

WORKERS THEATRE

IN THIS ISSUE: A Playwriting Group in Action--Broadway and the
Group Theatre--Flo Ziegfeld--Three Plays



SEPT - OCT.
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OUR WIDENING FRONT

By Bernard Reines—Workers Lab. Theatre of the W. I. R.

Today, with the bourgeois theatre entering pessimistically upon a new season, and with the United States now entering upon the fourth year of its economic crisis, we in the workers theatre are preparing for greater efforts and greater accomplishments. Penetrating with our program and plays into newer sections of the working class as well as intellectual and theatrical workers, we may well look about us to survey our widening front, in order that we may better realize what tasks confront us next.

The stock market crash of 1929 heralded the close of an epoch in the development of the workers theatre. Up to that time, groups had sprung up, persisted irregularly for a while, and then went out of existence. They mainly produced full-length plays by satirical or radical bourgeois writers, plays which reflected the bewilderment and disillusion of the bourgeois intelligentsia after the World War (THE BIGGEST BOOB IN THE WORLD, by Wittfogel). Foreign-language organizations of workers had their dramatic circles, staging elaborate conventional productions of Shakespeare or modern "classic" playwrights. They went in heavily for painted nature scenes and the obvious realism of the Belasco school.

This was also the period of the unsuccessful New Playwrights Theatre, a "radical" and "experimental" theatre in New York, founded by the banker Otto Kahn. Their plays were confined to ideas and failed to receive the support of the workers.

But it was in this period, too, that a number of groups

were founded who have continued to work and have grown stronger and stronger, groups that are today among the leaders of the revolutionary workers theatre movement (Artef, 1929—not producing at first; Prolet-Buchne, 1930; Workers Laboratory Theatre; Rebel Players, of Los Angeles). But even these groups were not clear then as to the aims and methods of the workers theatre. They were united in general aim only,—to serve the interests of the working class movement.

It should be recorded that at the time of the stock market crash in October 1929, there was not a single workers theatre group doing agitprop work in the United States. But in 1930, under the influence of practical experience, revolutionary theory, and the experience of the workers theatre in other countries, two groups turned to agitprop theatre,—the Prolet-Buchne and the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. R.

Now we can check up on what we have accomplished since. First, we have established a monthly WORKERS THEATRE Magazine, at first in mimeographed and now in printed form. Workers clubs and mass organizations are more and more adopting workers theatre as a regular activity. We have brought workers theatre into a number of strikes, particularly since the Penn.-Ohio coal miners strike in 1931. We have made mass pageants a regular feature of the big mass gatherings such as on May 1, November 7, and Lenin Memorials, not only in New York but in a number of other cities.

We have penetrated into the bourgeois press (Theatre Arts Monthly), being both encouraged and attacked. Even the

Jesuits, the historic persecutors of truth (as in the days of the Renaissance) have sensed our growing power, and have attacked us as a "Communist" theatre, a theatre of "half-truths" (America, Catholic weekly, May 21, 1932). These "half truths" we have shown to be whole truths (**WORKERS THEATRE**, June-July, 1932).

Organizationally, we have held a successful National Workers Theatre Spartakiade and Conference (April 10 and 17, 1932), which established the League of Workers Theatres of the USA as a section of the International Workers Dramatic Union.

Sensing the growing influence of the revolutionary workers theatre, leaders of the Socialist Party have sought to counteract this influence by hastily calling together and organizing a "Federation of Workers Theatres" under our revolutionary slogan, "Theatre is a weapon". We have seen them stage defeatist plays, with workers committing suicide instead of fighting (**DOLE BROTHERS**), and pseudo-satirical bourgeois plays in the "best society comedy" tradition (**GENTLEMAN WANTED**). We have seen some of the young workers abandon this reformist "Workers Theatre" and come over to the revolutionary workers theatre (New York).

The last few months, too, have witnessed the rise of the workers theatre (agitprop) in Canada, a land where terror is used constantly against all militant workingclass organizations, including the cultural ones. In this rise our cooperation has been an important factor.

Our newest broadening of activity has taken place recently. We accepted the invitation of the United Front Election Campaign Committee to perform in the streets at election meetings of the Communist Party. Three agitprop troupes are functioning thus in New York City.

And now, with the agitprop theatre definitely on the road to becoming established as the basic form of workers theatre for the United States in the present period, and with many artists unemployed and disillusioned with the bourgeois theatre, we are witnessing also a new interest in the English-speaking workers stationary theatre, with definite work being begun (New York).

In all of this development, our magazine, **WORKERS THEATRE**, has been of the greatest importance. It has supplied plays, it has helped to clarify theoretical and practical problems, it has stimulated the politicalization of old groups and the formation of new ones.

Now then: As we have surveyed our widening front, it might seem that everything is progressing well and that there is nothing to do but go on as we have been doing up to now. Such an impression would be entirely false. We must regard our work very critically, for only then will we be able to go ahead to the important tasks that we must take up quickly.

The central point to be realized is that, while we can record definite accomplishments, we are still weak. Our groups are too few. **WE HAVE AS YET NO MASS INFLUENCE.**

When we consider the question of agitprop theatre, for example, we must contrast our few score of agitprop, most of them new and at a very low level in technique, with the many score, perhaps hundreds, of dramatic groups and circles in **REVOLUTIONARY** mass organizations who still produce plays only once in a while, and bourgeois plays mainly. This is particularly the case in foreign-language organizations. And this is saying nothing of the hundreds of bourgeois little theatre groups that have workers and farmers among their members.

Or when we record the beginning of workers theatre activity in strikes, we must realize that this activity is only a recent development and has only been carried on in a handful of strikes so far. Similarly, with the workers children's theatre, we have made only a beginning. The number of such steadily functioning groups is very small.

Only one district of the L. O. W. T. has been definitely organized outside of New York. Our magazine, **WORKERS THEATRE**, is as yet far from having the wide mass circulation it should have.

All in all, our achievements are small when compared with the work that lies ahead of us before we can actually become an important weapon of the workingclass in the fight for a new and better world.

We must widen our front. We must reach workers and farmers not yet conscious of their place in society, not yet aware that there is a revolutionary way out of this crisis of capitalism, a way out of all crisis, out of misery, exploitation, and war. We must reach cultural workers who are more and more coming to see that capitalism now stifles creation and cultural progress.

But in order to reach these new masses effectively, we must set to work on several important tasks. We need to:

Establish district organizations of the L. O. W. T.

Establish various language federations of the L. O. W. T.

Establish training-schools continually for the political and artistic training of directors and playwrights. Our directors are far too few, and many of them lack training. Our plays have improved a little, but are still too crude and in general too "leftist" for non-class-conscious workers.

These organizational steps and the training of theatre leaders will enable us to go ahead with other important steps (some can be begun without delay):

To establish workers theatre activity in the revolutionary trade unions, and as soon as possible in the reformist trade unions.

To intensify the development of workers theatre in the mass organizations (and to penetrate with it into bourgeois-led organizations of workers).

To stimulate the rise of a revolutionary student theatre as an ally of the workers theatre.

To win actors and artists from the bourgeois theatre to the workers theatre.

To organize theatre artists and stagehands, etc. for a united struggle against the worsening of conditions, and for federal unemployment insurance at the expense of the government and the theatrical producers.

To penetrate "civic", "art", and "social" theatres (Civic Repertory Theatre of N. Y., Group Theatre, Pasadena Community Playhouse.)

To penetrate more and more into the bourgeois press.

To develop the theory of the theatre from the standpoint of Marxism.

All of these activities must be carried on **TO WIN WORKERS AND INTELLECTUALS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS.**

We do not expect to go far with each and every one of these in the next twelve months. But certainly in some of these phases we should make considerable progress. And in all of them we should make at least a beginning.

Certain general points, too, should be noted. Our play must keep up with vital current events, must be better written

continued on page 19

Broadway and the Group Theatre

By ARTHUR DOUR

At this time of the year there appears in the newspapers the customary forecast of the plays that are to open on Broadway next season, following the plans of Broadway managers and producing companies. In setting forth their statements, the dramatic critics, in the coy manner of girlish gossip that has come to be characteristic of American dramatic criticism, add many ifs and howevers and speak of "surprises in store" and "unexpected turns". From the point of view of the proletarian theatre, however, there will be few surprises. The immediate future of the Broadway theatre can be forecast pretty definitely.

Already it is evident that Broadway activity will be curtailed the number of plays scheduled for production is noticeably below that of last year, even though the list this time is heavily padded with shoe-string producers. At the same time the average quality of the plays is so mediocre that it is already the subject of comment on the Rialto. Revues, musical shows and imported light comedy show a marked increase, indicating that the bourgeois theatre is losing its hold on ideas, and is starting on its retrogression to confusion and illiteracy. The purveyors of sex and glitter will now face for the first time serious competition from the cheap burlesque theatres, which supply more of the same merchandise for less money, and have consequently been thriving and increasing in number since the economic crisis began. The American show-business, as it so candidly calls itself, has never been a theatre, and is now entering upon its downfall as a business.

The general run of scheduled plays seem to fall naturally into 7 categories:

Native revues and musical comedies for tired business men (who are very tired these days).

European comedies and farces; imported fudge from the "gay" capitals of the Old World. **DOMINO, MISTIGRI, CHAMBRE DE HOTEL, I LIVED WITH YOU, MADEMOISELLE.**

Home-folks drama; local-color stereotypes of the American provinces, none of them touching on the vital sectional problems in their respective localities. **A NIGHT IN JUNE, LILLY TURNER, WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK?**

Costume drama; romantic dreams of long ago, containing artistic tableaux and a sense of nostalgia. This year, due to the success of **THE BARRETT'S OF WIMPOLE STREET**, these plays will deal with the antimacassar period. **MR. GRANT, CHILDREN OF THUNDER, DEAR JANE, THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.**

Melodrama; cynical machine-made plays in which human life has a mathematical value as plot-material. These plays glorify racketeers of all description and capitalism as backgrounds the excitement of the class struggle the exploited class being represented as villains, cheats, or faithful servants. **PEEP SHOW, TIGER HOLE, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, WHITE DRAGON, NINE PINE STREET.**

Smart comedy, smart-silly echoes of the jazz age, which is already as dated as the pre-Raphaelite period. **DE-SHED, FOR THE LIVING, UNFAITHFULLY YOURS.**

Tragedy; bourgeois and anarchistic defeatism. **ALIEN**

CORN, POTTER'S FIELD, and other plays by Sidney Howard, Paul Green, Eugene O'Neill, Philip Barry and Elmer Rice.

To the last category may be added a subdivision: Reform plays; exposes of conditions in jails, penitentiaries, newspaper offices, etc. These plays, of which **THE LAST MILE** was a conspicuous example, are descended from war plays like **WHAT PRICE GLORY**, and are now entering fields new to Broadway—industrial and strike situations. There is a box office future for such dramas, and there will undoubtedly be many of them; their authors manage to combine righteous indignation with a bow to the moving-picture industry. **INCUBATOR, LITTLE OLD BOY.**

The Theatre Guild holds to its policy of presenting liberal plays of no immediate public consequence, although by now the Guild directors must be depressingly aware that most of the plays they offer are below their own level of interest. There are no more Soviet plays on the Guild program. Having presented to its sophisticated public a couple of these plays as novelties, without a conception of the ideology behind them, the Guild has apparently decided that this line of goods does not sell.

From Russia, Elmer Rice sends back to the New York dramatic sheets the news that the American theatre is too far removed from life. Mr. Rice states that he will take measures to bring it nearer. The workers theatre heartily endorses this opinion and offers its cooperation in this very important task. Mr. Rice's talent would go far to strengthen the foundation of a stage that is in continuous contact with the life of the workers.

It is necessary to be specific: to whose life is the theatre to be brought nearer? To the life of the those who can still afford to buy seats to the Broadway shows? Then all that is needed is a mixture of local color, mild commiseration and a slightly pinker tinge of Marxian. If this is Mr. Rice's program, he may yet be happily surprised to find that uplift has its rewards; there is a growing bourgeois public that is Marx-conscious, and there will soon be a box office for pink Marxism.

