

"We have with us Tonight"

Ibañez, Maeterlinck, Dunsany, Winston Churchill, Galsworthy, Conan Doyle, Tagore: these stars draw the crowds, but sometimes the job of managing them is a good deal harder than it may sound

An interview with
JAMES B. POND

VICENTE Blasco Ibañez stormed into an elaborate Chicago hotel suite between two lines of waiting admirers, one a group of newspaper men, the other composed of representatives of the Spanish American Chamber of Commerce. A wiry Porto Rican, as swarthy as the illustrious author, but firmer-lipped, more self-contained, trailed the literary lion.

Ibañez tore off his hat, jumped on it, gaped through the rangy windows at a then uninspiring lake front of smoking locomotives and muddy breakers. He cursed fluently, ferociously.

"Señor Ibañez," said the Porto Rican interpreter to the reporters, "is tired and angry, as you see."

The newspaper boys counted ten more jumps and waited an explanation.

"Leaving the train," said the interpreter, "he was given a hat which, it seems, was not his. Hence his anger."

But a delegate from the Spanish American Chamber of Commerce drove Ibañez to higher flights of wrath by telling him his interpreter had falsely translated. Ibañez cursed the Porto Rican—raved at him. In a lull the interpreter faced the newspaper men.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have traveled with Señor Ibañez for several weeks. He has had an arduous tour, and naturally his temper has suffered. I have tried to protect him by softening his outbursts in my interpretations. Now I shall tell you exactly what he said—that this hotel is a dump, that Chicago is an unfit place for any civilized man to live in and that he is tired of looking at a pack of newspaper idiots."

After the newspaper men had had their innings in print the Chicago lecture had to be abandoned.

That was one incident of many typical of the troubles that confront a man who handles imported celebrities. James B. Pond is the head of the Pond Lyceum Bureau, which for fifty years has specialized in supplying eager Americans with exotic objects of admiration.

Mr. Pond is a comparatively young man, having inherited his well-ramified lecture business from his father, the late Major Pond, who presented more foreign celebrities to American audiences



Winston Churchill's manner was offensively superior



By
JOHN B. KENNEDY

been and are clean-dealing, business-like and conscientious. But"—he sighed a sigh like an echo from the Book of Job—"there are the others."

"The most temperamental literary lion I have ever brought to this country was Vicente Blasco Ibañez, author of *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. Ibañez determined, on coming to America, that he would utter no word of English. Easy enough. He knows very little. I engaged an interpreter for him,

an ex-army officer from the South.

"The Spanish, when they use derogatory terms,

his private car to the Spanish author. Ibañez had the message translated. He fumed. What did this mean? That he would ride on that car and have a shrewd Yankee advertise the fact?

"The railroad man overheard the fuming. He had run railroads in South America and understood Spanish. 'Tell Señor Ibañez,' he said to the interpreter, 'that he can walk to Detroit so far as I am concerned.'

"Maeterlinck was hardly less temperamental than Ibañez, although more polite. His visit was a succession of wrangles and minor ruptures, ending in a legal dispute as to who had rights to manage him, myself or someone else. That need not concern us now. The amusing part of the tangle was the lengths to which friends went to protect Maeterlinck from legal service.

"At the Ritz-Carlton ballroom a small fence was built about the speaker's stand when he lectured and two businesslike pugilists were engaged to fend off process servers. Those two grim gentlemen sat disguised in evening clothes that didn't fit them very well throughout a lengthy discussion of immortality by Maeterlinck which they couldn't by any

Pontifical Annie Besant and her Messiah Krishnamurti



than Madame Tussaud housed in effigy at her famous waxworks in Marylebone, London.

For twenty years he has followed in his father's footsteps, stalking the headlines of Europe and America. He has had pleasure in his acquaintance with notables, and pain; also, for he is a business man, some profit, and for the first time he draws the curtain on the backstage drama and comedy of the process of manufacturing the oratorical by-products of fame:

Thunder in the West

"A WRITER, scientist or explorer is acclaimed, or perhaps some war hero or front-page stunt artist. Instantly a keen appetite to see and hear him or her arises. We have the machinery for presenting the celebrity with revenue to himself and usually to us. He is seen in evening dress, suavely lecturing to a crowded hall of admirers who sit in awe at the great man's words, but who rarely appreciate the difficulties encountered in getting him there and making him give a good show.

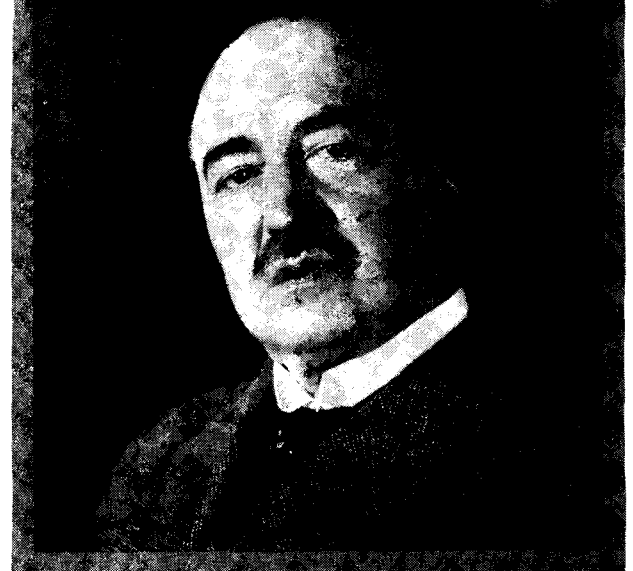
"At the outset let me say that the net of my experience is satisfactory. The majority of the people I route have

"Lion" hunting runs in the Pond family. This is James the Second

do so quite thoroughly, branding not only one's immediate parents, but one's antecedents to the fourth generation. One day I found the interpreter, his service revolver bulging in his pocket, stalking along the hotel corridor, pale and agitated, determined to rid the world of at least one famous author. Business reasons impelled me to dissuade him.

