

BRITISH MUSICAL 'ANNIE' RE-OPENS

ANNIE, THE BRITISH MUSICAL which ran for over 156 performances before Christmas, returned to the Westminster Theatre on Thursday, 1 February, with some fresh faces in the cast, and three new songs in the first act.

Its four-and-a-half months' run was broken to make way for the pantomime *Give a Dog a Bone*.

In the new production of *Annie*, Margaret Burton, beloved of audiences at Sadlers Wells, recreates again the warm-hearted and vibrant personality of Annie Jaeger.

Annie, in real life as in the show, sold her little hat shop in Stockport to plunge into the turbulent life of East London in the Thirties. She helped hundreds of families to fight back against poverty and unemployment by the warmth and gaiety of her own determination.

Gerard Hely returns as Joe Saunders, a leader of the unemployed, Philip Newman as Jim Parks, the old revolutionary, Joyce Carpenter as Mrs Parks, and Olive Lucius as Mrs Hockaday.

A newcomer to the cast, as Millie, is the Australian actress Roslyn Dunbar, who played Guinevere in the Australian production of *Camelot*, and many leading roles in Gilbert and Sullivan opera.

Andrew Shearer, who takes over the part of Bill Jaeger, is known for his television appearances in *Crossroads* and *Emergency Ward 10*.

Choreography

Denny Bettis, who plays Tim, is responsible for the choreography of the show. Freddie Eldrett, all-England junior tap dancing champion of 1958, joins the cast along with Len Maley, Norman Ghent and Gary Brighton.

Book and lyrics are by Alan Thornhill, music by William L Reed. Direction is by Henry Cass. The Musical Director is Louis Mordish.



Clara Jaeger presents 'Annie' book to Margaret Burton photo Strong

NEW ANNIE JAEGER BOOK GIVEN TO MUSICAL'S LEADING LADY

IT IS APPROPRIATE that the first copy of Annie Jaeger's life story should go to the actress who has made Annie Jaeger live for thousands. The new book, entitled *Annie**, was presented to Miss Margaret Burton by its editor, Mrs William Jaeger. 'I shall always treasure this book and read it with the greatest interest and pleasure,' said Miss Burton last Sunday.

She stepped on to the stage of the Westminster Theatre to tell the audience gathered from many parts of Britain how proud she was to be playing the part of Annie. 'It is the happiest and most rewarding experience of my career,' she said. 'I never knew Annie, but I hope some of her courage, gaiety and indomitable spirit lives through my performance.'

Annie's story starts in Stockport and ends in Philadelphia. It is told simply and directly in her own words, and is edited by her American daughter-

in-law, Clara Jaeger. Mrs Jaeger, who has lived in Britain for 22 years, spoke of her appreciation of Annie's British qualities—her sense of humour and the fact that you could count on her not to buckle when the going was tough.

Speaking with Mrs Jaeger were men and women whose lives Annie had radically affected—an East London housewife, a British diplomat, an English playwright, the daughter of a Hollywood businessman. They told stories of marriages mended, bitterness wiped out, commonsense regained. It prompted me to ask: What secret did this lion-hearted little woman possess? Has she something to offer Britain in the stormy outlook of 1968? The answers to both these questions lie between the covers of her book, told very naturally and directly in her own words.

MARY MEEKINGS

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'ANNIE appeals anywhere,' says Australian actress

ROSLYN DUNBAR, Australian actress, plays Millie in the new production of Annie. Fellow Australian PENELOPE THWAITES interviewed her this week:

'THE MOST NECESSARY quality for a singer is the ability to bounce back. Many excellent singers allow themselves to be flattened by a sense of failure,' said Roslyn Dunbar, the new 'Millie' in the new production of *Annie*. Miss Dunbar continued: 'I enjoy the teamwork of theatre. Theatre should not be a vehicle for self-display. If you become self-satisfied in your work, you stop learning. You have to love what you do.'