The only sign of life in the present moribund drama is the Group Theatre, now preparing for its second season on Broadway. This organization is of extraordinary interest at present. Descended from and reacting against the Theatre Guild, the Group Theatre, after a long period of incubation during which it rehearsed plays but did not produce them, arrived last year at a Broadway status. It had begun by modelling itself on the Stanislavsky pattern, rehearsing in the country, preserving an inner discipline, and acknowledging a direct relationship between esthetics and social conditions. At the same time the directors disavowed any political attitude, admitting, however, that the Group Theatre in the course of its development might have to put itself on record politically.

The Group's first production, **THE HOUSE OF CONNELLY**, was a dated American variation of Chekhov's **THE CHERRY ORCHARD**. The production was well received by Broadway, and the Group players demonstrated that they had youth and vigor. In "1931", their second production, they showed that

they had considerable courage as well, since they presented a picture of the tragedy of unemployment in a manner that, although foggy, made no bid for the box office. The Group's lack of ideology became thoroughly evident with the choice of their third play, NIGHT OVER TAOS, which was a complete withdrawal from the position they had assumed with "1931", a play which had singled them out for authority even in the eyes of the most reactionary dramatic critics.

Continued economic pressure and more precise self-valuation is now forcing the Group Theatre to realize that it is a representative middle class organization, in spite of a certain heterogeneous make-up. Still shy of making any political alignment, the Group, partly due to general economic conditions and partly to its specific problem of subsidy, is nevertheless being pushed step by step toward political clarification, and toward at least a theoretic acquaintance with Marxism.

This development will be reflected more and more in a separation of the opportunistic and radical elements within the organization. From now on the Group will find it uphill work to hold itself together as a developing unit. The two plays already chosen for this season, John Howard Lawson's SUCCESS STORY and Dawn Powell's THE PARTY, describe very well the present state of the Group Theatre;

both plays are bourgeois-idealistic, but both testify more or less consciously to the bankruptcy of the American business culture. For the moment these plays are a fairly happy compromise, as they are on comparatively safe ground politically, and a vigilant Marxian production may lift them out of the usual class of romantic defeatism.

From the proletarian point of view the Group is a key to the Broadway theatre. If the Group does not succeed in holding itself together by means of straddling during the coming season—and a break-up this season is a possibility—it will either take up some commercial offer and go entirely right, or there will remain a Group Theatre nucleus which because of its valuable experience will be of great importance to the proletariat working class.

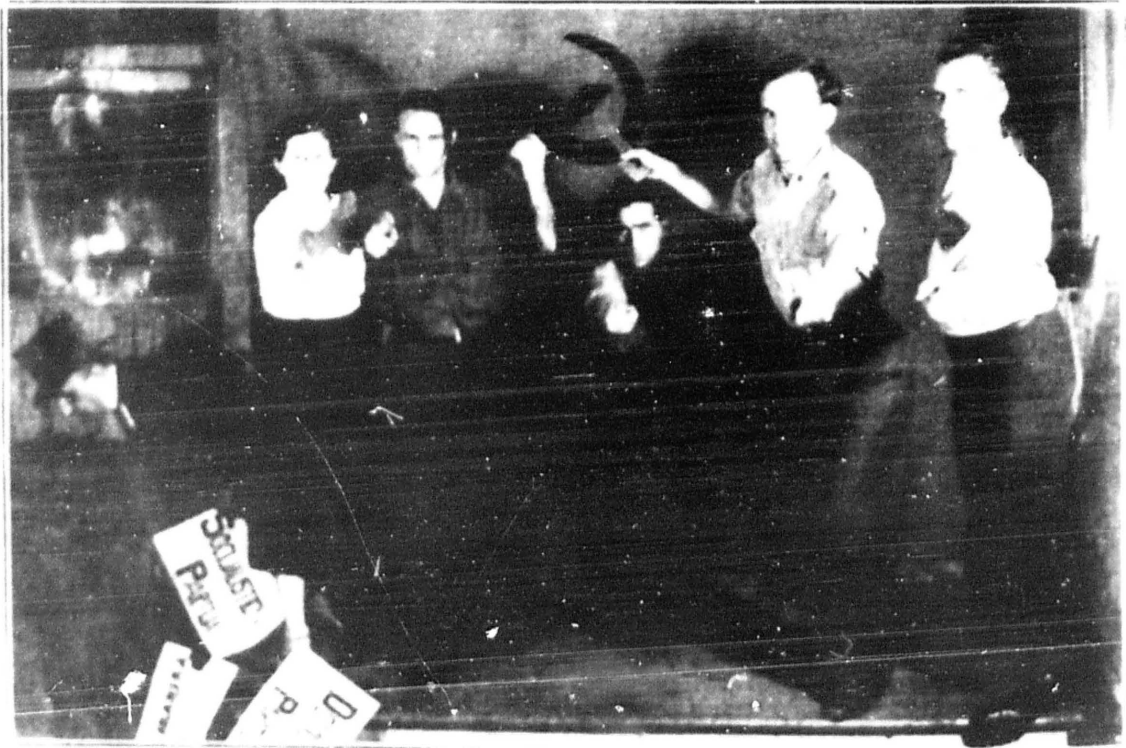
In the meantime it is plainly up to the Workers Theatre to establish itself on a wider basis than that provided by its agitprop units. Each week will bring it greater responsibility. It is particularly necessary that the Workers Theatre complete the project it began last spring, of preparing the nucleus of a stationary theatre within the ranks of the workers, and of clarifying and making solid the organization and ideology of this nucleus, so as to receive incoming unclarified elements without loss of time and without possibility of distortion.



The Old and the New.

The Jugo Slavs have broken the ice.

A scene from the Jugo Slav agit prop troupe, New York



A Playwriting Group in Action

By H. ELION—Chairman of Playwriting Group, W. L. T.

Each group should develop its own playwriting committee so that plays suitable to local conditions can be developed. How shall the groups go about it?

A playwriting committee should include at least one person who is thoroughly familiar with the needs of the workers theatre, both political and artistic. His job is to give guidance to the other members of his group in the course of active work.

This is not an easy job. Many people join a playwriting committee in order to learn how to write plays. With these the problem is simple. Others join because they "know how" to write plays and here the problem is more difficult.

Let us start with those who want to learn how to write. There's John who used to write poetry, Sam who writes short stories, and Jim who is a critic. None are professional writers. They have hobbies. They all want to write plays.

"Suppose," proposes the chairman, "we see what are some of the most important current issues."

John says the bonus march, Jim, unemployment and the fight for unemployment insurance, and Sam, the war danger and the defense of the Soviet Union. A long discussion develops. The chairman suggests that a play is needed on each of these subjects.

Soon there are a number of suggestions on how to utilize a certain situation for a play. Now the difficult part begins.

"Suppose," says the chairman to each of the three, "you take your suggestion, and you yours, and you yours."

"But," says John, "I'm no playwright." Neither is Sam or Jim.

"We don't want you to write a play yet," says the chairman. "Just make an outline for next week on your subject. Write out step by step, what happens, not what one or the other character says, but what happens. What we want is not much talk, but movement and action."

All three agree to have an outline by the following week, and the first step toward writing a play is taken. At the next meeting probably only one or two outlines will be presented, but that will be enough. This method, we found, is much preferable to asking a new member to write a complete play. It even pays to discourage an enthusiast who wants to write a complete play for the second meeting. In nine cases out of ten he will complete his play but he will have to rewrite it, because he has not yet become acquainted with the needs and limitations of the workers theatre. One member, an able writer, rewrote a play about deportation three times. It nearly broke our hearts to see him work so hard.

To proceed with the second meeting. Suppose an outline is presented for a play on unemployment insurance, to be given on the street. The writer has on the stage a hysterical mother of a small child, who interrupts a political speaker. She sob and gives her heart out to the audience. Her baby is starving, her husband is unemployed. She wants food, food, food. She does not know what to do. There is excitement in the audience. Other workers break in.

A democrat and a socialist politician are in the audience. Each one claims that voting for his party will bring food. The audience is not convinced. A Communist gets up. He explains the need for unemployment insurance. He points

out that only mass pressure will bring it. He urges the workers to vote Communist and to organize. After that the whole crowd goes with the woman to the Home Relief Bureau to get relief.

In the discussion after the outline is read, it is brought out that in his zeal to expose the capitalist parties, the writer made the question appear to be a choice between elections and immediate action. It is pointed out that the Communist Party does participate in elections, and that the play is supposed to be for an election campaign meeting. The correction is accepted, and the next step is to write the play. Then at the next meeting we take up the finished play.

Suppose a finished play is presented by a new member who "knows how" to write a play and who never submitted an outline. For example, in our group, one such playwright submitted an anti-war play. We suggested changes and he never returned. He knows how and he won't change. In his play, character after character got up and explained in highly intellectual rhymed verse, how they are set on destroying the Soviet Union. The Communist Party asserts that it will defend the Soviet Union. From time to time the author gets quite poetic, but it's all talk. He finishes reading, and there is silence for a moment. "I don't want any criticism," explains the writer. "First I want to know whether you are going to put this play on."

"No," says the chairman calmly, "but I would like to explain why not." The writer is impatient, he shouts and waves his arms. He intimates that we have something against him, and that people who know told him that it is first class stuff.

The chairman explains to him that while he wrote a good poem, it was not a play because the characters only spoke about action instead of participating, through dialogue and physical action, in the drama of the play. But this new member would not hear of any criticism.

There are many like this poet who cannot see the advantage in group activity. Another writer, for example, whose play was refused, in the form in which he presented it, on the ground that he spoke in terms that were too general, said he knew the play was no good, but he presented it for criticism. However, instead of changing the play according to the suggestions made, he took the play in the same shape to another group, and received the same criticism.

One writer wrote an excellent election play. He portrayed the elections as a prize-fight. The Republican and the Democrat were the pugilists, while the Socialist was the referee. The writer got stuck, however, when he wanted to bring in the workers' point of view. When he came to this point the whole group shouted, "Frame-up". The writer's face lit up. "Damn it," he cried, "why didn't I think of it before. Now I see it. The audience will shout 'frame-up' when the decision is handed down. Players in the audience will jump into the ring, throw the fighters out, and explain our view of the fight, by giving the Communist Party election platform."

And in this way individual writers will learn the advantages of group action in the writing of plays. Each group can develop its own playwriting committee. It is best to set aside a regular day and a regular hour for the committee to meet. The meetings should take place every week. Once the activ-

ities of a group are interrupted it is difficult to get it to function again. When each group has an efficient playwrighting department that turns out at least one play a month, the problem of an adequate repertory will be solved.

The Movie "Art"

An analysis by GEORGE LEWIS

Why do millions of workers help to elect politicians to office who are openly known to be stock swindlers, gamblers, grafters, open sponsors of wage-cuts and forced labor, open enemies of unemployment insurance? Why do so many workers vote for Mayor Walker of New York City, for Hoover, for Roosevelt? Why do so many workers still follow the leadership of the American Federation of Labor officials who have with incredible cynicism sneaked wage-cuts over in the mines, railroads and factories?

Obviously a worker who puts his cross mark next to the symbols of the elephant or the donkey or the torch does not say to himself, "I approve of the massacre of the vets, I approve of starvation and forced labor. I approve of the clubbing the unemployed in 'socialist' cities like Milwaukee. I like the capitalist system." Were the issues as clear as that, it is obvious the election results would be quite different.

The capitalist system at its present stage lives, therefore, only by obscuring the issues. A mighty engine of obscurity is the motion picture industry, popularly, and by coincidence, accurately, known as the screen.

The worker who pays his 15 or 25 cents sits for about two hours enjoying the vicarious thrill of being a gangster or bond salesman or some other big or little swindler. For these two hours he forgets that he is the one who is being swindled. And when he goes to the election polls he votes for the Walker and Hoover swindlers. In his American Federation of Labor local he votes, where he is given a chance to vote, for William Green or Matthew Woll or John Lewis or Dubinsky, and all the time he thinks he is voting for himself, that is, for the dream hero created by the motion pictures.

