

making it a School of Acting second to none in the kingdom. Artists like Robert Donat, Diana Wynyard and Marjorie Fielding, to mention but three of the better known out of several hundred, have grown to maturity at Liverpool under his hands. . . .

It was not, however, as a School of Acting that the theatre was founded. Indeed, that hardly occurred to us. We wanted life to be made more vivid to us by seeing in turn the great dramas of the past, and we wanted to join in the high adventure of new plays which faithfully interpreted the life of today. We certainly wanted entertainment, but that was not the first thing. We wanted to laugh more heartily but we wanted to feel more deeply too, and the latter was by far the more important. Of all the producers in turn, looking back I think Basil Dean understood this best. Though he nearly ruined the theatre financially in the two years he was with us; he not only included more serious drama than in any two successive seasons, but, with the help of that very genuine artist of the theatre, George Harris, broke what was at that time fresh ground in this country in decorative scenery and lighting effects.

The early days were very difficult. . . . The

Board, if it were not very clear and united in what it wanted to do, did not mean to let Dean run away with its new theatre without a struggle. We were always trying to invent methods to check his expenditure and he, it seemed to us, methods to circumvent us. . . . Indeed, we must have been a very difficult Board to work with and, looking back, I sympathise more and more with Dean.

(*Later on*) I was able to persuade him [Lawrence Hanray] to try the full repertory plan which Granville-Barker had always advocated. The company came together a few weeks earlier than usual and got three or four plays into rehearsal. To these it was always adding. The bill then consisted, like that of an opera company, of several plays a week. . . . It meant even harder work for the company, but it meant better produced plays than ones rushed up week by week. It meant great difficulties with scenery, especially in our theatre where there is little storage room in the wings. However, it did this good besides stopping the continual losses. It showed that an average play would run in the town for much more than six nights and that the next six and even the next might be better.

Stands Scotland where it did?

Rank Strand have long been notorious for their premises in a strange building in Sauchiehall Street at the top of a giant staircase guaranteed to daunt all but the most agile. Tradition has it that certain visitors and more than one member of the staff have been known to leave the place far more rapidly than they came in having literally put a foot wrong at the top. This hazard and the hazard of parking has now been removed and they are ensconced in new premises at 104 Hydepark Street, Glasgow G3 8DN which allow much greater facilities of all kinds.

There is now a wider range of lighting equipment in the hire stock including the new tungsten halogen lanterns. Loading, warehousing and parking facilities are much improved. An enlarged showroom

features stage lighting and control equipment, architectural lighting fittings, stage equipment, drapes and seating, and also serves as a demonstration theatre. Rank Strand intend to use this to put on stage lighting lectures in Glasgow along the lines of those already held in their London and Manchester theatres.

Rank Strand not only service Scotland from the new premises within the border but could be said to service the whole world of Lighting for Entertainment from Scotland. At Kirkcaldy not far from what is surely the heart of that country, St. Andrews, there is well over 100,000 square feet of brand new factory in which the larger part of Rank Strand lighting equipment is made.