

expect a country at war to turn to the "leg" shows, with their jokes and light-minded stories. That this sort of spectacle has prospered cannot be denied, but there is another side to the picture. Two important ballet companies have been doing enormously well both on tour and in New York. The Strauss *Rosalinda* is turning them away all over the country, and *The Merry Widow* is still playing right merrily around the country. Add to these pieces *Carmen Jones* and two

companies of *Oklahoma!* and it becomes apparent that the American public is paying literally millions to see and hear quite serious projects in its theatres.

I conclude from all this that the public is not only willing but anxious to go along with us in the theatre in our search for better things, and that if we continue that search with honesty and feeling the day may not be far off when an American art form of its own will have been evolved.



## PORTRAIT OF AN OLD WOMAN

BY ETHEL BARNETT DE VITO

SHE does not mind dimmed sound and sight:  
 Her world of ebbing warmth and light  
 Knowing how much is better blurred  
 And best unsaid and best unheard.

She does not mind the blanks that stay  
 Erasing last week, yesterday  
 Knowing how she recalls the glow  
 Of more than fifty years ago.

She does not grieve the lessened view,  
 The narrowed scope of things to do  
 Knowing her task as scarce begun:  
 So much remembering to be done —

Her memories of crowded hours  
 Are like rare fragile glass-blown flowers  
 And she the last for knowing, seeing  
 The way to blow them into being —

# THE CASE AGAINST BIG GOVERNMENT

By CHARLES EDISON

WE Americans are not afraid of bigness. We have settled a vast continent and opened up its immense resources. We have lately built the biggest Navy and raised the largest Army in our history. The mere size of a job has never been discouraging to Americans.

Because many of our big undertakings have been satisfactory we are often inclined to think that what is biggest is best. But there is a point of size beyond which expansion can take place only with diminishing returns, with reduced efficiency, or with new dangers produced by sheer size.

Through a good part of my life I have been associated with business corporations. I have been present at their births; I have seen them grow bigger and bigger. I have observed them reach the size where surgery was necessary to preserve their lives, and I have seen this succeed. I have also seen necessary surgery come too late, so that the history of some corporations has been summarized with the epitaph, "Big, Bigger and Bust".

A corporation, by a fiction of the law, has a legal personality. This

fictitious personality can sue, be sued, and do various other things. But anybody who works in and for a corporation over a number of years cannot help feeling that it has a real personality, too. Among its other characteristics is ambition — the desire to expand, to take in more territory, to open more branch offices, to produce a greater variety of products. Within the limits of efficiency and safety — both commercial and social — this ambition usually is laudable.

It is common knowledge, however, that some industrial organizations have become so huge that administrative costs eat up the profits. Expansion has reached the point where the inevitable overhead charges and social problems offset the gains and savings through mass purchasing and mass distribution.

Nature has provided an automatic check on bigness. Be it trees, people, ducks or microbes — they reach pretty much a given size and stop. But business organisms and government have no pituitary glands. In the case of business, the anti-trust acts are an ineffective attempt to provide a substitute for nature's controlling mech-

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