Art is a powerful and subtle weapon. "Scarface", for example, is a movie that pretends to attack gangsters, and many virtuous speeches are made, in which innocent audiences are stirred up to hate "foreigners" and to back vicious deportation bills. But the main purpose of bourgeois art is not forgotten. Gangsters are still painted as "interesting people", the love problems of gangsters are placed to the fore, and the truth about gangsters, that they are capitalists with their legal clothes off, is drowned out.

"Rebecca of Sunnyside Farm" is another interesting method of leading workers by the nose carefully away from political and social problems. Rebecca, a little creature of sunshine and life, leaves the farm where her widowed mother ekes out a miserable existence with six or seven children, and goes to live at the rich mansion of a crabby old aunt. No connection, of course, is drawn between the rich mansion and the dilapidated farm. The whole agrarian problem is solved when Rebecca gets her aunt's consent to her marriage with a young doctor.

Seeing is believing. Workers do not see, in "Rebecca of Sunnyside Farm", the rich aunt, (who has a sound heart at bottom) drawing her sustenance from a mountain of lynchings and foreclosures. For two hours they live a dream life in which they are the rich aunt, they are the Rebecca who solves every problem through marriage, and when they go to the polls they will vote for the rich aunt's system of lynchings and foreclosures. "Forgotten Commandments", and "World and the Flesh", pretend that the entire Russian Revolution, in which a new society of 160 million people has been created, is nothing but a setting for a few sex-obsessed creatures, a hero and a heroine. Workers forget, while they sit in the dark auditorium, that they are the 160 million people, and not the handsome hero or beautiful heroine who are the symbols of dying parasites. They forget that they are not and cannot be parasites, that it is disgusting to be a parasite. They forget it is their blood that is being sucked. So when they go to the polls they vote for bloodsuckers and think they are voting for themselves.

A workers theatre must work to destroy this bourgeois trick. We must give the worker a picture of who he really is. We must show him it is far better to be what he is than to be a grafter like Ex-Mayor Walker, a stock swindler like Hoover, a stool pigeon like Waters, a lowbrow demagogue like Father Cox, a highbrow demagogue like Norman Thomas. The Workers Theatre, if it succeeds in making the worker realize a true picture himself, will go a long way toward establishing that unity among workers which is the first condition for a serious struggle against capitalist hunger and death.

PERMANENT THEATRE ORGANIZED

New York City—

When the Workers Stationary Theatre called its first organizational meeting on Sept. 30, over fifty theatre workers—directors, playwrights, actors, technicians,—signified their willingness to cooperate. A manifesto and an organizational plan were read and discussed. The plans of the Theatre call for classes in scene design, acting and playwrighting, as well as the immediate production of a play that is under consideration.



First Anniversary Pageant of the John Reed Club—Chicago.



First Anniversary Pageant of the John Reed Club—
Chicago.

FLO ZIEGFELD

By MARY VAUGHN

Florenz Ziegfeld, who died recently in Los Angeles while preparing a Los Angeles edition of his Follies to draw the trade of Olympic Games visitors, would be gratified perhaps if he could see the number and variety of the write-ups that his life and work have received; or perhaps, veteran publicity-grabber that he was, he would grumble that it wasn't enough.

The showmen call him "artist", Ex-Mayor Walker calls him a "creative genius", Will H. Hayes says he was a "splendid citizen."

Let's see.

His outstanding theatrical achievement was his annual edition of the Ziegfeld Follies. He got the idea for it from a visit to Paris in 1906 where he saw the Folies Bergere. There he saw a show which projected sex in a way not yet seen in America. The first Ziegfeld Follies appeared in 1907—girls, music, dance, comedy, tableaux, girls—in fact, all the trappings of the Paris Folies except prostitutes in the lobby. The show was a success. From that time on, he developed his showmanship through revues, musical comedies, operettas—a showmanship which was efficient and astute, with an intimate knowledge of his particular show materials and his particular public. The qualities which distinguished him from other producers in the same field were an instinct for lavishness, which was called taste, and a knack for combining hack effects in new ways which was called originality, qualities which became legend on Broadway as the Ziegfeld "magic touch."

Better than anyone else he knew how to display beautiful women in an atmosphere of theatrical glamor. For the fulfillment of that purpose no expense, effort, or exercise of patience was too great, and he is said to have spent hours at rehearsals adjusting a rosette on a girl's shoulder when he could spare hardly a moment to run through a scene for the leading comic. "Glorifying the American Girl" took the form of an increasingly lavish presentation of a mild sexuality made glamorous by surroundings of rich textures, magical lighting, sensual music, dance and tableau, all singing imperiously with the power of money. He knew, too, what sort of publicity counted with his particular audience. In his early days when Anna Held was his star he heard that a famous French beauty bathed in milk. He ordered gallons of milk to be delivered to the Held apartment daily. Then he waited till the milk company sued him for an enormous bill and when the reporters came around he let them photograph his star neck deep and smiling in a tub of milk.

His public swallowed his publicity and enjoyed it, paid him for his entertainments in millions of dollars.

He reached the height of money success and prestige in his own field. As a citizen what use did he make of his money and power?

He owned six Rolls-Royces. He traveled in a private railroad car. He kept a private barber and a succession of private chefs. He played at Monte Carlo and took away a million dollars. He maintained establishments regal in their extravagance. He made and spent fortunes, paid his bills when he had to. "Sue me," was his phrase. He died leaving an estate consisting almost entirely of debts. He had his friendships in the circle of Tammany Hall and among the stock-jobber playmates of his chorus girls.

What is his social significance?

A big wheel in the complex mechanism of the luxury trade, no more, no less—in a class with the high-priced beauticians and maitres-de-hotel. The growing prosperity of a tasteless American bourgeoisie enabled him to deck out and expand the banality of the leg-show until it became for his orchestra customers the essence of the desirability and cost of women, the salve of fatuous wit, the aura of money. In the balconies the less fortunate citizens caught from a distance the fake allure of the Rolls-Royce class, and were filled with hopeful dreams, seeing themselves in the front rows of the orchestra at the next Follies opening, and in possession of that money-power whose essential emptiness, Ziegfeld, notable for his lack of humor, presented in terms of shining illusion. The theatre of Ziegfeld vitiated the petty-bourgeoisie in much the same way as the products of Hollywood continue to vitiate the American proletariat.

With the passing of Ziegfeld there passes also the era of lavish banality on Broadway. Such orchidaceous products as this master conjured up with his "magic touch" require a golden soil, but the golden inundation of Broadway is receding forever.

CARRY THROUGH
THE
SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

500
NEW SUBSCRIBERS BY
DECEMBER 15th

AGIT-PROP GROUPS
FILL YOUR QUOTA
SUBSCRIBE TO WORKERS THEATRE

SOLIDARITY DRIVE ORGANIZED

SOLIDARITY COMPETITION . . .

500 NEW SUBSCRIBERS BY DECEMBER FIFTEENTH

This means:

that 500 more workers, students, artists, sympathizers, will be regularly informed about the ideas and activities of the workers theatre movement; that we win 500 more friends; that we win 500 more active forces for our constructive work towards a new theatre.

That we cancel the financial difficulties which kept "Workers Theatre" from appearing on time every month. "Workers Theatre" **must** appear regularly. Because the workers theatre groups need it regularly for plays, for technical advice, for exchange of experience, for theoretical clarification. Because everybody interested or busy in theatre needs it **regularly** for full information on the revolutionary theatre as well as on the economic, political, and artistic aspect of the bourgeois theatre.

Do You Realize:

the importance of "Workers Theatre!" Then it is your duty to help keep it up and build it. There is no possible doubt that we can reach our aim. The quota we have set is low. We must surpass it. All that is necessary is your **solidarity and cooperation.**

THE PRIZES ARE:

1. A TYPEWRITER or BOOKS VALUED AT 25 DOLLARS for the organization that sends in the highest average number of subscriptions per member.
2. BOOKS or A SCHOLARSHIP IN THE WORKERS SCHOOL, VALUED AT 10 DOLLARS.
(The collection can be selected by the winner.) for the individual reader who sends in the highest number of subscriptions.
3. BOOKS or A SCHOLARSHIP IN THE WORKERS SCHOOL, VALUED AT FIVE DOLLARS.
for the individual reader who sends in the next highest number of subscriptions.
4. A LENIN STATUE or A BOOK VALUED AT FIVE DOLLARS
for the subscriber whose subscription number will be drawn as the lucky number.

SPECIAL REWARD FOR PROMPTNESS

A LENIN STATUE each for the individual reader and the organization with the highest number of subscriptions on November 1st.

It Works This Way:

Every reader must participate in the competition. **THIS MEANS YOU!**
Every reader must act immediately. **THIS MEANS YOU!**

Every reader who is not a subscriber must send in his or her subscription—
Today. **THIS MEANS YOU!**

Your own new subscription counts in the competition.

Work systematically. It saves time. And brings better and quicker results. Don't wait for subscribers. Look for them and approach them. There are many prospects among your fellow workers, relatives, friends, colleagues, among your neighbors, and members in your club, and organization. Don't work mechanically. Don't just ask for a subscription. Explain the importance of the magazine. **Show the Magazine,** and demonstrate the interesting features (pictures, plays, news, reviews, etc.) **Always carry a copy of the magazine.**

Send in each subscription immediately. Quick action is needed. (There will be a special reward for promptness.)

TERMS:

1. Each reader can participate in the Solidarity Competition.
2. Each participating organization must send in not later than Nov. 1st a statement indicating their membership on Oct. 1st and the quota of subscriptions set by the membership.
3. Subscriptions sent in by members of organizations will be listed for the organization as well as for the individual members.
4. All subscriptions arriving not later than Nov. 1st, (from the Eastern and Mid-Western States) and Dec. 3rd (from the Western States and Canada) will be counted.
5. The names of the winners and the next 10 most successful readers and organizations will be published in the Jan. issue of "Workers Theatre."

STRENGTHEN "WORKERS THEATRE"!

ACT AT ONCE

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW
BE THE WINNER**

500 New Subscribers by December 15th



500 New Subscribers by December 15th



THE SELLOUT

By J. S. [REDACTED]

(An election campaign play for outdoors.)

Character:

Norman Thomas (THO.), Auctioneer.

Two other Socialists, as criers, whose names can be changed to suit local conditions.

The props consist of a big teething ring, which may be cut out of paste board, lettered "Socialist Unemployment Compensation Program", a big bottle, also out of paste-board, lettered "Bill Librolax, and some broad strips of cloth or paper. (Two Socialists step forward.)

TWO CRIERS:

Bargains! bargains! bargains! bargains!
Step in closer, folks and see,
Everything is almost free,
Every thing is fresh and nice,
We will sell at any price.

Come right over, don't be bashful,
If you're somewhat short of cash,
We'll accept a small deposit.

Bargains! Bargains! New and old,
Everything here must be sold.
We sell cures for old and young
Buy right here, folks, don't get stung.

A cure for unemployment,
A cure for corns and bunions,
A salve in a jar for imperialist war,
A cure against militant unions.

And when it comes to crisis, boys,
That's where we specializes, boys,
Just use our "Thomas-Hilquit Drops"
Kick up your heels and turn about,
Zip! It's off because it's out!

Our laxatives are gentle, mild.
The capitalists are simply wild.
They do not pinch, they do not gripe,
Communism's dynamite!

We also have a cure for secret diplomatic notes,
A cure for beg-bug bites, for motes,
And all we ask is give us votes.
Bargains! Bargains! Don't be shy.
Step right over, folks, and buy,
All our cures are fresh and nice.
We'll close out at any price.

Now, please don't go folks, stay right here,
We'll introduce our auctioneer.
Bargains! Bargains! Bargains! Bargains!
Step right over, folks, and hear.

