

## Servel Canceling Burke But Plenty Bids in for Seg

NEW YORK, March 3.—Billie Burke's *Fashions and Rations* show will shortly bow off the CBS air, according to informed trade sources here, because the sponsor's Servel, Inc., has run out of ad dough. Cancellation will become effective within a month.

The show has done well Hooperwise, hitting a 7.4 last report, high for the 11:30 a.m.-12 seg on CBS Saturday, but the sponsor is close to the maximum advertising expenditure which Mr. Whiskers allows manufacturers of war goods.

It is understood that several food concerns are interested in the Burke program and CBS may be able to sell it without missing a broadcast. A Hooper 7.4 won't be laying around in the daytime long.

## Blue Co-Op Options Constance Bennett

NEW YORK, March 3.—Blue web co-op program set-up this week signed a 45-day option on the services of film star, Constance Bennett, with a new daily strip, 1:15 - 1:30, in the offing. Contrary to trade-paper reports, Miss Bennett will not do a 4G package based on her life. The Blue's option, which is two to one to be exercised, provides an exclusive deal allowing the star only Sunday afternoon and evening guest shots.

Stanley Florshelm, the web's co-op program manager, put it on the dotted line with the Saphier Agency early in the week and an audition disk is being flown East for his okay. The show will use a chatter format with Miss Bennett doing a pop Jane Cowl. She'll tell about the people she meets, the places she goes and the things she does.

## WGN Set To Scan Air Pix on WBKB

NEW YORK, March 3.—WGN, Mutual outlet in Chi., will be presenting video shows over the Balaban & Katz station, WBKB, within the next two months, according to reliable reports here. WGN, which has its construction permit and part of its equipment in the house, will do video versions of local and net radio shows as well as develop new formats over B&K outlet until the time comes when it can set up its own scanner.

When the deal goes thru, Mutual will have its stations in the three major production centers, New York, Chicago and Hollywood in the tele picture. WOR, MBS shareholder here, has been doing a show called *WOR Video Varieties* on the DuMont station, WABD, since July 13, 1943. The Don Lee web on the Coast, also MBS shareholders, have their station W6XAO in operation now.

The WGN-B&K tie-up will make the third.

## Yoder Home to KOA

NEW YORK, March 3.—Lieut. Com. Lloyd E. Yoder returned to KOA, Denver, Tuesday (1), resuming his former position as general manager of the NBC station. During the two years and nine months of Yoder's service with the Naval Reserve, James R. MacPherson has been running KOA. MacPherson has now been named assistant manager in charge of commercial activities.

## REVIEWS

### WOR-DuMont

Reviewed Tuesday (27) 8:15-8:45 p.m. Style—School days. Sustaining over WABD, New York.

Al Bernard's *School Days* was pure and unadulterated corn direct from Dixie by way of Gus Edwards, via Bob (WOR) Emery's *Rainbow House*. If there is any wonder how a completely delightful half hour came forth from under the wings of the Emery it respectfully explained that Bob had the sound idea of taking innumerable gags direct from Al Bernard's collections and stringing them together. Altho they all smelled from overuse, they came so fast and furious that the viewer was laughing at himself for laughing at what he knew were old, old minstrel routines in white-face.

Al Bernard played the Negro porter who took over the teacher's desk while she was a-missing and played the role in a combination interlocutor-end man manner. In the school room were all the Gus Edwards characters—from the tough guy with a derby to the sweet and dumb young thing who never had the right answer in her life. There was plenty of movement—plenty of color, not a dull moment in a carload—and not a sophisticated one either. Thru the use of a blackboard idea they were able to get across the WOR credit without pushing and the camera work was ace—only once or twice missing a person or a routine.

Credit Mrs. Bob Emery at the producer's console for this, and Bob, who acted as floor manager in the studio, keeping things moving—and the white-face minstrel routine rolling along.

How often a school-days telecast could hold a regular audience is questionable. Al Bernard's act used to travel and he didn't have to have new material every week. However, based on the evidence of this one show—and the hope that the corn will continue green, this rates the top Emery to date. *Joe Kochler.*

### CBS

Reviewed Thursday (1) 8-10 p.m. Style—Boxing, film, news. Sustaining on WCBW, New York.

Studio boxing, once the initial problem of setting up the ring, arranging the lighting and the seating and finding suitable camera locations is licked, becomes almost exclusively a cameraman's headache. Both CBS's lensmen, Al Kleban and Howard Hayes, did their job very well Thursday night.

The cameraman's two major problems are focus and framing. The boxers move fast and keeping the focal depth correct is a job that we wouldn't wish on our worst enemy. Both of Columbia's boys kept their heads in the rough corners and both of them rate a nod for their skill. Framing, keeping the boxers in the picture as they move laterally is another toughie. Here again Hayes and Kleban did a pretty good job. With only two exceptions, the fighters stayed in frame.

And Tony Miner, directing up in the control room, did a good piece of back-stopping the boys. Most of the time he was able to help one or the other out of a tight spot by switching from one camera to the other and he led them around from spot to spot with smooth timing. Once or twice Miner started a pan and then cut it, and once or twice he cut from ike to ike for no reason. At one point camera No. 2 was moving into what started to be a nice shot in one of the fighter's corner when the director broke to camera No. 1.

