



CHRISTMAS

Statesman with your promise,
Rich man with your power,
Who will light the nations
Through this midnight hour?

Dark the heart of millions,
Hungry to be fed,
Bitter at their toiling—
Who will give them bread?

Wisdom can be humble.
Wise men from afar
Knew themselves for nothing
Following a star.

Kings who left their kingdoms,
Humbly they trod,
Bearing thrones as offerings,
They were taught of God.

Proud men, bring your knowledge;
Frightened men, your fears;
Stubborn men, the hatreds
Of your wasted years.

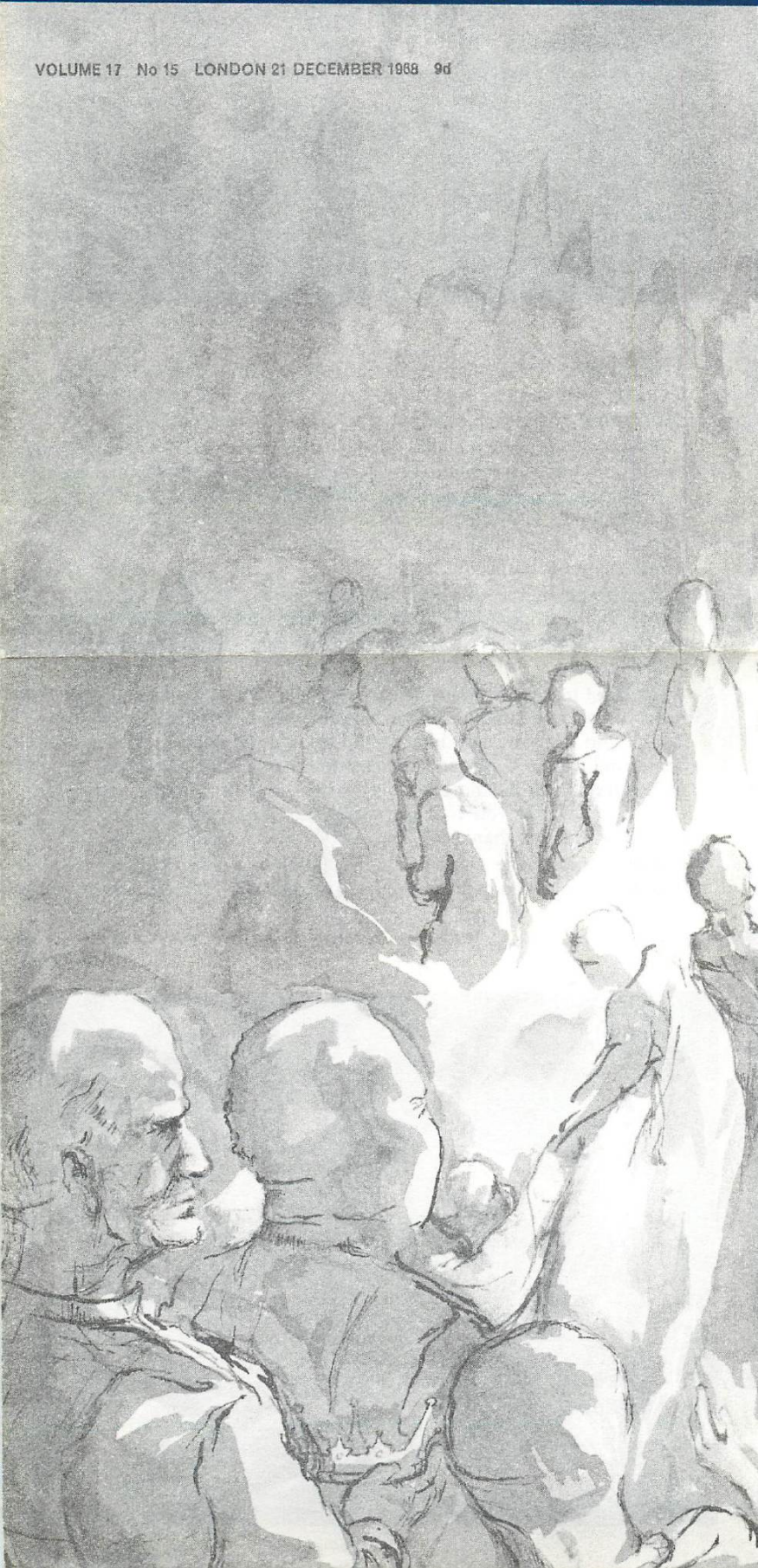
Ye who would—but dare not;
Ye who dare—but fail;
Every living creature,
Valiant and frail,

See the thin-brained cattle,
Wiser than you all,
Ox and ass together
Kneeling at the stall.

