

Lagniappe

Readers' Theories
On 'Throws' Differ

By THOMAS GRIFFIN

GOT A FEW REPLIES re the practice of maskers throwing beads and trinkets from Carnival parade floats—and they differ in explanations thereof. But let's have a go at it, withal!

Joe T. Hogan quotes a passage in Lura Robinson's book, "It's an Old New Orleans Custom" (Bonanza, 1948), to the effect that following the first organized Mardi Gras procession in 1838, that "in succeeding years, ladies waited on Mardi Gras to catch a glimpse of these lavishly costumed young Creoles who threw bonbons and dragees onto their balconies. By 1841, the banquettes and streets were lined with thousands of spectators and masqueraders joyously frolicking while awaiting the procession."



TOMMY GRIFFIN

Irma Ristroph says, "I was always told it was a carry-over from ancient feudal days in Europe when the lords of the domains surveyed their lands and tossed coins or gifts to the people who cultivated the crops."

"The custom of celebrating Mardi Gras itself is of obscure origin—probably beginning in Southern Europe and brought by the French to Louisiana. At any rate, you often cause me to grab an encyclopedia or dictionary — and after your question on the trinket custom, I've filled my purported brain with many interesting facts on feudalism from Encyclopaedia Britannica."

A CORRESPONDENT initialed A.F.W. writes he has no idea where "the trinket idea started but certainly not in Mobile." (It was suggested by Mrs. Helen Quigley that Frenchmen from Mobile, upon reaching the mouth of the Mississippi River started throwing beads to the Indians to let them know they were peaceful people.)

A.F.W. continues: "I am a native of Mobile and lived there until 1942. At no time did our maskers on the floats throw anything but serpentine paper tape and taffy candy (paper wrapped). I was amazed when I moved to New Orleans to find the maskers so busy untangling their beads, they couldn't dance or show any signs of gaiety as ours in Mobile did." (Editor's note—on the contrary, maskers in Mobile are known to have at least given out pairs of beads many years ago—in the early 1900s.)

Lagniappe note: No matter how the practice started, it should be retained. Imagine a Carnival parade without all the shouting that greets the floats and the thrill of catching something on the wing!

POTPOURRI—Jewel Toups has joined friend Adelaide Brennan in the glamor cast set; fell and broke her collarbone when her high heel caught in the railroad track behind

the Auditorium . . . Couple of French Quarter art galleries will soon be united when the owners merge in matrimony which could happen this week . . . It's a firstborn boy, tagged Steven Jude Jr., for Linda and Steve Mason . . . If they must call that French Quarter hotel on which work has finally resumed, "Hotel America," to conform with the chain, how about "Hotel Amerique?"

★ ★ ★
OFF THE CUFF—Celtic club's all set to hail St. Pat, 5 p. m. Sunday, in Delmonico's Cornstalk Room; Gaelic-speaking attorney Dermot McGlinchey will spellbind the assembly, Irish songs will be sung by tenor Arthur Gordon-Mason, and bagpipers will pipe Irish jig tunes — all before and during dinner . . . Hunch bettors guessed wrong when they played "That's P.J." at the Fair Grounds the other day because the movie "P.J.," coincidentally, is playing at the Joy theater; nag ran out of the money . . . Fellow I know hailed a taxicab Sunday and was somewhat astounded to find Perry Raymond Russo, celebrated witness of That Case, driving it . . . Spring Fiesta is having a book review and tea, today, in the Presbytere, to warm up for the big event, come April 19.

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HITHER AND YON—Archbishop Philip Hannan, Bishop Harold Perry, the Clayton Nairnes, the Lionel Favrets, Anne Wolbrette Mayer and Muriel Francis Bogner in the packed Auditorium applauding Debria Brown's performance in Xavier U's production of "Carmen." (Muriel hailed Miss Brown as "the greatest 'Carmen' I've ever seen.") . . . Dan Fountain, back from a weekend in Biloxi, reporting Mary Mahoney, the Coast's sensational fashion faddist, greeting patrons of her French House restaurant in a broad-striped gown of black, silver, and plum-hued sequins worn with chandelier earrings . . . Mr. and Mrs. Walter Moses, the Niles Faulks and the Ford Grahams among the many impressed by the splendor of the interiors at the grand opening of Joe Morrow and Jim Elzey's plush showroom on Howard ave. . . Rickey George "receiving" at Montelepre hosp. after surgery.

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SHOW BIZ—Rep Theater's "Tartuffe" in rhyming couplets made quite a hit with first-nighters at the public performance; one listened more carefully to the lines to catch the expected poetry in the delivery; Dillon Evans romped professionally through the title role as if he were having more fun than anybody in the theater; and he was ably supported by Herb Nelson, Don Perkins, Barbara McMahon, Rudy Willrich, Peter Stuart and Tom Tammi; the French comedy is more broad than subtle but delightful to behold. Famed Boston critic Elliot Norton, of the The Record-American, was among those present for the opener . . . Loyola student-musicians are excited about playing some of the NBC arrangements Skitch Henderson is bringing down with him when he conducts them in concert, April 22, in the Field House.