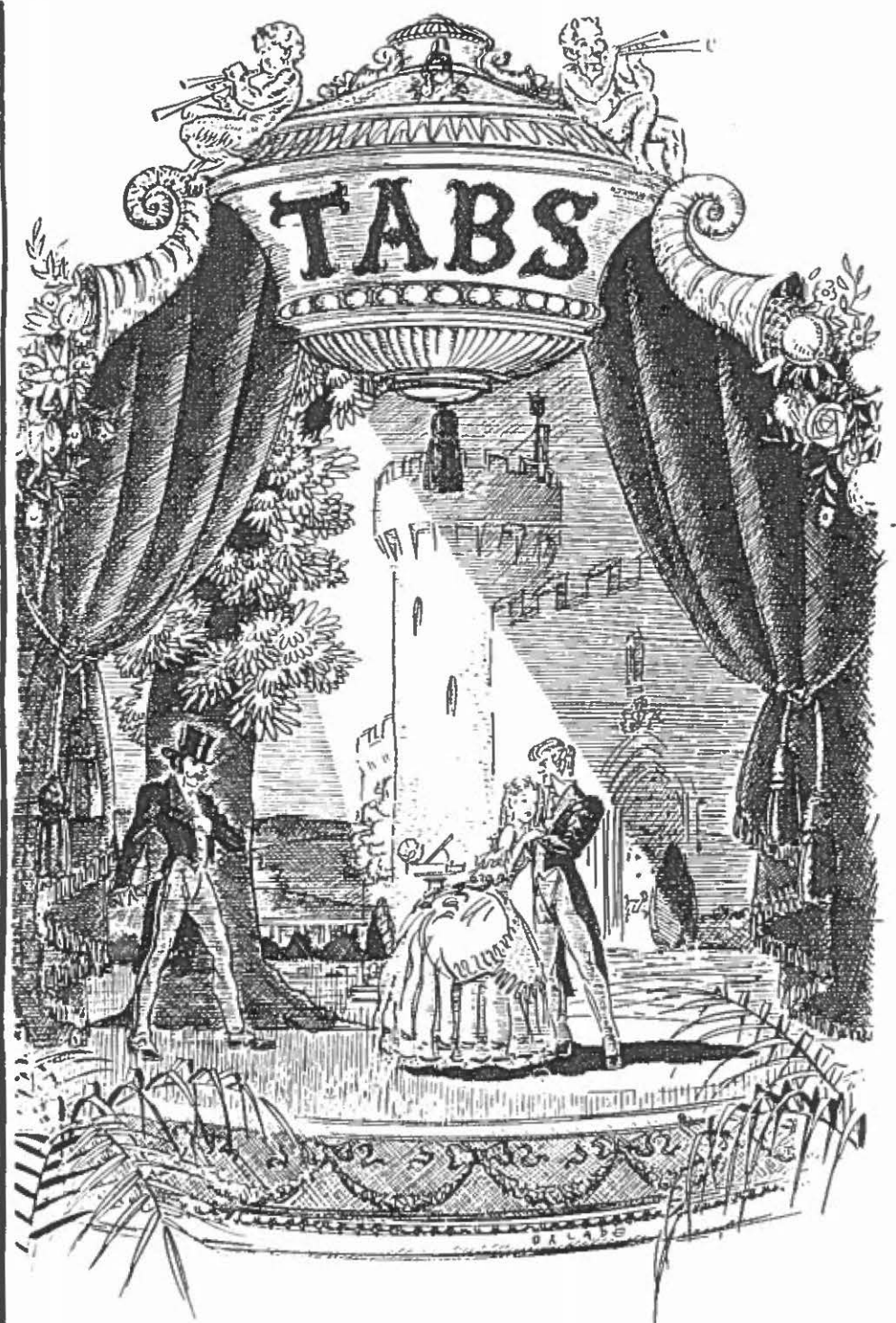


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# TABS

ISSUED BY THE STRAND ELECTRIC COMPANY  
IN THE INTEREST OF THE AMATEUR THEATRE

## Editorial

During the past few weeks there has been a great deal of activity in our Demonstration Theatre. Workmen have been working at top speed to complete the seating and put the finishing touches to decorations, etc. Now it is finished, and we are going ahead with a heavy programme of demonstrations.

This issue contains a description of the theatre—its general construction and equipment installed—which we hope you will find interesting.

Please understand that this theatre is at your disposal for demonstrations of Stage Lighting, and we shall welcome visits from parties or Societies at any time. Your party can be any number from 2 to 90, and demonstrations can be arranged to suit your convenience—morning, afternoon or evening.