These remarks came out of fourteen years experience of singing in the theatre. As well as making numerous radio, television and concert appearances in Australia, Roslyn was leading lady of the D'Oyly Carte Gilbert and Sullivan Opera and of such musicals as *Camelot*, *Brigadoon* and *The Great Waltz*.

One of her most outstanding successes was in 1960, when she won the Australia-wide *Sun Aria* Contest. This competition has made known such singers as June Bromhill and Joan Sutherland.

She has always felt sure that singing in the theatre was her calling. But from the beginning she has known the hard work and persistence needed for such a career and has not been dazzled by the glamour of it. When you meet Roslyn Dunbar, you meet a person of Australian directness and sense of humour.

Roslyn has been in England once before, but this is her first extended stay. She describes her time so far as a 'fabulous experience. People have been extremely kind and have opened their hearts and homes to me.' She is looking forward to seeing more of the country, and to finding out more of what is going on politically and socially in Britain. She says: 'We can judge Britain's problem from afar, but we can only help by really trying to understand what is needed here, and how our countries can work together.'

Can the theatre influence people

and events? 'Any form of art can,' she says. 'I came to see the revue *It's Our Country, Jack* at the Westminster Theatre feeling depressed and exhausted. The spirit and sincerity of that show gave me fresh inspiration. I found then something worth living for — something fresh, clean and stable. Up to that point, I had thought of the function of the theatre as a sort of "psychological holiday" for the audience.'

'I've spoken to cab-drivers, shop assistants, all types of people here in London. They are not satisfied with the idea of their country being on the way out. They want to do something. But people must be given a lead.'

This brought us to the point of *Annie*. I asked her how she felt the musical fitted in with the situation today. Her views were clear. '*Annie* brings people together. It would appeal anywhere. You can identify yourself with the characters, you realise that people and situations can change. The medium of music, and simple words is the best way of putting this message across. For example, "Mending Things" shows so clearly how bitterness can be cured. The audience can see clearly that they, like Annie, can start with themselves, the person next door, and then take on the world.' Roslyn feels, '*Annie* started with nothing. This shows that anyone can take on the job she took on.'

Roslyn describes this production as

'Anything to declare?' cast with Mayor of Biel, Switzerland (see article page 3)



Roslyn Dunbar

photo Rogers

a 'vibrant new show.' 'The author has had the unique opportunity of clarifying certain points, and this has colossaly improved the first act, particularly,' she says. 'There's a brand-new opening, a brand-new finale and one of the new songs "The Festive Spirit" set my toes tapping from the very first time I heard it tried out.'

'I see the Westminster Theatre as an acorn, from which the strength of Britain will grow. It is a theatre which gives hope. I find it a challenge.'



photo Maillefer

BRITAIN, EUROPE AND THE WORLD

LAST THURSDAY *Annie* returned to the Westminster Theatre, London. On Friday the cast of the European musical *Anything to Declare?* arrived in Britain. They will visit Liverpool, Birmingham and the Midlands.

Today *Annie* is even more startlingly relevant than when it opened last summer. Its setting is the Britain of the late 1930's. It was a Britain whose manhood was being corroded by massive long-term unemployment—more than four times as many were out of work then as today. She was torn by deep divisions of class and ideology. Her infirmity of purpose in face of aggression was expressed in the policy of appeasement, soon to culminate in the Munich agreement. Never, until recent weeks, had Britain seemed so helpless and humiliated. Yet this was the Britain which within two years was to astonish the world by its unshakeable unity, its unflinching resolution, the sheer guts of its ordinary men and women.

Through peril

No one who lived through these days would wish to live through them again. Yet few can recall them without a certain nostalgia. For they were days during which, first through hardship and then through peril, the people of Britain found themselves and learned to live greatly.

By re-creating these days of the past, *Annie* gives ground for great hope in the future. But it does more than that. It dramatises the faith and character which were the secret of national rebirth then and can make it possible again.

