

March of Time Through the Years

TELEVISION—Reviewed Friday (23), 10-10:30 p.m. EST. Sponsored by the Chase National Bank, thru Hewitt, Ogilvy, Benson & Mather, via WJZ-TV, New York. Producers, Arthur Tourtellot, Dick Krolik; director, Tom Buscemi; writer, Lillian Rixey; moderator, John Daly. Guests: Manfred Gottfried, David Douglas Duncan.

The initial stanza of the *March of Time's* new TV series didn't measure up to the excellent production standards set by the same outfit's award-winning movie documentaries. And it's difficult to understand this failure in view of the wealth of filmed material available and the really fine potentials the series has for superior TV programming.

Friday's show (23), tagged *Newsfronts of War—1940*, alternated old film views of the history-making 1939-'40 period with a panel discussion. Latter seg was headed by moderator John Daly and guests Manfred Gottfried, *Time-Life* chief correspondent, and *Life* photog David Douglas Duncan. Production-wise, the transitions between film and panel portions of the show were extremely faulty, particularly in relation to audio values.

Muddled Segs

In an effort to draw an analogy between current events and pre-World War II happenings, the bulk of film footage was concentrated on the Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact. Westbrook Van Voorhees' film commentary was phrased in the present tense, which was rather confusing at times, and the efforts of the panel to tie up the historical event with today's muddled global picture were never convincing.

Daly was impressive in manner, tho working under the double handicap of close-mouthed guests and a distinctly unchummy, straight-line seating arrangement. In an attempt to draw the men out he was often reduced to putting words in their mouths—an unseemly attitude for a moderator, if ad lib, and even more unseemly if script-directed. Perhaps that accounts for the dyspeptic expression on Daly's usually cheerful pan.

A more showmanly idea for the initial program would have been a montage view of choice *March of Time* clips thru the years. This would have afforded an over-all picture preview of the series' basic theme and provided more alluring tune-in bait for future airers.

The Chase National Bank commercials were apparently aimed at two major markets. For the serious-minded they spotted a determinedly folksy spiel by a "big exec" type actor. Those more frivolously inclined were wooed with coy close-ups of Chase's much-touted exotic money collection—all in all a shrewd job of plug-type casting. *March of Time Through the Years* is slated to be carried by other ABC affiliates shortly via the same local bank sponsorship deal. *June Bundy.*

Jack and Jill Varieties

TELEVISION—Reviewed Sunday 11:30-12:30 p.m. over WPIX, New York. Sponsor, Republic TV Stores. Agency, Products Services Group, Inc. Producer, Les Perry. Director, Pete Molnar. Emcee, Bob Molnar. Ork, Walter Kamm Trio. Announcer, Kevin Kennedy.

This is just another TV amateur hour—no better, no worse—and surely not productive of enough entertainment to get the local televiewer's attention. It may, however, appeal to the youngsters in the family who have stars in their eyes.

The format is simple, too simple. Emcee Bob Russell, with a smooth manner, introduces the acts and then compliments their beaming parents on their prodigal offspring. The talent consisted of male and female singers, an infinite number of tap dancing lines of girls, two older females who interpreted the waltz, a mimic and a two and a half year-old whiz kid who rendered the *Daughter of Rosie O'Grady* in a cute but tremulous voice. The last two performers were the most accomplished.

Announcer Kevin Kennedy handled the numerous commercials for Republic Stores well. There were too many plugs, but by now televiewers should be used to them.

A more careful screening of talent for more entertainment vitamins is in order. The ork which plays as if they had just finished a 5 a.m. club date could stand a little livening up. *Leon Morse.*

Television-Radio Reviews

Treasure Hunt With Captain Boots 'n' Gus

TELEVISION—Reviewed Saturday (24), 11-11:30 a.m. EST. Sponsored by Friedman-Shelby Shoe Company thru the William Wilbur Agency via WPIX, New York. Producer-writer: Robert Kirschbaum. Director: Jack Flynn. Cast: Paul King, Glenn Styres.

