

Jersey. He lasted at the Capitol until 1955, at which time, Loew's was breaking up into two companies by anti-trust action.

He was given six months' pay, a lump sum from the pension fund, and a note that his 27 years with Loew's had terminated. The latter years of his Capitol tenure made Ted the only live attraction in a Times Square motion picture theatre.

He was 54 now, had spent 43 years in the theatre. What next? He didn't want to teach, and there were no more theatre jobs.

Lester Isaac contacted him. Isaac had left Loew's to direct the presentation of Cinerama. He introduced Ted to Otto K. Eitel, part owner and managing director of the Bismark Hotel in Chicago. Ted signed for the Bismark, playing a Hammond with all speakers and equipment. He featured songfests nightly, with the aid of two 35 MM projectors in the ceiling, controlled at the console. The engagement lasted a year.

Back in New York, Ted Meyn put together a one-man trio idea; a Hammond with Wurlitzer electric piano keyboard above the second manual, a Kruger electronic string bass, their sounds coming out four speakers. General Artists booked Ted as a one-man trio.

Until 1964, he played the Bismark; two summers at the Lake Tarleton Club in Pike New Hampshire; Plaza Hotel in Jersey City; Continental Restaurant in Paramus, N. J.; Mark Twain Hotel in Elmira, N.Y.; Hotel Dixie in New York, and lastly Paul's Edge-water Restaurant in Wanamassa, N. J., where he slowly phased himself into retirement. He sold all his equipment, including station wagon, trailer and van.

He was asked some questions pertaining to music and musicians. "Rock Music? It's just another cycle. Some of it is nothing more than another version of jazz. And that ear-splitting stuff: I improvised that back in 1909 as the proper music for a silent picture in which a tribe of cannibals was dancing around a big kettle of boiling water in which they were going to cook their captive. Victim was rescued by Francis X. Bushman, while I played 'Napoleon's Last Charge' and the 'Midnight Fire Alarm'.

"Today's fashion of dress? One cannot give the long-haired, bearded, shabby-looking musician of today

credit for having guts; you have to feel sorry for him, because it seems that it is the only way he can make a living in the music business. The first unwritten rule of yesterday's musician was 'never take a drink on the job'. That rule still stands, but narcotics have been added to it."

"Other unwritten rules? My father gave this one to me: 'He who resorts to smut for laughs, or the flag for bows, is no showman'."

Ted Meyn and his wife, Helen, will have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in July 1971; both are 70 years young. They are planning a European trip which may become a round-the-world venture. Their son, Ted, a pilot-engineer with Pan-Am for 30 years, believes they should go the whole route.

There is another Meyn who is an organist, grand-daughter Charlotte Ann, 20, and attending Hartford's Hartt School of Music. She is majoring in organ, is a member of the organists' guild, and is a church organist. The apple of Ted's eye, she plays the masters with ease. No rock stuff for her!

"Bach", says Ted, "is like writing

Latin with one hand, Greek with the other, kicking a wild cat in the tail with one foot, and mad dog with the other, all at the same time."

And so, we come to the end of the Ted Meyn story. We have seen that for over 55 years, the man devoted his life to entertaining others. Now, with retirement, it is hoped he and Mrs. Meyn will enjoy many years of relaxation which retirement is designed to assure. □

## Closing Chord

GEORGE EPSTEIN, who played the Roxy Kimball during its last days, died in New York in November. Born in that city in 1900, Mr. Epstein studied organ under John Hammond, and piano and theory at the Damrosch Music Institute. At 16, he began his theatre organ career, and played several houses in Brooklyn and on Broadway. He broadcast over WSOM, and was organist at the Roxy for over 5 years. His biography is scheduled for THEATRE ORGAN. □

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