

The Jules Verne novel *Michael Strogoff* has been an old favorite of the movies—both here and in Europe. As early as 1916, Universal released a version and a few years later another one. Then a sound model was produced in Germany and another in France. R.K.O. bought the French version and imported the German star Anton Walbrook for the lead. They re-shot the close-ups with Walbrook and a Hollywood cast, and used the long-shots of the original European version—thus getting mass scenes of the Bulgarian army very cheaply. It is still a horse-opera with Czaristic-imperialist flavor.

Marked Woman (Warner Bros.): If you are sharp enough you might guess that this film is based on the recent Lucania (according to the *New York Times*, Luciano by all other papers) vice trials. Of course, punches are pulled and dramaturgy is absent in spite of the Bette Davis come-back. It is really a stereotyped gangster film with memories of *Little Caesar*, et al. You will always be one jump ahead of the dialogue.

Swing High, Swing Low (Paramount): A new version of Burlesque with variations. Carole Lombard is the good wife and Charles MacMurray is the good-for-nothing trumpet-player husband. Some "showy" photography (very dark shadowed) and little else.

I Loved a Woman (R.K.O.-Radio): The émigré Anatol Litvak was imported from Europe to do a conventional triangle story about aviators in the French army during the world war. Paul Muni, who wears his Zola beard, and Miriam Hopkins do not have much of an opportunity for acting.

PETER ELLIS.

THE DANCE

TECHNICALLY, the ballet lends itself to brilliance of virtuosity, and it is this inherent brilliance, intrinsically theatrical and exciting, that tends to confound the socially conscious audience. Here is apparently a contradiction: a moving quality in a definitely reactionary form.

There can be no doubt as to the fundamentally reactionary trend of the ballet offered these last seasons of "ballet renaissance in America." Nostalgic, sometimes mystic, and very often taking even a pre-bourgeois ideological position, the ballet certainly has lacked consciousness of contemporary social, economic,

cultural forces. As a matter of fact, it's rather difficult recalling a single ballet composition that has been influenced by even the forces of the French Revolution, not to mention the Industrial Revolution. True, there was some ballet representation in concerts offered by the anti-fascist New Dance League (which, incidentally, presents its pre-amalgamation and last concert Sunday afternoon, April 26 in New York), but it was a Rip Van Winkle sort of stranger in a strange class-conscious milieu.

Simply, the ballet has been in the nature of a feudal hangover; and a long hangover it's been, extending its work this late into the 1930's. The two ballets that Mikhail Mordkin, at one time ballet master of the Imperial Russian Ballet, presented recently, *The Goldfish* in premier performance and *Giselle* for the first time since 1911, are both cases in point.

Giselle, based on a story by Theophile Gautier (who wore a "red waistcoat" and was thoroughly anti-bourgeois until the bourgeoisie was threatened by a rising working-class movement) is a tall tale of lords and ladies and peasants, the nobility of the gentry and the honest servility of the peasantry epitomized in the love life of Giselle and the faithful-to-death Duke Albert. *The Goldfish* is based on Pushkin's fable of poverty to riches and the return to the old poverty, the story of the simple, kindly, poor fisherman (Good) and his hag of an old social-climbing wife (Evil), whose greed brings hard days and medieval sufferings to her simple-minded peasant of a husband. Better the empty larder than the wealth of the full table (and handsome costumes, music, dancing, slaves, etc.).

The Critics' Group has published an excellent group of Marxist dissertations on Pushkin and his work. What is here of special interest is to note that the source of the material of these ballets is their tie-up with bourgeois and even feudal morals, precepts, and traditions; and since this is the nature of its form, to question the validity of the ballet as a technique for other than reactionary forces in the contemporary scene. Nothing that the Ballet Russe (to be reviewed next week) nor the native (?) American Ballet has produced to date will serve but to strengthen the argument. It is only when the rigid structure of the "five positions" of traditional ballet is smashed that, as with the Jooss Ballet, there is some release from the reactionary hold of the old form.

