

CLUBS' HIGH FLOOR

Look Forward to Good Winter; Not Much Dough for Acts, Tho

HOLLYWOOD, Oct. 14.—Outlook for winter night club season here is extremely promising. However, whether there is enough work available to make this sector lucrative for Eastern acts is problematical. Acts that have enjoyed local spots many times still seem to be in demand.

Eastern acts that can play vaude or night clubs can garner around 12 weeks of their stuff in the average. Outside of the Coconut Grove in the Ambassador Hotel and the Biltmore Bowl, there is really no spot paying night club acts any real dough. Once in a while one of the spots on the Sunset Strip books in a name and holds it for some weeks, but such a case is a rarity. Clubs on the Strip have shied from names for some months, due to beating they have taken on numerous occasions when names failed to draw. Trocadero, ace spot on the Strip, which formerly went heavy for talent, is now using only a band.

It was claimed by some bookers that they would welcome new acts offering something a little different. But a strictly vaude or a grooved night club act has little chance to pick up any good money here because of the lack of class spots. Any act that works equally well on a night club floor or in a theater can pick up around 12 weeks booking, and this is only possible

if the acts double between here and Frisco.

One act landed in town, got four weeks at the Biltmore, jumped to Frisco for four weeks at the Bal Tabarin, then an additional four weeks between the Golden Gate and the Paramount Theater. Some acts have come out here from the East strictly on speculation and wound up with 20 weeks' work.

There is a general feeling here that night club business is on the upturn. The managers of one of the largest local nighteries say grosses are 20 per cent higher than the same period last year.

There is also a general feeling that (See **COAST CLUBS** on page 19)

Treasurers Present Five-Page Demands; TMTA Drops Kick

NEW YORK, Oct. 14.—Treasurers of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees conferred with League of New York Theaters yesterday, submitting a five-page memorandum of requests for working conditions. Document was too long for complete discussion in this first session, and League committee, anyway, would have to get membership approval on changes from present conditions. League therefore suggested that treasurers leave document with James F. Reilly, executive secretary, for study, and that when League's answer is ready Reilly will call treasurers for another conference. James J. Brennan, vice-president of the IATSE, accompanied the treasurers' committee.

Negotiations between League and treasurers is now freed of possible objection from the Theatrical Managers and Agents and Treasurers' Union, which up until this season had the treasurer jurisdiction. TMTA obtained deal for its TMTA membership and promised not to interfere with these negotiations. Further, union has withdrawn its charges filed with State Labor Relations Board against the Shuberts.

AGVA Does Well in Hub

BOSTON, Oct. 14.—The local branch of American Guild of Variety Artists is just 50 behind the total membership of the former APA. Tom Senna, local AGVA representative, reports. Senna says that the reception of the actors to the new organization was very favorable and expects to increase enrollment more than the previous high within two weeks. Before signing up spots Senna is waiting for the results of a New York meeting which will establish new rules and regulations.

"Gateway to Hollywood" Shut But Back Door Is Still Open

NEW YORK, Oct. 14.—Many an ingenue's heart strings were torn after the winner of Jesse Lasky's Gateway to Hollywood radio program were announced some months ago. Small wonder, because the lucky girl to be crowned Alice Eden, and the equally fortunate male to sit on the throne of John Archer had delusions of stardom and a career in motion pictures that would out-Lamar Hedy. Groups of young hopefuls won contests in their respective home towns and were shipped to Hollywood to compete in the quest for the screen's newest starlets.

This is the way affairs turned out,

Bashful!!!

CHICAGO, Oct. 14.—Public dancing stunt between acts of A. B. Marcus' 40 Night Club in Montezuma, which recently opened its Midwest one-night tour in Davenport, Ia., was dropped after the first couple of nights.

With the show staged on a regular stage either in auditoriums or theaters, few customers ventured to face an audience to dance during intermission. And even the personality of Rita Bio, who has the band with the show, couldn't attract any of the customers on the stage floor.

GAC Lands Big Chi Hotel Deal

CHICAGO, Oct. 14.—Local office of the General Amusement Corp. received an okeh this week from the Sherman Hotel on one of the biggest band-booking deals consummated around here in some time, and all that remains before a final wind-up is ironing out of schedules on previous radio commitments of some of the orks involved.

Contracts will mean over \$50,000 on the GAC books, and calls for services of Larry Clinton, Jimmy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw and Slim Gaillard. When final papers are signed, probably next week, deal will start around the first of the year, with Clinton teeing off.

Sherman hostility has been a job-time account of Music Corp. of America, that office only occasionally giving way to a competitor and then only for a one-time shot at the College Inn Panther Room. One reason for this direct shift to GAC was due to the rock paper scissors policy which has been catering strictly to swingeroo outfits. Heavy run on this stuff has had MCA scratching bottom, having to book repeats.

In an effort to head off competition, the MCA office tried to make a split commision deal with GAC, but latter figured that if it had what the Sherman wanted, it would be more logical to set the bands direct.

Salina Wants More Shows

SALINA, Kan., Oct. 14.—Local patronage turned in good gross for showing of Tobacco Road recently and manifested desire for other legit attractions.

"Possibilities" and "The Broadway Beat" will be found this week on page 24.

BENNY GOODMAN (This Week's Cover Subject)

BENNY GOODMAN, whose rise was synonymous with that of swing, was born in Chicago May 30, 1910, and at the age of 11 was playing in the pit of a local theater. He later played in a five-piece ork on a Lake Michigan excursion steamer, worked with Jules Harbover's band and, while a student at Lewis Institute, Chicago, fooled in Arnold Johnson's crew in a local night club.

