

Theatre News

New College

St. Bonifacius — (RNS) — The nearly-completed college for Jesuit seminarians near here will be blessed by Archbishop William O. Brady of St. Paul on July 21, the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.

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Henry V

By EUPHEMIA WYATT

HENRY V — Free Shakespeare in Central Park, having won full cooperation from Mayor Wagner and the new Park Commissioner, Mr. Newbold Morris, which includes new chairs and a gravelled terrace has opened most propitiously with a rousing production, directed by Mr. Joseph Papp of HENRY V. This is no play for pacifists with the uncomplicated ethics of a fairy tale.

It recounts the breathless victory of the soldier-king who sets out to win the crown of France on the same film set used by his great uncle Edward III, whose mother was a French princess — Young Henry, who was shown by Shakespeare in Henry IV as the wild prince, who spent his time carousing with Sir John Falstaff and his scandalous crew, has assumed regality with the crown.

The small army he called across the Channel had been devastated with dysentery at the siege of Harfleur, and Henry had the temerity to lead what he called an army — actually one thousand armoured knights, six thousand archers and two thousand foot soldiers — against a finely equipped French army of some thirty-two thousand. What made the battle of Agincourt so popular was that it was won, not by the nobles, but the English yeomanry, the archers and their longbows.

In every English village fathers trained their sons in archery and as the boys grew up their bows were lengthened to fit their height so that the arrows, which had the weight of the archer's body behind them, soon made chain armour useless and plate armour, vincible. As at Crecy and Poitiers, the undisciplined French knights had the impatient foolishness to charge the archers. The result was terrifying.

As against thirteen English knights there were five thousand of highest French nobility slain with one thousand

taken prisoner and for one hundred English soldiers, six thousand Frenchmen lay dead on the muddy field. The numbers engaged may seem ludicrously small but not the odds of one hundred to one.

HENRY V was presented on Broadway by London's Old Vic in 1938 in a production which constantly suggested unhappy comparison with the great screen play with Olivier. But in this production the scene is forgotten in the excitement of the action in which the archers and their longbows, the knights and the gallant King sweep backwards and forwards across the large stage and the sense of struggle is never absent except in the graceful scenes with the French Princess who begins to grope for an English vocabulary which she has considerably increased by the time King Henry comes to woo her.

There are no stars in the cast but certainly James Ray's Henry will be remembered for its direct approach. Its youth and distinction with Kathleen Widdow's Katherine, Thomas Aldredge's Dauphin, John Call's Fluellen, Arthur Male's Charles VI and Frederic Wariner's Archbishop of Canterbury whose longwinded discourse on the Sale Law has been given comedy values. The Chorus is well spoken by Leonardo Cimino characterized as a veteran of the French Wars with a crutch.

Banners and costumes take the place of scenery with their bright colors and between the battlements on either side of the stage can be seen the romantic view of towering architecture across the Park.

Long Live New York Shakespeare Festival!

Moscow Radio Raps Prelates

Moscow — (RNS) — The Moscow Radio, in a broadcast beamed in Spanish to Spain, charged the hierarchy there with clinging to the dictatorship regime of Generalissimo Francisco Franco.

"Will the Church hierarchy cling to the dictatorship to the end?" it asked. "History has shown that, at the right moment, the Church is skilled in jumping off the bandwagon. Although the hierarchy owes its position to Franco, it is not impossible that one day, when the popular tide rises over him, it will abandon him to his fate."

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Prayers Herald Freedom

Accra, Ghana — (NC) — Ghana's Catholics observed a special day of prayer for their nation's new status as a republic. At the request of their bishops

Archbishop John Amisah of Cape Coast, in a Republic Day message, also called for prayer for the country's new form of government.

Ghana became a republic June 30. Although remaining in the British Commonwealth, its sovereign is now President Kwame Nkrumah rather than Queen Elizabeth II. It became a republic, social justice and an independent state within the

Commonwealth in 1957. Previously it had been the British colony of the Gold Coast.

THE BISHOPS set aside July as the special day of prayer to ask God "to bless our new republic, her first president and her people."

They also asked that prayer be said for "the cessation of social injustice and the return of peace and respect for human dignity and human rights."

As Catholics observed their day of prayer, Accra Protestants staged a mass rally in the city's sports stadium where President Nkrumah read the prayers for the new republic.

Ghana is a country on the west African coast about the size of Oregon with a population of 4,839,000. The population includes 562,912 Catholics, about 700,000 Protestants and 825,000 Moslems. The rest are heathens.

The Church operates close to 2,000 schools, including 210 which were returned to Catholic administration in May after they had been taken over by the government in 1958.

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