(Enter Thomas)

THO.: Ladies and gentlemen, fellow-citizens, and also my

dear fellow workers. I guess you all know who I am. I am no stranger in these parts. But in order to refresh your memory, I am Norman Thomas, of Thomas, Hilquit, Hoan, Noske, and McDonald, Inc., international jobbers and auctioneers, specializing in sociological and economic remedies and cure-alls. Meet me, folks, meet me. Step in closer and let's get acquainted for our mutual benefit. Just at present I am closing out a magnificent lot of remedies, brand new, new, practically new, almost new, slightly used and aged in the wood. But all good, all absolutely guaranteed to be harmless, and all carrying the stamp, trade mark, patent numbers, inscriptions, and directions of Thomas, Hilquit, Hoan, Noske, McDonald, Hindenburg, Inc., international jobbers and renowned auctioneers of sociological economic patent remedies and cure alls. All absolutely guaranteed and absolutely pure, carrying the stamps, trade marks, patent numbers, inscriptions, directions, instructions, and testimonials of Thomas, Hilquit, Hoan, Noske, McDonald, Hindenburg, and Hitler, Inc. Step in closer, yes-sir-ee. Now folks, we're right within the law and can proceed.

And remember, folks, if there's anything you don't see, ask for it. If you find some of our remedies a bit too strong, we'll add a little bit of water. We aim to please.

We'll fix 'em up to suit the cop,
We'll trim 'em down to suit the clown,
We'll cut across to suit the boss.

A. T.: So don't be bashful, have no fear.
Just crowd closer, folks, and hear,
Everything is gentle, mild.
Nothing that might harm a child.

THO.: Very well, Mr. _____, hand me our 1932-1. Thank you.

First of all, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to introduce to you our unemployment compensation pacifier. This, I must say, with pardonable pride, is a most useful and ornamental product. I have introduced this product, in courteous and refined private conferences, of course, to some of our most solid and esteemed citizens, such as Governor Roosevelt, Jimmy Walker, Hamilton Fish, etc., and it is a matter of public record that it has won their enthusiastic respect and approval.

Now, if one of you ladies or gentlemen will kindly volunteer to come up to the platform, I will be glad to give you a free demonstration. Won't someone please step up? Now, now, there's no case to be shy, folks, I know that many of you need this particular treatment. This is a rare opportunity.

Well, do I hear any volunteers?
How about you, fellow worker. You look like a very good subject. You're unemployed, aren't you?

WOR. IN AUDIENCE: Yes.

THO.: Then why don't you step up?

WOR.: Oh, I don't know. I tried all sorts of phony medicines, and . . .

THO.: Ah, my dear fellow worker, then you are just the man we want. Now, now, don't argue. Just try it once and be convinced. That's right. Step right up this way.—Now here, ladies and gentlemen, is the way it works.

THO.: Are you unemployed?

WOR.: Yes.

THO.: Are you hungry?

WOR.: Yes.

THO.: Are your wife and children starving?

WOR.: Yes.

THO.: Do you sometimes feel a spirit of rebellion rising up in you at the abuses of this capitalist system (you see, I am a Socialist and therefore can well understand how you must feel at times). You do, don't you?

WOR.: Yes.

THO.: Well, here is the idea—don't shout, don't demonstrate, don't fight, but—now watch me closely, ladies and gentlemen—put this unemployment compensation pacifier in your mouth—thusly—and chew on it with all your might—that's the idea—concentrating at the same time on beautiful and edifying constitutional thoughts. Now, listen closely; ladies and gentlemen. Are you hungry?

Are you homeless?

Are your wife and children starving?

(Worker tries to speak, but can't.)

THO.: You see, ladies and gentlemen, it works! It works! There you have it. No noise, no fire-works, no demonstrations. A refined, peaceful and absolutely legal solution to the unemployment insurance problem.

No use our gentle pacifier,

Fellow workers, buy her, buy her.

And if you want unemployment insurance,

Do not demonstrate or fight,

They'll hand it to you. At least they might.

Mightn't they?

OTHER TWO: Why, sure they might.

A. T.: So use our gentle pacifier,

Fellow workers, buy her, buy her.

Do not demonstrate or fight.

They'll hand it to you. At least they might.

THO.: All right, Mr. ———, have it wrapped up nicely for the gentleman and give him our most special discount.

(Exit worker.)

And bring me one of our 1932-2. That's right.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, and fellow workers, let me acquaint you with our world famous patented remedy, Civil Librolax. This, as you may guess, is a cure, an unswerving cure, for all forms of civil and political oppression. A soothing, effective and most democratic preparation, guaranteed absolutely legal and highly approved by Matthew Woll, Mulrooney, and the Department of Labor.

Just a few words of explanation, folks, as to the use and effectiveness of this product.

All oppressive measures, and all forms of political terror, you must know, are a direct result of social conflict. A most deplorable state of things. Now, ladies and gentlemen, follow my explanation closely.

Who, may I ask, starts social conflict? Those, of course, who are dissatisfied with things as they are. Those who start strikes, demonstrations, hunger marches, bonus expeditions, anti-lynching campaigns, and the like. It is very obvious that these, therefore, these Communists, these Reds, are the people who are directly responsible for some of the most outstanding examples of political terror. They, by their militant fighting tactics, by their habit of demanding things, are actually, as you can see, guilty of inciting to acts of terror the otherwise quiet and gentle Hoovers, Doaks, Fishes, Mulrooney, etc.

Now, my good friends, you will probably ask where does Civil Librolax come in. Well, I must again ask for a volunteer from the audience (Pointing to worker in audience). How about you, my good fellow? May I offer you a free treatment?

WOR.: Sounds like a lot of boloney to me, but I'll take a chance, if it is as good as you say.

THO.: My dear man, let me assure you that it's even better. Just step up here and try it out, free, and without any obligation whatsoever. That's it, thank you, my dear fellow, thank you. (Worker ascends platform.) And now, my friend, let me ask you a few questions, and please answer loudly, so that all these people can hear you.

Are you by any chance satisfied with things as they are?

WOR.: Hell, NO! I think that things as they are are pretty lousy!

THO.: Fine. Fine. I think you will make an excellent subject.

WOR.: And what's more, I think that all the workers should get together and kick up a fine row. The way the bosses are running things won't get us workers anything. I think . . .

THO.: (Very anxiously) Very good. Very good. But don't excite yourself. That will be all now. That's all that's necessary. (To audience) You see, ladies and gentlemen, this worker is obviously in a dangerous frame of mind. Allowed to develop, his ideas might get him into trouble. He might begin to struggle for his rights. This might arouse the resentment of our guardians of law and order, and result in political oppression. He might be deported, jailed, or—only God knows what.

What you need, my good man, is a good dose of Civil Librolax—the miracle medicine that never fails. This remedy comes in two forms, applied internally as a sleeping draught, applied externally as a porous plaster, it will exert a most salutary and soothing effect upon you. Now, watch closely, and see it work. (He applies remedy, winding strips of cloth and paper around worker, so as to blind and gag him. Worker appears doped and helpless.) You see, ladies and gentlemen, it works perfectly.

I ask you, my good friends, to gaze upon this worker. Just look at him. Would any of the authorities trouble to arrest him, to club him, to deport him? The man is obviously safe and so are our civil liberties. (Shout) CIVIL LIBROLAX FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES!!!

So—paste it over mouth and nose,

It will induce a sweet repose,
Paste it over ears and eyes,
It soothes, it quiets, it pacifies.
So paste it over mouth and nose,
It will induce a sweet repose,
Paste it over ears and eyes,
It blinds, it blinds, it stupifies.

A. T.:

THO.:

Oke! Oke! ———, make up some nice neat packages for the folks and don't forget the discount. Thank you.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, the firm of Thomas, Hilpert, Hoan, McDonald, etc., aims to please. Our best advertisement is a satisfied customer.

Our slogan is happiness in every bottle. Our remedies are compounded with a view to peace, law and order and friendly relations between human beings, nations and classes.

You will therefore not be surprised to learn that we also have a remedy for another great evil—for war. Ladies and gentlemen, no matter how quiet things may seem, no matter how secure we may feel, none of us are at all times intirely immune against the danger of this disease—war. Therefore, without wishing to excite or alarm you unnecessarily on this subject, I will still maintain that it pays to be prepared with a suitable safe and sane preventative. My firm therefore offers to the public just what is needed. Just what you have been waiting for. Children cry for it. Bosses walk a mile for it. Safe and sane, refreshing and delightful. I am happy, my good friends, to offer to the anxiously awaiting public the epoch making anti-war remedy,—SWEET-EMS!!!!

A. T.:

Safe and sane
Tried and proved
90 percent caffeine removed.
Sweet and mild
Safe and sane
Toasted, wrapped in cellophane.

THO.:

Sweetems comes either in pills or liquid form. Rich in vitamin T. N. T. Prepared from refined essence of loss-imperialist sulphur and League of Nations molasses.

A universally approved remedy endorsed by such authorities on the subject as Wilson, McDonald, Brand, Mussolini and others. A dose of Sweetems and you'll forget all about the danger of war. Particularly good for workers, ladies and gentlemen.

Sweetem's cheatem
Just the way to treat 'em.
Feed them League of Nations Dope,
And they're ready when you need 'em.

A. T.:

Oh, 'em, beat 'em
But don't forget to feed 'em
A bit of League of Nations Dope
The best way to cheat 'em.

THO.:

It's impossible, my friends, in the brief time allotted me to demonstrate our complete line in detail, but I believe I have shown you enough to convince you that we have a suitable remedy for every social ailment. You cannot get better bargains any where. Our prices are pleasant, our methods refined and polite. Our mission is your satisfaction, so!

Don't be bashful, don't be shy,
Step right over, folks, and buy
Teething rings and lolly pops,
Librolax and block-aid drops.
Everything is sweet and nice
Everything is half the price
We sell cures of every make
Easy to look at and easy to take.

WORKER FROM AUDIENCE: Fellow workers, it's a fake!
OTHER WORKERS: A FAKE! A FAKE!

(A worker jumps up on platform. The two who had been treated jump up with him, and discard the pacifier and the gags.)

1st W.: Fellow workers. If you listen to this Socialist faker, he will not only sell you fake social cures, but he will sell you to the bosses over and over again, as he has been doing the world over for years.

2nd W.: He will not only sell you teething rings but he will take the teeth out of every real struggle of the working class, of every militant working class slogan.

3rd W.: This fellow is trying to peddle off to the worker the bankrupt stock of the capitalists under fake socialist labors. He is merely handing you the old shop in relabeled bottles.

1st W.: If you look over his stock, you will find there Hoover's wage-cutting stagger system disguised as the shorter work day. You will find there an endorsement of Morgan's vicious block-aid scheme, a scheme designed to disarm the workers' struggle for immediate relief and unemployment insurance. You will find there under a fake pacifist label an endorsement of the war-making League of Nations. You will find there a sneaking approval of terror against revolutionary workers. Every bottle, every jar contains treachery against the workers, the war veterans, the Soviet Union.

2nd W.: These are the Socialist bargains.

A. T.: Bargains! Bargains, meant to hang
Starvation around the workers' neck.
Bargains, bargains, meant to place
Still greater burdens on his back.
Bargains, bargains, to disarm the
Worker in his fight for
Bargains, bargains, to enslave yourself,
Your children and your wife.

1st W.: Bargains, bargains, that betray

2nd W.: Bargains, bargains, that mislead

3rd W.: Republican bargains,

1st W.: Democratic bargains,

2nd W.: Socialist bargains.

ALL THREE: BOSSES BARGAINS!

1st W.: Throw them back into his face.

ALL THREE: The Communist Party sets the pace
In the fight for workers rights,
No fake remedies, BUT—

1st W.: Immediate relief for the workers and poor farmers.

2nd W.: Unemployment insurance at the expense of the bosses and the state.

3rd W.: No discrimination against Negroes or foreign born.

1st W.: Stop political terror.

2nd W.: Stop imperialist war.

ALL THREE: Fellow-workers! Vote Communist!

THE GREAT SHOW

By IRWIN SHAPPIN—Philadelphia, Pa.

A political burlesque in 3 reels

Characters: Speaker (SP), Capitalist (CAP), Chameleon (CHA), Worker (WOR).

