

Off-Broadway

RICHARD III

(Opened Friday, February 13)

LENOX HILL PLAYHOUSE

A tragedy by William Shakespeare. Staged by John Boyt. Costumes, Ruth Birnholz Morley. Stage manager, Richard A. Martin. Production manager, Randall Brooks. Presented by the Equity Library Theater.

Richard, Duke of Gloucester... Alexander Clark
 George, Duke of Clarence... Norman Roland
 Sir Richard Ratchiff... Robert Cromwell
 Lord Hastings... Joseph Hardy
 Lady Anne Neville... Lydia Clarke
 James Tyrrel... Bernard Kates
 Queen Elizabeth... Claire Stuart
 Earl of Rivers... Thomas Poston
 Duke of Buckingham... John Straub
 Earl of Stanley... Allen Stevenson
 Marquis of Dorset... Jack Cannon
 Queen Margaret... Marion Copp
 William Catesby... Steven Thomas
 First Murderer... James Morley
 Second Murderer... Carl Don
 King Edward IV... Raymond Christian
 Duchess of York... Goldie Bookhalter
 Young Clarence... Richard Marlow
 Lady Margaret Plantagenet... Jean Hanson
 First Citizen... Bill Butler
 Second Citizen... Joseph Gilbert
 Earl of Norfolk... Gerard Witt
 Lord Mayor of London... Alvin Sullum
 Cardinal Bouchier... George Habib
 Duke of York... Alan Masters
 Prince of Wales... George Drew
 Messenger... Joseph Gilbert
 Earl of Richmond... Keith Taylor
 Captain Blunt... Joseph Gilbert

In tackling a chore like *Richard III* the Equity Library Theater (ELT) started out with the score against it. And it does not militate against the ELT that in producing the opus it failed to bring it off. However, the fact remains that in spite of an unusually good performance from Alexander Clark in the title role, the show did not make the grade. The tragedy is one of the Bard's worst and brings to the stage neither that insight into character nor the poetry for which the playwright is justly famed. It merely makes Richard a black-hearted villain, the type of melo villain who, in another age, would probably twirl his mustache and gyp pennies from blind old ladies.

It is entirely to Clark's credit that he makes Richard a human being by underplaying. His reading is clear and understandable and his stint an evidence of talent that rates a break on Broadway. He is ably assisted by several top-flight supporting actors, including Norman Roland, Joseph Hardy, John Straub, Allen Stevenson, Keith Taylor and Alan Masters. Both James Morley and Carl Don were exceptionally good in wringing laughs from their parts as murderers.

Distaff Side Weak

However, the fem contingent found itself mostly on the debit side. Lydia Clarke, as Lady Anne Neville, did not seem to understand her part and thus both her reading and interpretation were off. As Queen Elizabeth, Claire Stuart found herself with a role much beyond her present ability. She paced herself too fast and also frequently injected a shrill note into the proceedings. Marion Copp was much the best of the actresses, but even she became too intense.

Except for the battle scene, which resembled a small 10th Avenue riot, John Boyt's staging was competent. Boyt rates an additional bow for his clever but simple backgrounds, using platforms and drapes to excellent effect. Costumes by Ruth Birnholz Morley were also top-flight.

Leon Morse.

'Survivors' Cast Pay Settled

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—Actors' Equity has agreed to accept a half week's salary for the cast from Bernard Hart and Martin Gabel, producers of *The Survivors*, instead of going to arbitration. The show closed after a week's run, and actors claimed they were owed an additional week's wages, but the management alleged that that was covered by paying the thespians for a week's previews. The settlement will come to about \$2,500.

Hurok Signs Art Jr.'s For University Tour

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—Contracts have been signed for Sol Hurok to book the American Repertory Theater junior company on the road next season. Hurok is guaranteeing the troupe of 23 thespians \$5,000 a week to cover all expenses and in return will receive up to 20 per cent of the company's share of the gross for handling them.

The company, touring by bus, will play colleges and universities exclusively for about 16 weeks during the season. Margaret Webster will direct. Hurok bid against Charles Green, of Consolidated Radio Artists, for the right to book the troupe and offered better terms.

5 Fellowships at Stanford; Applications Close Mar. 10

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—For the second year of Stanford University's fellowship program, acting Prexy Alvin C. Eurich announces five \$1,000 fellowships in the department of speech and drama. Three are open to actors and two to stage technicians, costumers and designers. Grants have again been made possible by contributions from the National Theater Conference, the Stanford Players and the University's board of trustees.

Applications must be made before March 10 to Prof. Hubert C. Heffner, head of the speech and drama department. Requirements for acting fellowships call for a college degree in drama plus a two-year stint in professional or recognized amateur theater. Preference for technical fellowships will also be given to drama degree holders, but applications from students in accredited schools and colleges will also be considered. The term will run from March 29 to August 28.

