COURIER-JOURNAL

Tuesday, December 24, 1985



Tiny Tim (Gracen Porreca) is held aloft by actor Time Winters, flanked by, at left, Philip LeStrange, Eberle Thomas, Elaine Good, and Thomas Lee Carson, and at right, Mary Stark, Jason E. Zwetsch, Gerald Richards, and Jessica Stone.

GeVas gift continued from Page 4 turned inward. It's a beautiful arc that moves

in the play, as he moves through sadness and self-recrimination and awareness. It ends in this great blithering joy - Scrooge becomes

a maniac of happiness."

The play works, in Sister's Pat's estimation, because the central character moves from an icy, crusty shell into a rarefied kind of ecstasy. "People enjoy seeing that," she

concludes — and children of all ages are hardly exempt from the magic. "You have very adult, sophisticated themes moving dramatically, done so naturally and simply and truthfully that they'll reach a children's

audience as well as an adult audience."

Dickens, she believes, draws his vivid tableaux from a palette of very colorful, eccentric characters, and the resulting illustrations of London street life translate easily to the stage. The problem encountered by any adaptor, she adds, is in differentiating between the various levels of dramatic change in the central character, without the benefit of narration.

"Eb's script is a very tightly constructed script," she observes, "yet he has a very keen sense of how to build and juxtapose scenes, and how long scenes should last. The character of Scrooge is able to build an ascending arc of change; this adaptation allows an actor to do that."

Eb Thomas has been successful in his attempt to scenically translate the dramatic momentum of Dickens' original plot, says Sister Pat. "The actor who plays Scrooge is able to find an effective emotional handle in each scene to build his change on," she states. "He watches the party, or the Cratchit family mourning at Tiny Tim's grave, or the scene of himself as a young boy - and when he turns back to the ghost, the audience can literally and dramatically feel the change in him."

Scrooge's conversion echoes visibly in Gerald Richards' marvelously expressive face - a Christmas gift in itself that illuminates the entire stage each time Scrooge's previously sour countenance opens into a smile of recognition, of pleasure, of increasingly more expansive awareness of his own dawning humanity.

continued on Page 16

Dickens and his Ghost of an idea

O STOROUGH and a timber the

First of all says Chesterton happinche la mot a state, il is a crisis. Therefore, il is inherently dramatic. All the old costoms surrounding the with of Christ were established by human instinct so as to main and reinsist on this crucial quality. Everything is stranged that whole households may

there is conscibling a fittle vehicle, if only sobler in form and theory, than mere comfort; even holly is pricitly."

Dickens shares this Christmas sensi-bility Scrooge's London is wapped in a dense and piercing fog, and Dickens makes very sure that each scene of rejoicing and merriment is a warm still point in a bostile world. "The cold was intense." In the main streets, at a corner of the court, some labourers were



figures. In beauty perhaps, there is something allied to sadness; certainly there is something akin to joy in the grotesque, nay, in the uncouth." Original illustrators of A Christmas Carol knew this instinctively. Thus, their Mr. Fezziwig is portrayed as a plump stomach pirouetting on two dainty feet; Bob Cratchit becaomes a series of lines and angles that either snap to attention or gangle in amazement, while Scrooge himself resembles nothing so much as a fantastic gargoyle hopping about with new life.

From the time of his conversion, says Dickens, Scrooge was often an object of laughter as his wizened old frame cut a bustling, exuberant path through London. In a real sense, that picture of Scrooge brings the reader back full circle to Dickens' preface. For Dickens did indeed raise the Ghost of an idea, the Ghost or Spirit of Happiness. And so

today, in an age fearful of its own technology, weared by cruelty and confusion, he still holds out the promise

No mai

of happines. Its spirit will come in the hardest and bleakest of conditions, he musts, provided that it is willed by the courage and stoutness of the humanheart. It is for that reason that A Christmas Carol continues to haunt our bouses, our lives (and our theaters) most pleasantly.



Cushion Lifting Chai

> Combines the elegance of a traditional lounge chair with cushion lifting assistance.

• Power cushion gently lifts you to a standing position Simple switch control

VALAVA

LA C

• Runs off household current Recliner models available · Variety of colors,

FOSTER

MEDICAL

models and fabrics • We bill Medicaid and Medicare CALL OR STOP BY FOR A FREE DEMONSTRATION

2590 Ridge Rd. W.

227-7860

A Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our bowling friends from Fred Morgenstern and his Staff

CLOVER



2750 Monroe Avenue Rochester, New York 14618

Raceway Lanes

6030 Victor Manchester Road Victor, New York 14564

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all of our many relatives, friends, and neighbors for their prayers and kind words following the loss of our son, James

It is difficult to find a way to best thank everyone for all that was done for our family during these recent days.

We would like to especially mention the clergy and the Sisters of the Diocese of Rochester, the members of the Monroe County Sheriff's Department and the Gates Police Department, and Jamie's friends who were just like brothers to him.

With such a tremendous outpouring of community support and prayers, it is, difficult for us to thank each and everyone individually in this letter.

But we want you all to know how we so very much appreciate your thoughts. Your support of our family during this time has certainly not gone unnoticed and will never be forgotten.

The Leone Family