



Jeanne Crain, June Haver and Lon McCallister in a moment of youthful romantic misunderstandings in "Home in Indiana," currently at the Keith Memorial Theatre.

"The White Cliffs of Dover," opening at Loew's State and Orpheum Theatres, on Thursday, brings together Irene Dunne, Dame May Whitty and Gladys Cooper.

Gary Cooper and Signe Hasso, who are actively concerned with telling "The Story of Dr. Wassell," now playing the Metropolitan Theatre.

INTELLIGENT FILMS NEEDED TO ATTRACT MALE AUDIENCES

SECOND THOUGHTS OF A FIRST-NIGHTER

By ELLIOT NORTON

AFTER three weeks of persistent and more or less patient movie-going, I have arrived at the conclusion that Hollywood is not making enough pictures for men. The aim of the picture people seems to be to cultivate the children and the teen-agers and, within certain limits, the ladies. But, except in rare cases, there appears to be little attempt to woo the interest, the favor or the patronage of the ordinary adult male of voting age or beyond.

In order to test this conclusion I asked 28 men whom I met in the course of two days if they went to the movies regularly and, if not, why they stayed away. Since most of these 28 are in various branches of the newspaper business and since they are all Bostonians and the weather was bad at the time and many of them are still jittery about the war, it may be that their answers just happen to coincide with my convictions. Or it may be that what they say about the pictures is typical of what men in general, outside the armed services, feel about the films. The men in the armed forces, and although each said his wife's interest and not his own was the prime reason for going that often, they both "generally enjoy the pictures."

Another who goes "about once a week" finds going that often a reasonably pleasant adventure, but he wishes they had more good stories. Two others among the 28 declared they went "about once a week" and although each said his wife's interest and not his own was the prime reason for going that often, they both "generally enjoy the pictures."

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For what they may be worth, two facts stand out in this poll. In the first place, only one of the 28 men I talked with said that he goes to pictures without any urging from his wife and one other reported that his refusal to go often than once a year was an occasion for domestic quarrels. He prefers the quarrels to the pictures. The other important fact, or so it seems to me, is that almost all the 28 non-moviegoers said they stay away because of the stories. The word "story" was used, in one way or another, by almost every one of them.

The general feeling of all of them seems to be that the stories of the films are "silly" or, at any rate, "not interesting." Would they go often if the stories were better? Most of them were a little vague in answering that one, but they generally "guessed they would." Their wives are not less critical than these gentlemen, as nearly as I was able to discover. But they are more tolerant. In the first place, it appears they consider moviegoing as primarily an escape from the confines of their home. Having spent most of the week at home, doing housework, taking care of their families, being pretty closely confined, they want to get out—anywhere. Furthermore, they find it pleasant to see romance enacted on the screen. If the story of a picture is foolish, they are aware of it, but they are inclined to overlook that fact. They smile tolerantly and content themselves with admiring the Betty Grables, the Ann Sheridans and their sweeties.

MEN LIKE GRABLE, SHERIDAN, TOO

THE gentlemen report, almost unanimously, that they like the Betty Grables and the Ann Sheridans, too, but they consider many of the male heroes who pursue and capture them in the pictures as pretty silly people. Not Bogart. Not Muni. Not Gable. But many of the others. Since most of the 28 men polled are no beauties themselves, it could be there is a touch of envy involved. But they go for Grable, who is handsome enough despite his ears. So it isn't envy. The fact is they like her men and they resent the pretty boys. They also resent the customary screen behavior of the pretty boys.

The basic difficulty seems to be this business of behavior. Any moviegoer, any playgoer, tends to identify himself with the principal characters of the picture, or the play. To a certain extent, he becomes the character and participates in his adventures. He does that, if he can. But the average male moviegoer refuses to identify himself with men on the screen whose actions they consider unmanly, or silly. That's the rub. They won't take part when the hero is a diffident, cap-twingling cuckoo who casts down his eyes and says "gosh, oh gee whiz, Mabel, you certainly are sweet."