Still, the young Viola Essen (almost a child) was movingly beautiful as Queen of the Willys (some spirit figure), and Mikhail Mordkin was a touching old fisherman in his excellent miming. If the technique can still be exciting, and to a proletarian audience (the ballet is the popular form of dance in the Soviet), then there must be some life in it yet. It's rather difficult to assign the popular approval to mass nostalgia; and yet form and technique are presumably inseparable—and certainly from the content of a work when the nature of that work has been consistently



Bath Gikow

Travel - - -

With Our Conducted and Independent Tours to the

U. S. S. R.

MISS THYRA J. EDWARDS—educator, lecturer and Soviet worker—will conduct a National Minorities Tour—1937 European Seminar on International Relations, sailing July 9 from New York.

SOVIET RUSSIA TODAY—A tour sponsored by the popular American magazine under the leadership of Fred W. Ingvaldstad, leaving New York on July 7th.

DR. EDWARD KALLMAN—This authority on Europe's social and economic trends will conduct a tour of Soviet Russia and Western Europe, leaving New York July 7th.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING—Lillian Hodghead will conduct a tour of Sweden, Finland, Soviet Russia, Istanbul, Athens, Rome and Paris, leaving New York on June 9th.

CULTURAL TOUR—led by Dr. James C. Coleman—writer, radio speaker and authority on International Social and Cultural Relations, leaving New York July 3rd, visiting eight countries.

MR. MARTIN E. CORDULACK—elementary school principal of long standing will conduct a tour through U.S.S.R. and other European countries, sailing July 3rd from New York.

Tours to Mexico

Tours and Steamship Tickets Sold to All Parts of the World

Make your reservation Now—For further Information Apply to

World Tourists, Inc.

175 Fifth Ave. New York, N. Y.

Tel.: ALgonquin 4-6656-7-8

CHICAGO

110 S. Dearborn St. Tel. Franklin 9766

681 Market Street SAN FRANCISCO Tel. Garfield 6367

COOKE'S Storage Warehouse

209-11 East 125th Street, New York City
Telephone: HARlem 7-1053

300 Readers Used Our Service Last Year

Est. 1861

Special rate to New Masses readers

Garment Centre's Most Attractive Dining Room

Breakfast, 15c up—COMPLETE DINNER, 50c—Lunch, 30c up

BESTFOOD

VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT

225 W. 36th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues
Open 6 a. m. to 9 p. m. Mgt. V. Tofilowsky

Enjoy a SPRING VACATION

In a friendly atmosphere

ALL SPORTS

**NAPANOCH
COUNTRY CLUB**
NAPANOCH - - - N. Y.

CHAPEL HILL COUNTRY CLUB

formerly

RED OAKS

Located at Atlantic Highlands, N. J.

will open Friday, May 28, 1937

Reservations now being booked

For information Call

Ashland 4-1633 or Atlantic Highlands 896

Mail Reservations

Room 2004, Chanin Building New York City

CHESTERS' ZUNBARG

a Delightful Hideaway in the Mountains

Pleasant walks, splendid handball courts, riding, roller skating, other seasonal sports. Open fireplaces, library, musical, new game room. Always good company.

WOODBOURNE, N. Y.

Fallsburg 2-F-22

AID SPANISH DEMOCRACY

Week-End of April 30-May 2

At the request of many guests we have set aside this week-end—10 percent of proceeds to be donated to the cause of Spanish democracy. Special program: Madrid movies, speakers from Spanish front, Spanish music and dancing.

BLUE MOUNTAIN LODGE

Special cabin arrangements for week-ends (May 1 to Oct. 1) Write or phone.

PEEKSKILL Phone 1403 N. Y.



THIS YEAR COME TO SOUTH WIND

for your vacation and week-ends because it offers much: 145 beautiful acres, large private lake. Camp activities; hotel accommodations. Sports, tennis, cultural activities, no regimentation. Summer Theatre. Low rates. And You'll Like the Folks You Meet Here

SOUTH WIND, Woodbourne, N. Y.

Special Features and Rates Decoration Day week-end. Book early. Phone BEekman 3-7159.

KATZ COTTAGE SANATORIUM

WAWONDA AVENUE, LIBERTY, N. Y.

A sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis situated in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains within easy reach of New York City by rail, bus or auto. Fully equipped including fluoroscopy, X-ray, and pneumothorax, where indicated. Recommended by I.W.O. Write for booklet.

BERNARD KATZ
Superintendent

DR. HARRY GOLOMBE
Medical Director

Telephone: Liberty 1235 or 28

CAMP NITGEDAIGET

BEACON, N. Y.