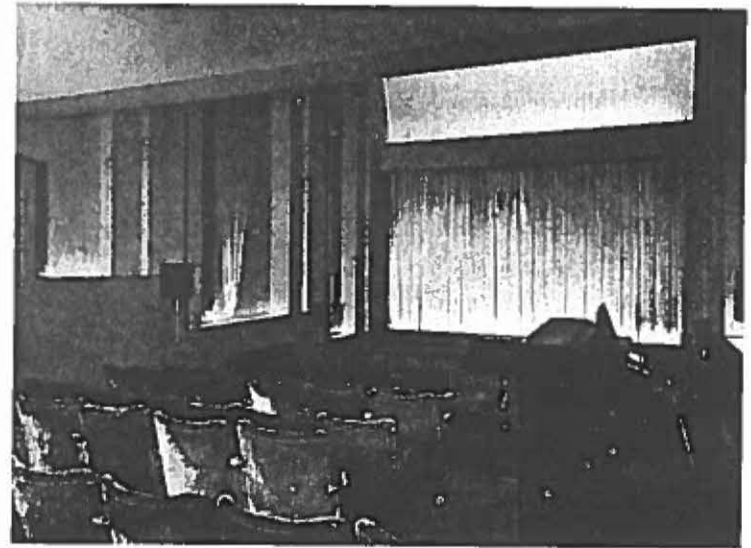
The lighting of the stage is most important to any production and realising the few opportunities the average amateur enthusiast has to devote to this fascinating subject, we have arranged demonstrations that will be found interesting, informative and of practical value to those who undertake the responsibility of this side of the Society's activities.

Stage Lighting is a subject that should interest every member, not merely those who may be called upon to handle the lighting of a play, because the conditions under which the actors have to work depend so much on an atmosphere created for them by the lighting. That is why we urge everyone to take more interest in Stage Lighting, and we hope that as many as possible will accept this open invitation to our theatre.

# The Demonstration Theatre

All the buildings which now constitute the firm's headquarters have been thoroughly overhauled and converted to their new purposes. An entirely new electrical installation, the removal of walls here and the insertion of walls there, together with extensive decorations, have given the Strand Electric the home they have so long needed.

Nowhere is the change from old to new more strikingly apparent than in the new demonstration theatre. At first sight the problem of where to put the theatre seemed insuperable, but eventually part of the ground floor and the basement immediately beneath, were allocated. After the floor between the two was removed, the principal problem lay in a series of cast iron columns which ran both in the basement and on the ground floor. These



columns supported the side wall of the building which at the first floor set back and ran several feet inside the basement wall line. Arrangements had to be made to carry this wall on transverse steel joists whose weight had to be borne by new stanchions in breasts along the walls. Excavation work was needed to provide exits from the basement, and so on. Altogether, works of considerable magnitude had to be carried out.

This foreword is necessary, in order that the results obtained may be appreciated to the full. Space as well, has been an important consideration; when it is realised that the wing space on the stage is *nil* on the left and one inch on the right, the tightness of the site will be appreciated.

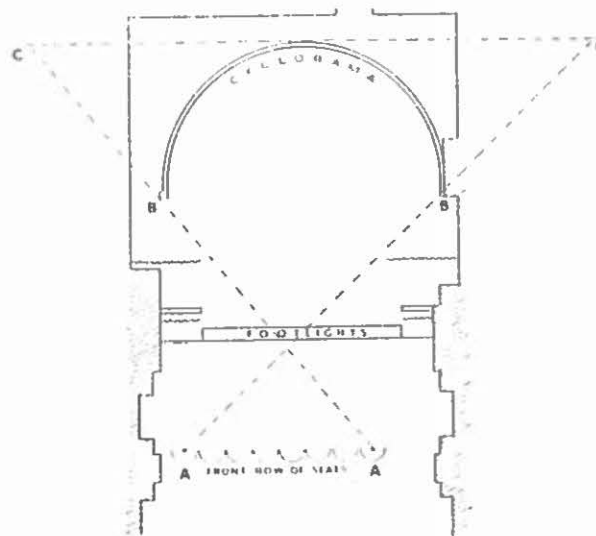
In spite of this, however, the Strand Electric now boasts of a theatre which seats 90 in properly stepped Stalls and Circle; has a stage with a Cyclorama, and a lighting installation of ninety dimmer ways which can be arranged to mimic installations from the humblest village hall to that of the Covent Garden Opera House. Nor is it designed for legitimate theatre work only. The stage can reproduce curtain effects so dear to the cinema, while the auditorium has a very elaborate coloured lighting system.

Unlike most venues for decoration by light, the Strand Electric Theatre has a very definite architecture. Without the lighting effects it is almost severe, but with them the Auditorium can respond to any mood. The general lines of the design have been arranged to give the impression of width which the site itself lacks. The lines of the Auditorium, however, are not sham. The ceiling beams, wall columns, etc., all play their part in well and truly holding the building up. The architecture is functional although it does not, after the modern manner, shriek this at the beholder.