They don't consider that kind of behavior—which seems to be typical of the average feature picture—admirable or manly. More than that, most of them resent it. They don't like men who behave cutely or sweetly in daily life and they like them even less in the films.

THERE ARE SOME GOOD ONES

OBVIOUSLY, there are fine pictures being made which have stories that an adult male can find satisfying. Pictures like "The Song of Bernadette" and the Bing Crosby film, "Going My Way," and others of all kinds will hold and intrigue and fascinate any man, because they do not insult his intelligence, because they have intelligent stories—because the men in them behave like men and not like limping schoolgirls.

But Hollywood continues to turn out idiotic stuff like "Pin-Up Girl" and because such pictures do business, because millions of eager kids and teen-agers find them acceptable, because millions of tolerant women put up with them, they will make many more.

MOVIE MEN WOULD HELP INDUSTRY

THE movie men have always been alert to discover what the youngsters want, because of the vast number of these who patronize films. It seems to me that in preparing entertainment for these under 21ers, taking pains at all times to present only stories "which will not confuse a 14-year-old," as they will tell you, they have too often forgotten the adult population, especially the men.

The bewildering thing about this is that the pictures which do please the average man rarely ever frighten the kiddies and never displease the ladies, so far as I can find out. Hollywood could bring the men back into the theatres without any revolution. Perhaps if some of the movie producers would stop thinking of their pictures as "product," something to be sold, and began thinking of them as entertainment, the whole problem would be solved to their own ultimate advantage.

Maybe there should be a law requiring all the men involved in the making of a picture to sit and watch it afterwards. Right from beginning to end.

That would fix them.



ELLIOT NORTON



Gene Krupa, who with his drums and a new orchestra, returns to the stage of the RKO Boston Theatre on Thursday.



Dorothea Jackson and Theodore Levitt, are two of the young people contributing to the comedy moments of "Three Is a Family," at the Colonial Theatre.



Ann Sheridan, as Nora Bayes, in the musical film "Shine On, Harvest Moon," coming to the Paramount and Fenway Theatres on Tuesday.

SEASON OF '43-'44 SAW 61 SHOWS HERE

Forty-Six Plays and Fifteen Musical Productions During the Season—Musicals Proved to Be Far More Successful Than Dramatic Attractions

IN THE theatre season which ended officially on June 1, Boston saw a total of 46 plays and 15 musical shows including operettas, in the downtown theatres. In addition, and not counted in the tally otherwise, there were two separate "seasons" of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas by the R. H. Burnside company, at the Boston Opera House, a week of ballet by the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe and a week, minus one day, of the so-called "Tropical Revue," of Katharine Dunham, which was not a revue at all but a dance programme.

The total of 61 productions is about normal for a Boston season. It compares with 93 presented in the same period in New York city. Of the 46 plays done here, 24, or two more than one-half of the total, were tryouts—presented here so that their producers might discover and if possible eliminate, their faults, so that they might be successful in New York. Boston success is, of course, not to be snubbed, but it is of secondary importance.

Of the 24 tryouts, eight became commercially successful in New York. The rest were failures. The successful ones are "Chicken Every Sunday," "Pick-Up Girl," "Winged Victory," "The Voice of the Turtle," "Rambunctious Inn," "Over Twenty-One," "Decision" and "Jacobowsky and the Colonel." The plays which had tryouts here

and were subsequently done to death in New York were "Those Endering Young Charms," "The Snark Was a Boojum," "The Naked Genius," "Outrageous Fortune," "Another Love Story," "Suds in Your Eye," "Peepshow," "The House in Paris," "Thank You, Svoboda," "A Highland Fling," "Mrs. January and Mr. Eck," "Pretty Little Parlor," "Sheepy," "Career Angel" and "For Keeps." One other play, "Same Time Next Week" was mercifully withdrawn here instead of being sent to next slaughter on Broadway.

