—
FATT: (*Breaking in*) You're out of order!
AGATE: (*To audience*) Am I outa order?
ALL: No, no. Speak. Go on, etc.
AGATE: Yes, our officers is all aces. But I'm a member here —and no experience in Philly either! Today I couldn't wear my union button. The damnest thing happened. When I take the old coat off the wall, I see she's smoking. I'm a sonofagun if the old union button isn't on fire! Yep, the old celluloid was makin' the most god-awful stink: the landlady come up and give me hell! You know what happened?— that old union button just blushed itself to death! Ashamed! Can you beat it?
FATT: Sit down Keller! Nobody's interested!
AGATE: Yes they are!
GUNMAN: Sit down like he tells you!
AGATE: (*Continuing to audience*) And when I finish—
(*His speech is broken by Fatt and Gunman who physically handle him. He breaks away and gets to other side of stage. The two are about to make for him when some of the committee men come forward and get in between the struggling parties. Agate's shirt has been torn.*)
AGATE: (*To audience*) What's the answer, boys? The answer is, if we're reds because we wanna strike, then we take over their salute too! Know how they do it? (*Makes Communist salute*) What is it? An uppercut! The good old uppercut to the chin! Hell, some of us boys ain't even got a shirt to our backs. What's the boss class tryin' to do—make a nudist colony outa us? (*The audience laughs and suddenly Agate comes to the middle of the stage so that the other cabmen back him up in a strong clump.*)
AGATE: Don't laugh! Nothing's funny! This is your life and mine! It's skull and bones every incha the road! Christ, we're dyin' by inches! For what? For the debutant-ees to have their sweet comin' out parties in the Ritz! Poppa's got a daughter she's gotta get her picture in the papers. Christ, they make 'em with our blood. Joe said it. Slow death or fight. It's war!
(*Throughout this whole speech Agate is backed up by the other six workers, so that from their activity it is plain that the whole group of them are saying these things. Several of them may take alternate lines out of this long last speech.*)
You Edna, God love your mouth! Sid and Florrie, the other boys, old Doc Barnes—fight with us for right! It's war! Working class, unite and fight! Tear down the slaughter house of our old lives! Let freedom really ring!
These slick slobs stand here telling us about bogey men. That's a new one for the kids—the reds is bogeymen! But the man who got me food in 1932, he called me Comrade! The one who picked me up where I bled—he called me Comrade too! What are we waiting for . . . Don't wait for Lefty! He might never come. Every minute—
This is broken into by a man who has dashed up the center aisle from the back of the house. He runs up on stage, says:)
MAN: Boys, they just found Lefty!
OTHERS: What? What? What?
SOME: Shhh. . . . Shhhh . . .
MAN: They found Lefty . . .
AGATE: Where?
MAN: Behind the carbarns with a bullet in his head!
AGATE: (*Crying*) Hear it, boys, hear it?
Hell, listen to me! Coast to coast! HELLO AMERICA! HELLO . WE'RE STORMBIRDS OF THE WORKING-CLASS. WORKERS OF THE WORLD. . . . OUR BONES AND BLOOD! And when we die they'll know what we did to make a new world! Christ, cut us up to little pieces. We'll die for what is right!, but fruit trees where our ashes are!
(*To audience*). Well, What's the answer?
ALL: STRIKE!
AGATE: LOUDER!
ALL: STRIKE!
AGATE and Others on Stage: AGAIN!
ALL: STRIKE, STRIKE, STRIKE!!!

The End.

J. Edward Bromberg as Agate.

NOTES FOR PRODUCTION "WAITING FOR LEFTY"

The background of the episodes, a strike meeting, is not an excuse. Each of the committeemen shows in his episode the crucial moment of his life which brought him to this very platform. The dramatic structure on which the play has been built is simple but highly effective. The form used is the old black-face minstrel form of chorus, end men, specialty men and interlocutor.
In Fatt's scenes before the "Spy Exposè," mention should again be made of Lefty's tardiness. Sitting next to Fatt in the center of the circle is a little henchman who sits with his back to the audience. On the other side of Fatt is Lefty's empty chair. This is so indicated by Fatt when he himself asks: "Yeah, where's your chairman?"
Fatt, of course, represents the capitalist system throughout the play. The audience should constantly be kept aware of him, the ugly menace which hangs over the lives of all the people who act out their own dramas. Perhaps he puffs smoke into the spotted playing space; perhaps during the action of a playlet he might insolently walk in and around the unseeing players. It is possible that some highly gratifying results can be achieved by the imaginative use of this character.
The strike committee on the platform during the acting out of the playlets should be used as chorus. Emotional, political, musical, they have in them possibilities of various comments on the scenes. This has been indicated once in the script in the place where Joe's wife is about to leave him. In the climaxes of each scene, slogans might very effectively be used—a voice coming out of the dark. Such a voice might announce at the appropriate moments in the "Young Interne's" scene that the USSR is the only country in the world where Anti-Semitism is a crime against the State.
Do not hesitate to use music wherever possible. It is very valuable in emotionally stirring an audience.

J. Edward Bromberg as **Agate.**

Shows for Sale

By HAROLD EDGAR

Aline McDermott, Katherine Emery and Florence McGee in **The Children's Hour**

HERE are shows for sale. The best of the Broadway stock. Shows with risky themes that end in suicide, shows with fine bright words that speak of a tottering society, shows that record slick echoes of worldly despair and bring down the curtain with pistol shots and death, and finally shows by the bard himself. Take your choice. We shall soon see that they are all pretty much the same!

Look at them one by one. The critics have said that *The Children's Hour* is a compelling treatment of a delicate subject. But what exactly is the subject? A mischievous child, to free herself from boarding-school, tells her grandmother, who supports the school, that the two teachers who run it are guilty of Lesbian relations. The grandmother believes the child although the teachers deny the charge. The school is ruined, the teachers ostracized. One of them loses her fiancé (although she is blameless) the other confesses that she may have homosexual inclinations, though she has not committed any illicit act. Aside from the improbability of the central situation (the trust put by the grandmother—presumably an educated woman— in the child's testimony) we find that the author holds the audience's attention by a series of shock-surprises without ever coming to grips with any single element of her story. At the beginning, we are engaged by the prospect of a study in distorted child psychology but by the second act the child in question has become a tiresome little villain whose malice is given no plausible explanation. This act is devoted more or less to the sheer mélodrama of cross-examination: is it true? what will they do?, etc., etc. The third act begins by being a kind of tragedy about the terrible effects of gossip—although it is quite unnatural that guiltless people accused of this "crime" should take their conviction with such utter passive despair! And then the play shifts its focus and ends with the psychology of the girl who discovers in herself a latent homosexual nature. But if the play is about the harm that gossip can do why is it necessary to show that one of the parties is potentially guilty, and what, furthermore, is the author's point of view on the attitude of society in such cases? If the play is about Lesbianism why is the Lesbian made to declare her feelings only at the last minute, when for two acts she has been a fairly negative figure?

The truth is that this highly praised and very successful play is a mere patchwork in which each piece of the story is made to attract our interest while the whole thing remains quite meaningless. Despite its sincere tone and sombre ending it is actually nothing more than a money-trap to catch the curious.

A more amusing show but one equally empty is *The Petrified Forest*. The author presents us with a character who, one may fairly say, stands for himself. He is a "lost generation" intellectual aware of his own futility. He describes his plight by saying that he is too young to have been in the war and too old to fight in the revolution! Around him the playwright has set such characters as a dumb patriot of the American Legion, an old relic of the pioneering days whose greatest pride is that he was shot at and missed by Billy the Kid, a banker, his sex-and-soul starved wife, and a gallant desperado on the order of Dillinger! The intellectual falls in love with a girl who serves hamburgers (and reads poetry) on the Arizona desert but all he can think of doing for her is to let the desperado kill him so that she may collect his insurance.