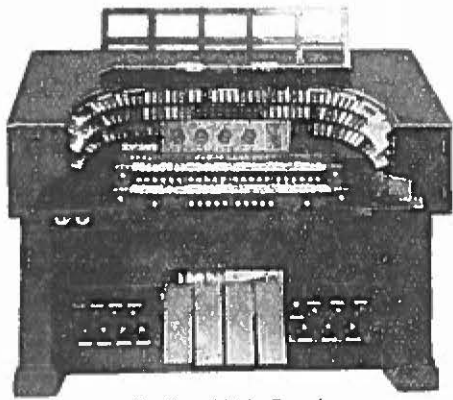
The Auditorium is provided with comfortable tip-up seats which will be welcomed by those who suffered in our old theatre, while

a proper ventilation and heating system is installed. It is not intended to describe in detail here the Auditorium Colour Lighting system, as these effects must be seen to be appreciated. But, in passing it, will be of interest to note that thirty-four dimmers look after the effects to be seen when the tabs are shut.

Probably the greatest interest centres in the Stage, where there is a system of Black, White and Grey curtains, gauzes, a set of interchangeable scenery and a cyclorama. Although we generally recommend a flat cyclorama, in order to get the best effect on a stage which has depth and height but very little width, a curved Cyclorama is desirable. Obviously on a stage where wing space is non-existent, a flat cyclorama placed at the rear of the stage will need an impossible number of legs to mask the side walls. A curved cyclorama, however, acts as masking itself. (See diagram). The Cyclorama is almost half a cylinder of 8 ft. radius by 18 ft. high, which gives a total lighted area well over 400 sq. feet.



A-B Sight line of curved cyclorama.  
 A-C Sight line of straight cyclorama.  
 C-C Represents width of flat cyclorama needed if same amount of masking is to be used.

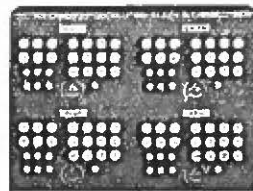


The Strand Light Console

to demonstrate a flat cyclorama, a screen is dropped down stage of the fixed cyclorama. This reduces the depth of the stage but gives it the proportions usually encountered on an amateur stage.

At first sight the stage appears to be crammed with apparatus, but this is of course peculiar to a demonstration theatre. It must be ready at one moment to show lighting effects for a West End production, and at the next for a Village Hall, Church Hall, or Social Club. At times it has to make the lighting effects a show in themselves without any actors at all. Actually, the control board is fitted with a special row of switches to select an installation suitable to any particular demonstration.

Needless to say, the whole of the lighting is controlled from the famous Light Console. Some of the lighting can also be worked from the new Strand Luminous Control Panel—a new idea of Mr. Bentham, inventor of the Console. This must surely be the smallest control in the world. On this system 120 dimmer and switching ways can be operated from a panel only 2 ft. wide by 1 ft. high by 5 in. deep. It is fitted with a long flex and is quite portable, since it may be tucked under the arm. It is recognised that the Light Console, although very compact, needs a special type of man to play it. Anyone can work this new Luminous Panel; it is simplicity itself. It is not, of course, suitable for advanced Colour Music, but as a stage lighting control it is without rival.



Strand Luminous Control Panel.

In spite of the acute curve it is lit evenly on the three colour system, using only three 500-watt Floods (Pattern 55) to the Red, the Green and the Blue. Also, Cloud Effects are projected with equal success.

In cases where it is required

# Leslie Henson at Floral Street

On Wednesday, February 22nd, Mr. Leslie Henson, the well-known Gaiety Comedian, opened our new Demonstration Theatre in the presence of a large number of Screen and Stage celebrities. Mr. J. D. H. Sheridan, Managing Director of the company, welcomed Mr. Henson and our guests, and after a few appropriate remarks handed the stage over to Mr. Henson.

As would naturally be expected, Mr. Henson indulged in one or two wisecracks, but he also delivered a very interesting speech relative to the stage generally, and to the value of good Stage Lighting in particular.

Following Mr. Henson's speech, what may be called the emotional range of lighting was demonstrated by the achievement of various effects such as realism or fantasy to appropriate music. Optical Effects on the Cyclorama, stage decor and auditorium decoration, by means of lighting, were all demonstrated. The control of lighting effects was by means of the Light Console, which is situated in the body of the theatre.



Mr. Leslie Henson at the Light Console. With him are (left to right) Mr. J. D. H. Sheridan, Mr. H. M. Cotterill, Mr. F. P. Bentham and Mr. S. Earnshaw.



This was particularly apparent in "Rhythm," a Silly Symphony in Light, which consisted of an eccentric use of coloured lighting to a popular dance tune, while the beauty of colour lighting on gauze was revealed in the item entitled "Fantasy." The variations of tint and intensity of light so readily accomplished was greatly appreciated by the audience.

