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art-work were called for in those places, and I think that the criticism directed against people who made no pretensions to excellence in art was gratuitous. The fact that memorable performances were sometimes given in theatres was a testimony to the ambitions and integrity of theatre people who, after all, could make a handsome living without kow-towing to the purists. I remember one week at the Chicago Theatre when the stage consisted of the presentation of the complete song-cycle of Liza Lehmann, "In a Persian Garden." With beautiful voices, a forty-piece orchestra, lavish settings, and the organ, it was an unforgettable thing of beauty — all for fifty cents.

Not all theatre organists were untrained exhibitionists; there were many talented organists. In New York there were Mauro-Cottone, Firmin Swinnen, Deszo d'Antalfy; and Buffalo, Chicago, and on the West Coast Albert Hay Malotte upheld a high standard. Wilhelm Middelschulte and Arthur Dunnam, among others, taught theatre organists in Chicago to make honest and authoritative transcriptions of orchestral music, to register effectively and tastefully, and to play so as to please not only the customers, but the composers.

Our fraternity has suffered along

with others from the evils of over-generalization. Our profession, like others, is often judged in the light of the worst of us. There were probably more bad theatre organists than there were good (although that is nothing unusual as workers of the world go), and their derelictions, deficiencies, and distortions made the purists (and I mean no disrespect to them in this term) groan with dismay. Still, what group of musicians ever had such a variety of demands made upon them by such a varied audience?

If the theatre organ were functioning in public today, it would be making an important contribution in unifying the American people, reducing the feeling of alienation in many of our young, and in holding up the lamp of beauty. In the twenties the lamp flickered a good deal, for there was then, although in smaller degree than now, a little more vulgarity, immaturity, and incompetence than one would wish for. Nevertheless, the local theatre was a non-political community center, a place where young and old came together to be entertained. Most of the time it was the pipe organ that made the music. The theatre organist not only affected single listeners; he produced audience-reactions. At his worst, he led community singing. At his best, he played

on hearts and minds so as to elevate and inspire. There was a performance long ago at the Fox in Detroit when Sousa's Band was on the stage. The final number was "Stars and Stripes Forever," in which the big house-orchestra in the pit joined in playing with the band. On the final refrain, as a large United States flag was lowered into sight on-stage, the great Wurlitzer organ joined in. The sound was overwhelming. The audience went wild. Even the dullest clod could not escape the power of this music. Our culture needs that kind of inspiration today, badly.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER TO BE PRINTED

The first National membership roster to be published in five years will be available by the end of 1969. All members on record as of the first of November will be included in this roster. If, for any reason, you wish to have your name withheld, you must notify National Headquarters, P.O. Box 2329, Livonia, Mich. 48150 by Nov. 1, 1969.

Names will be listed alphabetically by states. This pocket size booklet will be available to all members for \$1.00 postpaid. Please mail your request along with your check to ATOS ROSTER, P.O. Box 2329, Livonia, Michigan 48150.