"Thereupon we engaged a Porto Rican, who understood Ibañez and his temperament, to act as interpreter. This suave young man got along fairly well but one day at Ann Arbor hand shaking caused Ibañez to miss his train. A high executive of a Michigan railway took the interpreter aside and generously offered

possibility understand. Neither, for that matter, could the audience until they heard the interpreter. Maeterlinck spoke in French, having abandoned his early device of phonetic spelling which he thought (Continued on page 44)



Ibañez, according to Mr. Pond, is the most temperamental literary lion ever brought to this country

The Gold Rush puts on Dawg

Close-ups of WIDE-OPEN WEEPAH

A BIG touring car, piled high with trunks, boxes and bedding, came to a grinding stop in a cloud of desert dust. Three men sprang out and began the task of getting a large tent from the running board to the ground. Working with feverish haste, they stretched out the canvas, placed poles and raised the big, flapping mass. While two held the poles upright the third drove pegs and tightened ropes.

Three women, a layer of dust covering the artificial roses in their cheeks and the penciled lines that marked their eyebrows, alighted and began helping with the unloading.

First, two boxes, obviously containing groceries, were carried into the tent and placed on end. Next a board was laid on top, making an improvised counter. Then came a trunk from which was taken a cloth to cover the board. Glasses followed and then a bottle and a demijohn.

One of the men stepped to the front of the tent.

"I'm Hard Rock Jack from Quartz Mountain!" he yelled. "Everybody come and have a drink. The first one is on the house!" And in an undertone, "Get busy, girls!"

Thus in less than twenty minutes was born the first dance hall in Weepah, latest of Nevada's mushroom gold towns.

For twenty years the vast desert of Nevada had lain dormant, watching the gradual encroachment of modern times. But with the cry of "Gold at Weepah" the desert reawoke to life; back to it trooped the desert rats, gamblers, women and sure-thing men who have made lurid the history of every gold rush the West has seen.

They Gave It Away

DESPITE the changes wrought by time, despite the discarding of the burro for the flivver, the pack-horse for the roadster and the wagon and team for the truck and limousine, human nature at Weepah is the same as in the days of Goldfield, Tonopah and Rawhide—names to conjure with in Nevada history.

For the same old faces were seen among the prospectors and miners who trooped out the twenty-seven miles to Weepah from Tonopah. Many were the reunions among friends who had not met since "the last one."

Some came rich and seeking more; others came broke but confident that at last they would "strike it."

And in their wake came the usual crowd. New faces perhaps, but the same old professions, the same old lures, the same end in view—to get with ease what others secured by dint of hard labor.

Some day a Western poet will rise to sing the saga of the badger hole. The history of Nevada gold mines is based largely on badger holes.

The badgers like rocky dens, but the rocks must not be too hard. Instinct tells them where the soft rock is, just below the surface.

SHADES of Chilkoot Pass and Klondike sourdoughs! There never was a gold rush like this—where dancing girls are highbrow and desert rats listen to the radio!

By D. E. CRUZAN

Now, gold, the real high-grade, is found among the soft rocks. No good prospector will overlook panning out the badger burrows in the district he is working.

Frank Horton, Sr., owner of the property on which the Weepah strike was made, had gone broke there working an old mine. He went to Los Angeles to raise further finances. He left his last \$5 with his family and borrowed money to take him south.

Young Frank Horton was left at the mine to guard the property, on which a



"Blackjack": This might be 1860 or 1906, but it's 1927

judgment for labor claims had been filed. Frank and his chum, Leonard Traynor, decided to do a little prospecting on their own account.

"Here's a badger hole," said Frank, pointing to a spot some ten feet from the trail. "Let's take a chance and pan it out."

The first pan showed a color or two. This, in prospector's parlance, means

flecks of gold. Encouraged, the boys went to work, and the gold content increased with each pan. Finally they began digging below the surface and within two feet struck a ledge. Specimens showed free gold, apparent to the naked eye.

Taking two sacks of ore, they started for Tonopah. There they confided their "trouble," as they termed it, to Nick

"Fraction Jack" Reddy is at his old tricks with careless claim stakers

Ableman, owner of the Tonopah Club, a gambling house. He at once had an assay taken and received the report of "\$78,000 a ton." Ore running \$20 a ton is considered a good find.

The news spread like wildfire, and then the boys realized their mistake. In their excitement they had not staked out the surrounding claims!

Day and night they were dogged by the populace of Tonopah. At night a miniature army camped about the Horton and Traynor homes.

At last the lads decided to make a run for it and started one midnight despite a blinding snowstorm.

Every man and woman in Tonopah went with them!

Gaming tables were idle, dance halls and red-light houses closed, county officers, school teachers, business men—all forgot their various pursuits and joined in

the wild midnight chase across the desert.

Not having money for gasoline to take them to Weepah, the boys offered Lee Henderson, Tonopah garage man, a third interest in one claim for ten gallons. Three weeks later Henderson received a check for \$1,666.66, his share of the \$5,000 the claim brought when the youths sold it.

The ride to the strike that night took three hours. Old-timers, bringing back to memory the days of the burro, estimated that it then would have taken two days to cover the same distance under the same circumstances.

The Weepah rush that first night presented a picture of contrasts. Take Dorothy Forrest and Wave Cross, the former a cabaret entertainer, the latter an assayer, school-teacher and writer.

Dorothy took (Continued on page 43)