



Leslie Howard in "The Amateur Gentleman" Begins His First Radio Serial Today, 8:30 P. M., WABC.

Kirsten Flagstad, Soprano, With 70-Piece Symphony Orchestra, Erno Rapee, Conductor, Today 10 P. M., Over WEAf's Coast-to-Coast Hook-Up.

Photo by Rudolf Hoffmann.
Wallace Beery, New Master of Ceremonies at WEAf, Saturday Nights at 9:30 o'Clock.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Showmen Consider Using Electrical Yardstick to Measure Program Popularity

BROADCAST showmen are wondering if they have found a new index by which to measure the popularity of programs. Revelation of the increased electrical consumption in homes during the Louis-Baer prizefight and other events of national interest has caused the broadcasters to investigate the possibilities of gauging their comedians, symphonies and other shows by keeping tabs on the electrical output meters.

"The remarkable upswing in current consumption during the Louis-Baer fight gives us a new idea," said the program director of a major network. "Why not arrange with the utility companies in ten key cities to make charts of electrical consumption during broadcasts? For example, the popularity of Amos 'n' Andy, Eddie Cantor or any act might be measured in kilowatts to supplement the present surveys of telephone calls, house-to-house canvasses and mail applause. Daily we could watch the electrical curves and judge the popularity of events by the bulges in electrical consumption."

The yardstick plan is feasible, according to a representative of the New York Edison System. He said it is a matter of comparison, but, of course, there are upsetting factors occasionally such as the shift from daylight-saving to standard time, when, obviously, lamps consume more current and at earlier hours.

About Programs and People.

WALLACE BEERY will fill the master of ceremonies post vacated by Al Jolson on WEAf's Saturday night 9:30 o'clock variety show, starting this week. In addition to introducing guest performers from week to week, he will play the lead in a dramatic sketch. Victor Young will continue to dispense the tunes, assisted by Jack Stanton and Peggy Gardiner, singing duo. Los Angeles is the locale.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Serge Koussevitzky, will inaugurate a season of Saturday night concerts on Oct. 12 at 8:15 P. M. over WJZ's network. The hour programs will be picked up directly from Symphony Hall, Boston. The Cleveland Symphony is expected to begin broadcasting over WJZ later this month and the Rochester Civic Orchestra in December over the same network.

Countess Olga Albani, soprano,

returns to WJZ at 9 o'clock tonight with a new series entitled "Life Is a Song." Charles Previn's Orchestra and the Singing Knights, a vocal ensemble, are also on the bill. Paul Whiteman will not sign off for long when his current WEAf program, sponsored by a cheese, ends in December; he has a new three-year contract with another sponsor, whose product is soap. It is expected that the new hour revue will get under way in January, probably over a WEAf or WJZ hook-up, although as yet no order for time has been received.

Father Charles E. Coughlin plans to resume his Sunday afternoon broadcasts Nov. 3 for twenty-six weeks over a network of twenty-nine stations. WOR will be the New York outlet from 4 to 4:45 P. M. . . . "America's Town Meetings," an educational innovation introduced last season, will be back on the air Oct. 31. The discussions of international, political, economic and social problems will be broadcast Thursdays at 9:30 P. M., with WJZ picking up the discussions from Town Hall in West Forty-third Street. This year two or more speakers will be invited to take opposing sides on the subject under discussion, the total broadcast time allotted to the speakers not to exceed thirty minutes. The remaining half-hour will be devoted to an open forum, with members of the audience airing their views. . . . A new WEAf concert series, entitled "Music by Al Goodman," will get under way this afternoon at 5:45 o'clock, with Mr. Goodman conducting a seventeen-piece orchestra and featuring songs from musical plays and talking pictures with which he has been associated.

Mr. Howard's Plans.

A dramatization of Jeffrey Farnol's novel, "The Amateur Gentleman," will serve as Leslie Howard's vehicle in his first regular radio series, opening over WABC at 8:30 o'clock tonight. Mr. Howard plans to act as narrator, setting the locale, time and situations for each episode, in what he describes as "a soliloquy manner." The broadcasts, hereafter, will originate in Hollywood, where Mr. Howard is engaged in making a celluloid copy of "The Trifled Forest," in which he appeared last season on Broadway.

"This method of changing the scenes," Mr. Howard explained, "is not to be confused with the asides in 'Strange Interlude,' for instance. It is merely the citing of one's thoughts as a soliloquy so as to reveal the who, what, why, when and where in short order."

Returning to the Studios.

Alexander Woolcott returns to WABC in the rôle of "The Town Crier" at 7 o'clock tonight to resume his anecdotes and whimsical comments. . . . Dr. S. Parkes Cadman and Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick are due back at the microphone next Sunday. Dr. Cadman will be heard Sunday mornings at 10 o'clock over WEAf's network and Dr. Fosdick will conduct the "national vespers" broadcasts at 4 P. M., via WJZ. . . . Josephine Antoine, soprano, has signed to alternate with Rose Bampton, Metropolitan Opera contralto, in the Friday WJZ operettas. James Melton, tenor, will be the male singing lead each week at 9 P. M.

Aiming at New Heights.

The première of "The Cavalcade of America" a weekly dramatic series starring Walter Hampden, veteran actor, will be presented over WABC's network, Wednesday, 8 P. M. The program is heralded as one of unusual technique, reaching, "new heights of vivid interest and artistic excellence—linking little-known but thrilling episodes of American life."

Named for an Elephant.

Even Barnum probably never dreamed that the name of his famous elephant Jumbo would be the title of what electrical showmen of a later day would describe as "the most elaborate program on the air—a circus musical spectacle." But it has come to pass, and a new broadcast, "Jumbo," featuring Jimmie Durante, Donald Novis, tenor, and others, is on WEAf's calendar as a Tuesday performance to open Oct. 29, at 9:30 P. M.



Rosemarie Brancato, Soprano, in Verdi Series Opening at WJZ Today, 12:30 P. M.



New York Times Studio.
Lucrezia Bori, Soprano, With Detroit Symphony Orchestra Today, 9 P. M., WABC.