An item incorporating the use of "Black Light" brought out some of the possibilities of using this in connection with fluorescent liquids and make-up for spectacular stage presentations.

The demonstration lasted approximately an hour, and afterwards the guests were entertained to refreshments.

## Projected Scenery

On January 29th the Toynbee Hall Theatre Club produced the Opera "Orpheus," by Gluck.

The production was outstanding in that the Cyclorama in the Toynbee Hall Theatre was used for "Projected" Scenery. Producer J. L. Hodgkinson, is to be congratulated on his enterprise. Strand Electric provided two of their 1,000-watt Projector Lanterns and Miss Lotte Reiniger, the designer, in her first attempt at this method of scene presentation, designed the necessary slides. The two lanterns were placed at either end of the 30-ft. Cyclorama with a throw of about 10 feet. The slides on which Miss Reiniger painted her design were the standard lantern slide size. Side projection made Miss Reiniger's task far from easy as distortion had to be corrected in the painting of the design.

The very effective lighting of Mr. H. V. Buckridge, the Hon. Electrician of the Toynbee Hall Theatre Club, combined with Miss Reiniger's designs produced particularly in "The Entrance to Hades" scene an outstanding example of this type of presentation, which although used frequently on the Continent is rarely attempted in this country.

Bravo. Toynbee !

# Let there be Footlight

by P. Curry

(The writer of this article, the Manager of our Manchester Branch, realises that his comments may arouse opposition from some of our readers, and quite possibly from other members of the Company's staff. We shall welcome any controversy on this subject and hope we may publish other opinions in our next issue.—Ed.)

A Northern producer recently declared with confident emphasis that in the best modern theatres footlights had been dispensed with. The truth of this statement depends on the interpretation of "best." The fact is, that the majority of theatres, professional or amateur, still possess footlights and the majority of producers require them.

It is recognised that Stage Lighting is no longer a simple process of illuminating an acting area. It should include the effective use of light and shade. But the producer who ignores the essential condition that the face of the actor shall be *adequately* (though not necessarily *evenly*) illuminated, whatever his position on the stage, neglects an obvious aid to the success of his production.

Plays are written to be acted before an audience who must be able to see the stage pictures and hear the words *without strain* ; conscious striving to see and hear will destroy the perfect unity of stage and auditorium. It will be readily acknowledged that one finds it more difficult to hear spoken words when the face of the speaker is not visible. But even if it were not so, it would still be necessary to have sufficient light on the actor's face to allow the audience to read his thoughts. His thoughts should be as important as the words. If they are not, either the actor is *not* an actor but a mechanic, or the author should forsake the theatre and write for the radio. Dramatic effect may be heightened considerably by the controlled use of shadow ; but a stage bathed in abysmal

gloom for long periods may be very depressing or intensely irritating.

It is generally impossible to light the forestage from above except by use of perch spots or lighting from the front of the house. It is usually found desirable to have Spot Lanterns suspended over the auditorium, either in the ceiling, on the front of the circle or on the side walls. These lanterns are usually focussed to cover the forestage with overlapping beams of light. It is then possible with the addition of the overhead equipment on the stage to provide all the necessary graduations of light from above. Almost invariably, however, it will be found that in most positions on the stage the lower part of the actor's face has distracting shadows; shadows that distort the expressions. Footlights can provide the necessary correction. But they must be used intelligently. In correcting facial shadows they must not be allowed to "flatten" the scene or cause unwanted shadows on the background.

Footlights should be controlled by dimmers and used at an intensity which carefully *balances* the main lighting without destroying its variations. If dimmers are not available and the organisation cannot afford the modest hire charges (about 3s. 6d. each, per week) it may be possible to reduce intensity by using lamps of lower wattage, using fewer lamps, or by varying the colour mediums. For certain settings it may be found that not only is it desirable to vary the intensity of each colour circuit but sections of the same colour require variation. The control of footlights should therefore be as flexible as possible.

Intelligent use of footlights requires, in addition to careful control of intensity, a selective choice of colours. Compartment footlights wired for three circuits are often used with Red and Blue gelatines and White; when a fourth circuit is used Amber is usually demanded. It is not intended, nor is it desirable that these colours be used consistently. For cyclorama lighting it is desirable to use the Red-Blue-Green combination; by mixing the colours

In varying intensities it is possible to obtain innumerable hues, and the correct proportion of all three colours gives a close approximation to daylight. With footlights, however, the balancing of light alters the process of dimming, and the use of colour should be much more selective, and therefore the method of colour mixing with Red, Blue and Green as used in the Cyclorama should not be applied. The Strand range of gelatines include 56 different colours, in large sheets at 7s. 6d. per dozen. They are also available in light and heavy frost which may often be used in conjunction with colours to give a greater diffusion of light.