New Firm Seeks Scripts

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—Helen King and Anthony Parella, who operated the strawhatter at Sea Cliff, L. I., last summer, have joined forces for Stem legit production under the firm name, Theater Enterprises. The org is in the market for new scripts. Other execs of the firm are Fred Kelly, associate director; Aron Marshall, managing director, and Milton Marshall, publicity rep.

ROUTES

Dramatic and Musical

Annie Get Your Gun (Shubert) Chicago.
 Blossom Time (Nixon) Pittsburgh.
 Burlesque, with Bert Lahr (American) St. Louis.
 Carousel (Shubert) Philadelphia.
 Chocolate Soldier (Ford) Baltimore.
 Dunham, Katharine (Studebaker) Chicago.
 Hallams, The (Wilbur) Boston.
 Harvey, with Joe E. Brown (Hartman) Columbus, O., 23-25; (Memorial Auditorium) Louisville 26-28.
 Inspector Calls, An (Cox) Cincinnati.
 I Remember Mama (English) Indianapolis.
 Joy to the World (Forrest) Philadelphia.
 John Loves Mary (Harris) Chicago.
 Lady Windemere's Fan (Davidson) Milwaukee.
 Linden Tree (National) Washington.
 Mary Had a Little (Shubert Lafayette) Detroit.
 My Romance (Shubert) Boston.
 Oklahoma (Convention Hall) Tulsa, Okla.
 O Mistress Mine, with Lunt and Fontanne (Seiwyn) Chicago.
 Pick Up Girl (Locust St.) Philadelphia.
 Private Lives, with Tallulah Bankhead (Cass) Detroit.
 Red Mill (Blackstone) Chicago.
 San Carlo Opera Co. (Auditorium) Fresno, Calif., 26; (Philharmonic Aud.) Los Angeles 27-28; (Russ Aud.) San Diego 29; (Philharmonic Aud.) Los Angeles March 1-6.
 Student Prince (Royal Alexandra) Toronto.
 Showboat (KRNT Radio Theater) Des Moines, Ia., 23-25; (Music Hall) Kansas City, Mo., 26-28.
 Sweethearts, with Bobby Clark (Erlanger) Chicago.
 Shylock and his Daughter, with Maurice Schwartz (National) Washington.
 Song of Norway (Poche) New Orleans.
 Sleep It Off (Lyceum) Minneapolis 25-28.
 There Goes the Bride (Shubert) New Haven, Conn., 26-28.
 You Never Can Tell (Colonial) Boston.

OUT-OF-TOWN OPENINGS

JOY TO THE WORLD

(Opened Thursday, February 19)

SHUBERT THEATER, NEW HAVEN, CONN.

A new comedy by Allan Scott. Staged by Jules Dassin. Setting, Harry Horner. Costumes, Beverly Woodner. Lighting, Jean Rosenthal. Company manager, Michael Goldreyer. Press Representatives, Samuel J. Friedman and Lewis Harmon. Stage manager, Ben Ross Berenberg. Presented by John Houseman and William R. Katzell.
 Mary Magille... Mary Welch
 Floyd... Michael Dreifuss
 Mildred... Lois Hall
 Edith Wham... Peggy Maley
 J. Newton McKeon... Myron McCormick
 Mortimer Behrman... Leslie Litomy
 Richard Stanton... Hugh Rennie
 Edward F. Gannon... Bert Freed
 Alexander Soren... Alfred Drake
 Barbara Benton... Nina Vale
 Henry Saintsbury... Walter F. Appler
 Tilworth... Harris Brown
 Dr. A. J. Wood... Marsha Hunt
 Steve Walton... Herbert Ratner
 Dimitri Oumansky... Kurt Kraszner
 Sampson... Hal Gerson
 Dr. Wilcox... Theodore Newton
 Harry... Sam Bonnell
 Sam Blumenfeld... Morris Carnovsky
 MESSENGERS: Beverly Thawl, Blanche Zohar, Lucille Patton, Jeane Jordan and Vicki Carlson.

Marsha Hunt was lucky in snaring the Allan Scott comedy, *Joy to the World*, as the vehicle for a Stem legit bow-in; it is definitely in. It's a happy, riotously funny, breezy opus that is bound to please its customers. While the subject is Hollywood and the flickers, this off-time played comedy routine is handled in a refreshing manner and while some of the characters and situations that abound in Hollywood stories are present, the angle is completely new and timely. It's the first of the movie-town comedies that makes a definite effort to defend the industry, and while Scott delivers a sermon thruout the play, it's never forced on the audience and a pew sitter can take it or leave it.

Marsha Hunt makes a fetching heroine, and altho her role isn't exactly an arduous one, she does creditably by it. Her technique still smacks too much of cinema, however, and she is given to broad gestures and a too noticeable tendency toward the broader facial expressions.