Benny began to achieve prominence in the trades when he was featured member of Ben Pollack's, Ted Lewis' and Paul Whiteman's orks, and in July, 1934, he formed his own outfit, playing his first engagement at Billy Rose's Music Hall, New York. Shortly afterwards he was signed for NBC's National Circuit commercial, "Let's Dance." He then played a stand at New York's Hotel Roosevelt, but it wasn't until a Coast-to-Coast tour and a run at the Palomar Ballroom, Los Angeles, that he finally gained his first tremendous success. Followed then Chicago and the Congress Hotel, New York and the Pennsylvania Hotel and sensational engagements at the New York Paramount, all of which, over a period of several years, cemented his position as one of the foremost exponents of swing music.

Goodman's clarinet and ork haven't been limited to hotel rooms and night spots. He has played concert engagements in the halls of the classics, Carnegie Hall, Boston's sedate Symphony Hall, and last summer broke tradition at the Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles, by bringing swing into its heretofore classic surroundings. He also was heard the past summer in concert at both world's fairs, New York and San Francisco.

His other activities have included book writing, his "Kingdom of Swing" having been published recently, and picture work in Warner's "Hollywood Hotel." This fall he is playing a return engagement at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria's Empire Room, New York, and is tending a colored swing version of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," which will probably have a streamlined title when it shows at the Center Theater, Rockefeller Center, New York.

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Linda Darnell flopped on the program. 20th Century-Fox picked her up, put her thru the perfunctory set of an agent, gave her the lead in *Hotel for Women*. The picture was no great shakes, but Darnell was, with the net result that she is being given the build-up by the 20th Century moguls.

Katherine Adams (nee Hone) also fell by the wayside in the radio contest, but she was the girl who played the sister role in *1776 Avenue Girl* and for whom the RKO studio publicity department is rolling out a new set of adjectives.

Linda Hayes (nee Rochelle Germaine), also a failure in Lasky's talent incubator, is being featured in RKO's *Girl From Mexico*.

Hovena Cooke, winner of the coveted Alice Eden assignment, was given the second lead in *Career*, which didn't turn out so well, and Mary Jane Barnes, whose work on the program was described as "outstanding," played an insignificant role in *Winter Carnival* after her screen test didn't come up to expectations.

Thru Sugar's Domino

A LITTLE late but before the nap has been worn off her new rug in her new office we want to welcome Mrs. Dorothy Bryant back into the family of theatrical unions. It was a sad day for the chorus girl when she decided to retire from her place at the helm of Chorus Equity Association. It was a sad day, too, for the theatrical union movement. Mrs. Bryant was needed a couple of years ago when she became temporarily fed up with unionists. She is needed far more today and it is therefore a stroke of good fortune for the actor and it speaks well for the Four A's that she has been prevailed upon to return to the arena, this time as executive secretary of America Guild of Variety Artists.

We are sorry that we cannot honestly express the hope that when AGVA becomes thoroughly organized it will have at its top the selfsame personalities that now dominate its councils. The notable exception, of course, is in the person of Mrs. Bryant. We hope that not only will Mrs. Bryant be retained in office but that she will be given the broadest of action that she demanded as a prerequisite to assuming office. Knowing Mrs. Bryant as well as we do, we are sure that one factor cannot exist without the other.

Of all human beings, with the possible exception of housewives en masse, the actor seems to be most loquacious in backroom squawking. He is well trained by tradition and temperament in the art of making his best speeches over the top of his head, occupying a veritable tongue-tied when the time and place are opportune to talk up. In the open forums being conducted in the nooks and crannies of Broadway many of the orators are holding forth on the issue that Mrs. Bryant has been given the best choice that might have been made for the job she now holds. Their great objection seems to be that Mrs. Bryant was never a performer, that she was not booted into the crucible of vaudeville and that she is not cut from the same pattern of background and experience that were former leaders of the variety branch of unionism.

The trouble with the argument advanced by the boys who are determined to find fault is that they fail to realize that a half truth is a dangerous thing in the hands of one who cannot follow thru. Which amounts to saying that there is no one and no book of horse sense to the effect that the executive secretary of AGVA must be a former actor. If one must be brutally frank about it, the time is opportune to point out to certain of the dissenting gentry that the actor has rarely distinguished himself as one who is capable of taking care of his own affairs. Maybe one who has never trod the boards can do an equally good job. To personalize a little more, perhaps the crucial case is far better left to the boys who hope so but we are sure she will—if she is given half a chance by the rank and file and by the diplomats engaged in theatrical union power politics.

It might, incidentally, be of some comfort to the squawkers who are pointing sotto voce about tradition and background that Mrs. Bryant issues from a distinguished theatrical family, that she was active in the restricted union movement long before many of the present-day union nobility were in the show business; that she has actually had a tremendous lot of experience in negotiating with managers and that she has a head on her shoulders that is probably the envy of many union leaders who are highly respected for their shrewdness and acumen.

To us who have spent some little time studying the union terrain it is more important to find that a person in Mrs. Bryant's position should possess honesty, aggressiveness and integrity than any other attribute. It is fortunate that Mrs. Bryant has these in full measure as well as a good grasp of the business at hand that it is difficult to match. Mrs. Bryant is nobody's fool and nobody's (See **SUGAR DOMINO** on page 19)