During the first act, despite some painfully phony highbrow speeches, one has hopes that the playwright will do something with this menagerie. But in the second act nothing happens and the inverted suicide of the "hero" is downright offensive. For, after all, not only is there no cause for the character's desperate act, but it is a false image of the playwright's sense of life. There *are* human beings today who are unable through ignorance, weakness or fear to look forward to the coming revolution so that they turn to the protection of the church or write mournful poems of defeat, or dream about a happy past, but Robert Sherwood doesn't do even that much. He just cracks a few jokes, makes popular coin of a few half digested ideas, makes senseless killing and dying seem easy and almost romantically desirable, and then goes out and collects the shekels that such a stew of stale ingredients is sure to bring on Broadway. The only thing that might convince us at least of the author's sincerity is his own suicide. But that is too much to ask! Even his disillusion is a fake; and all we have is what one reviewer calls "a peach of a show."

RAIN FROM HEAVEN is much worthier stuff. In it S. N. Behrman reveals for the first time an awareness of the problems that confront thinking people today. More than that, though he embodies himself in the personage of a woman who believes rather hopelessly and helplessly in "mercy," "tolerance" and other ill-defined virtues, he does show his most interesting character, a music-critic who has been exiled from Germany because of a quotient of Jewish blood, at the point of understanding that the dilettante world he has lived in was based on an ignorance of its basic realities, that the day of a generalized "liberalism" is waning and the time to take sides, to fight, and if need be, to kill or die for a crucial cause, has arrived. The dilet-

John Holliday and Jane Cowl in **Rain From Heaven**

tante intellectual decides to return to his field of struggle—he goes back to Germany though he is offered protection in England —to seek out the reality he has been taking for granted all his life. Beside this figure, Behrman has drawn a rather witty caricature of a fascist, which does show fairly clearly that the fascist position is virtually that of the whole capitalist class even when it does not assume that name. . . . Yet because Behrman still studies these questions mostly from books and holds to a standpoint that involves no commitment of his own, the play is dramatically "soft," that is, the action of the play is mainly about trivial matters and the crises of the characters' lives are revealed only through talk. Social drama is thus transformed into a conversation-piece, life-and-death matters become subjects for sophisticated parlor-chatter. And the Theatre Guild audience can ignore the impending struggle and act as if the whole question of the world crisis was merely a peg on which to make a pleasant display of the author's epigrams.

When we come to *Romeo and Juliet* we enter the realm of the theatre in the old-fashioned sense. The settings by Mielziner are sweet (even though they are supposed to be in the style of Giotto!); the costumes are pretty; Miss Cornell looks lovely in maroon and red, and has a thrilling (albeit monotonous) voice; she acts very competently indeed, and her jet black hair, her striking mask remind one of the actresses of the old-school. Then there are Shakespeare's line which are exciting even if one can understand only sixty percent of them. The whole performance is redolent with a kind of Beekman Place refinement; and reminiscent of something that was once wonderful in the past.

But is this Shakepeare? Shakespeare, even at his most delicate, was a pretty violent dramatist: his colors were sharp, his design was large, his action strong and his subjective feeling hectic to the point of excess and at times agonized to the point of despair. But of this spirit—or any equivalent—there is hardly a trace in the production. Because what motivates it are none of the things that made the writing of the play necessary, but simply the desire to exhibit the star, to show how elegantly she and her colleagues can disport themselves in costume, and how cultivated they are in the reading of verses. And so even *Romeo and Juliet* becomes merely a glorified interior decoration, a large sugary canvas that is only a little superior to the lush landscapes and portraiture of a deluxe calender.

THUS despite the differences of talent that compose the various Broadway productions they all remain, culturally speaking, on the same level. In the last analysis, they spring from one main idea; to do business, to make money. This does not mean of course that because money is required for the continued production of plays that art cannot be born! But the

Katharine Cornell and Basil Rathbone

Broadway stage is so organized that nothing is ever done that comes from any fundamental conviction shared in common by a group of like-minded actors, playwrights and other craftsmen. In fact, it has long been forgotten that only such a collective conviction can create anything truly worthwhile in the theatre. And since the Broadway theatre-workers must primarily have in mind simply the importance of selling an "entertainment" commodity (rather than the need to express something that is vitally important to them as people) their audiences can only attend in the same spirit. And no matter how much intelligence, talent, genius even, goes into the making of the Broadway shows when they are put together in such a fashion the result cannot have any enkindling life. The "art" of Broadway is less valuable than that of a toy-shop.

All this becomes clearer when we contrast the above shows with such a performance currently presented at various proletarian occasions by members of the Group Theatre, of Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*. This will be dealt with critically in another place, but the point here is that with perhaps less expertness this group of theatre-people because they believe in something together, because they want to do something to and for their audiences, create such a stir of life, such a contagion of emotion that the audience is aroused to a pitch of joy beyond anything any of us have seen in the theatre for years. Through this simple one-act play an audience is made one in feeling and thought—one with the actors, with one another and with the working class that the play celebrates—and this sense of unity is of the essence of beauty and art at all times.

VOICE OF THE AUDIENCE

Dear New Theatre:

Aside from the economic instability of those who work and support the dance, both as participants and audience, perhaps the greatest reason for the general low regard of the dance as a vital art form is the dancer's "Ivory Tower" attitude in dealing with the vital aspects of the times. The creative dancer of today has revolutionized his technique, broken away from old forms, created new forms, and to what purpose? Merely to repeat the same old themes? At a time when men look to the dancer for comment, the dancer implies by his exclusive preoccupation with minuets in new form, romanticized character studies, rituals, laments, and Greek tragedies *ad nauseum,* that the problems of today are unimportant; or do not exist.

While on the road with the cast of *As Thousands Cheer* I have found a dance that faces life and its eager new audience,—an audience that clearly understands today and impatiently awaits more of these themes that are vital to them.

In Boston I worked with the brave *Workers Dance Group,* striving to meet the demands of an audience by showing the way out through the medium of the dance, dwelling on the themes of these momentous times, when civilization must continue to advance under a new social order, or lapse again into the Dark Ages of medievalism under the banner of Fascism and its program of "simple living."

The Detroit, a dance group (The John Reed Club Dance Group) is performing dances like *Militant Workers March, Lynch.* Out of this desire to express our times has grown a concert group,—the first of any kind in Detroit! It took the vital struggle of the oppressed toilers to provide the soil and finally to support the product,—the first and only Detroit Dance Group.

At Chicago I found a dance group working hard to get under way in the creation of group dances,—training their members technically, discussing subjects for dances, and building their organization into a strong rank-and-file committee system (as research, political, finances, educational, etc.)

When an emergency arose to have dances in two weeks for theatre programs of the Chicago Theatre Groups, they rose to the occasion, called special daily rehearsals, created a dance, costumes, had a modern composer write the music, and drew in a dance teacher to perform a solo that had bearing on today's struggle for economic and political equality. The fact that they had no dances before the emergency shows fine discipline and a sense of responsibility that said not "Can we?" but "We must."

Not content just to dance these ideas themselves, they conceived the idea of a "united front" with a YWCA Dance Group and taught this dance to them. On December 18th, this dance appeared on a Christmas program, two dancers in the Chicago Workers Theatre Group participating before an audience of over 500 at the YWCA. This was a "no applause" night, but in spite of this understanding, on the blackout at the end of this dance, the audience burst out into spontaeous applause, which was subdued only by much "hushing."