For certain types of plays, and for particular settings, it is agreed that footlights can be dispensed with temporarily, and it is quite easy to include footlights that can be made to disappear into the stage when not required, but so long as the theatre and the stage retain their present form, to dispense with footlights permanently creates disadvantages that appear to have few, if any, compensating advantages.

It may be argued that footlights are an intrusion between the audience and the actors and emphasise the falseness of the action. It may be argued with greater justification that if the intrusion is subtly employed it will heighten the effect on the audience. It is not the purpose of the stage to present realism but an intensely significant *illusion* of life. The most important medium of that presentation is still the actor; it is our job as technicians to assist him to create illusions. The contact between audience and actor is emotional and the more physical it becomes the greater is the difficulty in preserving the contact in its more ecstatic form. The actor compels contact by use of that magnetic and mysterious force we loosely label "personality." If he cannot project that force across a row of footlights even a troughless forestage will not help him; he has chosen a job for which he is not properly equipped.

# Our New Dublin Showrooms

Shortly before Christmas we opened new Showrooms at 38, Talbot Street, Dublin, under the management of Mr. Lorcan Bourke, who was formerly Manager of the Queen's Theatre, Dublin.

This depot is fully stocked with a very comprehensive range of our equipment and is proving to be of great service to Amateur Societies, Schools and Colleges in Eire.

Apart from the ordinary offices and showrooms, there is a miniature Demonstration Theatre, where various lanterns and lighting effects are demonstrated. This theatre was opened on 14th February, 1939, (in the absence of the Lord Mayor) by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin, in the presence of a very representative gathering of prominent theatrical and cinema folk, architects, consulting engineers and electrical contractors.



# A Matter of Expense

The question of carriage charges on equipment hired may have prevented some Societies from making full use of our service, and we have gone to great pains to remove this retarding influence. It is reasonable to suppose that with very limited funds some Societies hesitate to use our service to the fullest advantage because of this, and the matter has been investigated to ascertain whether this charge could be lightened in any way.

The outcome of these negotiations brings an advantage to all who hire our equipment, in the shape of a half-rate carriage charge on equipment returned from hire. Obviously there are certain conditions which have to be observed, and the following will explain the procedure that should be adopted. It should be noted that the arrangement only applies to goods traffic and not to material sent by passenger train. Here is an extract from the Railway regulations :—

“ An allowance of half carriage charges will be made on the return journey on the traffic sent for the following reasons, upon receipt of proof of the original journey and provided the return journey is between the same points and by the same route.

Class (F) Articles sent for hire and return.”

We reproduce a copy of a letter which will be sent to every hirer of apparatus, and will serve as proof demanded by the regulations of the original journey :—

“ With reference to your order for equipment to be

supplied on hire, will you please note that this was despatched on \_\_\_\_\_ by the \_\_\_\_\_ Railway Company, per Goods train, carriage paid forward; number of packages

When the period of hire is terminated, please arrange to return the equipment by the same Railway Company, and consign carriage paid to us at 24, Floral Street, London, W.C.2.

Will you please note the Railway Company will only charge half carriage on the return journey, but to obtain this concession you must declare the consignment as being Returned Traffic, and quote the above information, and claim Half Rate at the time of despatch."

The three main items which must be declared to the Railway Company are :—

1. Date of despatch from the supplier.
2. Name of Railway Company conveying goods.
3. Whether consigned carriage paid or forward.

It will be observed that these points are fully covered in the above letter, and the quoting of these details on the consignment note, together with a declaration that the articles are returned traffic, will qualify for the half-rate charge. The claim for the reduced rate should be made at the time of despatch and not form the subject of a subsequent claim from the Railway Company.

We feel that the benefit of this concession will readily be appreciated by Societies and hope that those who have found carriage charges an obstacle, will find the way open to them to commence a lengthy association with us.

# U. O. Make-up

In our October issue we gave a very brief description of "Black Light" and some of the purposes to which it could be applied. The use of the black lamp and its effect on materials treated with fluorescent liquid was explained and how intriguing stage effects could be accomplished.

Now we are able to introduce a make-up incorporating fluorescent qualities, and it does not need a great deal of imagination to appreciate the extensive field which is opened up for those who are at all interested in unusual and spectacular stage presentations. A combination of liquid on scenery, clothes, furniture, etc., and the make-up on the flesh offers a medium for unlimited exploitation.

Perhaps one of the first thoughts one would have about this make-up is, that owing to its fluorescent qualities it is detrimental to the skin. Very definitely we can state that it has been tested over and over again on the most delicate skin with no ill results whatever.

The make-up is used in the ordinary way and can be applied at the beginning of the show and worn throughout the performance. It is possible to apply it on top of ordinary grease paint, but it is preferable that the correct base be used if at all possible. It is absolutely invisible, so that whatever features are incorporated in the ordinary make-up are not interfered with at all and the effect when the black lamp is brought into use is startling and amazing.