ALL SPORTS EXCELLENT FOOD
HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

\$16 per week

Cars leave daily from 2700 Bronx Park East.
For all information call ESTabrook 8-1400.

For an inexpensive summer in the country, get a friend or more and arrange for the season's exclusive use of some room in which hot and cold water runs, with food at a special rate, at

TALL TIMBERS

MOHEGAN HIGHLANDS - - - N. Y.

(An Adults' Camp) Peekskill 3275

Irving Kantor and Jen Vizenthal, Mrgs.
Lake, Tennis, Handball, etc.

lined up with the influences of Reaction.

One thing is to be remembered, however. The ballet has advanced through a series of historic changes while maintaining the "five positions" (since 1661), and floor patterns have suffered radical innovations while the "pointes" remained. It's true that the changes have never been of a fundamentally revolutionary quality, revolutionary particularly in the social, economic sense, but there have been changes; the art has not been completely static. This considered, and not forgetting the popular inclination to the brilliance that a ballet virtuosity may attain, it is not beyond possibility (though there may be considerable doubt) that a proletarian ballet technique may yet develop. It should be stated, certainly, that signs of such a major development are not yet visible.

OWEN BURKE.

THE THEATER

THE scouts of the American Youth Congress might well look into the title song of the new Rodgers and Hart musical, *Babes in Arms*, to see whether it isn't close to a theme song for an American youth movement. And the rest of you had better begin tuning up for "Way Out West on West End Avenue" and "That's Why the Lady Is a Tramp," two other numbers from the very acceptable score which will probably be echoing strongly over dance floors and the air waves in the near future.

As for the show itself, it's mainly a large collection of pleasant and talented young folks cavorting to perhaps the best words and music of the Broadway season, and proceeding along the lines of a light narrative about how a neighborhoodful of vaudevillists' offspring, rather than go to the township work farm for the summer, defy the powers and engage in a coöperative effort to feed themselves while the old folks are away. Naturally, they decide to put on a revue, and there you are.

Apart from the title song, there's rather more than the usual quantum of social and political content in this musical. True, Communists come off badly where they're mentioned, but the most solid body of social viewpoint in the book is anti-white-chauvinist. New York's Mayor La Guardia gets a plug in the song, "That's Why the Lady Is a Tramp."

Mitzi Green, whom you may remember as being a child cinema performer, has grown up enough to be a top-notch feminine lead, and certainly knows how to use the old sock to put over a song. The hoofing in the show is top-notch, especially that by Duke McHale and those two young Negro brothers, Harold and Fayard Nicholas. And with all due respect to Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart (which is not inconsiderable, in view of their history from the first *Grand Street Follies* through *The Connecticut Yankee* and many other shows, including *On Your Toes*), it must be recorded that without the expert direction of Robert Sinclair there might have been some yawning moments. As a whole, it is good,

Applications still being
received for

JOHN L. SPIVAK
57 Day Tour - - - Sailing July 3

BROADUS MITCHELL
49 Day Tour - - - Sailing July 24

LANGSTON HUGHES
60 Day Tour - - - Sailing July 3

**RUSSIAN
TOURS** PLANNED TO
YOUR ORDER
\$259 and up

write, call or phone
—and mention the
New Masses

EDUTRAVEL, Inc.

An Institute for Educational Travel

55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Telephone: GRamercy 7-3284-3285

**SUNDAY
MAY 2nd**

7:30 P. M.

Celebrate
MAY DAY

GREET COMMUNIST YOUTH

HEAR FOSTER, BROWDER.
Green, Herndon, Flynn

8TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Adm.: 25c, 40c, \$1.00. Tickets at all bookshops

HILLTOP LODGE SPRING FESTIVAL — DANCE

Entertainment Prizes

Dancing to 12-piece Band

Saturday Evening—8:30 p.m.

APRIL 24, 1937

MECCA TEMPLE

133 West 55th Street

New York City

(Lodge Opens May, 1937)

Subscription: Seventy-five Cents

MEXICO—THIRTY DAYS*

Comprehensive Itinerary Limited Groups
24 FULL DAYS IN MEXICO

Mexican Journeys, Inc.

SPECIALISTS IN MEXICAN TRAVEL

220 W. 42nd Street, New York City. WIs. 7-2929

Brochure on Request

* Individual and limited time tours arranged.