This groping over the problems of today by even recreational groups, such as the YWCA, is further conclusive proof that the dance is beginning to face life. True, these YWCA dances of strike, hunger, war, lack the complete understanding that the Workers Dance League Groups have as to causes,—not merely picturing the outward event and omitting the inner significance—but at any rate it shows a definite trend toward the topical.

WILLIAM MATONS

Life Will Be Beautiful

By ROBERT STEBBINS

A CERTAIN lady acquaintance of mine once entertained the idea that a beautiful woman astride a pure-white horse could lead mankind from the field of battle to the walks of love and understanding. As she got on in years and suffered a change of looks, she had to relinquish this notion. But she has clung to still another conviction with a tenacity that both surprised and fortified me. It was useless for me to point out the risable qualities of *The Festival of St. Jorgen* and particular portions of *The Old and the New*. These attempts were sporadic, she would say, and off the beaten path. The arrival of *The Czar Wants to Sleep, Chapaev,* and the impending *Jazz Comedy* of Alexandrov, however, should suffice to eradicate such an idea from a mind more stubborn and quirky than her's. With these films the Russian cinema of wit and humor comes definitely into its own.

The Czar Wants to Sleep is a political satire that expresses in most trenchant terms the ludicrous and even insane aspects of court life. The action centres around a non-existent hero who has only been invented to extricate a young lecher from the consequences of having disturbed the mad Czar's slumbers. How this "non-corporeal" and therefore, non-present hero, Lieutenant Kidzhe is whipped to the tune of Prokofieff's screeching chromatics and then sent on foot, accompanied by two grenadiers to Siberia, provides us with a brilliant satiric basis for the movie. Thru a series of blunders, intrigues, deceptions and moronities, Lieutenant Kidzhe is recalled and elevated to the high command of all Russia's armies. Subsequently, Kidzhe, non-existent though he be, has nevertheless incurred the envy of the court nobles. His demise is therefore conveniently arranged; he is disclosed as an embezzler, stripped of his honors, and given an ordinary private's burial. Prokofieff's music, in all no more than some seventy or eighty bars, makes one regret that he didn't score the picture more fully. When one considers how perfectly this modern master's style, in its nervousness and swift response to kinetic nuance, is suited to motion picture scoring, one can't help but deplore the meagre extent to which his services were enlisted. This was an opportunity for a blending of music and film that after the failures of Auric in *The Blood of the Poet,* Milhaud in *Madame Bovary,* Toch in England, and others, (always excepting Eisler in *Kuhle Wampe*) would have done much to drag composers from the creative ditches and bogs they now lie in.

As a political satire, the humor of *The Czar Wants to Sleep* is of necessity on the mordant side. It was not enough for the audience to laugh at the chicanery of the Mad Paul's courtiers and let it go at that. The director's purpose was also to create indignation and disgust. *Chapaev* achieves its rich humorous effects without benefit of double-entendre. Instead, the harmless and humanly engaging vanities and failings of the great peasant warrior Chapaev are laid before us. Outwardly an epic in the larger manner of, let us say, Walter Scott, the film tells by a series of battles, charges and counter-charges, the story of the peasant Chapaev's military successes against the White Army and his tragic death after a surprise attack. This stirring combination of exploit and guileless laughter constitutes a warm affirmation of the goodness and strength of the Russian peasantry.

From **Chapaev.**

WHAT could be more affecting than the confusion of Chapaev when told that a certain veterinary friend of his cannot be made a doctor without additional training? He asks, "Isn't it unfair that a peasant hasn't a chance to become a doctor in Russia?" Or the incident when Chapaev in a moment of relaxation after the battle, turns to his adjutant and the girl machine-gunner, saying "You are young, my children. After the war life will be beautiful. We won't have to worry, we won't have to work. We won't even have to die in those days to come." Another section that is outstanding for its beautiful drollery, shows us Chapaev and the adoring adjutant in the course of a discussion. The latter wakes up while turning from one side to another on top of the stove where he has been sleeping. He asks Chapaev if he thinks he could lead an army. Chapaev replies "Yes" without any hesitation. "A whole front?"—"Yes." "All the armies of Russia?"—"Yes, with some instruction." Only the last question: "All the armies of the world?" brings a negative reply from Chapaev. "No. . . . I couldn't do that, I don't know languages." One cannot commend too highly the great human beauty of Boris Boboshkin's performance of the title role. That *Chapaev* is greater than the early masterpieces, as Eisenstein himself, Dovzchenko and others have declared, I cannot say—certainly it is in a different category. The former epics *Ten Days, The Fall of St. Petersburg, Storm Over Asia* were pictures made primarily to convince. As such, they resorted to the most brilliant intellectual expository devices, cinematically realized. *Chapaev* answers a different necessity in Russian life. Its function is to celebrate an accomplished fact, the success of a workers' republic, and as such, lacks the peculiar intensity that works, which plead for a new order of things and emerge from the turmoil of revolutionary ferment, often possess.

The Lives of a Bengal Lancer, brainchild of six authors and directed by Henry Hathway, serves to remind us that Hollywood never forgets a box-office success; in this case *Beau-Geste.* This "four-star epic" (at this rate what a star-cluttered firmament is *Chapaev*) glorifies the British military service in India. Again and again one hears in the dubious approximations to the Oxford English of Gary Cooper, Franchot Tone and Richard Cromwell, "Why man, do you realize that for the last one hundred years a mere handful of loyal soldiers has kept three hundred million natives under England's rule?" No one for a moment stops to think what England's rule has meant to her colonies. The lancers when they are not prancing about on beautiful steeds are working their way out of ambush, or manfully refusing to divulge the whereabouts of the ammunition-train, despite torture so fiendish as only a devil native could devise. Somehow, this portrait of colonial life seems lacking in certain details. It may be that I have too distinct a remembrance of the Indian riot scenes shown in the newsreels last summer. Then there was nothing very alluring or romantic about the Britishers beating the native demonstrators with long batons and billies.

(*Continued on Page* 29)

From **Chapaev.**

Dramatizing Our Times

By FRIEDERICK WOLF

IN the selection of its thematic material Soviet drama took a decisive step last year. From the portrayal of the civil war, of the reconstruction period; from the struggles of the masses in villages, in industries, it turned to the description of men under the Soviets in a new period, to the portrayal of differentiated personalities. *The Beautiful Life, The Personal Life, Life Calls,* and other new plays no longer treat with the fight against the Kulaks, against the wreckers in the factories, but focus attention on the fight waged for the creation of a personal life on the basis of Soviet realities. These realities are the problems of the inventor, the problems of intellectuals, and of the new youth. These subjects, in relation to the Second Five Year Plan which emphasizes the change in the "consciousness of man" and changed personalities, are truly adequate ones for the dramatist.

To the Western dramatist subject matter must primarily be an interpretation of the historical situation of the Western World. Here the class relationship must naturally be different. The Reichstag fire on February 28, 1933, Hitler's slaughter of Roehm and other Nazi leaders on June 30, 1934, the Vienna Hitler Putsch on July 25, 1934, the murder of Dolfuss, the heroic uprising of the Austrian Proletariat on February 12, 1934, are historical red letter days patterned after the burning of Rome under Nero, St. Bartholomew's Night, and the Paris Commune. All the outstanding events of our historical past are present, condensed in the small space of time of less than two years. They cry for the dramatist. But the question arises whether the dramatist should translate these aspects of historical developments before the excitement dies down, before the conclusions reveal themselves. Can he venture to begin the performance while the burning beams are still glowing, and smoke still clouds the eye ? To formulate the question more concretely, does the political actuality offer the dramatist an historical present?