Treasure Hunt is a giveaway for kids. The gimmick on this show was a map of Treasure Island and adjacent territory. Kids came on in couples with "sealed orders," directing them first to one island, then another, and finally to Treasure Island. Glenn Styres, dressed as Gus, the red goose—a tie-in with the product—marked their progress on the map with paper boats. After each team answered the third query, advancing them to Treasure Island, they got an assortment of prizes. Thanks to obliging hints from quiz master Paul King, the kids struck gold every time. In addition, 20 post cards from the show's young listeners were pulled out of a basket, and the senders also got prizes. And finally there was a jackpot question, and still more prizes.

The kids seemed gratified to get the loot, but King's cordiality failed to warm them up. In general, the kids were more poised than adults are on such shows, and they certainly seemed less childish than King did in his pirate get-up.

For commercials, the camera moved in on a table full of Red Goose kiddie shoes, and Gus's feathery hand was seen to fondle each shoe as King's voice extolled its virtues.

In the last analysis, giveaway shows, no matter what the gimmick, the prizes or the participants, are simply not very exciting anymore.

Gene Plotnik.

Bob Haymes Show

RADIO—Reviewed during week of February 26, 1-2 p.m. Participating sponsorship via WNEW, New York. Cast: Bob Haymes, Roy Ross ork.

Dick Haymes's kid brother, Bob, appears finally to have hit on a medium which can properly showcase his several talents in the most beneficial light. Bob, who has been and is a film actor-singer-songwriter, has successfully blended his talents with an easy informal style of chatter to come up as a lunch-hour deejay. His across-the-board show is easy listening stuff, tailor-made particularly for housewife audiences.

The show manages to achieve a charming informal air, an atmospheric condition not oft confronted on wax-whirling sessions. Haymes talks pleasantly of songs and show business friends. He sings (his own songs on many occasions) in a warm, loose crooning style to the able accompaniment of Roy Ross's house ork. And he whirles some particularly well selected platters. All told, Haymes shapes up as one of most entertaining of the recent recruits for the deejay ranks.

Hal Webman.

"Duquesne Show Time"

TELEVISION—Reviewed Wednesday (28) over WDTV, Pittsburgh, 8 to 8:30. Sponsored by Duquesne Brewing Company. Producer, V. I. Maitland. Director, Pete Barker.

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this stint Bryant brought out Harold Cohen, *Post Gazette* critic, who will emcee the *Starlight Revue* series. Cohen, a radio favorite here for years and more recently featured on WDTV's *Sho-Biz-Quiz*, brought out Mel Torme, who scored solidly with *Blue Moon* and then followed with a series of impressions to give the show its strong finishing touch. The whole show moved right along and showed the results of weeks of rehearsal.

Dr. Allen B. DuMont, president of the network that owns WDTV, came in for the show and said that he would be happy to have the program and any of the four different ones coming up as permanent network features. DuMont is also interested in Pittsburgh as an originating center of network shows, due to the crowded facili-

TV Telephone Game

Reviewed Wednesday (28) 11:15-11:45 p.m., EST, Monday thru Friday. Sustaining via WCBS-TV, New York. Packaged by Harry S. Goodman Productions. Producer-writer, Stuart Wilson. Director, Rick Leighton. Emcees, Durward Kirby, Stuart Wilson.

TV Telephone Game has been a radio package for a number of years and is currently being played on video in Chicago. The New York version, which features Durward Kirby, asks viewers to set down their telephone number or the first five letters of their social security number under the station's call letters, WCBS-TV. Then Kirby asks a question and if the query is tagged with the right letter and number corresponding to the viewers' letter-number set-up, he can circle the number and put down an answer. The show has a special 'phone operation so contestants can call up after the program and check their replies.

On paper, the game sounds about as complicated as a Pentagon guide book. Actually, tho, it works out quite easily on the air, and Kirby sums up its rules in a few clearly defined sentences. He is a likeable video host. However, his rugged charm doesn't get much of a work-out on this show.

In his quiz-master role, Kirby is forced to confine most of his chatter to a straight question routine, interspersed with still photos relating to the queries. The result is a rather slow-paced static session, with little entertainment value for other than the most ardent quiz fans. Red-headed songbird Rusty Arden is penciled in as Kirby's co-emcee, but director-writer Stuart Wilson subbed for her on the show caught. Wilson was on the nervous side, which may account for the stanza's lack of timing.