Six of the plays presented during the season were revivals and six others were return engagements. The revivals: "Abie's Irish Rose," "The Cherry Orchard" (LeGallienne-Schickel), "Othello" (Paul Robeson), "Charley's Aunt," "Jane Eyre" and "You Can't Take It With You." The return engagements: "Life With Father," "Kiss and Tell," "Blithe Spirit," "Arsenic and Old Lace" (two separate return engagements), "The Corn Is Green," "Tobacco Road."

Fifteen musical shows. The 15 musical productions presented in the same period, from June 1, 1943, to June 1, 1944, included four operettas, of which only one, "Rosalinda" was new. The revivals were "Foray and Bess," "The Student Prince" and "Blossom Time." There were three revues, if Ed Wynn's "Big Time" is thus classified, the other two being "Artists and Models" and the "Vincent Youmans Ballet Revue." Neither "Big Time" nor the Vincent Youmans show went on to New York.

The musical comedies included one revival, "A Connecticut Yankee." The rest were new ones, en route to New York. Four of them became hits, if you look at the whole "musical show" picture. Not one of three revues was considered a hit. Say then that there were 10 new musical shows (musical comedies and revues together, that is) of which four became hits.

This makes the percentage of success for musical shows higher than that of the plays, at that. Which is fortunate, if it means anything, since the musicals are much costlier to produce.

Some of the Highlights

For the record, some of the highlights of the season were this: "Decision," a fine anti-Fascist play by Edward Chodorov, was presented here twice within three months. Done first in January at the Wilbur Theatre, it was not well supported but had begun to do good business before the end of its lone week. In New York it became a controversial success (169 performances.) Its producers, fired by the Broadway success, sent a second company back here in April. It was a bad second company. It flopped badly.

2—Katharine Cornell brought "Lovers and Friends" by Dodie Smith, to the Plymouth Theatre for two weeks in April. 3—Echel Barrymore came here in May to bring to a close (on June 3, 1944), a four seasons long tour of triumph in the Emily Williams play, "The Corn is Green." 4—Somerset Maugham, presenting his first play since 1933, "Sheepy," discovered he had lost the knack of playwrighting. This at the Colonial Theatre, during April. This just before he wrote "The Razor's Edge," a novel, which seemed to show in its popularity that he had not lost his grip in the other form.

HOLLYWOOD

By MYRTLE GEBHART

HOLLYWOOD, July 1—Because of the wartime housing shortage, stars who own big estates are selling notions of their properties. Others, finding large homes difficult to staff, have closed off wings for the duration—such as Joan Crawford and Claudette Colbert.

Players just "coming up" the Hollywood scale, are buying little homes—where they can find any for sale—or they're bunching up in apartments. Though now rating stardom, Louise Albritton lived at the Studio Club until recently. There's such a long waiting list of girls that she felt she should give her room to some other girl who must live on a smaller budget. So now she shares a one-bedroom apartment with a girl who works as secretary.

Though Noah Beery, Jr., owns three and a half acres in San Fernando Valley, there's only a modest five-room house on the place. His walnut crop pays the taxes. While her husband, Lieutenant-Commander Richard Adams, is in service, Martha O'Driscoll lives in a small house with her mother and brother, who's in high school. Yes, gone are the days when Gloria Swanson had footmen in knee britches, when the late Charles Ray paid \$30,000 for landscaping. We've seen the heyday of Hollywood's lavish spending. Bill Holden phoned \$2,000 of an audience on Universal's biggest stage. It's still called the Phantom Stage but is now being used for a mammoth musical number in "Bowery to Broadway."

AWARD TO LOUISE ALBRITTON

This year, Louise Albritton wins the Pasadena Community Playhouse award, an annual recognition to the former student who has contributed the most to entertainment during the preceding year. . . . Though "Here Come the Waves" songs won't be published for several months, Bing Crosby is recording them for service men overseas. So your boys will hear them in advance.

