

# Actors win basic wage but lose "closed Shop"



Play Pictorial

Henry Brodribb Irving, actor son of Sir Henry

## Death of H.B.Irving, son of great Henry

1919: Henry Brodribb Irving, elder son of Sir Henry, has died at the age of 49. In the course of his career he revived many of his father's famous roles both in Britain and America.

His younger brother, Laurence, also an actor and author, died five years ago when the "Empress of Ireland" sank in a collision in the St Lawrence river.

1919: The Theatrical Management Association has recognised the Actors' Association as being the appropriate body with whom to negotiate actors' salaries, and a new Standard Contract has been agreed. The basic terms include a minimum salary of £2.10s per week, with a twice-nightly minimum of £3 per week. There can be a maximum of two weeks rehearsal with no pay. All actors will attend the first rehearsal "rough perfect" in their words, provided the manager has issued the scripts at least one week in advance. In the event of illness, the "no play - no pay" rule will operate.

The Actors' Union expressed satisfaction with this settlement, but declared their intention to call a strike on the outstanding matter of the "closed shop". They declared that "on a date to be decided, no member of this Association will appear in any cast which is not entirely composed of members or probationary members of this Association, only excepting those persons who may be considered as being in the position for the time being of Actor- or Actress-Manager". The decision to strike is a direct response to Mr C.B.Cochran's refusal to engage any artist who is a member of the Actors Association.

## Two New Knights Working with Aliens

1919: Two members of the theatrical profession have been knighted this year. Oswald Stoll, the proprietor of the Coliseum Theatre and controller of the Stoll Circuit has been knighted for his services to theatre and his benevolent work during the War. Harry Lauder, the Scottish comedian and music hall star, has been knighted for his services entertaining the Troops on the French Front.

1919: A Joint Committee of Actors, Managers, Variety Artists, Musicians and Stage Staff have announced a resolution that "The members of these Organisations will not, after April 30th next, work with or for any German, Austrian, Bulgarian or Turkish citizen". This decision is in protest at the War Reparations dispute which has followed the Armistice.

## Insanitary Theatres are unfit for Actors

1919: The Secretary of the Actors Association said in an interview with the Daily Express that nearly every No. 2 Theatre in this country is in an insanitary condition and is not fit for actors to work in. Theatre Managers have expressed outrage and demanded evidence for this slur.

## Eight day long National Rail Strike hits theatres

1919: An eight day national strike of railways caused many problems for theatres, but an Emergency Committee of Theatre Managers managed to minimise the number of lost productions. The Committee organised what transport could be achieved to move scenery and companies from one theatre to the next. Where this proved impossible because of the distances involved, the Committee arranged to transfer productions to adjacent theatres which might otherwise have been vacant. Since the strike covered two weekends there was considerable disruption and a number of dark theatres, but many productions were saved as a result of the Committee's work.

## Rabies Scare to curb Dog Acts ?

1919: A major rabies scare has led to an order that all dogs in London and the Home Counties must at all times be muzzled and that these areas are to be designated "controlled areas".

Dogs leaving these areas without a licence must be quarantined for six months unless they are just "passing through".

Since dogs must be muzzled in all public areas, the question of performing dogs in variety shows and theatrical performances has been raised. The question is to be raised with the Home Secretary as a matter of urgency.

## Death of Adelina Patti

1916: The famous opera singer, Adelina Patti, has died at the age of 76. She died at her private castle, Craig y Nos, in South Wales. In 1905 she was persuaded to make some gramophone records, thus becoming one of the first opera singers to be recorded for posterity.