It's really Alfred Drake's show thruout, and the thesp does a sensational job with a difficult stint. He is on stage almost continually. As the boy-genius head of production in a major studio he is given to long, breathless speeches that never get out of hand, rapid dictation to his corps of secretaries, and domination of every scene. Drake's performance certainly elevates him to top ranks.

It remains for Morris Carnovsky, a trouper from way back, to give one scene at the tail end of the show a breadth and depth that earns a rousing reception on his exit. It is a great bit of theater and a magnificent piece of character work.

The producers have loaded the cast with excellent supporting players who do a noteworthy job with their roles. Despite the large cast (24) there is not a weak character in the show.

A special bow can be given to Harry Horner for the single setting, showing both the reception room and the producer's offices. Jules Dassin's direction is exceptionally good considering the large number of characters he is forced to work with and the rapidity of action and pace that is required. After a bit of smoothing, *Joy to the World* should be a welcome addition to Broadway's parade of hits, and a steady Stem tenant for many months to come. Sidney Golly.

New Ridgefield Manager

RIDGEFIELD, Conn., Feb. 21.—Anthony Lokot, of Chicago, has arrived here to become manager of the Ridgefield Playhouse, succeeding Eugene R. Alden. Alden has been promoted to the personnel management of the Prudential Circuit, which operates the local house. Alden, who has held the local post since 1942, will have offices in New York.

YOU NEVER CAN TELL

(Opened Monday, February 16)

COLONIAL THEATER, BOSTON

Comedy by George Bernard Shaw. Directed by Peter Ashmore. Settings and costumes, Stewart Chaney. Production supervised by Theresa Helburn and Lawrence Langner. Company manager, John Tuerk. Publicity director, Joseph Heldt. Stage manager, Buford Armitage. Presented by the Theater Guild in association with Alfred Fischer.
 Dolly... Patricia Kirkland
 Valentine... Tom Helmore
 Maid... Scott Douglas
 Philip... Nigel Stock
 Mrs. Clandon... Frieda Inescort
 Gloria... Faith Brook
 Crampton... Ralph Forbes
 McComas... Walter Hudd
 Waiter... Leo G. Carroll
 Bohun... William Devlin

From the evidence given us this season it is possible that we will go on having lengthening, periodic revivals of the dialectical stage pieces of George Bernard Shaw. The latest, *You Never Can Tell*, tho it does not depend upon topicality for interest, revolves around such long accepted but once controversial issues as women's suffrage that its dramatic structure seems pale and watery. Here, as in many another instance, Shaw is concerned with the genteel battle of the sexes and the inescapable dominance of the female.

Sometimes he's very funny about it, even by today's standards. But more often you can let your mind wander afield, return to the action on the stage minutes later and find that you have lost nothing of the thread of the story or the cant of the ideas. It's the same old Shaw wit and paradox, and one statement of it is as good as the next or the preceding.

His story structure is simple and uncluttered. Mrs. Clandon fled England and her crotchety husband, taking her three children to Maderia. She returned with them, nearly grown, and ran into her husband, whom the children have never known. She engaged in a battle of wits with him for the custody of the two younger, while the eldest daughter began tilting lances with an impoverished dentist. (Here is the second generation illustration of the battle between the sexes.) By fair means and foul she won her man. And all the while, in Shaw's best manner, he squirms wittily as he knuckles under.

The Theater Guild has mounted the comedy in high style with the assistance of Stewart Chaney's decidedly proper sets and costumes. The production has been directed at a swift pace, so as to get over the gabby sessions as painlessly as possible, and the cast performs with glib sharpness.

Frieda Inescort makes a fine lady of Mrs. Clandon. Patricia Kirkland and Nigel Stock are the bouncing youngsters. Faith Brook is a properly haughty elder daughter. Ralph Forbes brings a nice middle-age grumpiness to the father. But it is Leo G. Carroll, as the hovering, diplomatic waiter, of unlimited tact and wisdom, and Tom Helmore as the dentist who is bright and devious, who dominate the proceedings. Carroll's acting is a finely detailed performance and Helmore's is exuberant.

You Can Never Tell is talky, dogmatic and clever. For that reason contemporary audiences may find it slow going. On the other hand, it offers a lot of wit, and some sage comment on our current mores. Bill Riley.

'There Goes Bride,' Hartford

HARTFORD, Conn., Feb. 21.—The farce comedy, *Here Today*, currently retitled *There Goes the Bride*, featuring Ilka Chase and Robert Alda, has been set for the Bushnell Memorial, Hartford, for one night only, March 1, at \$3.60 top.

The comedy is being presented by Harold J. Kennedy and Herbert Kenwith, in association with Robert K. Adams.