This and That: Carole Landis lost her purse, containing her prize short-snorter bill, signed by General Eisenhower, General Doolittle, Winston Churchill and a lot of other big shots. . . . Paulette Goddard has ordered 200 albums of "Oklahoma" records to be sent to service outfits in the China-Burma-India sector.

Susanna Foster, who's now labeled "The Girl With the Million Dollar Legs"—though she's still my choice for The Girl With the Etc. Voice—was perched precariously on an illuminated crescent moon, high above the Coliseum, for the benefit of the All Pacific War Recreational Fund. Then he goes over to Warner's for a spot in "Hollywood Canteen." After that, he hopes back to Republic to start another picture.

Her shapely legs encased in hip-length nylons, Suzy had been sitting aloft for two hours when Director Charles Lamont called up, "Do you feel dizzy, Suzy?" "Oh, no," she croaked back down to him. "I'm not afraid of falling; it's that's what you mean. But I'm scared to move an inch for fear I'll tear these beautiful stockings."

ROY ROGERS BUSY STAR

With his extra-curricular activities, the busiest star at Republic is Roy Rogers. As soon as he completes "San Fernando Valley," he will be guesting his "Hands Across the Border" song in "Brazil." On July 9 he puts on the first rodeo he has presented in Los Angeles, at the Olympic Coliseum, for the benefit of the All Pacific War Recreational Fund. Then he goes over to Warner's for a spot in "Hollywood Canteen." After that, he hopes back to Republic to start another picture.

One day recently Jean Sullivan started out on her daily 22-mile drive to the Warner Bros. studio. A mile on her way to Burbank, her jalopy coughed and died on her. So she hopped a bus, hopefully—which is the attitude out here when the cameras are rolling, one sees a bus. Well, it seemed that one was bound for parts equally distant, but in another direction. Along came another bus. Eureka! It was going the way she was. . . . But before long it expired, probably of old age. Next she goes over to Warner's for a spot in "Hollywood Canteen." After that, he hopes back to Republic to start another picture.

Giving up, she took to hitch-hiking. One driver took her a few blocks, the second got her to Hollywood. She finally made the studio gate, in Burbank, by foot—in fact, in her box, as she was carrying her shoes.

MOVIE MAGIC AT PARAMOUNT

I went down to the sea recently in a real New England storm while the ocean heaved up huge waves and the coast line bobbed by. But I didn't even get my tootsies wet, because I obeyed Director John Farrow and stood way back on the camera platform.

Talk about movie magic! They're really doing something at Paramount for "Two Years Before the Mast." Sea locations being out for the duration, they nonchalantly knocked down walls and combined three sound stages and two smaller recording stages into a gigantic movie production of one and a half acres—the largest set ever enclosed under one roof.

Through seven tunnels the wind roars, pushed by hidden wind machines. From a maze of overhead pipes the rain pours in deluges until a scene completed, the thrifty technician bawls, "Stop the storm!" and the rain ceases instantly, likewise the wind.

I'm used to standing still and watching the backgrounds move by, but this transparency screen is the biggest yet. It takes a projection 50x37 feet. Upon it is projected the seascape backgrounds against which the camera photographs the two-masted sailing ship Pilgrim, the brig upon which Richard Henry Dana made his voyage from Boston around Cape Horn to California in 1835.

Rolling there on it, ingeniously contrived "rockers," the Pilgrim is a full-sized accurate reproduction of the original 150-foot-long square-rigger. It floats there in a 640,000 gallon tank.

Eight gold St. Christopher medals accompany the crew of a Flying Fortress in the South Pacific. The plane already had made over 80 missions when its gunner, Sergeant Al Perryman, met Barbara Stanwyck. He said to his wife, "I'd like to get something with a religious touch, rather than a frippery mascot, so she presented him with the medals.

"SOCIAL" THEORY UNDULY STRESSED

Is the music of any given epoch a mere reflection of social and economic conditions, or does the art always evolve, develop and change in obedience to some inner necessity? This is a moot question, like the one about the chicken and the egg, and there are many arguments that can be advanced for or against either contention. On the whole, though, it would seem that too much stress is laid upon the "social" theory.

