

especially back to front, that the resistance dimmers had to be mounted en bloc over the levers instead of behind them. When the stage was at last re-wired for AC the layout was expanded and rationalised though the circle spots were still to have 26 dimmers. The existing separate lighting galleries under the fly galleries provided an unusually convenient location for socket-outlet boxes for all hanging circuits.

At curtain fall Saturday night March 18th 1950 the Strand Contracts department went into action with their speciality—a week-end changeover—and by 10 a.m. on the Monday Joe Davis was conducting the lighting rehearsal. The new switchboard was a three-manual Strand Light Console with 216 stops (dimmers). Anything less like the switchboards which had preceded it, it is impossible to imagine but Drury Lane was no stranger to an organ type console. Around 1870 there was installed the first organ with electric action in Britain. The instrument was by Bryceson of London with the pipes backstage and the console about 50 ft. away in the orchestra pit. It is said to have given every satisfaction and it would be nice, but not true, to say the same of the Light Console.

The design of this control was based absolutely on the idea that the operator should have a good view of the stage. The proper place was “out front” in a box at the rear of the dress circle but it was to be 27 years, when the Console was replaced by a



(above) Lighting layout for *Carousel* 1950 showing Patt. 56 acting area floods overhead. (below) A Chorus Line at Drury Lane today, showing temporary follow spot room top left; sound control front of the dress circle; additional lighting positions in the upper circle and at the proscenium.