("Chameleon" is a reptile possessing the power of changing its color.)

INTRODUCTION

SP.: Comrades, friends and workers, come one, come all!
Hurry, hurry, we will start the show at once!
A brand new show—and what a show!
A show for every occasion, where workers come and go;
For workers of every description,
For boys and girls, for young and old—
And every one that feels the bosses boot upon his neck!
Hurry, hurry, friends and workers,
Hurry, buy your tickets, take your seats;
Hurry, so we'll start at once
And cut the introduction.
Boys and girls, you can't afford to miss it.
It's a show for you and me and our kind:
Those with corns on their hands and feet—
It is very frank and awfully instructive;
It has 3 reels and 3 performers—
Only 3, but my, they look as numerous
As Jimmy Walker's benefactors!
The reels, I must confess, are short,
But, my, my, what a kick they have!
And what a story do they tell!
Hurry comrades, we start the show at once;
It's a shame for anyone to miss it—
Like marriage, it will open our eyes!
Come in, you scrubbers, cleaners or whatever else you do!
Come in, and see them: The clean-cut gents,
Who do everybody's bidding—
But ours—
The clean-cut gents, who know where money can be gotten!
The clean-cut gents who sell to the highest bidder!
Come and see them: The Pharisees,
The great Official and all his lying politicians!
See them all in one: Bosses, tools and henchmen.
The gents who are your friends in November,
And your enemies in December!
Hurry, boys and girls, hurry,
Come and see them "work"—
See them put it over!
With due apologies to our masters
We regret to strain a point,
But workers under 16
Are also allowed to view it.
Hurry, hurry, all you lean and hungry
And bozos of every description,
Hurry, and see the bosses' parties "work"—
It is very, very dignifying.

But very, very edifying—
Only a comedy in 3 reels,
No hankies are needed
For there won't be any tears.
No love or any strong emotion,
But plenty of burlesque with little commotion!
Hurry, hurry, friends and comrades,
Come and see them: Bosses, henchmen, politicians—
See them form a coalition!
Come and get acquainted with their style and method,
But please remember—
Unless you VOTE COMMUNIST in November
These gents will piece you limb by limb in December!
Hurry, boys, for we start the show!
Here is the curtain—
And now, let's see some tricks and stunts!

REEL I—THEY MEET

(CHAMELEON walks in pushing a cart. On the latter there is a box painted black with the following inscription in white: "MY PARTIES.—BIG BUSINESS". CHAMELEON is hatless, dressed in black. The CAPITALIST is wearing a high hat painted in National colors and a dollar (\$) sign painted or pinned on his back. It is plainly seen when he goes to meet CHAMELEON. There is a long table in the foreground)

CAP.: Ah, my dear old friend, welcome! It is good to see you again. Indeed, Chameleon, it cheers my heart; I feel young again—

CHA.: My master is good and generous. These are pleasing words; they fall upon my ears as music—

CAP.: Ah, my good Chameleon, you are the same old rascal, the same old charmer. Your tongue is glib as ever. I can see you haven't rusted a bit. You will serve your master yet—

CHA.: I will serve my master better, because I have the necessary training. Day and night I worked like a slave to sharpen my tongue and wits; now, it's yours for the asking.

CAP.: Excellent, excellent, my Chameleon, you are a most devoted servant. Your talents, I am happy to say, will stand me in good stead. My friend, I'll reward you richly if you help me win this election.

CHA.: I will, my master. Shall we begin?

CAP.: Yes, let's begin. I was waiting for your arrival. (Seats himself at the end of the table on the right, while CHAMELEON remains standing in servile attitude)

CAP.: Gentlemen, I declare this conference open. (Takes out sheet of paper from his bowler hat pocket)

CAP.: Gentlemen, let us have a roll-call. (reads) Republican Party!

CHA.: (Opens the box on the cart, produces a high, black hat, puts it on, bows to CAP. and places it on table nearest CAP.)

CAP.: (reads) Democratic Party!

CHA.: (Produces a derby, puts it on, bows to CAP. and places it next to the Republican high hat)

CAP.: Progressive Party!

CHA.: (Puts on a five-gallon hat and goes through the same procedure)

CAP.: Liberal Party!

CHA.: (Puts on a high hat painted in all colors and goes through the same procedure)

CAP.: Socialist Party!

CHA.: (Puts on either a Cardinal's or a Pope's cap or of any other dignitary that fits his head, and goes through the same procedure. When all hats are placed on table, CHAMELEON bows for the last time and seats himself in the centre within easy reach of any of these hats)

CAP.: (suddenly bursts out) Where is the Communist Party?

CHA.: (Puts on the Cardinal's cap) Master, I am the only radical party so far represented here.

CAP.: Where is the Communist Party?

CHA.: Master, do not aggravate yourself; it's not worth your trouble; its influence is hardly felt—

CAP.: Where is the Communist Party? I want the truth, the whole truth!

CHA.: Master, we regret our failure deeply; it was not possible to bring it here—

CAP.: Why not?

CHA.: It's the party that stands alone; it's the party that will not bargain; it's the party that can't be bought—all our efforts have been in vain!

CAP.: (sadly shaking his head) I thought so— I knew it all along, my friend—That party lays heavy on my heart. Of all the parties THAT ONE won't obey me. Instead, it champions the rabble's cause. Ah, the thought of its rise is killing me. It makes me tremble like a leaf—

CHA.: Master, do not aggravate yourself. We pledge to do all in our power to destroy your enemies, and all those who wouldn't bow their heads to you.

CAP.: Thanks, my friend, the Socialist. Such devotion moves me to tears. You have my approval; henceforth, I shall place all my hopes in you alone. I'll reward you richly if you help me win this election.

CHA.: We will, my master—We pledge!

CAP.: I am very grateful, my friend. Now, gentlemen, let us find an issue. We need an ISSUE that would be universal and that would appeal to all at once; young and old; rich and poor alike. But please remember, whatever we decide, the issue IS clear. We must preserve the System!

CHA.: (takes off the Cardinal's cap and puts on the Republican high hat) Master, I think I have an issue. The shaver that serves his term now is able and devoted. It's true, he is often blundering and weak, as he had shown by routing the hungry rookies, but with a little training before the Show, he might excel even Barnum. Let him pose as a savior of his country. The slogan should be clear and simple: "Let's re-elect him; he saved the country!"

CAP.: An excellent issue, my friend, but not sufficiently catching.

CHA.: (takes off the Rep. high hat and puts on the derby) As I lay asleep the other day to my mind occurred a happy phrase. I'm quite sure it would make a fair for my lord and bring him votes without end. The phrase is very simple: "Let's champion the Forgotten Man!" This point is so elastic that we can

easily get by with election. The man who expects most will never know who was meant by this, anyhow.

CAP.: A very able and apt phrase, my friend, but not sufficiently catching.

CHA.: (takes off derby and puts on the five-gallon hat) Master, I think the voter wants a change. We've broken so many promises that it's high time we changed our methods. For if he should chance to think—we are lost! Master, let us organize another party and draw away the discontented element and confuse them—confuse their minds so they'll never find their way.

CAP.: An excellent idea, my friend, but very risky, very risky!

CHA.: (takes off the Progressive's hat and puts on the colorful one of the Liberal) My Lord, experience teaches us that the way to win elections is to promise all men all things. Jeffersonian doctrines are such: they promise more than they give; they promise something that's dead, in fact—has been dead many years. Why not try it; it might work—If my lord sees danger in my talk, I will venture another suggestion. Now that unemployment is increasing—

CAP.: Hush, hush, my dear, none of that! Don't mention it; it turns my insides—

CHA.: (takes off the Liberal's hat and puts on the Cardinal's cap) Methinks I have an issue, master. It is so universal that my master is bound to like it. Master, let us be generous and big and give them beer and wine and sherry. Let's repeal this nasty Prohibition. It gave us all a headache. Let's repeal it and use it to good advantage.

CAP.: A prophet! A veritable prophet! Thanks, my friend, for helping me find an ISSUE. It is apt and universal. All honor to you, my devoted servant, I shall never forget your services. Gentlemen, let us pay homage to our friend—(the Cardinal's cap is solemnly placed on a chair amid the stage while CAP. and CHAMELEON applaud enthusiastically).

REEL II—THEY CAMPAIGN

(CHAMELEON rolling in his cart with the parties safely tucked in the box. He is now behind a screen and is seen from chest up).

CHA.: Ladies and gentlemen, attention, please! We shall now open our campaign. As there are many parties in the field we cannot help but be impartial. Each and every party will have its say according to the best notions and traditions. First, we'll hear from Lincoln's party. (ducks under screen and puts on REPUBLICAN high hat) Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Republican. I lead the party that Lincoln led, so won't you kindly re-elect me? I have always been sincere in every action. I restored industry; helped the banks; saved the country from radicals and rookies. Won't you show your appreciation and kindly re-elect me? I promise to return all I took from you: home, job, health and peace. (ducks under screen and reappears in the derby) (Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Democrat! You woe me all you possess! It is I who made it for you! I will give you even more yet, but you must vote for me directly like a sport. I promise all you ask for and a lot more;

my heart simply bleeds for you—and all! (ducks under screen and reappears in the five-gallon hat) Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Progressive! I believe in order and in progress. I believe in streets that are swept clean and neat. I believe in ash-cans, spit-oons, cups, mops and brushes, and if you elect me I promise to grant it freely! The country yearns for me to lead it; it cannot do without my leadership; it simply clamors for a well-deserved change! (ducks under screen and reappears in the Liberal's hat) Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Liberal! A chip from the old block so to speak. I believe in a fair and square deal and insist that even thieves should have scruples. Neither do I object to pick your pockets, but I insist on legal process even there. I stand on the Constitution and am against the Revolution. Vote for me and you vote for a rule that will be respected. (ducks under screen and reappears in the Cardinal's cap) Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Socialist! Once, I thought, I ardently believed in socialization, nationalization and outright confiscation. But I find it does not pay at all, and my masters say it'll never work. Socialism, we think, is a perfect failure and therefore, I now ardently believe in co-ordination, co-operation and yellow civilization. I believe in extensive economies and in general but liberal cuts for all. Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you to elect me; I promise wine, beer, sherry and all kinds of drinks for the thirsty!

REEL III—THE "WORKS"

(CAPITALIST at his desk. It is piled high with money which he counts leisurely. Enter WORKER)

CAP.: Who's that? Who are you? What's your business?
 WOR.: I am a worker.
 CAP.: A worker? Ye gods, how come you here?
 WOR.: Nothing can prevent my coming.
 CAP.: This is no language for humble workers.
 WOR.: I do not yield to my oppressors in pride of class.
 CAP.: What's your business? State it briefly.
 WOR.: Are you the man I helped to put in office?
 CAP.: I've always been in office and hope my term will never end.
 WOR.: You certainly have changed. You looked a trifle thinner.
 CAP.: Yes, my Business calls for Form. I always look to good advantage in every national campaign.
 WOR.: 'Um here to remind you of a promise and demand my due.
 CAP.: I don't understand at all—
 WOR.: Our children die of cold and hunger—
 CAP.: You have my heart-felt sympathy.
 WOR.: We cannot stand it any longer!
 CAP.: You must be more patient.
 WOR.: There is nothing more left to us—
 CAP.: Pray and trust in god almighty.
 WOR.: But you promised us salvation—
 CAP.: That was purely oration.
 WOR.: And homes, jobs and food—
 CAP.: A slip of the tongue; I beg your pardon!
 WOR.: What are we to do?
 CAP.: Wait till this depression ends.
 WOR.: There is plenty of money. Look at this.
 CAP.: Sorry, this is for the bankers.

WOR.: No! You'll feed the workers first! You'll feed our wives and children before another cent of this money goes to the bankers' coffers—

CAP.: You are a bolshevik! Get out!

WOR.: We demand it all for the workers!

CAP.: You are defying the law—my law!