This is something entirely new, and should not be confused with any products having a luminous property and which depend on the amount of light absorbed during daylight and thrown off when the source of light is cut off to achieve their effect.

When spectacular changes and effects form outstanding features of a show, such as in Revue or Pantomime, this new make-up will be found of the greatest value. The employment of special apparatus and mechanical devices which are costly items,



is eliminated, and this feature must automatically bring the make-up into the category of stage requisites which interest every amateur dramatic society. It gives a greater scope to a society's activities and permits excursions into a type of presentation which has possibly been denied them owing to the difficulties of changes. Here, then, hope can be turned into fact.

The range of materials is reasonably extensive and covers every normal requirement. Liquid make-up is available in seven colours, nail varnish in five colours, lipstick in two colours, while cheek rouge is supplied in dark red, and eye shadow grease in light blue.

If any doubts exist as to the effectiveness of this material, please write us, or it can be seen at any of the stage lighting demonstrations that are given in our theatre.

## Demonstrations

Although prior to the Official opening of the Theatre we had been giving sundry demonstrations, we have since been particularly busy entertaining parties both professional and amateur.

Perhaps one of the most interesting parties was the entire company of the Comédie Français, which recently had an all too short season in a London Theatre. A similar demonstration to that which was given at the opening of the Theatre was carried through, and the company was particularly interested in the Light Console and its operation of the lighting system.

We have also had a large party of Boy Scout Leaders from the outer London Districts, and a party made up of various Amateur Dramatic Societies from the Pinner District. This party came in the evening, and so interested were they in what they saw that it was 11 o'clock before the last of the party left the building. In addition we had a large party from the Training Ship, H.M.S. Vernon.

These are but a few of the parties we have entertained in the last two or three weeks.

# Switchboard Asides

by Busker

The Loamshire Grand Opera Society were presenting "Carmen." At least they thought they were. On the first night, just before the curtain rose, the distracted producer dashed around giving incoherent last words and attacks of the jitters to all and sundry.

To the electrician he ended his frenzied instructions with a most emphatic: "And don't forget! As soon as the *pizzicato* starts, dim your reds and your ambers down to half and bring up your number three and number five spots. Now, off you go! House lights! . . ." And he was gone.

At the end of the scene the producer tore his hair, tore round back stage and tore his dinner jacket on a nail in his haste.

"Where's that electrician? Why the devil didn't you do as I told you? Ruined the scene! Ruined it completely! Didn't I tell you that when the *pizzicato* started you were to . . ."

"Yes, I know, but I never saw him come on. What sort of a costume was he wearing, anyway?"

Which only goes to show what some producers do expect. And don't get! Why, should they? After all, a man who's responsible for the lighting can't be expected to know anything about the show. Enough to do looking after the board and preventing dam-fool actors from knocking the wing floods over in their eagerness to get on the stage. And what can they do when they are on? Nothing but attitudinise and perspire!

Anybody with half an eye knows that it was the lighting that made our last show. Where would it have been without it I'd like to know. And what would it have been like if the producer had had his own way? Him and his Surprise Pink and Magenta!! His psychological effects and such like bally-hoo! He's been reading Harold Ridge and Peter Goffin and Selden and Sellman and thinks he knows something about



stage lighting. Why, he doesn't know a three-pin plug from a two-eyed steak.

I told him off properly at the Dress Rehearsal. Said he'd have steel blue on the back cloth for broad daylight. I told him my name was on the programme as being responsible for the lighting . . . and he was having amber. Then he said he'd have the floats on check. I let him know pretty quick he could either have 'em on or off but he couldn't have 'em on check. I had a couple of spare dimmers I could have used but he didn't know. Then he got thoroughly peeved because I took the sunset effect quicker than he thought it should have been. Tried to be sarcastic. Said it was "Bird in Hand" we were playing, not "Bird of Paradise." I jolly well told him if he had his way the "bird" was the only sure thing about the show.

I don't know why he can't attend to his proper job. Producing the actors is his work and that's enough for any man. More than enough for him judging by results. Anyway, I've forgotten more about electricity than he'll ever know. I don't believe he'd know a fuse wire from a rockbestos cable. And I don't need to read books to tell me how to light a stage.

He gave me a copy of the play early on and told me I'd better study it. I told him it was no use to me. I've something better to do with my time than reading plays. I told him that if he'd say what he wanted I'd soon let him know what he couldn't have. And I did.

You know the trouble with this Society is that some people don't mind their own business. What I say is, let the producers produce and the actors act, but let them leave me to do the lighting in my own way. I know what the audience want. Plenty of light . . . lots of it. They pay their money and have a right to see. And what does it matter if there are a few shadows on the backcloth? 'Nobody notices it.