The questions, which Wilson said took four hours daily to write, were of the take-your-choice variety. For instance, Kirby asked "Which man is in the publishing business—William S. Paley or Henry Luce?" Movie stills were utilized via such posers as "The girl with Red Skelton is Ann Miller or Arlene Dahl." *June Bundy.*

Kings Row

RADIO—Reviewed Friday (2), 3:15-3:30 p.m., EST. Sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Company, Monday thru Friday, thru William Esty via Columbia Broadcasting System. Producer, Arlene Lunny. Writer, Welbourn Kelley. Director, Edward Downs. Music, Bert Buhrman, organ. Announcer, John MacDougall. Narrator, Lee Vines. Cast: Francis DeSales, Doris Dalton, Charlotte Manson, Charlotte Holland and Jim Boles.

Scripter Welbourn Kelley has effectively utilized the characters from Henry Bellamann's best selling novel for soap opera. That the sentimental and neurotic Kings Row characters always had potentialities for the necessary endless trouble is undeniable. And Kelley has included all the proved soap-opera elements.

Francis DeSales, as Parris Mitchell, psychiatrist, gave his lines a consistently calm reading on the segment caught. Doris Dalton skillfully provided the hysterics in the role of the sick-in-the-head gal out for Mitchell's scalp. A clue to her trouble was her husband, an unmitigated scoundrel, who may be insidiously trying to drive her to the nut house.

Life Ebbing

The stanza caught involved a tense interview between Miss Dalton and DeSales. Whether the latter would live to appear on the next installment seemed to be in doubt at the program's end.

A legion of other complex characters were referred to in the dialog, indicating more than ample material to extend the serial as long as necessary.

The commercial for Fab employed testimonials in a woman's voice to back up the announcer's claims. The Luster Cream Shampoo jingle was used at the end.

Kings Row is soap opera at its most typical. *Gene Plotnik.*

ties in New York and Chicago, and, if the people here can consistently produce shows of this caliber there is no reason why this move cannot be possible.

What's Your Trouble?

TELEVISION—Reviewed Wednesday (28), 10:45-11 p.m. CST. Sponsored by MB Auto Sales thru Irving Rocklin & Associates via WBKB, Chicago. Director, Bill Taylor. Cast, Mal Bellairs.

This show could be more properly tagged *Classified Page of the Air*. Billed as a clear-all for people with trouble, it was a 15-minute reading of want ads, larded liberally with three commercials in the show plus opening and closing.

Mal Bellairs, Chi announcer and disk jockey, sat at a desk, with a drape background, and read the want ads. Samples: "Items people want to buy—a 275-pound oil tank, an encyclopedia, five rooms of used furniture." He read some rooms for rent, said he had a list of available baby sitters, had a party who had nine pups to give away. Items for sale included a juke box, equipment for a beauty shop and two six-grave cemetery lots. Viewers were advised to write in to get the names of the sellers and buyers. Sign-off was: "If you have some trouble, if you need some help, write us."

The sponsors should decide whether the show is a lonely hearts club, advice to the lovelorn, or a want ad clearing house. As it stands it is largely confusion. Considering the material, Bellairs did extremely well. He has good looks and an excellent, easy air before the camera. Commercials were routine stills of new and used cars. One was enlivened by a cloud of smoke drifting across the picture, presumably from the cigarette of a floor director. Auto dealer used good gimmick to capi-

TV Talent and Show Tips

Babes in Arms

The recent Equity Library Theater offering, still intact for the Bronx DeWitt Clinton Community Theater showing March 8, 9, 10, revives many Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart old favorites in a revamped of the former Broadway hit. Production highlights or even a capsule of the musical would fill a variety TV bill.