We know the bourgeois objections to our earlier "Zeit-drama": the dramatist cannot interpret the present so long as political disturbances dim his sight. One should wait in order to gain perspective. We need not discuss here this claim towards objectivity and neutrality. But the issue of historical actuality is a different question. What does historical naturalism actually mean to the dramatist; where does it start, and where does it end?

I came upon this question while working on my play of the February uprising of the Austrian Proletariat in Vienna. Some of the original protagonists of my play, members of the Austrian Schutzbund, are with us at present in Moscow. There is a fundamental lesson in the fullness of events and of individual experiences of these turbulent three or four days. Here is a task which is difficult to condense or abandon. It requires skill, for the operation must be performed on living bodies. A drama must present within two hours an exuberantly eventful span of time as well as a point of view and a constructed plot. Therefore, it must have as its basis laws that differ from those of the novel—which may be read over a period of many days, or the film—with its natural overlappings.

THE preliminary problems of the dramatist are primarily pragmatic: the presentation of facts; the elimination of the non-essential, the condensation of the material. Only then can the organizing of the material really begin. One who has taken part either in an imperialist or in a civil war knows how varied are the reactions of the participants. Take for example the battle of Marne in 1914 which anticipated the results of the World War. The communications of the General Staffs of the respective armies have been made public, as well as the "Memoirs" of Generals. The gifted dramatist Cramers in his play *Die Marneschlacht* looks for the key to the whole situation in the published material. One is asked to wonder who actually gave the order of retreat to the "victorious German Army" of the Marne. Did the order come from headquarters? Was it issued by Colonel Hentch or was it given by the commander of the First Army of von Gluck? Here the dramatist raises the question of personal guilt which is typical of a bourgeois dramatist. We, on the other hand are only secondarily interested in names and persons, but very much interested in the *facts* surrounding this battle and the individual participation of the generals amidst "this united people in arms."

We have still a better example to illustrate where historical naturalism ends and where truth begins. Shakespeare's presentation of the murder of Julius Caesar, the end of "Roman Democracy," and his analysis of this red letter day. On the basis of the writings of the Roman Historian, Livy, we find the Roman drama of Shakespeare full of historical inaccuracies. The scene of Caesar's murder in the capitol is brilliant. But according to history Brutus was not even there, for he awaited the news of the murder at his home, However, in confronting Caesar with Brutus, Shakespeare created a situation which epitomizes the historical reality in accordance with the laws of the drama.

Goethe's pragmatism, as illustrated in his *Gotz von Berlichingen,* is quite different. Goethe makes a hero of freedom out of a "miserable wretch," as he was once called by Marx in a discussion with La Salle. Gotz accomplishes the revolution from above, but he is not brought forward to expose the troublesome times, nor is he made to lead the Peasant War of Germany. The two or three scenes, peopled with plundering peasants and gypsies, are muted and kept within the ideology of Luther. The revolting peasants are described as bandits and robbers. Goethe at an important point falsifies history in *Gotz;* while Shakespeare in Julius Caesar condenses and explains history to the audience.

EVEN the titles of the historical dramas of the bourgeois epoch suffer when compared with the titles of revolutionary dramas. *Gotz von Berlichingen, Franz von Sickingen, Florien Geyer* are titles of plays which deal prominently with individualists, knights, and "heroes." In *Poor Conrad, Kaiser's Coolies, Machine Wreckers, Roar China, The First Cavalry* we find the masses of peasants, sailors, of coolies—as the heroes of the revolution. Here the emphasis of the dramatist is transferred from the biographical to the political, to the history of the masses.

The dramatist can and must shape the historical raw material. He must leave out, bring together, condense. He must analyze personalities. This is his poetic freedom allowed by the laws of the stage. But through the medium of poetic license historical situations must never be falsified, emphasis must never be misplaced. Historical connections and the perspectives must at all times be correctly presented. The dramatist's *estimation of characters* must never be prejudiced even though their behavior towards the masses is at no time friendly. This is the failure of the Fascist dramas: Cramers' *Die Marneschlacht* and Jobst's *Schlageter.*

The historical *conclusion* belongs with any interpretation of the present as history. We know that history in its evolutionary process can have no conclusion. But the stage drama must end. It ends where there is no ending. An historical drama, then, must prolong the end, must open perspective. These perspectives are provided, as in Julius Caesar, as in the German Peasant's War, by history itself. In these cases we are able to glimpse at the final conclusion. It is more difficult to conceive the perspectives in the events of February 12 or June 30th, 1934. Yet this is possible and absolutely necessary. At no time must the dramatist surrender to this difficulty, especially now when the historical present is pregnant with the upheavals of tomorrow.

Translated by NICHOLAS WIRTH

The Dance League Recital

By EDNA OCKO

THE recital of revolutionary dance groups given by the Workers Dance League in Town Hall on December 23rd provokes discussion of two important considerations: first, what kind of dances should be presented on a concert platform, and second, to what extent can the dancers' essential stage equipment be ignored in a presentation of a concert program. Concerning the latter point, this much was certain: the lighting was poor, the stage management inadequate, with no cyclorama to give the dances an illusion at least of theatre, and the piano accompaniment was unadjusted to dance conditions. While part of these difficulties can be attributed directly to the lack of cooperation by the Town Hall management, some of the numbers might have appeared less amateurish if their technical needs had been considered by the organizations for whose benefit the affair was given.

This absence of stage equipment, while a serious problem, was overshadowed by a greater one. It seems to this disgruntled reviewer that the Workers Dance League had best eliminate group recitals until it has either a greater number of professional groups participating, or until the existing groups present more complete and better programs. As it now stands, only two groups, the New Dance Group, and the Theatre Union Dance Group, are creating dances that rightfully belong on the *concert* stage. The Red Dancers and the Nature Friends, while they are to be commended for their sincere efforts, are not only unsuited technically for recital work, but as a matter of fact are creating, not concert dances, but a commendable variety of agit-prop dance. This type of dance definitely has a place in the League's program; its dramatic construction makes it appealing to the untrained eyes of thousands of people who have never seen dancing before, and its simple presentation of political ideas in dance form makes it comprehensible. For this reason, workers' organizations, before whom all of the Dance League groups perform weekly, prefer the Red Dancers and Nature Friends Dance Group to all others. *Black and White, Kinder, Kirche, Kuche, Sell-Out,* have tremendous appeal, and the sincerity and genuineness of the performers enhance whatever work they do. On the concert platform however, where the attendance is much more diverse,—a large part of the audience is composed of intellectual and bourgeois elements,—these dances have neither subtlety of theme, nor richness of form to commend them, and the more developed dance audience finds these dances both crude and wearisome.

For example, both the New Dance Group and the Nature Friends Dance Group choose to depict in their dances, some aspect of German fascism. The New Dance Group uses a poem dealing with the Reichstag trial and creates, with that accompaniment, an imaginative and exciting piece *Van der Lubbe's Head* which projects the horror and viciousness of the Hitler regime, not through literal movement, but through distortion. The Nature Friends, on the other hand, in *Kinder, Kirche, Kuche,* dealing with the lot of women in Nazi Germany, have three groups of dancers on the stage, one scrubbing floors, another praying, a third rocking babies to sleep, and after simple rearrangements of pattern, they encircle a young Pioneer who bravely encourages them to fight for a new future. Although the latter dance is correct politically, and presents a revolutionary idea, as a dance it is elementary. This simplicity describes *Red Workers Marching.* Compared to the spirited and cleverly designed *Pioneer Marches* by the Theatre Union Dance Group, it seems lumbering and stodgy.

