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Richard Greene Returns In Prison Camp Drama

British Actor's First Since the War To Be 'Night the World Shook'

By DOROTHY MANNERS
Staff Correspondent Int'l News Service

HOLLYWOOD, July 2.—At last, Twentieth Century-Fox has settled on Richard Greene's first picture since the war, and it is an unusual decision taking him completely away from his British drawing room roles of the past. Gene Markey will produce, and Dick star in, "The Night the World Shook," a screen story by Nunnally Johnson from a French novel. It's he-man action from start to finish—about convicts in a Caribbean prison camp and strangely enough, for this setting, there's a strong romantic theme.

Greene, you know was one of the first actors to return to his native England, in the early days of the war. He rose from a private to a captain, seeing action in France, Holland and Belgium. His last American movie was "I Married An Adventuress," a smoothie—but there's no reason he can't go earthy with the best of them since he's a very rugged individual standing six feet tall and weighing in at 170. Markey starts the movie with Dick as soon as he finishes, "No Wedding Ring."

NOW, THE movie fans get a chance to squeal over Charles Trenet, the French cafe singer, who has had the bobby-soxers jumping in New York for the past few months and who, before that, had the French belles in a spin. Brynie Foy has caged the virile thrush on a contract for his Eagle-Lion Company and is so pleased over the contract that he has agreed to star Trenet in his own original screen story, "Of Thee I Dream." Permitting actors to write their own screen material is really enthusiasm at a high pitch. Charles won't be in Hollywood until September because he wants to catch up on his English before starting his screen career.

WHEN RUTH Hussey steps out of "State of the Union" to await the arrival of her baby, Kay Francis steps in replacing her in the hit political satire. In fact, Kay hurries to Broadway the minute she finishes "Wife Wanted," to sit on the sidelines about a month before Ruth leaves. The timing is good, because "Wife Wanted" is set for a big New York premiere this fall and Kay will be on hand to help put over the movie in which she stars, and co-produces with Jeffrey Bernerd for Monogram.

BARRY FITZGERALD'S brother, Arthur Shields, has been handed a role that may make him a potential rival of his more celebrated relative. Shields, a former Abbey Player actor, was signed for the father in "The Fabulous Dorseys" — a part previously hinted and rumored for Barry. It has all the sentimental comedy angles to put him over as a top character comedian in one performance — just as "Going My Way" put over Fitzgerald. Sara Allgood is the "mother" in Charlie Rogers' musical about the swing kings, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey.

THAT BUSY girl Bebe Daniels gets busier and busier. Now producing comedies for Hal Roach, Bebe has signed with Little Folks Favorites, a recording company, to make a series of albums of children's tales. The first two are "Aladdin's Lamp" and "The Little Doll That Ran Away." George R. Bacheller, head of the record company, comes from the movie pioneer family. Bebe is the first Hollywood name to sign for the albums appealing strictly to the child audience.

IT WILL cost Dick Haymes a neat $250,000 to loaf for three months—from now through September. The minute the hint was out that the studios might shutter because of another strike, Haymes was besieged with night club offers, theater contracts, personals, and the biggest of all—a national tour with a top band. To all of this, Dick has said "no." "I haven't had a real vacation in ten years," he added; "it's the first time in my life I've ever been in a financial spot where I could take time to get acquainted with my children, spend a lot of time at home and take it easy. And that's what I'm going to do." So everybody's happy except, possibly, Haymes' agent.

HOLLYWOOD IN SHORTS: Skitch Henderson "the Music" confiding to close friends that he and Anita Colby "the Face" would be married was a bit on the premature side—for the lady says "no." So she won't face the music, huh?; Gladys Robinson (Mrs. Eddie G.), who has been ill a long time, is so improved that she accompanies Eddie and their son to Honolulu Thursday—the first family vacation in years; Sir Stewart Duke Elder, ophthalmologist to the King of England, arrived in Hollywood for a look around, unfortunately, just as the strike broke. He's an optical specialist or eye doctor—if you are reaching for a dictionary; Carole Landis' groom, Horace Schmidlapp, is in dead seriousness about luring Hollywooders back to his new studio in New York to make movies. He's just sent Ed Jaffee to the coast to scout talent and bring home the biggest catches he can land; something has happened to B. Stanwyck—and it's all to the glamorous. Barbara, who cared little for clothes for years, was a dream puss, at a small dinner party, the other night, in a short-skirted black cocktail dress with a white print top. Along with Bob Taylor, Gene Raymond, the D. A. Dorans and Paul Short—Barbara had her fortune told and if the seer didn't tell her she's a candidate for the "best dressed" lists — she's no prophet; no actor in Hollywod has ever been more co-operative with the press and studio publicity department than Ronald Colman during his stint at Twentieth for "The Late George Apley." The studio whipping boys can't get over his graciousness about interviews, appointments and portrait sittings—all right on the dot of the hours set for him; the Lecuona Cuban Boys, opening at the Troc Thursday night, follow with a movie, "Christmas in Havana" for Twentieth Century-Fox; Rosemary De Camp's baby expected hourly. That's all today. See you tomorrow.