Besides the production numbers, there's some fresh talent in the show which alone would spark any TV musical. Arthur and Stanley Catron are dark chunky tap artists with good comedy line-reading ability. Tele actor Michael Dreyfuss, seen in a number of dramatic shows, proves equally at home in musicomedey. Among the ferns, Edra Gale, a buxom blonde, has plenty of comedy flash and a good voice; Zoya Leporsky is equally well-polished in comedy and modern-ballet technique, and Mimi Kelly takes drama and fine vocalizing in easy style. *D. McD.*

Tony Martin

Somebody is going to figure out a deal one of these days to get Martin into New York consistently enough to do his own video show, and when it happens (with a little ingenuity as to format and production) tele will get a real stand-out series. On the *Berle Texaco Star Theater* Tuesday (27) Martin again demonstrated his super-showmanship, matched by few performers today, his excellent voice and a constantly improving ability to read straight and comedy lines. The aforementioned *Berle* stanza, incidentally, with Rose Marie and Joe E. Brown, among others, was one of the best in a long, long time. *J. C.*

Not Such a Baby

Rose Marie Mazetta who, way back when, killed the people as Baby Rose Marie, worked the *Berle Texaco* program Tuesday (27) and showed as a seasoned performer who sings a sock song and has a fine comedy sense. Rose Marie, not such a baby any more, is a choice bet for further guest shots, similar to the *Berle* thing, but is also a distinct possibility as a show-wise femsee on a series of her own. *J. C.*

Al Gannaway's Half-Pint Party

TELEVISION—Reviewed Wednesday (28), 4:45-5 p.m. EST, Monday thru Friday. Sponsored by Sam Smith Shoe Company on Wednesday and Friday, thru Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, Inc., via ABC-TV, New York. Producer, Al Gannaway; director, Seymour Robbie; writers (games and ideas), Carl Jampel and Derry Falligant. Host: Al Gannaway.

The patter of little feet has taken on new significance for Al Gannaway's *Half-Pint Party*, now that the Sam Smith Shoe Company is sponsoring the show for Little Yankee Shoes Wednesday and Friday. Kid participants on show caught were thoroly sponsor-conscious. They all caroled happy little ditties about bootery, and one sprout showed suspicious plug perception by piping, "Little Yankee Shoes will look good on color TV."

In spite of their over-exuberant commercial spirits, tho, the youngsters, about "sevenish," were appealingly natural during the play-ports of the telecast. Host Gannaway, a personable young man with collar-ad good looks, took the small fry over a variety of game hurdles, including a see-saw session and a pin-the-mustache-on-Gannaway contest. In refreshing contrast to the usual pasted-on grins of professional kid actors, the boys and girls concentrated on learning new games with a frowning intensity and engaging lack of camera-consciousness.

The gala affair was climaxed with the entire group donning Bozo the clown masks. The enthusiasm sparked by this simple act portends interesting merchandising possibilities for sponsor Smith.

June Bundy.

talize on grandiose claims of local dealers, particularly Hudson dealers. He was billed as "World's smallest Hudson dealer with the world's biggest deal."

Jack Mabley.

Artist Meets the Critic

Ever since the Bard, performers have longed for a chance to talk back to critics, and this show would give them just that opportunity. While *Author Meets the Critics* and similar stanzas have this function, the actor has never really had a chance to slug back. Casts of current legit, radio and TV shows could be invited to appear on the same program with critics who have recently reviewed their efforts. As each critic takes the stand, the artists would be able to ask what they meant by certain sentences, explain away any shortcomings and generally "talk back" to the written word. The format could also be tailored for movie reviewers and visiting flicker players. An added gimmick might be the presence of an out-of-town critic to compare notes on the same shows with Manhattan reviewers. *J. B.*

Backstage

A visit backstage of current Broadway legit hits should supply enough vicarious glamor to pull a sizeable audience on video. Utilizing a human interest slant, the series would by-pass the star and concentrate on behind-the-scene characters—the stage doorman, the wardrobe mistress, prop boys, stage hands and chorus or minor players. It probably wouldn't be practical to set up theater remote for the show, altho it would certainly be a colorful venture, but sufficient illusion could be supplied by bringing the people to the studio, via a typical backstage set. Legit press agents should prove more than co-operative in rounding up backstage talent, in view of the free plugs garnered for the shows chatter segs could include capsule plot descriptions by stage hands, off-stage stories about the stars and general reminiscing about the "good old days." *J. B.*

Joyce Lear

Joyce Lear, currently playing the ingenue in the new Kaufman-MacGrath legit play *The Small Hours*, was featured in a *Look* Magazine summer stock spread not so long ago. The article emphasized Miss Lear's corner on youth, beauty, talent and brains, while decrying the difficulties *(Continued on page 9)*