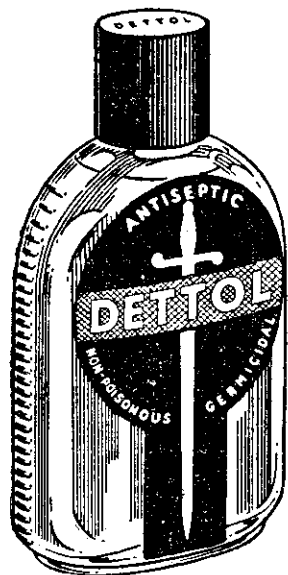


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## ANGELS OVER BROADWAY

(Columbia)



**BEN HECHT** must have been waiting a long time to make a picture like "Angels Over Broadway," for when the opportunity came, he didn't let many outsiders in on the executive side of production. He wrote it, produced it, and directed it.

"Angels Over Broadway" is the story of a timorous little business man (John Qualen) who has embezzled 3,000 dollars from his firm, and has decided to commit suicide. Morosely taking his farewell of life in a Broadway night club, he is picked up by a slick young confidence man (Douglas Fairbanks Jr.) who mistakes him for a wealthy "sucker"; an out-of-work night club dancer (Rita Hayworth) who mistakes him for a cheap evening's entertainment; and a drunken playwright (Thomas Mitchell) who mistakes him for a plot for a new play.

These three "angels" set out to rescue the would-be suicide—the confidence man for the sake of his own direct gain; the

my wife, whom I loved in my own nasty way, disembowelled by another woman, and I've written three flops."

His alcoholic speeches are crammed with deadly observations on life. Offended by a half-naked, wriggling tango dancer, he remarks with a shudder: "Venus was never an epileptic." "If I were a philosopher," he observes on another occasion, "I would say that this age is an idiot, with a gun in one hand and a clarinet in the other. In fact I did say so, and the play closed last Saturday."

High marks to the four principals, especially to Fairbanks and Mitchell. It is pleasant to see that Rita Hayworth is developing talent as well as good looks.

## LUCKY PARTNERS

(R.K.O.)



**HERE'S** a gay little story of a "purely impersonal pre-marriage honeymoon" which was quite naturally and inevitably misunderstood by everyone else.

The plot started off in life as Sacha Guitry's imprudent farce "Bonne Chance," about a middle-aged French gentleman



**CONFIDENCE MAN, NIGHT CLUB DANCER, EMBEZZLER ABOUT TO COMMIT SUICIDE, DRUNKEN PLAYWRIGHT:** The four principals of "Angels Over Broadway." From left: Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Rita Hayworth, John Qualen and Thomas Mitchell

little dancer because, in spite of her brittle front she has a tender heart; and the playwright because it amuses him to play God. They introduce him to a "big-time" poker party at an out-of-town millionaire, where, preparatory to being "taken for a ride" he is allowed to win heavily. Then, with his winnings, he escapes from the game and back to life.

As daybreak dispels the Hechtic night, the confidence man finds that he is none the richer from a monetary point of view, but he has accumulated a thorough beating up, a lesson on human values and the little dancer. The playwright, who passed out half way through, has forgotten all about it.

"Angels Over Broadway" is strong, adult stuff, and in dialogue and situation, unmistakably Ben Hecht. In some ways it is the direct lineal descendant of that fine satire "Nothing Sacred."

A character which Hecht must have taken a great deal of pleasure in creating is Eugene Gibbons, the tipsy playwright who sums himself up in a few cynical words: "I have been deserted by

who shared a winning sweepstake ticket with a little laundress and took her for a pre-marital honeymoon on the proceeds of his half. When Hollywood decided to do it with Ronald Coleman and Ginger Rogers in the leading parts, the naughty French inferences were, of course, ironed out; the laundress became a New York bookseller and the French gentleman a whimsical artist, and the whole thing is as dainty and innocent as a daisy.

Ronald Coleman, as the artist, shows a nice touch for comedy, particularly in a courtroom scene where, as counsel for defence, he cross-examines himself as defendant. Coleman is still, however, very much like Ronald Coleman — those graceful gestures, and nonchalant remarks remind one rather sadly of the Prisoner of Zenda and Francois Villon.

Ginger Rogers is a different proposition. For one thing she is no longer ginger, but brunette. And she has done few things better than the bewildered young lady who can't quite get used to the unconventional artist — or the unconventional situations he creates.

## NIGHT TRAIN TO MUNICH

(M.G.M.)



**IT** would have been easier to praise "Night Train to Munich" if the producers had not invited a direct comparison with "The Lady Vanishes." For it is a spy thriller, dished up with Margaret Lockwood and Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne (the two English sporting "asses"), and a considerable part of the action takes place on a train. The point is that "The Lady Vanishes" was done by Hitchcock.

But it is uncharitable to make too close a survey of parallels. "Night Train to Munich" is a bright, exciting show, with Mr. Radford and Mr. Wayne supplying a good quota of comic relief.

The picture opens with a Nazi pamphlet raid over Prague and the escape to England of a Czech armament inventor and his pretty daughter. They are kid-

## How To Cope With Double Features

At last the problem of how to enjoy a four-hour double feature movie programme has been solved. J. J. Dougherty, health director of the American Schools Association, offers the following tips:

Do not eat a heavy meal before entering the theatre.

If you can shake off your shoes without too much embarrassment—do so.

Do not wriggle—sit up straight but not too stiffly.

Do not lean on your neighbour's arm rest—it throws the body off balance.

Do not wear tight collars. Take a brisk walk in the fresh air before entering the show.

Clap your hands occasionally—you'll find it relaxing.

Don't hesitate to cross your legs if you are more comfortable.

If you can close your eyes for a few seconds without missing any action on the screen, do so once or twice.

He forgot to add: "If you can close your eyes for four hours, and go to sleep, do so."

napped back to Germany, there to be helped by a British intelligence officer (Rex Harrison) who has disguised himself as a German major. Foiling the German Navy, Army, and Herr Himmler's S.S. men by turns, they escape to Munich and the Swiss Frontier.

Good performance from Rex Harrison. We could have done with some more of the sporting asses, the aforesaid Messrs. Radford and Wayne.

An interesting point is that "The Lady Vanishes," which was made before the outbreak of war, did not actually name the nationality of the villainous plotters. "Night Train to Munich" makes no bones about it. The hand of Hitler pounding a map, high officers of the German Admiralty, S.S. men, and all the sinister trappings of Nazidom are there in full force.