Half a minute . . . where are they now? Oh yes. I believe I have a cue about now. Here it is . . . At cue "Don't talk like a fool . . ." gradual dim to end of scene. "Gradual" my eye! I can't wait that long . . . they'll be another fifteen minutes. I'm going to have a coffee. I've just as much right to have refreshments as the cast have. I'll dim right down.

There . . . that'll do!



# B.D.L.

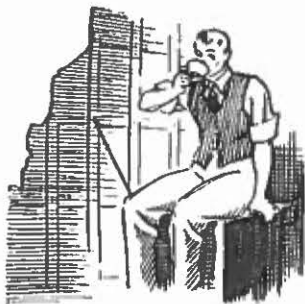
## School Course

On January 5th we had the pleasure of receiving a visit from a party of School Teachers who were in town for the British Drama League course.

Unfortunately, the time the party was able to devote to this visit was far too short, something less than an hour, which was grossly inadequate for a really comprehensive demonstration. The programme of the course was so full that it was impossible to prolong the session, but the effort that was crammed into the restricted period was very creditable to all who were responsible for the arrangements.

The party was welcomed by Mr. L. G. Applebee, Manager of the Theatre Lighting Department, and after a few appropriate remarks, delivered a short and exceedingly rapid address on architectural matters regarding the stage. He pointed out that his experience had brought him in touch with many schools, where the proscenium opening was brought to within 18 in. to 2 ft. of the side walls which left no provision for housing furniture normally occupying the stage, and which had to be removed when dramatic performances were taking place. Neither did it allow for the accommodation of scenery not wanted or portable lighting apparatus and control board. This is a most important point, and should always be given careful attention. In some cases, a door was arranged to open inwards and thus caused further complications.

Frequently the question of apron stages arises, and where this crops up the space from proscenium opening to side walls creates a further waste of space which is never occupied during a performance. If, therefore, the partition from the proscenium opening to the side wall could be set at an angle of 45°, this space could be used to store tables and chairs, etc., leaving a free area at the side of the stage for such apparatus as is necessary for the production.



When an apron stage is used, it is essential that this be lighted from the front of the house, and provision should be made for lanterns at convenient distances and heights from the stage.

Then again, the ceiling above the stage is never seen, yet it is often elaborately decorated. It would be far better if girders or beams were supplied running from front to back of the stage, so that hooks and pulleys could be fitted to meet the necessity of raising and lowering apparatus, according to requirements.

Mr. Applebee illustrated his points by the use of blackboard diagrams which were greatly appreciated by the audience. Mr. Howard Hayden who was conducting the party, in thanking Mr. Applebee, remarked that he could not recall having listened to so much in so short a time.

Mr. Norman Casty, who deals exclusively with the Hire requirements of Amateur Dramatic Societies, then took the stage with Mr. Hayden and proceeded to demonstrate the equipment that was installed. The apparatus used was that which is specially recommended for small school halls, the lanterns being of the smallest size and lowest wattage and not the larger material such as used in the larger halls of, say, 100 feet in length.

The demonstration was particularly interesting because it did not take the form of a lecture, with descriptions of individual lanterns, but was a kind of cross-examination of Mr. Casty by Mr. Hayden as to what he was using to light the stage, why he was using certain lanterns, which colour mediums were used to obtain certain effects, and so on.

Although Mr. Hayden's experience is somewhat extensive, he took up the role of a novice and the questions he raised and the replies from Mr. Casty resulted in the information being imparted to the audience in a most interesting manner.

For instance, Mr. Hayden wanted to know why a line of Floods and Spots were used in No. 1 Batten instead of a length of compartment type Batten. It was explained that by placing the lanterns at different angles a more even diffusion of light over a greater area was obtained. Also it is possible with this arrangement to localise lighting on any given part of a particular scene.

The question was asked why pieces of tin, as Mr. Hayden called them, were used over the lenses of certain lanterns. Mr. Casty was most indignant at this description of cowls, manufactured of lead-coated steel, and went on to explain that the use of these was to make the utmost of the light by throwing it downwards and not allowing any to escape in directions other than those where the light was expressly desired. The cowls are of course adjustable.

On a deep stage where three battens were suggested, Mr. Hayden wanted to know whether in the cause of economy, the centre lanterns could be dispensed with. The desirability of retaining these was effectively demonstrated, when the light was cut off, leaving a decided deep shadow right across the centre of the stage, usually the main acting area.

Portable dimmer boards were on the stage to full view, and Mr. Hayden asked what they were and what was the function of them. On being told that the control of the whole lighting rested on the boards, and having been shown how to control a slow or rapid dim or increase in volume, he asked that certain effects should be demonstrated and how the dimmers should be employed to obtain them.

The concluding part of the demonstration was a practical effort at setting the lighting for a scene. Members of the audience went on the stage to take the places of actors, and Mr. Casty got busy running up and down step ladders, setting his lanterns. All the time Mr. Hayden was firing questions—Why do you do this ? ; Why do you do that ?—each time being given a full explanation and reasons why certain things should not be done.