Put any negro and white performer on the stage, show them struggling under similar conditions, show their initial enmity and their final heroic handclasp and fist salute, and you have ideal conditions for applause. *Black and White,* by the Red Dancers, recreates a slogan in pantomimic movement, but surely no one can claim for it an imaginative or original approach to the negro question, despite the fact that it evokes lusty applause.

Cause I'm a Nigger, by the Nature Friends, is a much more interesting attempt, though here too, it is entirely too indebted to the song, the words, and the music, to give it genuine dance substance. *Sell-Out* by the Red Dancers, animates the figure of the Labor faker. Here, in order to make the dance suitable for concert performance, the director omitted the words on which the dance depended for clarity. The result was a dance incomprehensible to most of the audience.

WHILE this review seems overharsh in its condemnation of these dances, their appearance on a recital program demands their evaluation as concert dances. Their failure to measure up to standard is not the fault either of the groups or their director. Until the Workers Dance League reclassifies its dance repertoire so that these dances are directed exclusively to audiences where their simplicity is a virtue, and not a confession of choreographic poverty, they will always suffer comparison with the professional groups on the same program.

The Anti-War Cycle by the Theatre Union Dance Group remains an effective piece of work. Its last section *Defiance* can be improved if a blurred middle section were redefined. The new dance by this group, *Forces in Opposition,* chooses a roundabout method of making its revolutionary content apparent. The program note cites a poem by Essenin about the savage horse on the Russian steppes, who attempts to race with a strange opponent, the locomotive, and loses. The poem is then explained as the old dissolute order giving way to the new organized society. Finally the dance has to be interpreted through the explanation of the poem. While we are pleased that the Theatre Union Group is so eager to make itself understood, we feel that their choreographer is creative enough to discover a more direct means of combining the form with the content.

Charity and *We Remember,* a new dance, by the New Dance Group, have potentialities as yet unrealized by the members themselves. *Charity,* practically the only satiric group dance in the League, is a little too pantomimic and static for dance, and *We Remember* has not decided exactly what it means to be—a suite of three dances, or a dance in unequally divided sections. The first parts is an "In Memoriam", the second reverts to the scene where the worker was killed, and the third concludes with the workers resolving to continue the struggles for which their comrade fought and died. Until this dance is seen under more auspicious circumstances, very little can be said to help the New Dance Group. They are fully aware, we are sure, of the inadequacy of the presentation.

Were all these groups more intelligently used in performances, so that amateur groups are not taxed beyond their capabilities, and professional groups aim at higher artistic standards, the revolutionary dance movement would not be fostering recitals as inept as this one.

THE DANCE FRONT

NEW HEADQUARTERS for the John Reed Dance Group of Boston have just been acquired, and the group is now holding regular classes. In order to activize various members, the group has challenged the other groups in the Workers Dance League to see which group can recruit more Negro members during the months of February and March. At present the members are working on a satire of the Karlsruhe trial as well as a dance based on one of Lenin's slogans.

A UNITED FRONT has been established by the New Dance Group of Chicago with the west-side Y.W.C.A. as well as other such organizations. On December 7, 8, and 9, the group had their coming-out party in conjunction with the Chicago Workers Theatre. They performed *Lynch* and also presented a solo by Bill Matons called *Demagog*. Both dances were enthusiastically received, and it is interesting to note that the group had the aid of the Y.W.C.A., the use of their gym, pianist, and the participation of some of their girls. The performing members are now working on a sequel to *Lynch* to clarify certain of its ideas.

THE REVOLUTIONARY DANCE is growing in New Jersey to such a large extent that the Contemporary Dancers were forced to move out of their headquarters with the Jack London Club in Newark, and open a studio of their own. In the following excerpt from a letter written to the Workers Dance League, the gradual growth of the organization is very interestingly related. "Two years ago, a few members of the Jack London Club in Newark, decided to organize a dance group. The club at that time had for its headquarters an old loft, and the wooden floor was badly in need of repairs. The three dancers who first came out for classes were kept busy after class removing each other's splinters. The group eventually grew to a membership of twenty and achieved a popularity under the name of the Rebel Dancers of Newark. It was soon performing at various affairs and managed, despite difficulties, to reach audiences of thousands of class-conscious workers. With all of these performances, rehearsals, and callouses, the dancers improved considerably. They soon had several polished dances in their repertoire. One of the high spots in the group's history was the winning of honors in a competition with professional groups in New York. They continued to expand and broke away from the Jack London Club in order to have more time for rehearsal and also to find a better studio. Today, the name of the group is the Contemporary Dancers with active branches at the I.W.O. in Newark, and also in Elizabeth. Classes are now being held at the new headquarters of the Jack London Club. An ambitious program is successfully under way which is bringing the foremost solo dancers and groups to perform in Newark, and increasing the forces of the Contemporary Dancers rapidly."

THE NEW WORLD DANCE GROUP of Philadelphia is growing so rapidly that new classes will have to be formed in order to accomodate the people who are anxious to join. An extensive program is being planned for the group. On January 13th, they conducted a lecture demonstration by Merle Hirsh and her dance group. This was attended by over one hundred people. The next event is to be a symposium on "What is the Modern Dance?" Invitations have been sent to Mary Binney Montgomery and her group, leading Philadelphia dancers, and Nadia Chilkovsky

IN LINE WITH their policy of encouraging all forms of the dance, the Workers Dance League is establishing classes for training in the ballet in New York. Classes will be held for children and adults. Classes have also been formed in social dancing, for which, incidentally, over two hundred applicants have already enrolled. For further information apply at the Workers Dance League, 114 W. 14th Street, New York City.

A SECOND COURSE in the "Fundamentals of the Class Struggle" has been announced by the Workers Dance League. It will be a two hour class, with the first hour devoted to economic theory, and the second hour to reading and discussion of essays and articles on revolutionary culture, including works of Lunacharsky, Lenin, and others. The course will begin on January 31st, and will be in twelve sessions, meeting every Thursday night, from 6:30 to 8:30. Register at the Dance League Headquarters.

A GROUP OF YOUNG DANCERS is interested in organizing a club for the following purposes:

1. To provide a center for young dancers of today who at present have no opportunity to be known by the outside world, by offering them the opportunity to perform in recitals, lecture on the dance, demonstrate their work, discuss their problems, exchange ideas on the dance, and to contact artists in other fields whose cooperation is essential for dancers' work (musicians, artists, costumers, etc.) 2. To educate the existing audience in the problems of the dance: technical creative, and theoretical. 3. To increase the audience for the dance by offering, within the lowest price range possible, lectures, demonstrations, recitals, open forums, etc., on the dance. 4. To cooperate with other dance organizations who seek to better the social and economic status of the young dancers.

Members of the Workers Dance League feel that the formation of such a dancers' club may prove of tremendous aid in the solution of the problems of professional dancers. Address inquiries about this club to Dance Editor of NEW THEATRE.

THE EASTERN CONFERENCE of the Workers Dance League, to be held Feb. 16th-17th, promises to be a landmark in the history of the developing revolutionary dance movement.

The major part of the Conference will be devoted to a discussion of the creative problems and artistic development of our various groups. A great deal of discussion still revolves around: 1. the question of the comprehensibility and revolutionary integrity of our dances, and 2. the problems of sectarianism, and the danger of isolating our dance groups from the occasionally helpful cooperation of "bourgeois" dancers.