What happened a generation ago—under circumstances far more difficult than we face today—can happen again today as thousands find in the Westminster Theatre the secret which *Annie*, the ordinary woman from Stockport, found and passed on to hundreds like herself.

Annie is rooted in Britain. *Anything to Declare?*, with its cast of 60 from a dozen countries, takes you into Europe. It is the latest weapon in the ceaseless battle which, ever since World War II, Moral Re-Armament has fought to give reality and an out-

going thrust to the concept of a united Europe. Twenty-one years have passed since Churchill launched that concept in his famous speech at Zürich. Europe, 'the fountain of Christian faith and Christian ethics'—the words are his own—lay in ruins. The only remedy was to build 'a group of nations which could give a sense of enlarged patriotism and common citizenship . . . and take its rightful place with other great groupings in shaping the destinies of men'.

Magnificent vision

It was a magnificent vision. But the task of realising it fell largely on the shoulders of three great Christian statesmen—Adenauer of Germany, Schuman of France and de Gasperi of Italy. All three became friends of Dr Buchman. All three saw in Moral Re-Armament the idea which Europe needed and the dedicated men and women who could give that idea legs. Both Adenauer and Schuman came to Caux—Schuman more than once. Schuman at the close of one of his visits said, 'What impressed me more than anything else is how MRA is being applied between nations and in international affairs'.

At another time he said, 'We must give ideological content to the lives of the millions of Europe'. This is precisely what the cast of *Anything to Declare?* have been doing in Europe and what they will do in Britain. And the content of the idea which they bring is the 'Christian faith and Christian ethics' of which Europe was the 'fountain'. This is the battle they have taken up.

In his Zürich speech, Churchill had said: 'If Europe is to be saved from infinite misery and indeed from final doom, there must come an act of faith in the European family and an act of oblivion against all the crimes and follies. The first step . . . must be a partnership between France and Germany. There can be no renewal of Europe without a spiritually great France and a spiritually great Germany.'

If the European Community is to fulfil the vision of the far-seeing statesmen who launched it, if it is to rise

above economic self-interest and give to the world the uniting idea which it longs for, this battle must be won.

Annie offers to Britain the secret of immediate recovery. *Anything to Declare?* may suggest an answer to the question: 'What is Britain's role in the world?'

H S ADDISON

BASLE GOVERNMENT RECEIVES REVUE CAST

THE GOVERNMENT OF BASLE this week gave a reception for the cast of the European revue *Anything to Declare?* in the City Hall.

The Cantonal Vice President, Paul Burckhard, told the representatives of 15 nations that his city with its industrial emphasis and its links to the world was specially receptive to the ideas of MRA.

Referring to the problems of modern industrial society he said there was an over emphasis on affluence and an indifference to the problems of human nature. A bridge had to be built between the ideals men cherished and the brutal facts of life.

'I was impressed by the ardent and practical belief you showed us,' he said. 'You gave an example in everyday life of what should be done to make a better world. It is something we need. And most important of all you showed that it can be real and not just an idealistic conception.'

Burckhard spoke of the enthusiastic audience, of which he was one, at the Basle premiere of the European revue, in the Komodie Theatre. The Vice President said, 'In your revue you sing "Break down the Barriers". You present something our city experiences daily but needs to work on. Mr Basle has something to declare. We open our doors to everyone. You have added something real and permanent to our life.'

Egon Karter, Director of the Komodie, gave his theatre free of charge.

Last week the revue was performed to crowded audiences in Biel's ultra-modern community centre, the Congress House, and sponsored in the city by the Board of Education.

'THE YORKSHIRE POST'

NEWS FROM ABROAD

MRA delegates say India will change

Panchgani, Friday, 26 January

LEADERS of Calcutta dockers, trade unionists, students and Harijan (formerly 'untouchables') all spoke of change in India at the MRA Assembly of Nations here today.