There are still several bugs in the machinery that have to be worked out, but over-all CBS has a fine feature. The chief bug is the announcing of Albert T. Gore, CBS's new director of video sports. Gore tried to give a blow-by-blow in some spots and just an explanation in others. When he tries the blow-by-blow he gets flustered and ends up about four punches behind the action. And when he simply tries in a general way to tell the viewer what's going on, he becomes dull, dry and almost (See CBS on page 32)

### Balaban & Katz

Reviewed Thursday (1), 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Style—News, variety. Sustaining on WBKB, Chicago.

Bothered by curfew troubles, like a great part of showbiz at the present time, WBKB was able to present only a weak show tonight, using no outstanding talent whatsoever. Station had arranged to have Phil Regan and Dianne and Edward, dance team now at the Blackhawk Restaurant here, on the program, but the acts discovered they could not appear on the video show and perform in the curfew-necessitated earlier dinner show at the Blackhawk so they had to cancel out.

All that the station had left was a news program, *World in Action*, by Howard Malcolm and Don Faust; Lee Phillips and his magical mysteries; Jenya, pianist, and Jeanne Bennett, currently with Bernie Cummins's orchestra at the Latin Quarter. Jeanne was able to slip out, curfew or no curfew, but because the station, with only a short notice, was not able to rehearse her, she was able to do nothing but sing a few songs, accompanied by a piano. Her singing was good. No complaint about that. But the potentialities of video are not realized when a vocalist merely stands in front of a mike and does her stuff with piano accompaniment sans trick shots or other tele techniques.

Malcolm and Faust's program would have been good radio, because the boys did nothing but read the news, altho they did that well. But they used no maps, nothing to appeal to the sense of sight so, as video fare, they fell flat.

Lee Phillips did his magical work in his usual competent style. After seeing him do just about the same type of work week after week, with very little change, we can find little to say about him except that he's good, but we're getting tired of seeing him so often.

Jenya again proved that she is an excellent pianist. Camera work on her hands was too static during most of the program. Twice, however, the station used slow dissolves so that it appeared as if four hands were playing at the same time. Her hands, naturally, in this trick were caught by two cameras focused at different angles. By means of the dissolve the picture on each was transmitted at once for a short time, and thus the appearance of four hands on the keyboard. Trick stuff like this should be used more often. *Cy Wagner.*

### Blue-DuMont

Reviewed Tuesday (27), 9-9:30 p.m. Style—Variety. Sustaining over WABD, New York.

The place to make mistakes in any entertainment medium is during rehearsals. Just to be different, video seems to make a habit of making most of its mistakes on the air—right in the faces of the ether spectators.

Living up to the "show-your-slips-in-public" tradition, the Blue web did its second air-pic telecast (the first was aired over WRGB, Schenectady, and reviewed last week in *The Billboard* with a tyro presentation of *On Stage, Everybody*). The boom mike got on the air, somebody walked before one of the lights and no time was permitted the studio audience to applaud Pearl Primus, the only visual act on the bill, or for Primus to take a bow. The director played with one or two dissolves that had real sock appeal—but dropped them like a hot cake before they could register. If they only had a walk-thru camera rehearsal, tele life could have been oh, so different.

The effect of a lighted marquee with the bulbs flashing Blue Network and *On Stage, Everybody*, was swell. Between these two lines there was supposed to be a moving sign with the names of the guests, etc. The moving sign (a piece of cardboard pushed thru a slot) got stuck while the first part of it was three-quarters thru, and the camera was so far away from the sign that it was literally illegible. It would have been good video to have moved in for a close-up of the moving credits—but someone was captivated by the theater effect—and didn't stop to realize that he who looks should be able to read without losing his eyesight.

Because radio frequently uses both a regular announcer and an emcee, the

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How often a schooldays telecast could hold a regular audience is questionable. Al Bernard's act used to travel and he didn't have to have new material every week. However, based on the evidence of this one show—and the hope that the corn will continue green, this rates the top Emery to date. *Joe Kochler.*

Blue followed the radio tradition and had a good time-wasting formula of Fred Cole, the spieler introducing Danton Walker, the emcee. Between them they added up to a pic without the slightest appeal—altho debonair Walker has an edge on Cole; that moustache helped.

The guest of honor, who was picked up in the studio audience, was half-pint Billy Rose. Rose worked without script or rehearsal and sounded like a friend of the family sitting in on an amateur production.

The contestants who were bidding for fame and fortune and a spot in the Universal's to-be-produced-pic, *On Stage, Everybody*, was three monologists, James McCall, Hildegard Halliday and Cyril Smith and the dancer, Pearl Primus. Why the latter needed the *On Stage* (See Blue-Dumont on page 32)

### More Radio and Television News on Page 32.

## Curfew Hits Tele

CHICAGO, March 3.—The curfew, it seems, has hit even television. This week, on its Thursday night show, WBKB, local video station, had planned to present Phil Regan, currently at the Mayfair Room of the Blackstone Hotel here, and Dianne and Edward, now appearing at Chi's Blackhawk Restaurant. However, when the curfew struck town, the acts had to say nix. Seems as tho the shows in these two spots were moved to an earlier hour so that the past-curfew number could now be presented before midnight. And, just when the new curfew necessitated early shows were to be presented at the niteries, the acts were to appear at WBKB. They, therefore, had to cancel out their tele appearance.

So, it seems, another problem has been placed in the laps of video programmers. Most of them, because they telecast during the early evening hours—just when niteries throught the country will be putting on shows at a new time—will have trouble getting guest stars—and since most tele appearances are on the cuff—

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