AT FIRST, John Wayne finds Claudette Colbert overly snoopy because she insists on taking notes on his every word and act—for publication in a novel. Romance soon develops, though in "Without Reservations," opening at the Golden Gate today.

New 'Fortune Teller' Wins Curran Laurels

By KEVIN WALLACE

EITHER EDWIN LESTER'S minnesingers have pulled themselves brilliantly out of the decline registered in "The Vagabond King," or I've mellowed in the past month. Either way, the report on the Civic Light Opera Association's third entry for the season at the Curran, "The New Fortune Teller," is enthusiastic.

Everybody else at Monday night's world premiere of the new vehicle for old Victor Herbert melodies seemed to agree, except a gentleman who said it was cute and pretty, but so what, it had been done before.

"Well, what do you want them to do?" snarled his lady. "'Strange Interlude'?"

If not a strange one, the evening was a wonderfully melodic interlude, without a single heavy pause to weigh down all the very pleasant songs from Herbert's original "Fortune Teller," "Serenade" and a couple of other forgotten shows—"Romany Life," for instance, and "The Serenade," and "Gypsy Love Song," and the sprightly "Let Her Go, Piff Paff."

Such pauses as appeared were light as bubbles, since Henry Myers, who wrote the new book as an unpretentious music rack, never takes his operetta cliches seriously. They have something to do with a gypsy princess (Helena Bliss) and a bohemian baron (Gene Lockhart) and a glamorous marquise (Dale Melbourne) and a Sinatra of Father's Day (John Tyers) and a "Pygmalion" transformation (funny how everybody keeps writing "Pygmalion" these days) and Lord knows what all—it doesn't matter, which is all to the good.

Whimsy seems to be easier for singers to act than The High Drama, and everybody in the enormous and good looking company seemed to be having a terrific time kidding themselves.

Not only in lightening of plot and weighting of music does "The New Fortune Teller" improve on last month's barn dance. Miles White's costumes are tasteful as well as kaleidoscopic this time; Aida Broadbent's dancing girls are integrated with the stage direction as a whole, which is, as it should be, choreographically precise; and the comedy is everywhere.

All this requires more than just co-operation between the players—it requires the utmost co-ordination and speed, and opening night showed the need of some slight tightening up. For instance, there's no time for seeming inadvertence, a point which Walter Catlett occasionally forgets by ad-libbing his otherwise beguiling role as a raffish gypsy king.

Neither is there time for encores, a phenomenon closely resembling ether, and I'm delighted to say that none were indulged in Monday night.

The ideal pace, it seems to me, is set for the show by a marvelous new comic called Jack Goode, who strikes a sort of medium between Massine and Danny Kaye in his lightfooted part as a ballet instructor.

Joseph Macauley keeps pace with Goode's metronome in the comedy field, as a stuffy duke, and Val Valentinoff carries it on in the dancing department, as an enormously agile gypsy.

The only essential lack in "The New Fortune Teller" is a star voice loud enough to drown out the orchestra, which incidentally is a fine assembly led by Arthur Kay. Maybe they just don't sing from ze diaphragm. They all sing sweetly, however, and I don't think you'll find the slightest grounds for displeasure.

'Drunkard' Is Staged Nightly

ONLY PRESENT ACTIVE survivor of the classic period in American melodrama, "The Drunkard" continues its nightly presentation at the Green Street Music Hall. Other shows of the era were "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Ben Hur," East Lynn" and "Way Down East."

Italian Film

"OPEN CITY," stirring drama of Rome during the Nazi occupation, continues on into its sixth week at the Larkin. Famous Italian stars appear in leading roles and English titles interpret the foreign dialogue.

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