

Nelson B. Bell About The Showshops

Notables Are Coming Here for 'Between the Devil;' 'March of Time' Takes 'Rap' for No Apparent Reason

Beatrice Lillie and Group of New York Newspaper Celebrities Arrive With Company Sunday Afternoon; Wire and Bulletin Announce Films in the Offing; High Government Officials View Disputed Film; Notes of the Theater and Its People.

THE MOST recent bulletin from Chairman Andrew R. Kelley, of the entertainment committee, to one of his vice chairmen brings the heartening word that arrangements have been completed for a reception at the British Embassy Sunday afternoon at 5 for Jack Buchanan, Evelyn Laye, Adele Dixon and the other stars of "Between the Devil," the Broadway musical hit that will be presented here for one performance in the National Theater on Sunday night to inaugurate the President's Birthday celebrations.



BELL

As hinted here at an earlier date, Beatrice Lillie, the theater's foremost feminine clown, will come down with the troupe, which arrives at Union Station at 2:30 Sunday afternoon. Whether she does anything on the stage Sunday night or not, it will add a fillip to the event which it otherwise would not possess just to know that she is among those present. It is almost inconceivable that "Bee" Lillie should be kept in the background on such an occasion.

But the thing does not end there. A cameraman representing the "Life Goes to a Party" department of the magazine Life also is coming to town from New York to cover the reception and highlights of the "command performance" of "Between the Devil." That, as the saying goes, is something!

It should be interesting to the Capital's ardent "show fans" that there still are available a few choice seat locations in the orchestra for Sunday night's gala presentation of the first musical comedy the National Capital will have seen this season.

If you haven't got yours, a friendly admonition would be to burn up that telephone wire before it is too late.

The boys of the press aren't indifferent to this event, either. Ward Morehouse, of the New York Sun; Danny Walker, of the New York News, and three other Manhattan key-pounders will arrive on the "Between the Devil" special train Sunday afternoon. They will occupy seats at the performance purchased by Lee Shubert, which is a news item in itself. It is through Mr. Shubert's wholehearted co-operation that the "command performance" is made possible. This is perhaps the only time in theatrical history when a producer has bought a block of tickets for an attraction he has himself contributed to a cause of unique national importance. It will be interesting to examine the rabbits' feet carried in their vest pockets by my fellow craftsmen of the New York rags.

So now it comes out that what happened to that "March of Time" release dealing exclusively with Nazi Germany, supposed to have been a featured part of today's bill at the RKO-Keith Theater, but canceled at the last moment, is that it has been "recalled for laboratory revision" and will be along at a later date, probably with all of the possible disturbances of international amity removed.

That sounds a little like an omelet with the eggs left out. With Nazi organizations springing up all over the country, what are we, over here, mice or mice?

This panting wire practically explains itself. "Dear Nelson: Al Lightman, vice president of our company, was so enthusiastic as to preview screening of 'Everybody Sing' that he telephoned from studio stating that 'in my opinion this is one of the finest pieces of entertainment we have had privilege of releasing. Fannie Brice and Judy Garland are dynamic and picture should prove to be fastest-moving musical comedy attraction ever released.' This picture scheduled for early showing on F street. What more can be said? Regards. RUDY BERGER." Nothing more can be said—unless it is that my good friend Mr. Berger is Washington manager for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and "Everybody Sing" is an M-G-M. production. Making every possible concession to this possible bias, one is tempted to suspect that in citing the dynamics of Fannie Brice and Judy Garland the boys still may have something there.

And as long as this sort of thing has been brought up, it might be as well to note now as any time that Gradwell L. Sears, general sales manager who has just returned to New York from the West Coast, reports that nine of the Warner Brothers' most important pictures will be released in immediately impending weeks—or is it months? Anyhow, here they come:

- "The Adventures of Robin Hood," in color, with Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland.
 - "Fools for Scandal," with Carole Lombard and Fernand Gravet.
 - "Gold Is Where You Find It," also in color, with George Brent and Olivia de Havilland (what, again?)
 - "Jezebel," with Bette Davis, Henry Fonda and George Brent (ditto).
 - "Swing Your Lady," with an all-comedy cast, led by Louise Fazenda and Nat Pendleton.
 - "Women Are Like That," with Kay Francis and Pat O'Brien.
 - "Girls on Probation," with Dolores Costello and Bonita Granville.
 - "The Kid Comes Back," with Wayne Morris and June Travis.
 - "A Slight Case of Murder," with Edward G. Robinson, who has just done so magnificent a job in "The Last Gangster."
- There they are—take 'em or leave 'em. If you are as show-wise as I think you are you will take 'em.

FLASH!

These proceedings were interrupted after the preceding paragraph by an invitation from Harold Horan, representative of Time and "The March of Time" in Washington, to dash down to the private projection room in the Twentieth Century-Fox Film Exchange and have a preview squint at the beleaguered print of the issue of "March of Time" that has fallen under an inexplicable ban because

Will Tumble on the Earle Stage



THE FIVE TOPPERS,

a quintet of nimble young women, who will appear in a novel routine of acrobatics, gymnastics and dancing as an added attraction on the vaudeville portion of the new week's program at the Earle, beginning today. The headline spot will be held by Benny Baker, comedian of both stage and screen.

of its complete dedication to the topic of Nazi Germany and its far-flung crusades for the de-democratization of the world.

Fresh from that screening, I can perceive no possible excuse for banning this release from the public screens. A personal opinion that was corroborated by more than one high Government dignitary in attendance is that the picture does nothing more than expound those precepts of Nazism that have been publicly preached by the Hitler propagandist machine ever since the Fuehrer ascended to power.

It tells the truth insofar as we are able to apprehend it from this distance—and tells it frankly and eloquently through the medium of exceptionally fine photography that lends vivid actuality to many millions of words already printed. It is not malicious and it is not in any sense violent in intent or execution. It is, in fact, an exceptionally fine job of pictorial reporting.

If alien picket lines were feared in Washington for the showing of this "March of Time," an equal fear of native picket lines should be felt for not showing it.

Repetition-Probably-Does-No-Good Note.

Who's running this country, anyhow?