Take modern music, for example. We are frequently told that its boldness, even recklessly dissonant quality, its rhythmic impact and freedom, its linear bias, its general appeal to the intellect rather than to the emotions, its scorn of mere ear-tickling, its adherence to the classic ideal of design rather than to the romantic ideal of expression, are all symptomatic of and apposite to this 20th century. But are they? If what might be called the "love interest" has disappeared from music, it is still present in the drama, the movies and the novel.

In its earlier stages—folk song, plaint, chant and "elementary" polyphony—music was distinctly a communal art. But the closer we come to our own day the more its evolution is seen to be in the hands of certain key-men, who push it a long way toward some particular objective and whose efforts are augmented by those of a host of imitators.

Source Material Important Let us imagine, for the sake of argument, that Richard Wagner had been executed for his complicity in the Revolution of 1848. "The Ring," "Tristan," "Die Meistersinger" and "Parsifal" would then never have been written. All that would have slowed up tremendously the 19th century's development of the expressive, the emotional power of music, which was its special mission. Deprived of the great source-material of the later Wagner, such men as Franck, Bruckner, Strauss and Debussy would have been tremendously handicapped—just as Wagner himself would have been handicapped without Beethoven and the attainment of the expressive goal would have been long postponed. For, mark you, that goal would not have been abandoned until it had been reached. In 1913, Stravinsky would not have been able to compose "The Rite of Spring," nor would he have had the urge to do it. Reaction does not come until action has played its part.

In the current modern music there is an article, "Rhythm and Habit," by Theodore Chanler, gifted composer and brilliant critic (he was for a time music editor of the Boston Herald and in that capacity stirred up quite a few hornets' nests). In a discussion of Gregorian chant he rightly finds it a perfect expression of the monastic ideal. Counterpoint, which flourished during the Renaissance, reflects "an individualistic and social life." Harmony, which grew out of counterpoint," continues Mr. Chanler, "reflects in its turn the material wealth that is one of the chief fruits of an individualistic society. It is worth noting that harmony did not attain its full development until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the industrial revolution was an accomplished fact and had brought on an era of material prosperity unparalleled in the world's history. . . . The resulting wealth may devolve upon some poor little rich girl or a melody decked out in mink and diamonds and herself enslaved to them—anyhow, not an interesting person per se nor up to her position."

While not denying the aptness of Mr. Chanler's analogies, it is, nevertheless true, that the gradual discovery and exploitation of the richness of harmony and the ultimate overemphasis upon them, until they began to sate and cloy, was a perfectly natural phase of music's evolution. It just had to go on until that particular instinct was satisfied. But the men who did most to further this

development, Schubert, Chopin, Wagner, Franck, Debussy and Scriabin, idealists and mystics, were distinctly not the type that engineered the industrial revolution. There's a catch in it somewhere.

Counterpoint Necessary Speaking of such weighty matters as counterpoint and harmony, there appeared, last winter, from the press of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., the first adequate English translation (by Alfred Mann) of the most celebrated of all treatises on counterpoint, the "Gradus ad Parnassum" of Johann Joseph Fux (1660-1741). Originally written in Latin, the "Gradus" is in form a colloquy between Joseph, the student, and Aloys, the teacher. Says Aloys at one juncture: "Now, we have completed the exercises in two part counterpoint upon a cantus firmus, having gone through all five species—for which we should be duly thankful to God." The trouble with the "Gradus" is that while Fux thought that he was adhering to the style of Palestrina, whose music was little known and understood in those days, he really misinterpreted both its letter and its spirit. What Joseph finally evolved comes closer to being elaborate homophony, or animated harmony, than true polyphony, closer to a classical string quartet than to a Palestrina Mass. When the Josephs of today are taught 16th century counterpoint—and they need it—they get the real thing.

SUMMER THEATRES

Julie Hayden, star of "Guest in the House," at Cambridge Summer Theatre this week.

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