WOR.: (threateningly) There are millions behind me—

CAP.: (prostrating himself over the money while pressing button with his left hand) No, you shall not have a cent of this—

WOR.: Then, we'll take it in a body—

CHA.: (rushes in, gun in hand. He is dressed in a military jacket and cap) Did you call me master?

CAP.: Yes, arrest this man at once!

WOR.: (looks at pointed gun and smiles) It's an answer, workers always get when they demand what's due to them. Take care, there are thousands that follow my trail—men and women that will beat you at your own game. The joke, my dears, will be on you when they no longer take that answer!

REVIEWS

COUNCIL OF WORKERS CLUBS

Reviewed by J. Shapiro

The Dramatic contest held by the Council of Workers Clubs at Irving Place on Sept. 24th was easily the high spot of what was otherwise a very successful and thoroughly entertaining evening.

All of the four plays were on the whole very well rendered and aroused enthusiastic response on the part of the audience. What is chiefly to be noted was that one of the plays, "The Red Menace" was an entirely new play that came from the performing group itself while another, "Charity", was brought up to date and revised from the original script for election campaign purposes very successfully also, by the performing group.

This is a highly important factor, indicating a growth in initiative and self which is essential to the development of a real workers theatre movement.

First place in the contest went to the Prolet-Cult in "Charity" both for the performance and for the excellent revision of the script.

Progressive Workers Club took second honor with "The Big Stiff." This performance had however an important short-coming. This play was written some two years ago and should have been changed in a number of details. Workers Theatre groups should remember that a script is not sacred and may always be changed both in line with new social developments and with new production ideas.

A new group, the American Youth Club, performed "The Belt" very commendably and show promise of developing into a fine group. The Concourse Workers in the "Red Menace", showed some live acting and also developed an interesting and original script with some new and useful ideas in it. Their performance unfortunately became very shoddy and undisciplined toward the end. Discipline and a military seriousness in performing is an absolute essential in agit-prop theatre.

Jugoslav Workers Theatre

Reviewed by J. PROKOPEC

The Yugoslav groups are moving. We, too, have broken the ice. In New York we have already a good agitprop group, with 14 members actually participating in agitprop plays. After a lengthy discussion, and against the objection of the older comrades, we got started. Several months ago, our club had an affair, and we had practically no material for the program. Although we had only ten days left, some comrades promised to present one of those "new" plays. Many were against it. Many of our comrades, like some of our Hungarian brothers, thought that the agitprop plays are not "art", or would not be received by our workers as such. Well, we did "Scottsboro" at that affair and the result was amazing to all. It went over so big that at our following meeting it was demanded that we continue with this work. Since then we gave "Scottsboro" and "Vote Communist" twice, and have another booking (in Yugoslav language). We are now rehearsing a Yugoslav mass recitation, produced illegally in that country, in which we have made many revisions; we are starting "Charity" in English, since we have some comrades who speak English well. We are also working on "Hands Off" in Yugoslav.

With the cooperation of the L. O. W. T. and the Bureau of Yugoslav fraction of C. P. U. S. A. our group is putting through measures (through the Radnik, etc.) to get other groups started. We are confronted with a two-fold problem. One is translation, since we have only one comrade doing this and we need many more. The other problem is education and training in the new methods of presentation which are quite different from the old methods, deeply rooted in our groups. For years we had dramatic circles under the guidance of the Party and the Party press. It is well known that long dramas have been the chief attraction at our bigger affairs, and our groups enjoyed a prominent place in the Yugoslav theatre of America, particularly in Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, So. Chicago, St. Louis, etc. But, it was also felt for a long time that something "new" must be developed. The material that we could obtain in our language, after much revising, rewriting, copying, etc., was hardly ever satisfactory from the class point of view. Some of our groups, like those in Cleveland were driven to operas such as "Carmen" and "Traviata", which to be successful taxed our resources enormously.

All our groups are welcoming the change, and I am confident they will all soon start on agitprop plays. They realize that the agitprop Theatre and not the old drama and methods can be the real basis for the future development of the Workers Theatre, as well as a greater and more efficient instrument in our hands in the class struggle. The change, we must realize, cannot come about overnight. Already plans for the winter affairs are based, as in the past, on the old dramas—the traditional attractions. But this does not by any means exclude the possibility of beginning on the new plays, which are particularly adaptable for minor affairs and special features at mass meetings, lectures, etc. We, in New York, are proceeding along these lines and are succeeding well. Through development and training in the new drama, the change must and will come.

Labor's Love Lost

By SAM PEVZNER, International Workers Order

Characters: CAPITAL, the director (D. C.); LABOR, the heroine (LAB.); NORMAN THOMAS, the hero (THO.); CAMERAMAN, the yellow press (CAM.). (The words "yellow press" to be painted on camera so audience can see them.)

Scene:— A movie studio. In the center of the set is a sofa upon which the heroine, LABOR, reclines. On one side stands the cameraman with his hand on the camera. On the other side stands Director Capital and the hero, Norman Thomas. (The Director holds a small megaphone.)

D. C.: Now understand, Norman, you love Labor. (Pointing to girl on sofa) You have courted her for years. You haven't seen her for a long time, because you've been busy preaching sermons to Old Dame societies on the brutality of the Soviets toward old-maids whose stomachs can't stand black bread. You've been working hard—all the time, dreaming of how you love Labor. You have yearned to come to her. You enter this room, see Labor sitting there. You rush to her, embrace her, and kiss her passionately. Do you understand? (Norman Thomas nods his head in assent, rather dreamily.)

D. C.: O. K. Now go outside and come in on the signal. Ready camera. (Norman Thomas goes out) Shoot! (signals Thomas to come in) All right now, Thomas, stop by the threshold. Hesitate a moment, see Labor sitting there. Wait, watch for a minute, let the light of love enter your eyes. That's it. Labor, you recognize him, leap to your feet and extend your arms. Good! Now rush to her, Norman. (Norman Thomas has been following Capital's directions with a sort of listless indefiniteness. He walks lifelessly over to Labor, takes her into his arms weakly, and plants an awkward, lifeless kiss on her cheek)

D. C.: No! Camera cut! No! For heaven's sake, Thomas, can't you make love to Labor so people will think you mean it. What do you think people will say about the pictures of Director Capital if you show them you don't give a damn about Miss Labor! Brace up and show some manliness! What the hell do you think this is, a church service? And kiss her on the mouth, not on the cheek. Forget your Sunday school; you're working for capital now. All right, man, now try again—and do it right, will you? (Norman Thomas nods head in assent. He leaves again.)

D. C.: All right, Miss Labor. Ready camera! Shoot! (Pause. Cameraman grinds away. Norman Thomas comes in on Director's signal. He hesitates again, then slowly walks to Labor) Now kiss her passionately. (Thomas kisses Labor as before—only on the lips this time)

D. C.: (Throws megaphone on floor enraged.) No! No! No! —you blockhead. What kind of a Socialist are you? Even the clam, Heywood Brown, could play better than you. Please don't be a comedian, too. Labor must be duped into loving and trusting you, get me? How can she do it if you show your real feeling like that? Put some pep into it, Norman. This picture

must be a success or all of my business is wrecked. At all cost Capital must be preserved if you want a job. What would you do if I went out of business? You'd be out in the cold. So come on, and show some real acting. Enter this room with eager expectancy. Rush to Labor as if you really love her. Grab her and kiss her with passion, understand—with passion! Here, let me show you.

(Director Capital leaves the room, then enters again and enacts the scene with gusto. After he kisses Labor passionately, she gives him a reproachful look and turns away. He apologizes.)

D. C.: I beg your pardon, Miss Labor. I know it isn't my job to make advances here, but Thomas is so dumb that I gotta show him. Excuse me, it's all bluff—so you needn't mind. (Turns to Norman Thomas.)

Now you do this scene—and do it right! (He resumes director's position with megaphone. Thomas leaves again, enters and re-enacts scene with as lifeless a spirit as before.)

D. C.: Stop! Cut! Damn you, are you made of stone? (Faces up and down) What a bum actor you are. How in hell can you fool anyone with that acting?

Why, the Socialists over in Germany did a better job than you. You must be a cripple if you can't save the business of Capitalism now. You show as much love to Miss Labor as the Communists show J. P. Morgan, our biggest stockholder. You are positively disgusting! What the hell is the matter with you? DON'T YOU LOVE LABOR?

THO: (With a misitorial angelic tone and demeanor) It's YOU I love!

BLACKOUT (lights out in a flash)

NOTE: This sketch must be played with zip and a sense of satire, but do not let it become sloppy burlesque. The cameraman should be a dopey looking individual, with mouth wide open, and a sappy look. When the Director yells "Cut" to him he should pull out a stream of toilet paper, which should be lodged in the improvised camera, and cut it with a huge scissors, if you have one. This should be repeated every time the director yells "Cut". If the director can improvise better lines it is O. K. to do so. The other characters, however, should not speak except as in this script.



A Correction . . .

To the National Executive Committee of the L. O. W. T.
Dear Comrades:

In the June-July issue of **WORKERS THEATRE** there was published a continuation of Comrade Bonn's report for the Dram-Buro on the "Situation and Tasks of the Workers Theatres in the U. S. A." We wish here to point out that the section on the "History of Our Workers Theatre" is incorrect on a number of points as to the part played by the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the Workers International Relief.

Thus, regarding the request of the International Workers Dramatic Union that the Cultural Department of the Workers International Relief undertake to organize the American Section of the International, the published report says: "The Workers Laboratory Theatre at that time already affiliated with the W. I. R., was too busy with its own organizational problems. But with the strengthening of its organizational, political, and artistic foundation, it became more and more conscious of the responsibility toward the whole movement, handed over to it by the I. W. D. U."

The report then continues: "But the group only half understood its task. Instead of building the foundation for central organization by preparing and mobilizing the various groups, it established itself as a kind of clearing house and information center, for all workers theatres in this country. Though these activities did not and could not result in the necessary centralization and organization of the workers theatres, its achievements should not be underestimated. By establishing contacts on a national and international scale, by spreading the idea of the political importance of the Workers Theatre, it laid the foundation for the coming more successful attempts."

This "historical record" is incorrect, as a brief summary of some of our early activities shows:

The Workers Laboratory Theatre had already early in 1931 established contact with most of the English-speaking as well as some of the foreign-language workers theatre groups in the United States. But the WLT did not limit itself to formal "contact". In line with our policy from the beginning, we sent copies of our plays as well as long letters of organizational advice to groups and to individuals interested in starting groups.

The WLT, in April, began the publication of the monthly mimeographed magazine, **WORKERS THEATRE**. This was the most important single step it stimulating the growth of the American workers theatre up to the time of the National Conference. The magazine and our correspondence were not simply a clearing-house, but resulted definitely in the politicalization of existing "labor" dramatics as well as in the formation of many new groups, particularly English-speaking groups, which are very important for this country and of which there were very few up to the time of the appearance of **WORKERS THEATRE**. In the published report, the magazine is mentioned only casually, in spite of the great importance.

Scene from "GHANDI", played by the
SOLIDARITY PLAYERS, BOSTON.



CORRESPONDENCE

The WLT assigned dramatic organizers to a number of local workers clubs. Several English-speaking dramatic groups were established. Though most of them were unable to continue when the WLT had to withdraw its organizers for the summer nevertheless interest in the workers theatre was greatly stimulated. Some of these clubs have since managed to establish English-speaking theatre groups again.

The WLT did not centralise the groups immediately because there were then few groups to centralise, and hardly any English-speaking groups. Barely a handful of groups then knew or cared anything about the agit-prop methods of political theatre. But we consciously undertook the necessary preliminary work.

The WLT had actually undertaken to establish an American Section of the IWDU, and was definitely getting the work of consolidation and centralization under way. In the June 1931 issue of **WORKERS THEATRE**, which was still being published solely by the WLT, there appeared an article, "Consolidation of the English-speaking Theatre Movement", which was a definite call by the WLT for the formation of a central organization to include all workers theatre groups (though the title refers to English-speaking groups only). In that same issue was also published the original letter from the IWDU, and directly under it, a notice that the WLT had accepted the call to consolidate the American section, and laying down the first steps.