It will be seen that this practical method of explaining lighting is far more effective than text books and articles written in papers and magazines, and allows for a much easier and more rapid appreciation of the essentials of stage lighting. Opportunity is also given for queries to be raised and the replies illustrated by demonstrations, thus giving a clearer explanation of the problem and making the solution much easier to understand.

When the demonstration ended, Mr. Hayden thanked Mr. Casty and the Company for a most interesting session, and the party left for lunch and a continuation of their studies in the afternoon.

# Queries

Here is another query which is continually cropping up and as the situation is one that demands careful placing of lanterns and the correct use of colour mediums, we feel that it is a matter that will be of interest to many of our readers. Here is the problem.

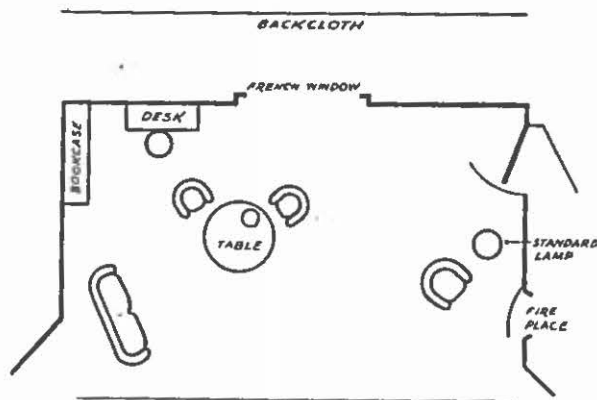
"One of the scenes in a play we are doing is set in a room which is illuminated only by a standard lamp set by the fireside on the right-hand side of the stage. This means that the right-hand side of the stage must be reasonably lit and the light dimming across the stage to the left-hand side where it is most dim.

I can eliminate half the Batten and Footlight but this gives a definite light and dark effect, and not the gradual lessening of light that I require.

How can I obtain the result I am aiming for? The main lighting is centred on an old man seated in a chair by the fire (see diagram)."

In a setting of this kind it is obviously important that the main lighting should concentrate round the old man by the fire, the rest of the stage being of secondary importance, although to get correct atmosphere into the whole scene, all the lighting needs careful handling.

First of all, let us apply ourselves to the main features. Here, in order to get that cosy feeling which one always attaches to a large easy chair, a glowing fire and a warm light, it is necessary to reproduce as near as possible the light one would obtain from the fire and the lamp.



Starting with the fire, a very good representation of fire glow will be obtained by placing a fire spot lantern behind the fireplace, and at such an angle that its beam envelopes the chair and deviates across the room. Many people make the mistake of using a red medium for producing the colour, but it should be observed that a burning fire never throws off a red glare, it is more a deep orange. Therefore, in order to faithfully reproduce your fire glow, use No. 5 Amber and No. 10 Pink, mixed, the whole being frosted to diffuse the colour. This will give a more natural appearance of the firelight than anything else. To bring up the glow of the fire well on to the seated figure, supplement the fire spot with a 500-watt spot fixed at the end of No. 1 Batten, and focussed into the other beam so as to cover the whole of the immediate area round the chair. The colour medium should be No. 36 Pink frosted.

The next thing is the lamp. The spread of light from a standard lamp will not be very great, so the lighting will have to be localised round the base of the lamp and that part of the chair nearest the lamp. For this purpose use a 500-watt Spot fixed on No. 1 Batten immediately behind the Pros. Arch and focussed round the foot of the standard lamp, breaking over the far arm of the chair and using No. 3 Amber and No. 31 Focus Frost.

Subsidiary lighting will cover the table and chairs near the centre of the stage, but this of course will have to be held in check to a certain degree. On No. 1 batten, to left centre fit two more Spots, each of 250 watts, the one nearest the centre being at full capacity, and the fourth one, a focussing spot, checked to approximately half strength left of the chair. In the brighter Spot use a No. 3 Amber and in the other one a No. 36 Pink, frosted in each case.

You will notice that footlights are dispensed with altogether in this case, the reason being that to introduce them would to some extent destroy the effect round the fire and lamp. In any case, the action is concentrated and as no actor will approach the front of the stage, illumination of this part is not necessary.

To obtain the moonlight effect, the backcloth must be suitably illuminated to give the effect of general night appearance outside the room, and to do this use a 500-watt flood on either side of the stage, incorporating No. 18 Blue gelatine, and keeping the lamps at three-quarters up on their dimmers. For the shaft of moonlight through the windows, use a 500-watt Spot fitted with No. 18 Blue full up and focussed so that the beam crosses the stage behind the table and chairs and with a slightly downward slope.

You will find this arrangement will overcome your difficulties and give you real atmosphere for the setting.