

Spooky Old Rookery Above City Hall Is Cradle Where Amateur Thespions Learn Stage Tricks

By RUTH MAE LAWRENCE

THE stage holds a lure that hypnotizes its enthusiasts, both professional and amateur, into a state of mind which an "outsider" can never comprehend. Stage folk rail violently at the hardship with which they contend, wear martyred aspects, tell of the long hours they study and the major sacrifices they make. But when one of their ilk starts to repeat the long list of woes . . . well, have you ever heard about the man who beat his wife? He could beat her, but just let anyone else try to! And stage folk are the same way.

The greatest discomfort with which the cast of the two one-act plays which will be offered by the Salem Drama League December 3 at the Blinnore is contending, according to we folk on the dark side of the footlights, is the place where rehearsals are held. Just one glance at the third floor of the city hall, where the small group of devotees gather every night or every other night, is quite enough to make anyone in whom the fire of a thespian does not burn with a bright and unceasing flame forswear dramatic ambitions forever.

Big, Weird Hall
A chilly, barn-like place, reached by stars with startling black nooks where anything from headless and gruesome murders to spiders and toads may lurk. A door that responds only to a heavy shove, and then reluctantly creeps open with a doleful squeak. A gaunt, immense room where the small handful of human beings are dwarfed and insignificant. Two speak, and your voice pours back from the far walls in a dumb, meaningless sound. Drafts eddy fitfully from the high places where the roof stretches far above the rafters. The electric lights hang close to the beams are of feeble candlepower, and but half of them glimmer.

And it is to such a place as this, crowded gingerly up the dark stairs, violently shoving the door, and walking across the vast dusty floor to the far corner where rehearsals are held, that the enthusiastic cast of "Jon and the Dear Little Wife" and their patient coach and production director, Mrs. Otto E. Paulus, come. In "Jon" the "props" are simple . . . very. An old store counter serves as a table; and Mrs. Gertrude Prescott, who will play the mother of Jon, scrubs her hands with a dainty handkerchief, for round little spots of black dirt show where her fingers touched the surface. Oliver Huston, who

Cities To Fight Increased Rates For Telephones

SEATTLE, Nov. 28.—(AP)—The Seattle city council today tentatively agreed to join other Pacific coast cities in a proposed concerted effort to prevent increases in telephone rates. The council informally accepted an invitation of James W. Carr and Kenneth C. Harlan, Portland public utility consultants, to attend a meeting for this purpose in Portland early next month. Harlan and Carr said that representatives of Spokane, Tacoma, San Francisco and Portland would also be present. They said rate increases were contemplated or were already being put in effect in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Nevada, where the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph company operates. New franchisees for the company are pending in both Portland and Seattle.

are present. The surge of the sea, a necessary background for Mrs. Odell Savage Olling's graphic play, is given realistically by the gusts of rain drumming against the windows. And so the actors read their lines, and the wild storm shrieking outside is forgotten in their absorption of the parts they play.

Not Half Bad
"It is a most inspiring place to work in," said Mrs. Paulus, when an "outsider" made a derogatory remark concerning the third floor of the city hall. "No, don't laugh. It really is. It is so big it gives excellent practice in stretching the voice. Despite its bareness, or because of it, there is nothing to attract the attention from the reading and interpretation of the lines of the play. We have used the room so much that we are all attached to it, even if we do make jokes about it. I think the one thing the majority of us will regret the most, when our plays are finished, is that we no longer will have a legitimate reason for using this room. I guess the Drama League players will have to present the 'Passing of the Third Floor Back' as their next production. And if we do, we'll have to give it up on the old third floor of the city hall."

But you and I . . . solemn, sedate and serious people who can only view the stage through the glamour of tinsel and trappings and footlights, wonder at the vagaries of these "stage folk" who their tribulations and discomforts protestingly, but relinquish them with regret.

Valley Firemen Cooperating in Drill Meetings

HUBBARD, Ore., Nov. 28.—(Special)—George Grimps, chief of the Hubbard fire department, attended the meeting of firemen at Molalla Monday evening. The firemen of several of the valley towns between Oregon City and Salem have organized and are holding meetings for the purpose of cooperative drill. The state fire marshal was represented at the Molalla meeting by Captain Stokes of Portland. It is announced that the next meeting will be held at Mt. Angel, December 4.

Radiogram From Mid-Ocean Comes As Big Surprise

SILVERTON, Ore., Nov. 28.—(Special)—Mrs. M. G. Gunderson was pleasantly surprised recently when she received a radiogram from Mrs. Carrie Larson, who was two days out from New York on her return trip from Norway. Mrs. Larson wished Mrs. Gunderson a "happy birthday."

Mrs. Larson, who went to Norway last spring with the intention of making that her home wrote Mrs. Gunderson some time ago that she found the climate there did not agree with her so she would return to Oregon to make her home. She landed in New York November 25. She will visit there for a short time before coming on to Silvertown, her former home. She expects to arrive here sometime during the first part of December.

Schools Closed For Five Days

SILVERTON, Ore., Nov. 28.—(Special)—The Silvertown schools closed this afternoon for the Thanksgiving vacation lasting until Monday. The various schools and classes held programs this afternoon.

The public speaking class of the senior high school gave a play, "The First Thanksgiving." Other numbers on this program included a reading by Juanita Rankin and selections by the Girls' Glee club.

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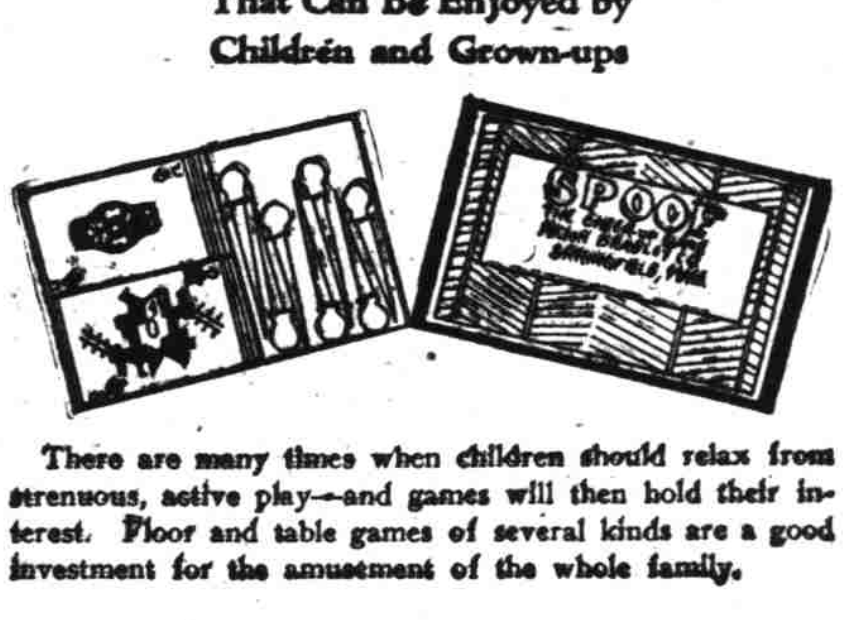
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