



*Wythenshawe Forum (above) 492 Viceroy's clad in cloth of gold, or at any rate gold in colour. (opposite right) Leningrad Square.*

structural monotony and to provide very necessary constant publicity.

The theatre itself is an excellent unit. It is a proscenium theatre, occupied by the Library Theatre Company and worked in tandem with the theatre that has for many years operated very successfully at the Central Library in Manchester. Players and staff are directly employed by the City Council under the managing directorship of the City Librarian, an unusual arrangement that has worked very well for many years. Each play that is now produced has a run of three weeks in each theatre and the settings must, therefore, be designed for transfer. Each theatre has a proscenium stage with a wide opening, but whereas the Forum theatre has the facilities of fly-tower with counterweighted suspension, and a forestage lift, the Central Library theatre, not having been originally designed for play production, has very restricted height

above stage and has other restrictions. The Central theatre has only 315 seats: the Forum has 492, tiered in sixteen rows. The seating is in three blocks with four gangways; between rows 11 and 12 is a cross-gangway giving the thirsty customers direct access to the bars, alcohol on one side and coffee on the other. This close proximity of the bars has the disadvantage of allowing the noise of clinking glasses and rattling cups to obtrude.

The auditorium is attractive and comfortable. Sight-lines are excellent throughout and the maximum distance to centre front-stage is under 70 ft. Fluorescent lighting in perimeter ceiling coves appears to be rather superfluous as the walls are practically non-reflective and the inset tungsten lighting alone is quite adequate. The acoustics are very good but the motors of the ventilation system are audible and must be switched off during performances.