In order that we may accomplish our two-fold aim of artistic and ideological development, the executive committee of the Workers Dance League is submitting the following proposals as a guide to pre-conference discussion:—

1. That we make every effort to win our trained dancers as performers and leaders for our groups.
2. That we organize classes in Fundamentals of the Class Struggle (such as held in N. Y.) in each city in which we have dance groups.
3. That we establish a review board in New York City and in other cities where there are more than one or two groups, as a guiding committee to help raise the artistic level of production and to select compositions for performance.
4. That the review board categorize our dances in relation to the place of performance. (a) Concert dances for large stages; (b) Concert dances for small stages; (c) Agit-prop dances.
5. To change the name Workers Dance League to "Dance League" in order to avoid further misunderstanding in the term "Workers" (although this includes intellectual and cultural workers, the term has often been misunderstood as referring only to laborers and industrial workers.)
6. The Dance League shall become a broad dance organization comprising groups of all "dance categories including stage, folk, ballet, etc. dance forms. We shall contact at this time such organizations as the language folk dance groups, the dance groups organized by the W.I.R. and numerous Workers

ON FEBRUARY 17th, the Workers Dance League is planning a recital that for interest and high standard has not yet been topped. For the benefit of the *Daily Worker*, as part of International Theatre Week, the League will present a combination program of outstanding revolutionary group and solo dances. These dances will be selected by a Review Board of six who will compile the program from dances selected, not only from the solo and group recitals, but also from the presentation of dances by soloists who have never before appeared on League programs. As befits a performance of this scope, and in order to sell huge blocs of cheap seats, the Centre Theatre in Rockefeller Centre has been contracted.

SHIFTING SCENES

IN San Francisco, the bitter echoes of the great General Strike still resound. Negroes from Hawthorne House in Los Angeles, which produced *Stevedore* semi-professionally last summer, are planning to bring the Peters-Sklar drama to San Francisco, in co-operation with the Workers Theatre there. But the bankers, the manufacturers, ship-line owners, and the others who broke the strike—are afraid of militant theatre. The big money-men of the Bay City don't want *Stevedore* to be shown. They are doing everything in their Fascist power to keep it off the stage.

"*Stevedore* has become a political issue here," writes a Los Angeles theatre worker, "and that's not surprising, when you consider the race problem in the bay area. Once this play is shown to these dock workers, it may effect a union of negro and white that will help prepare for the next strike—a victorious one this time."

USING THE SHADOWGRAPH FOR PRODUCTIONS

It pays to experiment. So the Workers Laboratory Theatre of Los Angeles has discovered. During the past three months, they produced three plays—*Election; America, America;* and *Scottsboro.* Of these three, *Scottsboro,* according to a West Coast correspondent, was the most successful—"It achieved one of the greatest sensations an agit-prop play ever made out here."

An excellent production was largely responsible for the success of *Scottsboro.* For the first time, the group experimented with lights. Although only six persons were used on the entire production, the impression of a mass of workers on the stage was achieved by a judicious use of lighting.

Further effects were secured with a shadowgraph. During sections of the chant, the figure of a lynched negro was projected on the screen.

After the performances of Scottsboro at the Mason Opera House, the troupe marched out into the street and took up the chant there. A handful of sympathizers soon grew into a crowd of several hundreds.

Incidentally Workers Theatre activity on the West Coast will receive the stimulus of a laboratory school, being organized in Los Angeles under the directing influence of the LOWT. The school will train students in the social basis and fundamental aspects of the theatre.

Courses will be offered in four departments of theatrical expression: Drama, Dance, Puppets and Marionettes, and Cinema. Included in the drama courses will be classes in direction, playwriting, voice culture, histrionics, make-up, scenic-designing, and costume designing.

HUEY LONG, FANNIE PERKINS & CO.

Huey Long is very funny. So is Fannie Perkins. Ditto Bill Green. Add to this trio, Upton Sinclair and General Johnson, and mix well with music, dancing, and dialogue, and you have *Opus* 1934—*A Flat.*

The Theatre of Action, Detroit Group, is responsible for this short satirical political revue, which is built up around the numerous headliners of the day.

"Each character in the revue," writes a member of the Theatre of Action, "has a solo song or two, and during the production we utilized the John Reed Dance Group for chorus dancing in the Sinclair, Long, and Perkins episodes. In the main we used popular melodies which we parodied with our words."

The revue had its premiere at the John Reed Club's New Year's Eve Ball and received a tremendous ovation.

During the past month, The Theatre of Action also gave performances of the strike scene of *Peace on Earth* and *Daughter* at union halls. In conjunction with the election campaign of Maurice Sugar for judge in Detroit, they are working on *James Victory,* a dramatization of a case which Sugar defended for the ILD. The play is designed to appeal to the 150,000 Negroes in the city.

James Victory will have its first performance on March 10. If the play is successful, the Theatre of Action will hold a New Theatre Night late in March, when *Opus* 1934 will be performed again.

COAST TO COAST FLASHES

God's In His Heaven is becoming a popular piece in the Repertory of Workers Theatres . . . The Chicago Workers Theatre is the latest group to plan a production of the Stevenson play . . . The same group did *Troops are Marching* for the Lenin Memorial and the *Daily Worker* anniversary . . . They also report seven bookings in two months of *Capitalist Follies* . . . Another Chicago organization, the Theatre Collective, sends word that it has organized Art and Music Groups . . . and a girls' Quartet which plays for various workers organization affairs . . . Students of the Dramatic Department at Syracuse University recently produced *Fear,* a play by the Soviet playwright A. Afinogenev . . . Clifford Odets, whose short play *Waiting For Lefty,* is published in this issue, is the author of *Awake and Sing* which will be produced by the Group Theatre in New York City, after the close of *Gold Eagle Guy. Awake and Sing* is about a Jewish family in the Bronx and dramatizes their experiences during the present crisis . . . The Workers Theatre of Pittsburgh has begun intensive work among the small Pennsylvania mining towns . . . They report success with their first efforts . . . A puppet play, *Dr. Roosevelt Will Cure Your Ills,* went over big with miners at Finleyville, Pennsylvania . . . and they are going to play a return engagement there soon . . . The Unity Players of New Haven, Connecticut, have recently produced *America, America; Dog Days;* and *Hollywood Goes Red* . . . working now on *Man and the Masses* . . . Like the Pittsburgh Group they do not confine their activities to their own city . . . they perform in Bridgeport, New Britain, and other Connecticut cities.

NEW PRODUCTION METHOD FOR DIMITROFF

Christmas Day found the Elinden Group and the Workers Dramatic Club of Gary, Indiana, scheduled to perform *Dimitroff* before an organization of Bulgarian workers in Chicago. When they arrived at the hall, they found no curtain, no stage; the only place on which a performance might be given was a makeshift speaker's platform, which extended out into the hall.

What to do? Call it off, some suggested. Then, some resourcefully inquisitive member of the Dram group, while exploring the hall, discovered that all the lights were centrally controlled.

"Hell!" he exclaimed. "We don't need curtains. We'll do the show with lights. Blackouts!" And they did. Successful?

"It certainly was," says a member of the group. "You know, we had given *Dimitroff* on December 23 at Gary. Persons who saw that performance and the one we did at Chicago with light effects, told us that the Chicago show was better . . . *Dimitroff* is going to be performed again in February, in Indianapolis. We'll use the light effects."

ORGANIZING WORKERS THEATRES IN SOUTHWEST

The Workers Theatres movement is gaining impetus in the Southwest. From Albuquerque, New Mexico, comes news of a Theatre being organized there, the first in the state. Production will begin shortly on *Charity* and *America, America.*

Similarly, in Houston, Texas, a group has started work. "Ours is a particularly interesting group," writes its organizer, "embodying Mexicans, Negroes, and Whites. We feel that some worthwhile blending of the three cultures can be effected."

