Both of tonight's Bette Davis films were made in 1933, consecutively, and in the order of our screening. Coming after films like "The Dark Horse," "Cabin in the Cotton," "Three on a Match" and "20,000 Years in Sing Sing" they illustrate an incredible blindness on the part of Warner Brothers to the kind of (proven) talent that they had under contract. Moreover, they were followed by a string of programmers which - despite their often considerable merits as individual films - continued to waste Davis quite shamefully. It is probably because of this, and because it is right in the middle of the group, that Miss Davis constantly refers to "Parachute Jumper" with some scorn.

**PARACHUTE JUMPER** (Warner Brothers, 1933) Directed by Alfred E. Green
Screenplay by John Francis Larkin from a story "Some Call It Love" by Rian James; Camera, James Van Trees; 6 reels

This is the kind of film where one wonders if someone thought of the title first and then sifted through stock-piled scripts to find a story to match, or if the title was added at the very last minute in order to make the film sound a little different! Either way, except for one incident, the film has virtually no connection with its title. In fact, it rambles along quietly and efficiently for quite a while, trying on various plot twists for size, having no cohesive story-line other than a generally background of the depression, and then quite unexpectedly develops to become a gangster film, with Dames in a size role, as well as a nice girl. It's all so short and brisk and pleoded by interesting faces that it hardly matters that one never knows quite how to take it. The dialogue is peppery, and the action fast, with some extremely well done miniatures in the plane crash-up scenes. Claire Dodd gives another of her marvellously attractive society-bitch-nymphomaniacal studies, and it's a pity indeed that she was so typed in this kind of role that she didn't get much of a chance to be a nice girl (and thereby get into more footage) till later on. in the 30's, when some of that youthful fire had simmered down a little. Davis is certainly somewhat wasted, but she gives the role more depth than perhaps it deserves, and her Southern accent, whether authentic or not, is a delight to listen to.

**"THE WORKING MAN"** (Warner Brothers, 1933) Directed by John Adolphi; screenplay by Maude T. Howell and Charles Kenyon from the story "The Adopted Father" by Edgar Franklin. Camera, Col Polito; 7 reels

The exact opposite of "Parachute Jumper" structurally, "The Working Man" - like all George Arliss vehicles - knows exactly where it is going, and goes about it very methodically. So much so that when its allotted running time is up, it just rings down the curtain without any attempt to build to a climax, on the theory (probably justified) that Arliss followers just wanted good acting and a solid story. It is one of the few actors who can get away with a sentimental scene such as the one where he looks at his former sweetheart's portrait while the orchestra is sawing away at "Just a Song at Twilight". (Too late, one wishes for a collaboration between Arliss and John Ford, whose sentimentalities might have meshed rather well in a freaky way). As if to compensate for this musical sentimentality, the orchestrations also make considerable use of "Young and Healthy" from the same year's "42nd Street". Davis, back again with Arliss (with whom she worked well in "The Man Who Played God") is given a rather better (if still conventional) role this time and once more is a pleasure to look at and listen to. The supporting cast offers a number of old friends, ranging from Edward van Sloan (taking a break from vampire and mummy hunting) to Warner's stock weak-chinned purveyor of oily business chisellers, Gordon Westcott.