Actors' Strike May Close N.Y. Theaters In June

And With Big Cify Expecting Half a Million Visitors During Democratic National Convention That Would be Calamity for Town to Say Nothing of Visitors

By ROBERT T. SMALL Conveight, 1924, by The Advance

New York, March 6 .- A theater strike in New York on June 1, just as the city is getting ready to receive the hosts of Democrats at their national presidential convention, seemed inevitable today as the producing managers gathered to consider the terms of the Actors' Equity Association, organized under affiliation with the American Federation of Labor.

The police already have promised to close up the New York saloons by June 1. If the union actors succeed in closing up a good part of the theaters by that time, the delegates and visitors will be threatened with having to devote all of their time to the convention and to politics which wasn't the idea at all in voting to hold the convention here.

vention here.

Some of the managers who insist they will not be dictated to further by the actors' union, say they will turn their houses over to the films. They regard this as, a very sinister threat, for New York and Chicago are almost the last strongholds of the actors who want to appear "in person." If these two cities should stop production there would be a dearth of work for the actors as a whole and a great rush for the jobs that might be open at Hollywood. "The Road" does not offer the opportunities for the legitimate that it once did. High costs of production and higher costs of transportation, to say nothing of the inroads made by the popularity of the "movies," have reduced road troupes to

says he is through for he doesn't know a darned thing about running a factory.

William A. Brady takes a philosophic view of the situation. He says he is going to give a production for the Democrats in June even if he has to act in it himself.

"I've got a wife who would take part, too," says Mr. Brady. "She is Miss Grace George. And I have a daughter quite well known to the stage and the screen, Miss Alice Brady. She also could take a part. And the public may not know it, but I have a son who is dying for a chance on the stage, wanting to foilow in the old man's footsteps. He could also take part. An all-star, all-Brady cast. How about that?"

The all-family show would not be a novelty in the theatrical ranks by any means. The four Cohans long held the boards in vaudeville and later in musical comedy production. Fred Stone and his wife and his daughter are now in one production and there are two other Stone children who are crying to get into the "stepping."

"stepping."

The actors are taking their proposed strike very seriously and they are encouraged by the fact that at least some of the producing managers are going to give in to their demands. The Shuberts, the Selwyn's and Al Wood are counted upon to play in with the Equity even if they do have to withdraw from the producing managers' association.

But Belasco has a powerful following. George Cohan, one of the busiest producers, who was forced to return to the stage himself during the actors' strike of five years ago and still is there, says he is ready to agree to closed theaters rather than a closed shop in the theaters. Sam H. Harris, of the "Music Box," of "Rain" and many other successes is allied with Mr. Belasco. Florenz Ziegfeld, of the Follies, also has a

"IN WRONG"



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Other managers are threatening to darken their houses and keep them that way until the actors "come to their senses and place their work upon the plane of art once more rather than to degrade it by union hours and union conditions."
David Belasco is the head and shoulders of this die-hard group. It was his recent statement of intentions which has brought the theatrical sit untion to a crisis. Mr. Belasco is urging his fellow managers to close down prior to June 1 and have it out with the equity right away. The "closed shop" Mr. Belasco thinks, would put the theater on a par with the factory. When that happens he says he is through for he doesn't know a darned thing about running a factory.

William A. Brady takes a phillo-

mind which runs along with that of the "old master." And Al Erlanger is grouped with the die-hards. So whether the actors win out or not in their June 1 demonstrations it looks as if they were going to start a heavy row among the managers and perhaps invoke a theater war which may prove disastrous to all interests in the end.

The managers had been planning to make June and the Democratic Convention period the greatest in theatrical history. Many special productions had been planned. Suddenly things have come to a standstill. To the country at large an actors' strike in the good old summer time is nothing to worry about. To New York with an expected 500,000 visitors on its hunds, the situation is serious in the extreme.

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MEET AT PINEHURST

convention of the National Insu-rance Commissioners will meet in Pinehurst on April 14-15-16, accord-ing to Stacy Wade, Insurance Commissioner of the State of North Car-olina, and a member of the executive committee of the National Insurance Commissioners' Association. This will be the second time that the national convention has been held in North Carolina, Mr. Wade said.

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