We had also written already to a number of groups asking them to affiliate. In the July 1931 issue of **WORKERS THEATRE** there was published a letter from the Rebel Players of Los Angeles announcing that they had "voted to affiliate with the Workers Theatre movement now being organized thru your organization." These first definite steps were interrupted by the June 14 Cultural Conference, out of which came the broader Dram-Buro, which then took up its assigned task of forming a central organization. In this task, the WLT gave full cooperation.

Comradely,

Workers Laboratory Theatre of the
Workers International Relief, Executive Com.

OUR WIDENING FRONT

continued from page 4

ten and better played. We must take to the streets and parks more and more, when the weather permits, so as to reach new workers. We must begin to play at factory gates, co-operating with the revolutionary trade unions. And to accomplish a substantial part of the work we face, we must systematically and constantly spread **WORKERS THEATRE**.

The economic crisis is still deepening, despite all the production prosperity ballyhoo. The bourgeois theatre is reflecting the critical condition. Unemployment in the USA is around the 10,000,000 mark. Only the Soviet Union has no unemployment, and only the Soviet theatre (like its brother workers theatres in capitalist countries) is creative, dynamic, and growing. The shadow of another imperialist war is constantly falling. Large-scale fighting is going on in Manchuria and South America. Fascism and the workingclass are facing each other in Germany. Today, more than ever, the working class in its fight for life needs every weapon it can command. It is for us in the workers theatre to make it as strong a weapon as possible.

Dear Comrades:

Our proletarian Theatrical Group "Grupe Teatral NOSOTROS" is very anxious to get in contact with other similar groups in America and other countries and begs you to advise us how to do it.

We have about sixty members, mostly workers, and a few intellectuals and will shortly produce "HINKEMANN", by Toller and "CYANKALY", by Friederich Wolf. We are of course, very poor but have a great revolutionary enthusiasm which is surely the main thing in these organizations.

We are sending you our weekly **NOSOTROS** regularly and would like to get your magazine in exchange. We are too poor to buy it and are very anxious to get a number and read it.

With revolutionary greetings
Nosotros

Revolutionary greetings to our comrade-players in Spain! We are eagerly waiting for their magazine. We have, of course, mailed immediately copies of **WORKERS THEATRE**, and other material that can be of interest to the group. A more detailed report of the work of our Spanish comrades will follow in a subsequent issue of the magazine.

To the Editors:

To the **WORKERS THEATRE** from the **EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE OF VASSAR COLLEGE**, greetings.

We have just had the first year's copies of **WORKERS THEATRE** bound, and although we congratulate you on your new make up, we still feel indebted to those first mimeographed copies.

I sat down and read the June-July-August issues from beginning to end. Every page is alive. The plays are gaining in technique, and **SOMETHING FOR NOTHING**, by Tom Thomas, suggests a whole new field of subject matter.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, frequent disagreement, I read with keen interest Alfred Saxe's reviews of Broadway plays. His analysis of **MERRY GO ROUND** (the most important play of the year—will it have a chance at the Pulitzer prize?) is astute, especially his explanation of the dialectic use of the Times Square news sign, which is in accord with Eisenstein's use of landscape in his Mexican film.

I am enclosing names of people who might be interested in **WORKERS THEATRE**.
Cordially yours,
Hallie Flanagan

To the Editors:

I do not seem to have received either the June or the July number of **WORKERS THEATRE** to which I have subscribed. As I value these numbers very much and want to keep, as far as possible, a complete file of the **WORKERS THEATRE**, will you please mail me as soon as possible copies of the June and July numbers. I enclose a dollar to cover the expense of this. Please keep the change to repay you for your trouble and as a slight additional contribution to the fine work you are doing. If you care to send me any extra copies of the last four numbers, I should be glad to take them with me to the Soviet Union when I sail next Wednesday to show them there the excellent work that you are doing now that your magazine comes out in printed form.

Cordially yours,
Harry Dana

GROUPS IN ACTION

ON AUGUST 14, 1932, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED FRONT CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

Hell-Oh Fellow Workers! The Workers Laboratory Theatre performed in Bronx Park on the above date. We were supposed to go on at 4 P. M., so with our usual promptness we started on our journey at five after four. After going past the wrong station and a heel-blistering walk of fifteen blocks or more we arrived on or at the scene of our performance. Right at the start we had trouble. A cop, I believe he was a rookie, I may be wrong, approached us and told us that we were forming a crowd and acting disorderly. The leader of the W. L. T. and the W. I. R. at this juncture had the crowd sit down. The limb of the law walked away mumbling to himself. The play started. Comrade Topa started speaking his lines. The cop returned. This time it seems that we were holding a play without a permit. Why, sure, that guy is on a stage (which consisted of a folding chair) and had on a costume (which consisted of a high hat and a dollar sign). This point was obviated by having the Comrade remove the high hat and the dollar sign, and standing on the ground. The cop again removed himself saying that he was not sure if this was right and he was going to call the station. VOTE COMMUNIST, that great epic, was given. After the play some nut tried to disrupt the meeting by shouting profane language at the top of her voice. She was quieted down by some of our sympathizers. The group then gave "Scottsboro". After this a comrade got started on a really splendid speech with a view of selling some of our magazines. All of a sudden, who should appear but three formidable looking policemen. Another comrade was in a tight spot. There she was, holding incriminating evidence,—a whole bunch of WORKERS THEATRE magazines in her arm. But she put them on the ground and then parked her shapely body on top of them. As another comrade once said, "We've got some clever ——— in this group." The cops circulated among us and who should be the object of their mission but Comrade Topa. "We want that fat guy with the high hat and the dollar sign. He's the ringleader." Topa was sitting so close to them that he could have reached out and touched any one of the three cops that were looking for him. It seems that a stool pigeon had been seen talking to the cops. And that was that.

A very pleasing feature of the affair was the militancy of the crowd. A speaker asked them if they were going to stand for the police terror that would not let them enjoy themselves in a public park on their only day of rest. They shouted back their defiance of the whole police force in a manner that would have warmed the cockles of Wm. Z. Foster's heart.

A suggestion. When next we play again, it is best not to carry anything that would serve to identify you. Therefore, if any arrests are made and it is the desire of the comrades to give false names there will be nothing to incriminate them. I hope you like this, if you don't

THE LOS ANGELES BLUE BLOUSE GROUP

The Blue Blouse group of Los Angeles, presents plays regularly at street meetings. "Charity", "Three of a Kind", Liber-

ty in U. S. A.", and "Vote Communist", have especially proved to be well adapted to street corner settings. During the past month the Blue Blouses have also participated in banquets, mass meetings, and picnics; in each case they have contributed to the success of the affairs through their entertaining way of bringing life to the problems and tactics of the working class movement. The organization is becoming well known and is doing active work in this city and in the many suburban towns.

The membership of the group is limited to ten in order to insure the maximum mobility and unity in work (another group is being organized). The group is affiliated with the Rebel Players, a workers dramatic organization of this city. Besides dramatic work the membership carries on educational activities to train them for intelligent leadership; extemporaneous speaking, Marxian studies, and current topics are on the agenda for every weekly meeting.

The players always appear in jeans and blue blouses; if costumes are employed they are simple and effective, for example, in the play "Charity", the boss wore a high hat, the salvation lass a black cape, while the Red Cross official used only a white head band with a red cross on it.

We have found through experience that the best time to go on at street meetings is near the beginning of the program, as theatricals are excellent means of attracting crowds of workers; they add interest and arouse thought on the part of the audience. It is, of course, best to be prepared with two plays, the second must be strong enough to create a militant climax to the meeting. Plays of the nature of "Vote Communist" are excellent material for election campaigns, they can easily be given at street corners and factory gates. The Blue Blouses are prepared at all times to enact such plays, and give them at short notice.

Comrades, the Blue Blouses have become an integral factor in the revolutionary movement of this city. Blue Blouse activities are necessary everywhere workers go; let us build a united workers dramatic front. Let us hear of your activities.

NEWS and NOTES . . .

THE VANGUARD YOUTH THEATRE OF NEW YORK added fourteen new members to their ranks within a very short period of time. Recently these young players, most of them between the ages of 10 and 14, performed "Helping the Strike" at an affair given in honor of a Mexican Pioneer who was visiting New York City. The Vanguard Youth Theatre has decided to become a member of the I. O. W. T.

PHILADELPHIA SECTION—Though some of the groups are not working during the summer, the section as a whole is keeping up its activities. Two Pioneer groups and two I. W. O. Youth dram groups have been organized, and two other groups—one affiliated with the W. I. R. and the other with the Friends of the Soviet Union, are in a process of organization. The John Reed Club Dramatic Group, as the most advanced group of the Philadelphia Section, gives the existing groups valuable organizational assistance and artistic aid.

THE ARTEF IS AT PRESENT CARRYING ON A CAMPAIGN through the mass organizations for 10,000 new members. A

membership subscription is 50 cents, and the member gets 25 percent reduction of all tickets and is admitted to all other cultural activities of the Artef (lectures, play-reading, etc.) The theatre will open at the end of October with a play celebrating the 15th anniversary of the October Revolution. The second production will be a play about Negro life in the South, "Hold the Fort", by Chaver Paver.

PROSPECT WORKERS CLUB DRAM GROUP give a fine performance of "Scottsboro" and "Vote Communist" on Aug. 20. They are now preparing "Why", an anti-war play by I. Rom. This they will produce at an affair of the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League.

BORO PARK WORKERS CLUB DRAM GROUP performed "Vote Communist" at an affair run by their own club. For the coming Jewish holidays, they are preparing an anti-religious play.

CONY ISLAND WORKERS CLUB DRAM GROUP performed for the East Side Workers Club. They performed "Deportation", "Vote Communist" and rehearsing "Mr. Gott Is Not In", an anti-religious play.

I. W. O. GROUP, BRANCH 6, was organized during the latter part of August. The group consists of about 16 comrades. They will have their first appearance at the end of September, when they will perform "Unite and Fight".

ELECTION CAMPAIGN WORK IN THE NEW YORK SECTION is well under way. Agitprop groups are performing election plays at affairs of mass organizations and at outdoor meetings. The first call that the New York Dram Council received from the District for a group to perform at a street meeting was filled by the Workers Laboratory Theatre agitprop group. Since then, two other groups, the Prolet-Buehne, English Section, and the Red Players, have also performed at open air election campaign meetings held under the auspices of the Communist Party and the various revolutionary mass organizations.

RED RIOT NIGHT, THE FIRST THEATRICAL NIGHT OF THE NEW YORK SECTION of the L. O. W. T. held at the Coney Island Workers Center, went over with a bang. The participating groups, the German Prolet-Buehne, The Training Course Group, the New Dance Group and The Workers Lab. Theatre, "showed their stuff" and helped to make the affair one complete, hilarious and riotous success and set a standard of quality. The proceeds of the affair went to bolster up the finances of "Workers Theatre".—And by the way, don't fail to see the W. L. T. put over the "Political Band Wagon". It's a great show!

The New York Section started a campaign to better the work of the theatre groups both artistically and technically. In line with these the section arranged the following:

1. A vocal class by Com. Noskin, a capable comrade in this field. The class started on Wednesday, September 28th, at the Workers Centre, 50 E. 13th St. and will continue every Wednesday evening at 8.30.

2. Lectures and performances at Dram Council meetings. The first one will be given by Comrade V. J. Jerome on Monday, October 17th, at the Dram Council Meeting.

The New York Section plans a pageant for November 7th. N. Y. Section groups should be ready when called to help in this pageant.

The Section also plans an affair for Workers Theatre Magazine in the Bronx. The time and place will be announced soon.

THE SCANDINAVIAN BLUE BLOUSES have been in existence eight months, and in spite of recurrent hardships, when the membership dropped to only six, the group continued to work, and is at present actively functioning, and has a membership of about 20.

The Scandinavian Blue Blouses are participating in the election campaign, and have several agit-prop plays on their repertory. They have travelled to Bridgeport and Hartford where they played before as many as 450 people and were given a fine ovation.