God Himself in heaven
Raised His head and smiled,
As the wise and foolish
Journeyed to a Child.

God Himself is leaning
Out of heaven's bar,
Waiting till men humbly
Follow on a star.

PETER HOWARD





CHRISTMAS is the great family festival. As it approaches everyone's thoughts turn to gifts, and all hearts are open in a special way. But do we think for all the children who do not have a family?

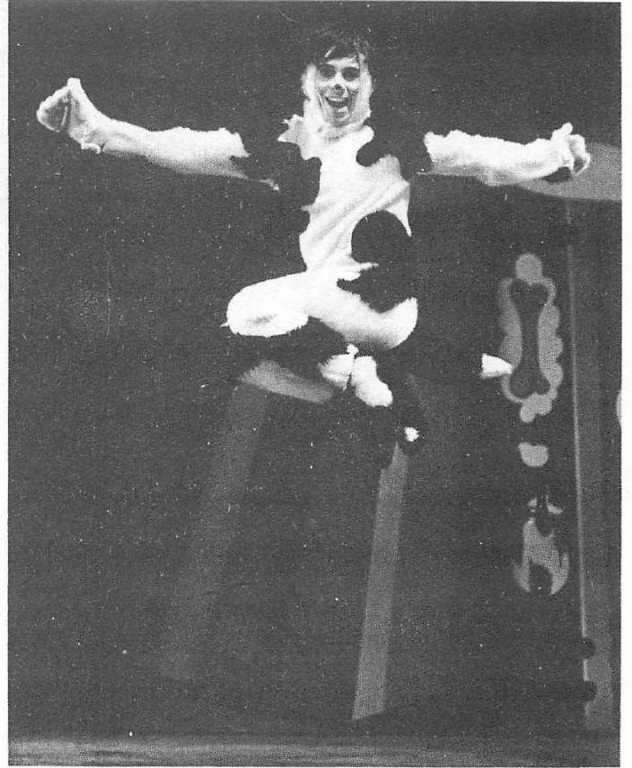
If you try to imagine the minds of children who have either no parents, or whose parents have left them, think of the potential bitterness that must be there, and the anti-social attitude to life. Think of the attitude of 'I couldn't care less'. Think of the anarchy and lawlessness in the future, with more and more children growing up like that, if they do not get an answer.

Then think of the tremendous chance each Christmas with *Give a Dog a Bone*, a pantomime through which these children can learn the basic lessons of Society, and where miracles of change can happen in their lives.

A school teacher brought her class to *Give a Dog a Bone* and afterwards asked one small boy what he liked best. 'I liked best the way it came out neat and tidy in the end,' he said. He came from a broken home, and was so backward at writing he could hardly write his name. A few days later he brought his teacher a page of very reasonable writing. 'How did you manage this?' she asked. He replied, 'I kept on saying "please, thank you and sorry" over and over again.'

Many letters have come from the children-in-care themselves, and from the people who care for them. A warden of a home writes:





Wonderful World

'The children are still singing the songs. Sometimes when one or other of the children gets pig-headed, other say, "Watch out, or you might be turned an animal."'

From the children:

'I enjoyed it very much and wish I could see it again. I also like the bit where the people said, "I don't" and changed into an animal. I can still remember the three magic words to break the spell.'

'I still remember what you said and it is—I do care. I wish I could see it again . . .'

Peter Howard, who wrote this pantomime, used to say he wanted to care for every child as he cared for his own. Through *Give a Dog a Bone* each one of us has the chance to do that this Christmas. In the past four years 17,000 children who are orphans or in homes cared for by local authorities have been guests of the Friends of the Westminster Theatre at the pantomime. The Friends would like to invite 4,000 children in these next weeks. This will cost £2,500. Will you think how you can help to make this possible, and who you can ask to help?

It is more than a Christmas treat for these children—though it is certainly that. But much more—it is to build their character, to give them something with which to face life, and the chance to see in *Give a Dog a Bone* how to find their place in God's 'wonderful, wonderful world'.