THE THEATRE COLLECTIVE EXPANDS

The Theatre Collective of New York City has leased an entire four-story building at 2 Washington Square, North, for its new headquarters. The building has ample space for training studios, offices, library, living quarters, and a community kitchen. Work on this season's production schedule has already begun.

The general perspective and program of the Collective, in part, is as follows: 1. A permanent company of artists, actors, directors, playwrights and technicians. 2. Training from the most elementary beginnings as artists, as revolutionists. 3. The development of a repertory of old and new, short and full-length revolutionary plays. 4. Complete divorce from commercial competition in the Broadway theatre field. 5. The development of a critical and participating audience. 6. The building of an organizational framework on collective lines.

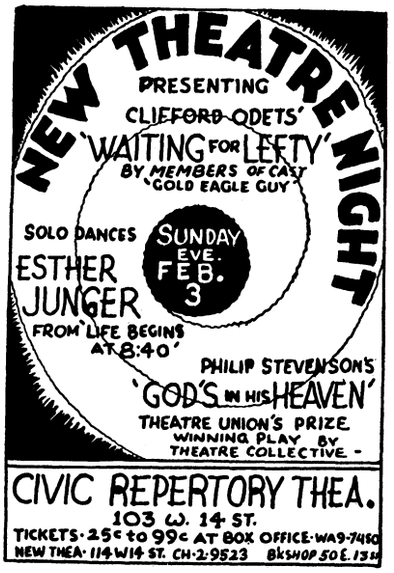
The faculty of the Collective which is headed by Mary Virginia Farmer, includes Lee Strassberg, Clifford Odets, Philip Barber, Manuel Kesman, Morris Carnovsky, Cheryl Crawford, Lewis Leverett, Grover Burgess, Walter Hart, and Elise Reimer-Kelly.

THE I.W.O. MOVES FORWARD IN THEATRE WORK

The fastest growing fraternal organization of the workingclass, the International Workers Order, has affiliated with the L.O.W.T. officially in January. The affiliation was arranged with the English and Youth Sections of the Order, and brings into the field of potential and actual L.O.W.T. activity the 60,000 members of that organization. An article on the dramatic activity and the contribution of the I.W.O. to workers' theatre will appear soon in NEW THEATRE.

The news of the affiliation to the L.O.W.T. brings upon its heels an announcement of importance. The Youth and English branches of New York will conduct a Dramatic Festival on March 24, where it is expected ten to fifteen groups will compete. This is the third annual Festival of the I.W.O. Youth Section. The desire to compete in the Dram Festival has already inspired many branches into action. The branches which have been conducting consistent dramatic activity are taking advantage of their experience and preparing to show the festival great advances in their technical, artistic, and political development. One objective of the Dramatic Festival will be the establishment of new permanent groups, and of heightening the artistic work and scope of the experienced groups.

The Youth Section of Chicago is also planning a Dramatic Festival for the spring. Dramatics has been one of the foremost cultural activities of the branches there.



Dance Reviews

Humphrey-Weidman

On Sunday, January 6, at the Guild Theatre, another landmark in the modern American dance quietly crumbled into trivial dust. Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, who were considered, even until last year, competent and encouraging exponents of the modern dance, shared a program as revealing as it was undistinguished. This then is what the contemporary concert dance, pursued to its inevitable conclusion along abstract lines, becomes: an entire program composed of *Credo, Affirmations, Ecstatic Themes, Alcina Suite, Memorial to the Trivial, Rudespoema, Duo-Orama,* and a point of view so effete that the slightest pressure of analysis could shatter the structure to an unlamented oblivion.

If *Credo* states the dance belief of Doris Humphrey, then one sympathizes with the innocuity and meagreness of her faith, that she has naught else to cling to save a precious technique (also on the wane), and an emasculated, and detached allegiance to formal design. If Charles Weidman is concerned solely with affirming his existence as a moving and positive body traversing space, then *Affirmations* is a good dance. If the only other solo Mr. Weidman chooses to present on a program is *Memorial to the Trivial,* one is at least forced to admire his acumen in the choice of swan song. That *Circular Descent* and *Pointed Ascent* (*Ecstatic Themes*) were lovely solos by Miss Humphrey, possessed of a fragile and tender dance quality, set even a sadder light on the proceedings when one realized how far she has strayed from even that limited communication with her audience. That Charles Weidman possesses a commendable dance projection and intensity, makes it a questionable virtue when expended on such casual subject matter.

The duets, always based on the man-woman relationship, were Handel's *Alcina Suite,* a recreation of the court dance, *Rudepoema,* a love-play between bucolic man and woman, and the *tour de force* of the evening, *Duo-Drama,* in three parts: *Unison and Divergence, Phantasm,* and *Integration.* The limitations of dances based on abstraction became all too patent. The titles for the episodes, in themselves abstract, demanded an obvious literalness interpretation, so that in *Unison,* the couple were united; they were separated in *Divergence,* were in disparate traumatic states in *Phantasm,* and *in Integration* each alternated in their appearance on the stage, first one, then the other, until "integration" occurred.

This is not what the modern dance should be; it was not for this that the ballet was discarded, nor for this that we struggle for acceptance of the dance on an equal footing with the other arts. Our younger generation of dancers, especially those who have undoubtedly received fine technical nourishment from these very dancers, must grow roots far healthier than their predecessors', and produce dances of far greater significance, not only for themselves, but for their ever-increasing potential audience.

SKRIP

Lil Liandre

One is tempted to speak to Miss Liandre like a Dutch uncle. She has youth and a fine talent, both of which are being wasted. Miss Liandre's sort of dance existence was the very typical way of life for young dancers before the greater number of them aligned themselves with the workers' dance movement. She is enabled to give one recital a year. In order to do so she must seek out the smallest possible theatre (in this instance the Little Theatre which seats at best a few hundred people). Her audience, which does not serve to fill even so small a house, is made up of a handful of dance critics, a double handful of Graham students, a sprinkling of friends, a dozen rival dancers, and a thin spread of ardent dance followers who live only that they may attend dance recitals.

Miss Liandre really deserves a better audience than this. She is more than commonly competent. She comes to the Little Theatre via Martha Graham via the classical ballet. Her years of training in the best that both the old school and the new school have to offer have given her a balance, control of her body, and rich understanding of that which has integrity in movement, that we can see equaled in few young dancers.

Unfortunately Miss Liandre still dances in an ideological dance period that has nestled cozily for some time now among the cobwebs in the warehouse of forgotten approaches. In a young dancer this is inexcusable. While the world seeths outside of her theatre, Miss Liandre still dances her *Prelude and Poem, Cants Magic, Moods, Arabesque, Passacaglia,* etc. The only sign she gave of any sort of social consciousness was her dance *American Sketches* (a) Two of the West, (b) Two of the South, (c) Two of the East. In this dance she has reached to about the same perceptive level as Thomas Benton does in his painting: a realization of the geographical differences of our country; and a utilization of the more obvious symbols to portray the sectional spirit—O great Pioneers—Way Down Upon the Swanee River, etc.

The most exciting of her dances was one she offered for the first time at this recital—*Call.* In this dance her ballet training intrudes itself least. It is sharp and clear in its patterns. The music was composed by Miss Liandre's pianist, Rose Lieder, who with this offering comes to the fore for the first time as a composer of music for the dance. Miss Liandre's dancing in this piece is so intelligently skillful that if only one could tell what she was calling to or about it would be one of the best of the seasons solo offerings.