The Brooklyn Scandinavian Group gave a three act play, "De Hemlosa", which was very successful.

On Sunday night, November 13th, the Scandinavian Blue Blouses intend to have a Theatre and Vaudeville Night, at the Finnish Hall, 15 W. 126th Street, N. Y. C. Half of the proceeds will go towards building up "Workers Theatre." Both sections of the group, Brooklyn and Manhattan, have sent in their applications for membership to the L. O. W. T.

A COURSE ON THE REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE is being given by the Workers School in conjunction with the L. O. W. T. The course will include the study of the theoretical foundation, the history, tasks, political problems, methods of work and technique of the Workers Theatre. It is a laboratory course, with members of the class participating in collective play-wrighting, play-directing and review-writing.

The class in Revolutionary Theatre will take place on Monday nights, from 8.40 to 10.10 P. M., during the Fall term of the Workers School, with Comrade J. E. Bonn, General Secretary of the L. O. W. T. instructing.

THE CHICAGO SECTION OF THE L. O. W. T. was the first section to respond to the call for the Olympiade Fund, filling its quota almost immediately, and acting with the same promptness in sending the money to the Olympiade Committee in care of the National Office, of the L. O. W. T.

THE ENGLISH DRAM SECTION OF THE BRIDGE PLAZA WORKERS CLUB was organized a short time ago. They have given "Scottsboro" for their own club and for the Progressive Cultural Youth Club. They are now working on the play "Vote Communist."

THE DRAM GROUP OF THE JOHN REED CLUB OF MILWAUKEE, very recently organized, rehearsed "I'll Tell You How To Vote" for an election campaign affair held on October 2nd.

THE SOLIDARITY PLAYERS OF BOSTON have decided to call a general membership meeting of all dramatic groups in Boston and vicinity some time during the month of October for the purpose of organizing a Dram Council. They themselves have already sent in their application for membership to the L. O. W. T.

The group performed "Tempo, Tempo", on four different occasions, and is at present working on two agit-prop plays, "Three of a Kind" and "Hands Off". They have also had success in the past with the presentation of tableaux on various current events.

The Solidarity Players have promised to give their fullest cooperation to the election campaign work and will soon be ready to perform at election meetings whenever called upon.

BRIGHTON WORKERS CLUB DRAM GROUP is giving performances since the end of August. They are rehearsing now "Vote Communist" and "Unite and Fight", an American play.

BROWNSVILLE WORKERS CLUB DRAM GROUP will appear September 10, at the opening of their club season, in N. Buchwald's play, "Hands Off."

THE LEAGUE ART, JEWISH SECTION OF THE L. O. W. T. was organized in June, 1932 and is composed of the various Jewish workers clubs, Artef, Prolet-Pen, Jewish Writers Federation, etc. The League Art has as its chief task the re-organization of dram groups which disbanded during the summer months, and the organization of new dram groups. There are now 16 Jewish dramatic groups in the New York Section.

The repertory committee has translated a number of plays from the English for the immediate use of the Jewish groups. Original players in Yiddish are being prepared by comrades of the Prolet Pen. The League Art is also carrying on a campaign to organize a workers writers group (non-professional) in order to meet the great demand for plays.

A SHOCK BRIGADE, CONSISTING OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE RED PLAYERS AND THREE MEMBERS OF THE PROLET-BUEHNE, ENGLISH SECTION, was formed when no group was available for a booking at the "Vote Ford" Club in Brooklyn. Realizing the importance of the affair of this new club, 65 percent of the members of which are Negro workers, a few of the most active members of both groups decided to do some shock brigade work. With only one rehearsal, the shock brigade group gave two plays, "Scottsboro" and "Vote Communist". As a result of this performance, the group raised 25 cents for the L. O. W. T. and \$1.00 for "Workers Theatre."

ELORE HUNGARIAN DRAM GROUP, N. Y., is preparing full length plays for several big affairs to be held in the early Fall. The group is planning to organize three agit prop groups during the next few weeks.

THE PROLET-BUEHNE, ENGLISH SECTION, organized during the month of July, has already given 15 performances of "Scottsboro" and "Vote Communist". The group consists of six members, including one Negro worker. Since September 1st, street performances have been given as part of the election propaganda work. Rehearsals take place Saturdays, at 5:30 P. M. at the Workers School, 35 E. 12th Street, N. Y. C. Workers who are not yet affiliated with any theatre group are urged to join the group.

THE REBEL PLAYERS OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, recently gave a performance for the benefit of their own group. Their program included "Mr. God is not in", a one act play by H. Allen, "A Great Deal is Needed", a recitation, by Michael Gold, "I'll Tell You How To Vote", an election review in seven scenes, by H. Eilon, and "Strike", by Michael Gold. Comments from the audience showed, without a doubt, that the Rebel Players presented a fine performance, both from the point of view of entertainment and propaganda.

The Blue Blouse group of the Rebel Players gave its first street performance at a street meeting on August First, where they performed "Three of a Kind". The response from the worker-audience was so enthusiastic, that the group is eagerly looking forward to more street performances. The Rebel Players are arranging a general meeting with all affiliated organizations, for the purpose of planning a joint affair and bringing the workers theatre movement in closer contact with these organizations.

THE I. W. O. JOHN REED YOUTH BRANCH OF CLEVELAND has organized a dramatic group which is rehearsing "Hands Off", for outdoor presentation.

THE I. W. O. YOUTH BRANCH, BALTIMORE, has an actively functioning dram group. They have performed "Ugar Sapp" on three different occasions, and are now rehearsing "The Second Story Man."

GENERAL NEWS . . .

THE REBEL POET IS PREPARING A SPECIAL ANTI-IMPERIALIST NUMBER which will be very widely distributed. In the current issue, the Rebel Poet calls attention to the Workers Theatre Magazine and asks every member of Rebel Poet to support it.

THE THIRD NUMBER OF "THE LEFT", a quarterly review of revolutionary and proletarian art, is ready for the press—116 pages full of interesting material, with art work done by members of the John Reed Club. Among its features will be Aragon's long poem, "The Red Front", translated from the French by E. E. Cummings, the poem that caused Aragon's arrest on a charge of inciting to murder.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS . . .

THE KOPF, FEDERATION OF PROLETARIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OF JAPAN, in view of the August First International Anti-War Day, issued a call to all the proletarian and revolutionary cultural organizations and to the toiling mass of workers and peasants of the world to unite to continue our violent and persistent struggle against the imperialist robber class, the class, that with Japan as a ring leader, has already begun warfare in the Far East.

In the face of the open combat, the Japanese fascist government is pressing the iron heel of brutal oppression harder and harder upon the revolutionary movement and the suffering masses. Scores of militant workers are daily being jailed and persecuted, but this does not phase the growing militancy of the masses in Japan. They call upon us to show the imperialist robbers the strength that lies in the International Solidarity of the Proletariat of the world.

SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY

One of the guests of honor at the 1936 Olympic Games, held in Sunny California this summer, was not listed on the program. The free, white, and American entertainment committee of the Olympics refused to admit Clarence Muse, well-known film actor, into the specially built Olympic Village because he was a Negro. The committee chairman, Norman Manning, told his secretary: "No Negro entertainer will be allowed inside the gates of the Olympic Village." Thus Jim Crow, one of the patron saints of the white ruling class, blessed the Olympics.

BUT YESTERDAY—

The once-famous stage comedienne, Eva Tanguay, was recently reported critically ill, penniless, and facing eviction by the sheriff from her little Hollywood cottage. When such a case comes prominently into the public eye, kind-hearted people often offer help. Our bourgeoisie always tries to salve its conscience in this way—and the press exploits this "goodness". But what of the thousands of lesser Eva Tanguays whom the capitalist theatre casts out to starve—and of whom we never hear?

WELL DONE

The fortieth anniversary of the literary activity of Maxim Gorky was celebrated on September 25 thruout the Soviet Union. Theatres and movie houses everywhere showed productions based on his works. Special editions of his writings were published. The highest literary institute in the Land of the Soviets, Gorky Institute, was established, as were Gorky scholarships in institutions of higher learning. And the city of his birth, Nizhni-Novgorod, has been renamed "Maxim Gorky." The emancipated workers and peasants know how to appreciate those who serve them honestly.

WE HAVE WITH US AGAIN—

The "Actors' Dinner Club," dressed-up Broadway soup-kitchen that was to "solve" the problem of the unemployed actors, is in distress for lack of funds. Theatre workers must be made to realize that only federal unemployment insurance can afford even a slight measure of security.

SHORT AND SWEET

More than half the legitimate theatres of Broadway, on the average, will be dark thruout the new season, according to expert showmen. They're being kind of optimistic, even at that. A further sign of decay is the new rise of burlesque. This is now a wholly degenerate form of theatre, with "strip" and "tease" acts as their only features. Several Broadway legitimate theatres have been taken over by the burlesquers. Progress of (bourgeois) Theatre Art, don'tcher know? . . . Remember Mamoulian, promising young director of the Negro folk play "Porgy"? He is out in Hollywood, big-money paradise of capitalist film Art. Using his talents to turn out such utter trash as Maurice Chevalier's latest feature film, "Love Me Tonight" . . . Add Elmer Rice and Helen Westley to the list of those who have looked upon the Soviet theatre and found it good.

INTERNATIONAL ITEMS

Art for art's sake, Japanese style: With the support of the War Office, a group of actors have formed the Japan Patriotic Actors' League, to present performances that will encourage patriotism among the people. Patriotism meaning in this case (and similarly elsewhere) support for the war policy of Japanese imperialism (as in the butchery of tens of thousands of innocent workers and their families at Chapei). At the same time, the government persecutes the revolutionary Japanese workers cultural federation (KOPJF), including our brother section of the International Workers Dramatic Union With an air of Christian resignation, a Frenchman, Rene Clair, writes in the Paris Tempo, that the theatre as an industry is perhaps doomed to disappear, and the fifty-odd theatres of a capital like Paris will have to be reduced to twenty or ten. Meaning bourgeois theatres, of course. Our comrade Buchwald, who stopped for a little while in Paris on his way to the USSR, writes about the French Workers Theatrical Federation (FTOF) and its constant need for more and more actors, directors, technicians, all functioning on a non-commercial basis.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

or

Art with a capitalist "A"

Among the new plays, with the critic of the N. Y. Times: "Triplets," which was exhibited at the Masque, touches bottom for silliness and ineptitude" . . . In "The Budget," a comedy about the depression, the author "contrives to give his jobless husband employment and a check for eight hundred dollars just before the last curtain falleth" . . . And lookie at this advertisement (also in the Times) of a new play: "A. H. Woods Gives Depression A Knockout! Laughing Days Are Here Again. You Howled At 'Ladies Night.' You Shrieked At 'Up-In-Mabel's Room.' You Yelled At 'Parlor, Bedroom And Bath.' You Screamed At 'Getting Gertie's Garter.' You'll Howl, Shriek, Yell, Scream, When You See 'The Stork Is Dead'—A Spicy Salad With Very Little Dressing." . . . Hotchacha! . . .

WHERE THE WORKERS AND FARMERS RULE

The first play in many years written by Gorky will soon be presented by the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow . . . You may know all about agit-prop theatre, but did you know that there's an AGIT-PROP OPERA troupe functioning? It's a Moscow theatre of young workers. They give performances of operas with portable stagings at workers clubs . . . Five other opera theatres exist in Moscow alone . . . Eisenstein's next film will be a comedy, made in the USSR. Can you imagine what an Eisenstein comedy will be like, can yuh? . . . "Steel", John Wexley's play about the lives of workers, "failed" on Broadway. Now it will be produced in Moscow by the MOSPSP Theatre with its full class significance made clear—and it won't fail there . . . VARIETY reports that Arthur (Harpo) Marx has gone to Russia to appear as guest artist in pantomime with the Moscow Art Players for four weeks—arranged by Max Reinhardt!?! . . . The International Workers Theatre Olympiade that was scheduled for November in Moscow has been postponed to May. This will permit better preparation all around . . . 'S all for now.

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