

Nelson B. Bell About The Showshops

The March of Time' Fades Out of Amusement Scene, Bowing to Country's International Relationships!

Release, Scheduled for Local Screening Tomorrow,
Canceled in Deference to Nazi Officials in the U. S.;
Congressmen Wanted as "Actors;" the Circus Is
Coming to Town—in May; Civic Plans Self-
Benefit; Notes of the Theater and Its People.

THERE are questions of pseudo-diplomatic relationships, managerial policy and divers and sundry other considerations involved, with which this department has no inclination to lock horns. The maintenance of world equilibrium—such as it is—happily does not fall under the incumbent duties of this column.

But the fact of the matter is that the new issue of "The March of Time," originally scheduled as a particularly provocative "added attraction" on the bill opening tomorrow at RKO-Keith's, will not be shown in Washington. This decision was handed down by the "high command" late yesterday afternoon, following the ban of the issue in Chicago—the theater's high command, that is to say.

The reason for all of this agitation and eleventh-hour hullabaloo is that the new "March of Time" deals exclusively with a single subject, a conspicuous deviation from the producers' usual custom of including at least three "clips" in each of its documentary pictorial treatises upon world affairs. That subject is the alleged "inside story" of Nazi Germany under the regime of Fuehrer Hitler.

It is reported that the matter of Nazi activities both in Germany and America formed the basis of this penetrating analysis of what the movement is all about, its present operation and future potentialities. It was emphasized in the Chicago imbroglio—if that is what it was—that the release of the picture would jeopardize the standing of German functionaries in America, reasonably high in the councils of Herr Hitler's governmental establishment, and probably would end their official careers. The same thing might happen here. So there you are. There will be no "March of Time" at RKO-Keith's tomorrow.

Who's running this country, anyhow?

Today, by the way—and I hope you can do with a sudden change of subject and pace—is the first anniversary of the first January Presidential Inaugural. The switch in dates, it will be recalled, was prompted principally by the prevalence of abominable weather conditions on March 4. I am laughing. Last year, January 20 was marked by a torrential downpour. Yesterday wasn't so hot, either! Why not move the whole merry business to July Fourth and make it a double-barreled day of national observance. And if that has anything to do with show business, I am a Chinaman!

On a day like yesterday, incidentally, what is the first thing you think of? The circus, of course—or is it?

At any rate, here is the first news of the "big tops" for the new year, communicated to this desk by that walking encyclopedia of the tanbark and pink lemonade, Mr. Melvin D. Hildreth, president of the Circus Fans Association of America and local barrister of renown.

The combined Ringling Brothers-Barnum and Bailey Circus will rear its shining canvas splendor in the National Capital on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, May 16, 17 and 18. But that will not be the opening gun of the tent shows in Washington.

Earlier in May there will really be some goings-on. Tim McCoy will bring his "New Wild West Show" to town to awe the natives with the closest approximation of a Buffalo Bill show that has come along since that long-haired plainsman passed from America's historic scene.

Col. McCoy's Wild West exhibit will be a brand-new outfit when it unfurls itself here. Fashioned after the Buffalo Bill pattern, it will take the form of an open arena with canvas sides and canopies over the spectators. This canvas will be fresh from the makers on special order from the boss of the troupe. It will be in blue and white stripes from the boss of the troupe. The wagons also have been made to order and all will be pneumatic-tired. The entire unit will be broken out here for the first time.

The "made-to-order" factor goes beyond the pitch on the lot. The rail equipment transporting this recrudescence of the Old West also is being made especially for Col. Tim. It will require a 30-car train to haul this resurrection of pioneer days around the country. That is quite a train in any man's railroad.

Instead of the usual side-show attractions, Col. McCoy will feature an authentic Indian Village as his added attraction.

So now you know. And, if this is too far in advance, try not to forget it and remember that it was I, Richard, who told you.

The Washington Civic Theater announces that it will present an extra play as a special benefit for itself. This will be in addition to the regular roster of seven plays scheduled for this season, four of which already have been delivered with three more to follow in March, April and May. For this added starter, the Civic has secured the local rights to "George and Margaret," which recently closed in New York, but still is running in London, where it is in its second year. "George and Margaret" will find the Civicers in gay mood. It definitely belongs to that school of dramatic expression that aims to amuse rather than to instruct. Being an "extra," "George and Margaret" will not be included among the regular subscription plays of the Civic's season. Extra tickets will have to be bought for this one. The proceeds of the performance will be devoted to a fund for the purchase of lights, workshop equipment and the thousand-and-one other requirements of an organization of this character.

If there are 12 representatives in the National Congress who have a yen to be actors, here is their chance. A dozen Congressmen who would rather act than filibuster are wanted to appear with Jack Buchanan, Evelyn Laye and Adele Dixon in the "command performance" of "Between the Devil," at the National Theater Sunday night, when the President's Birthday celebrations will be put in motion.

It seems in this enlivening musical comedy, by Dietz and Schwartz, Mr. Buchanan finds Miss Laye and Miss Dixon so irresistibly charming that he marries them both, only to discover, too late, that this unbalanced matrimonial budget is sometimes known as bigamy and is just a shade on the side of the illegal. There has to be a jury. That is where the Congressmen come in—or rather, that is where it is hoped by the management that the Congressmen will come in. Actors' Equity has



MIRIAM HOPKINS.

who has just retired from the cast of the Theater Guild's production of "Wine of Choice," as she appears in the stellar role of "Wise Girl," opening on the screen at RKO-Keith's tomorrow. Even with most of the background clipped off, this still is a courtroom scene. The youngster in the witness chair is Miss Betty Philson.

given its approval of this innovation. No experience is necessary and no speeches need be memorized or made.

That ban on speeches probably will be the hitch in the scheme. But there it is. Line forms to the right.

Speaking of the President's Birthday hurrah in behalf of the Warm Springs Foundation, Benny Davis, currently presenting his "Star Dust Revue of 1938" on the stage at Loew's Capitol, yesterday presented his new song, "The President's Birthday Ball," to Commissioner Melvin C. Hazen to the accompaniment of a vast explosion of flashlight bulbs, the clicking of cameras and the usual excitement attending such events. The pictures will go around the world and the song probably will do the same thing.

Caught-in-the-Blizzard Note.

Gallatin Pass was a little tough yesterday early afternoon, but once the dog sledge had cleared a way through the Valley Trail and passed Park Road Ridge, it was a comparatively easy matter to coast down into the Main Settlement. But I hear the boys on the Upper Creek are still snowed in and running short of champagne and caviar!