I wonder what Miss Liandre must think when she sees the audiences that come to watch her dancing sisters, who now dance for workers' audiences. Why as an artist does she prefer her petty few to the culture-hungry tens of thousands that she might have?

DAL NEGRO

Tamiris

Tamiris, in her recital at the Civic Repertory Theatre on January 13, presented a program of group and solo dances in which more than half the numbers dealt with social problems. The revolutionary dance movement should be pleased to find in its ranks a group, as professional, and well-trained, with a repertoire as convincing, as Tamiris' concert group. Although *Camaraderie* missed surefire, *The Individual and the Mass,* and *Conflicts,* from the suite *Cycle of Unrest,* and *Work and Play* from the suite *Towards the Light,* are praiseworthy additions to the existing number of revolutionary group dances.

Tamiris has given her group not only a firm workmanlike technical basis, but also meaty and provocative subject matter: the problem of the individual who, at first superior to the mass, finds herself losing ground with the rising tide of mass strength; the conflict between bourgeois and proletarian women, where the silly evening-gowned group is thrown into confusion by the strength and vitality of increasing numbers of proletarian women; and finally the bright, animated picture of work and play among Soviet workers. If she had presented nothing else that evening, these dances warrant acceptance of Tamiris as one of the most encouraging of newer adherents to the revolutionary dance.

This however, does not permit us to ignore certain deficiencies in the performance that evening which we should like to have considered. Because she hasn't yet shed completely certain bourgeois inhibitions, Tamiris' revolutionary solo dances do not project with a sufficient amount of conviction. *Protest* and *Affirmation* from the *Cycle of Unrest,* and *Dance of War* from *Toward the Light,* seem to waver between specific revolutionary dynamics, and generalized abstractions. The protest should have been more vital, the affirmation more buoyant and convincing, and the war more cruel and vicious. Some of the sincerity and conviction that characterized the performance of *Dirge,* an earlier dance, could easily penetrate to advantage the performance of these other numbers. As these dances stand now, something seems lacking: either emotional conviction, or a clear ideological approach. Also, *20th Century Bacchante,* while an amusing and semi-sensational number, should scarcely be the tone on which an evening containing so many revolutionary presentations, should end. And finally, Tamiris is possessed of a series of facial expressions which, because they seem set and artificial, should be conscientiously deleted from performances for all time.

SKRIP

Life Will Be Beautiful

(*Continued from Page 23*)

THE same unvarying attraction of box-office profits that ensures our succession of *Beau Gestes,* our sweetheart teams (Janet Gaynor-Charles Farrell, Myrna Loy-William Powell—you get the idea) conspired to ruin what might have been a good film—*Don Quixote.* You keep saying to yourself "If only the producers had had the good taste to overlook the fact that Chaliapin was known to the public as a singer. Not only can't the man sing any more, but even if his voice *were* that remarkable organ of thirty years ago, you're making a moving picture, not an opera" Besides, Chaliapin's gifts had always verged chiefly towards the histrionic. But it was not to be. Profits first. Aesthetic considerations afterward. The moving picture public knows Chaliapin as a singer, and sing he must. As a consequence Don Quixote, with all the great names that went into its making (Pabst—director, Ibert—composer, Chaliapin—star), achieved exactly nothing. On the cinematic side. Would it be an *opera?* Its set songs were trite and unequal both in quality and character. George Robey, who plays the role of Sancho Panza, is given a ditty that for banality would shame a musical comedy patter. Chaliapin's concluding song "Sancho Panza Do Not Cry, I Will See You Again In Your Little Island" would defy the genius of a Second Avenue Cafe Orpheus. Chaliapin's English where it actually can be understood, and that is infrequent, is deplorable. *Don Quixote* as cinema is second-rate and shows none of the mastery that went into *Comrades of 1918,* the *Three-Penny Opera* and *"Kamaradshaft.* For a revealing analysis of Pabst's disintegration I can refer you to Peter Ellis in one of the recent issues of the *New Masses.*

BACKSTAGE

WHEN NEW THEATRE announced a drive to raise circulation from 2,500 in May 1934 to 10,000 by January 1935, *Stage* commented skeptically on our cocksureness. But the 10,000 goal was reached in December! And circulation rose to almost 12,000 for the January Soviet Issue! (Please note, Mr. Motherwell).

Although the circulation results have been remarkable, NEW THEATRE's financial circumstances continue to be difficult, to say the least. The magazine's low price, 10c., cannot be maintained (with all the additional expenses involved since the enlargement to 32 pages, improvements in make up, increase of illustrations etc.) unless dollars for subscriptions, and payments on backbills owed by the theatre groups come in at once.

Forthcoming features of NEW THEATRE that should interest every reader in becoming a regular subscriber are: For March—scenes from *Let Freedom Ring,* a play by Albert Bein; *Theatre Architecture in the U. S. S. R.* by Jean Richard Bloch; and articles on the films by Eisenstein and Podovkin; also an article analyzing the entries and announcing the winners of the *New Masses-New Theatre* $100 Prize Play Contest. For April—an anti-war and fascism issue describing how the theatre and film are being used to whip up war sentiment, as in the World War. An article on the work of the German "agitprop" groups since the rise of Hitler by an exiled German writer and director now visiting in America will be a feature of this issue. Eugene Gordon, John Wexley, Edwin Rolfe, Langston Hughes, Paul Peters, Herbert Kline and George Sklar are contributors to a special issue on the Negro in the American theatre.

NEW THEATRE has to announce a serious loss —the resignation of Leo T. Hurwitz as Managing and Film Editor. Filling two important positions, and doing more than his share of the work, he has been responsible for the high standard of the movie material, and in great measure for the quick progress of the magazine in the last six months. While he will continue to aid the editorial board, his full energies will go into the film production *Nykino.*

Although *Sailors of Cattaro* is still playing to full houses at the Civic Repertory Theatre, Theatre Union is planning its next plays already. *The Pit,* a mining play, by Albert Maltz, and *Strike Song* by J. O. and Carlotta Bailey are scheduled next.

Broadway, Inc.

(*Continued from Page 6*)

be made sane, clean, livable, dramatic and exciting for its workers and its audiences only as the workers and the audiences take control of the theatre away from the profit-seekers who now stand between them. Though anti-labor in selection and interpretation, *B'way, Inc.,* is a useful source-book for the revolutionary student and worker in the theatre.

It is curious how, in discussing this small part of American life, the remedies proposed by Eustis correspond exactly to the remedies proposed by AAA, NRA, etc: chain the workers; strengthen the employers; cut down the number of employees in all departments; assure capital of greater profits. Exploitation, scarcity. On Page 102, Eustis remarks that before Recovery in the theatre is achieved *"it may first be necessary to tear down superfluous theatres, and institute other reforms."* The capitalist way out of the crisis in the professional theatre, as elsewhere, is destruction and death. The alternative? That is another article to appear soon in NEW THEATRE.

CELEBRATE • INTERNATIONAL THEATRE • WEEK • FEBRUARY 15-25

● FEBRUARY 15 — GENERAL ●
MEMBERSHIP MEETING

● FEBRUARY 16 — CELEBRATION ●
DANCE AND ENTERTAINMENT

● FEBRUARY 17 — RECITAL ●
SOLO AND GROUP DANCERS

● FEBRUARY 18 — FEBRUARY 22 ●
THEATRE LECTURES

● FEBRUARY 23—ALL DAY ●
FILM SHOWING

● FEBRUARY 24—INTERNATIONAL ●
THEATRE NIGHT

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