



Even "Rosie the Bear" sticks around at third floor after a television appearance. Hoping?



WMCA program director Joseph Gottlieb takes time out to advise one persistent actress.



Young Hopeful auditions for Joseph Daly, NBC producer. If she passes, still a long trail.

shows acting aristocracy skims cream while vast talent pool remains outside looking in



Nannette Sargent, most heard on *Curtain Time*.



It seems as if, every time you dial, you hear the tones of Jim Ameche ... And you really do!



Jane Webb is best known as Belinda on *Websters*.

actor on the air-waves. Santos Ortega, a regular on such shows as "Inner Sanctum" and "The Thin Man," adds, "Any desirable field will attract many more people than there are actually jobs for, and obviously this will result in a cry of 'closed door' on the part of those who find themselves part of the excess." Cameron Andrews, who plays "Enor" on "Lone Journey" sighs, "what keeps you out when you're out, keeps you in when you're in. It's a highly competitive business, of course. There are not five or six trying for the same job, but often as many as two or three hundred."

There was general agreement that the ranks of radio actors who are not able to make ends meet are swelled by people who have not sufficient experience before they come to the big production centers, where directors hesitate to take chances because of the large sums of money involved if an inexperienced performer makes mistakes.

Comedy and dramatic radio veteran Arnold Stang says, "the inexperienced actor often blinded by the 'glamour' of radio, or what seems an easy way to make money will be doing himself a favor if he learns the hard facts before trying to break in. It takes persistence, hard work, and in addition to basic ability, many of the same qualities that make for success in any line. You cannot escape into radio from some more commonplace kind of business." To which the well known Jackson Beck adds, "If you haven't learned the work habits, or acquired the skill to make good at other jobs, you're sure to have a much more difficult time in so competitive a field as radio."

A common complaint is made against the practice of hiring top radio thespians at fees ridiculously low in comparison with stars of other entertainment fields, even on the same program! Many high-priced shows pay some "name" actor of stage or screen a thousand dollars, and even more, for turning in a twenty-five minute acting job that could easily be topped by any one of five hundred anonymous radio actors. On the same show, the director leans heavily upon some veteran of the kilocycles to carry the entire drama for about a hundred dollars, or even less. While this may not be hay to the average listener, it still points up a situation that is unfair to the radio performer who has put in ten or twelve years in learning his craft only to find himself at a disadvantage with some inflated person-



Bill Thompson on *Fibber and Molly*, *Old Timer*.



Patricia Ryan plays Sue in *Big Sister* five days a week ... keeps busy



Ed Begley is famous for his *Charlie Chan* portrayal but you've heard him on countless dramas.

ality who has the backing of a big Hollywood studio.

Hi Brown, director of "Inner Sanctum" among other shows, told me he had discontinued the use of any but radio actors with excellent results and much fewer headaches. It would be interesting to know what our readers think of programs which use big names for dramatic roles, and whether a film star at two-thousand dollars per broadcast gives more listening satisfaction than a thoroughly radio-genic veteran like Everett Sloan, House Jameson, or Elspeth Eric.

One fault is clear. Top radio actors are kept in direct competition with newer performers. Jimmie Lipton (Robbie DeHaven on "Evelyn Winters") feels, "it puts a terrific handicap on younger actors to find themselves trying for the same jobs as seasoned veterans. One solution might be for networks to put young actors under contract and then throw their weight behind giving them the opportunity to develop."

Leading right into this direct competition is the problem of "conflicts." In other words an actor appears on two shows (or even more) that rehearse and broadcast so close to one another that he cannot possibly be in both places for the full time required to prepare the show. The better directors try hard to avoid conflicts, but it still happens often enough to constitute a problem. It obviously makes performance a risky thing to use a stand-in for rehearsal and then go on the air with an entirely fresh actor in a key part, which can easily throw the entire cast off its stride and result in a generally poor performance. Charles Irving, who plays "Young Doctor Malone" said an attempt to cut out conflicts was made in Chicago some time ago, but was not too successful because it was not a concerted attempt on the part of everyone and was simply set up by the union as a blanket rule.

Certainly it seems little good can be done by attempting to "legislate" blanket restrictions at this time. Any substantial improvement must be in the nature of bringing individual directors, actors, networks and sponsors into a new concept of radio casting. For example, I found less concern with the total effect on the industry among actors than directors.

Olga Druce (see feature story on page 32) summed up the principal reasons why many directors tend to have a closed door. Most

Continued on Page 25