

Dr. Parmentier Returns to Pipes!

by Dorothy P. Bloom

On Saturday evening, March 3, 1973, there was standing room only in the auditorium of the Roberson Center in Binghamton, New York, as Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier and the Link Organ rose from the pit to the rousing strains of the "Knightsbridge March."

This grand old gentleman of the organ established immediate rapport with his audience as he announced his numbers and talked and joked with them with that delightful mixture of Belgian accent and American humor that make him such good company, on or off the bench.

His program included something for everyone — from Beethoven and Rachmaninoff to improvisations on "Three Blind Mice" and "London Bridge" — from "Wedding of the Painted Doll" to "Finlandia," with "Love Story" included to bring us up to the 70's.

Throughout the concert Dr. Parmentier's "vim, vigor and vitality" were amazing. The fast pace, the beautiful technique, the intricate counter melodies and dancing pedal work that made him one of the greats

of the silent film era were all still there.

Although Dr. Parmentier has made cameo appearances during the past year, notably at the 1972 ATOS Convention, this concert was part of the first concert tour in his long career. During the program he paid tribute to his friend and manager, Mrs. Mary Bowles, our national Secretary-Treasurer, who "rediscovered" him and brought him back to the theatre pipes he loves. When Dr. Parmentier is not on tour he performs at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City.

In an interview for *The Evening Press of Binghamton*, the 75-year old artist-composer who opened the Roxy, the Capital and Radio City Music Hall in New York City, said he never plans to retire. "When people retire, they die," he said, and he is not ready for that; he wants "to try everything once," and has not had a chance yet.

by Billy Nalle

Cass Parmentier, one of the most respected and celebrated artists of the first era of theatre organ, played a solo concert in March at Long Island Un-

iversity, New York, sponsored by the New York ATOS Chapter. It was a concert which proved to be memorable on all counts and was a living definition of what is meant by professionalism. Great good taste, wonderful spirit, musical consistency and originality of thinking were showcased. The music was put first, *always*, and so, from that, all privileged to be present were given as much respect as the artist gave the music. Here was a real musician and that is defined as one who *serves* the music rather than using the music as his personal decor. We had a wonderful experience both for heart and mind, one that was genuine for us as it was honest for him. Never once did he waste time playing the musical language and approach of someone else; he played and he was... *himself*. For that reason the concert was special and had stature. His final number was Gershwin's "S Wonderful." After hearing his interpretation, I think mine will have (cough) a restful vacation while being infused with assorted minerals and vitamins. With gratitude and respect, I doff the hat I never wear and touch my pointed head to the ground. □

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE — Dr. Parmentier at the Link Organ, Roberson Center. — (D. Bloom Photo)

Mary Bowles shows Dr. Parmentier where to place a Vox pipe.

