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Remembering my own moments of high enjoyment last year, I'm going to take no chances of missing the three concerts of the Dessoff Choir under Paul Boepple (choral music from Schütz to Bach, nineteenth and twentieth century works for large and small chorus, liturgical music of the mediæval and Renaissance periods), the annual concert by the Pius X School Choir, and the Philharmonic Symphony Chamber Orchestra series, under Hans Lange, for the benefit of Bennington College. And I shouldn't be surprised to derive equal pleasure from the Duke Ellington concert scheduled for Carnegie Hall sometime in October. In Euterpe's house, as well, there are many mansions.

The New York Philharmonic Symphony will get under way on October 21 in its second season under Barbirolli, with (I've heard) a greatly increased repertory of American works. The Metropolitan Opera will probably still struggle along (despite the active disinterest of this department) and pack in the Flagstad, Pons, and Wagner idolators. The National Orchestral Association will continue its Carnegie Hall concerts, featuring this year four programs of 'cello-cum-orchestra works with Emanuel Feuermann as soloist. And led by Yehudi Menuhin (fresh from a two year sabbatical with an exhumed Schumann violin concerto) and Richard Tauber (king-pin of European recording tenors), there will be multitudinous recitals and solo appearances by name, routine, and debut artists (courtesy title in the majority of cases). Press blurbs from the big concert bureaus bring the disquieting news that bookings are 20 to 40 percent ahead of last year (the Columbia Concerts Corp. attributes the increase largely to the greater activity planned by the "singing stars of the films").

On the network broadcasts the gold-plated feature will be the special Toscanini series (N.B.C.) beginning around the first of January, but meanwhile industrious dial twisting at the proper hours will continue to produce more interesting programs and better performances than one almost ever hears in concert. Alfred Wallenstein's Sinfonietta and Frank Black's String Orchestra (Mutual and N.B.C. respectively) are the two best bets: the range and catholicity of their programs set a mark for the most world-famous conductors to shoot at. One should also watch for the Howard Barlow concerts and Columbia School of the Air music series (C.B.S.), and Ernest La Prade's Home Symphony (N.B.C.). The commercial programs will probably continue to be unbearable except for an occasional joyous moment of relief such as provided by some of Kostelanetz's special arrangements of folk

and popular tunes (C.B.S.). Worth anticipating is the première (as yet unannounced) of the one act opera, the *Old Maid and the Thief*, commissioned from Gian-Carlo Menotti following the success of his delightful hit of last season, *Amelia al Ballo*. The more enterprising local stations continue to offer some very good as well as some very bad music, but New York's bright spot of recent years, WQXR, seems to be slipping a bit in the direction of commercialism and its recorded programs are getting some stiff competition from those of WHN.

Which leaves untouched the diverse and sometimes monumental activity of the W.P.A. Federal Music Project. If you like Tchaikovsky, there's a chance to hear many of his unfamiliar works in the current series at the F.M.P. Theater of Music, Sunday evenings, but more important plans are to be announced soon, which, together with some of the varied F.M.P. accomplishments and ambitions, call for a later column to themselves.

R. D. DARRELL.

THE THEATER

TWO reopenings of last-season hits were the Broadway events of the week. The casts of each underwent important changes, and the results served in some sort to show again the subtle complexity of dramaturgy. The cast changes in *Richard II* are hardly noticeable although the personalities involved have changed considerably. The cast changes in *The Show Is On* make a glaring difference in the quality of the production.

Richard II is still, as we remarked when it opened last February, "a glittering fabric of chiseled phrase and pointed apothegm." And it still holds good that as a study of the degeneration of a section of a ruling class, with its revolutionary replacement by another which was too friendly with the common people, the play has much in it of special interest to us who live in a period of wars and revolutions. It reinforces the contention that Shakespeare had a clear conception of economics as a determining force in historic processes, and that he well understood what is still hush-hushed by all the machinery of bourgeois education and propaganda: that armed force is the ultimate keystone of statecraft. The psychological collapse (as king) of Richard II when Bolingbroke offers most generous conditions for his own surrender cannot be understood unless at the same time it is understood that the essence of Richard's kingship evaporated when Bolingbroke's army proved superior though Bolingbroke offered peace on easy terms. It is a great play, and in the present production, with Maurice Evans its bright star, it is Shakespeare which has no peer in recent years.

The Show Is On misses Beatrice Lillie very much, even though her successor sings and acts with ability and wit. It is a show that, being loosely strung together and lacking much intellectual fodder, requires the specialized brilliance of performers to give it effectiveness. The comedy of Willie and Howard is

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by now too traditional to have much impact except in such concentrated satire and mimicry as Willie's famous woodchopper's song. The best skit in the show is still the parody of *Tovarich* in which the two White Russians are transformed into two Republicans severely suffering from Landonitis. And by the same token, the best crack in the show is the Republican's bitter complaint that "the whole damn recovery is unconstitutional." This vein of political satire, which crops up in other sections of the production, gives it a life which remains long after the election-campaign angle might have been expected to have lost its time-liness. And its skit on burlesque, which borrows some time-honored material from that source, is a worthy memorial.

Some brilliant theater which few were privileged to see took place in a small auditorium early in the summer, when, among other things, sections of *Liliom* and *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* were put on as a term-end demonstration by the students of the New Theater School. The sheer technical brilliance of these fragments would have turned the average Broadway producer green with envy. We mention this because the school, at 117 West 46th Street, New York, is now registering students for its fall term, which will begin in about two weeks. Anyone interested in sound, expert training in the theater arts and crafts and even in such associated functions as publicity could hardly find a better school.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

- Dr. C. V. Akin. The chief quarantine officer of the port of New York will speak on "Diseases Outside Our Door," Tues., Sept. 28, 5:15 p.m., C.B.S.
- N. Y. *Herald-Tribune Forum*. Prominent speakers are scheduled for this annual forum, Mon., Oct. 4, 2 and 9 p.m., and Tues., Oct. 5, 2 and 10:15 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

- Heart of Spain*. Frontier Films' documentary on medical aid to Spain has been rightly called "pictorial dynamite."
- The Lower Depths*. Gorki's famous play of the dregs of humanity is brought to the screen by Jean Renoir with a script that Gorki personally approved before his death.
- Mayerling*. A tender and moving French film based on a historical incident.
- Baltic Deputy*. The newest Soviet film is a matchless portrayal of the intellectual during and after the revolution. Ranks with the season's best.
- The Spanish Earth*. Joris Ivens's much heralded film of the civil war in Spain is a deeply stirring document that you cannot afford to miss.
- Dead End*. The realistic drama of kids from the East Side slums comes to the screen with its impact unimpaired.
- The Life of Emile Zola*. Easily the best film of the year, powerful and profound.
- You Can't Have Everything*. A better than average backstage musical with the hilarious Ritz brothers.
- They Won't Forget*. A powerful and extremely moving film of a lynching in the deep South.

"GOINGS-ON"

ROLFE HUMPHRIES, co-author of "And Spain Sings," discusses "Poetry and Spain." Auspices: Poetry Group, League of American Writers, 145 West 21st Street, New York City. 9 P. M., Friday, September 24. Admission, 25 cents.

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