C M SIMPSON



Give a Dog a Bone at the Westminster Theatre

Clement McCallin Rat King **Bryan Coleman** Lord Swill
Neville Jason Mr Space **Bernard Sharpe** Ringo
Joyce Rae Mickey Merry

The cast includes **Len Maley, Helena Leahy, Roy Heymann, Angela Easterling, Denny Bettis, Gary Brighton, Betty Wheeler, Malcolm Reid, Linda James, June Elvin, Elizabeth English, Robert Luckham, Margaret Frost, Jane Darling.**

Book and Lyrics: PETER HOWARD Music: GEORGE FRASER
Directed by: HENRY CASS and Bridget Espinosa
Design by: Cameron Johnson Costumes: Dorothy Phillips
Lighting: Louis Fleming



Photos by Houston Rogers

Pantomime opens for fifth season

'WHERE'S MY BONE?' wailed Ringo the dog, with tears in his eyes. 'The three mice have taken it' said a little voice at the back of the circle, and the whole theatre shook with gales of laughter.

Thus *Give a Dog a Bone* opened for its 5th consecutive season at the Westminster Theatre to a full house, which included diplomats from Africa and Asia.

Peter Howard's world famous fantasy, described by the *Daily Telegraph* as a well tried favourite will be running until 25 January.

Clement McCallin's view:

Theatre takes you into the world

'I HOPE you'll forgive me if I take it easy while we talk, but I'm doing the whole thing again in an hour or two.'

With this cheery greeting Clement McCallin welcomed me to his dressing room. He was relaxing after a strenuous two hours playing King Rat in *Give a Dog a Bone* to a packed audience last Saturday.

'Yes, this is my first time in real pantomime and I find it fascinating. And *Give a Dog a Bone* is a real pantomime in the true traditional sense. Most other so-called pantomimes nowadays have had to resort to pop-songs and modern comedians to draw the crowds.

'It is enormous fun to play a part like King Rat which offers so much.

'In my career, I have done practically everything from being a chorus boy to playing Shakespeare and I find I have to draw on all that experience and training to do this part.

'There is nothing more exciting and rewarding than to play to children. You can so captivate them, and carry them away, that they live into everything that they see on the stage. I am

convinced that the children recognise much of what they see on stage when they go out into the world and they remember the simple ideas in the show, even much later in life. Adults often see their own experiences of life throughout the allegory.'

As we talked I could feel the enthusiasm of this man for his profession and the passion he has for the theatre to play its full part in modern society. This is no idle theorist with big ideas, but a dedicated man who throws himself fully into whatever he takes on.

I asked him how the cast were able to win each audience so quickly and get them fully involved.

'Audience participation is the absolute heart of theatre. It's amazing the wide range of age groups who are captivated by *Give a Dog a Bone*.

'For myself, I find it very exacting to play King Rat properly. I don't believe in scaring children out of their wits, therefore I have to be cunning and misguided rather than just terrifying. I also have to watch not to be influenced by the children or won over by them! It is important that the shape

CHRISTMAS 1968 INDIA

I saw Jesus born in India today,
In rough brown hands the infant's secret lay.
In callous ways and long uncaring hearts,
In timid, faithless men this secret starts.

I watched as Jesus grew among men's tears,
A tiny flame to end a nation's fears,
A new directive and a passionate claim,
To turn all people Godwards once again.

And now he walks among us as a man,
A cure, a Peace, a Passion and a Plan,
The voice of Asia to the world will say,
He speaks when people listen and obey.

God thrust his hand deep into the affairs of men,
And every year he offers it again,
To grasp and clasp if we will truly dare
To take . . . Remake this land if we will care.

JEAN McALL

which Peter Howard created is not distorted.'

I asked McCallin what he thought was the highest form of theatre.

'The very best in theatre takes a person out of himself to a wide and better understanding of the world. It happens when the material of the playwright and the skill of the actor combine to make him aware of things he hadn't noticed before.

'I believe anyone can come into a theatre, see a show, and go out with a totally different outlook on life. That is what theatre exists for.'

Before leaving, I watched Clement McCallin putting on his make-up for the next performance. It was a work of art. Fifteen minutes of careful, painstaking work on the nose alone.

The result was perfection. That attention to detail is the hallmark of a really great performance.

CAMPBELL LEGGAT

Front-page illustration by Anne Wood
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