Student leaders from Calcutta's Presidency College, known as the headquarters of extremists, told representatives of 23 nations: 'Up to today we have tried to lead our organisation by appealing to the intellect of students. Here we have learnt to appeal to consciences as well and we will take this approach.'

They urged that a force from MRA join them in taking action to change the atmosphere in Calcutta University.

An official of the West Bengal Transport Workers Union said that nations that did not apply the ideas of MRA were like ships without rudders. 'With streams of men and women from all walks of life and all parts of India coming to this mighty centre and finding a new hope, dignity and care for their country, things are going to change.'

This morning, the conference celebrated the Republic Day of India, and Australia's National Day. Mr Rajmohan Gandhi, chief editor of the weekly Himmat, was asked by the Municipal President of Panchgani to raise the flag at the town's celebration.

Mr. Gandhi said that he and the delegates to the Moral Re-Armament conference wanted to extend their sympathy to victims of the recent earthquake.

'MRA is an earthquake of a different kind. It is an earthquake to shake men out of greed, selfishness and hatred. After we have celebrated Republic Day is our life and nation going to change?' he said.

Sheikh Surur, Director of Personnel in the Government of Eritrea, represented the Emperor of Ethiopia at the ceremony.

Panchgani, Saturday, 27 January
THE ONE THOUSAND villagers, workers and delegates from 24 nations, present at the Moral Re-Armament Assembly of Nations, heard the Most Rev D R B Athaide, Archbishop of Agra, who is attending the Conference here, say today: 'MRA is not a new idea. In every century there have been convinced people who have worked to make the world a better place.'

'In the Middle Ages in Europe, when there were wars and fights, a certain friend of God, St Francis of Assisi, started a movement to bring peace. In this century this movement is Moral Re-Armament. We have to thank God for it.'

The Archbishop was speaking from the stage after a performance of *Jo Bhool Gaye Hain*, an industrial drama in Hindi of the English play *The Forgotten Factor*.

'The Yorkshire Post', a leading daily in the North of England, has published regularly the news of the Assembly of Nations from the opening of the Asia Plateau Centre in Panchgani on 20 January 1968.

Guerillas seek new way

THE EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA recently gave an amnesty to guerillas of the outlawed Eritrean Liberation Front who have been fighting in the country's northern province of Eritrea.

After laying down their arms these men have been de-briefed and placed in a government rehabilitation centre to undergo six months' training in positive citizenship, prior to resumption of civilian employment or studies.

Moral Re-Armament is part of this rehabilitation programme. After the first of a series of films and discussions a former guerilla fighter said to the MRA men: 'You have given us hope and vision for our future'.

'THE YORKSHIRE POST'

RIOTER SAYS:

Violence out-dated and ineffective

Panchgani, Monday, 29 January

VIOLENCE was old-fashioned and ineffective, an anti-Hindi rioter from Bangalore, South India, told the Moral Re-Armament Assembly of Nations here.

'Two years ago I took part in anti-Hindi riots in my city,' he said. 'I hated north Indians. After meeting MRA I apologise to them for my hatred and am now working with them to unite India.'

Language riots

He was speaking with a delegation from New Delhi, in the north of India. Yesterday's Indian newspapers carried headlines of the outbreak of further language riots with 100 injured.

Many thousands have streamed through the Asia Plateau MRA Centre, since the present conference began.

Bus loads of workers from the industries of Poona, where British trade unionists attending the conference recently addressed 3,000 people, 40 business men from Bombay's car industry and a delegation of 17 girls from a Bombay Roman Catholic school.

Sheikh Mohammed Ahmed Surer, a senior civil servant, representing Ethiopia, told the assembly today that in the short time that MRA has worked in his country, 'It already has had a profound effect on the relationships between people and on society. My presence here is a sign of how seriously my Government and my people take this work.'

'Ethiopia, as the seat of the Organisation for African Unity and as the link between Africa, Europe and Asia, needs firm moral buttresses.'