reading his plays.

I'm constantly distracted by meaningless ranting and baggy tights. Also I have a terrible time understanding what is going on. I try, God knows, but unless I do my homework I am drifting and yawning and my stomach is rumbling as if I were in church. The one exception was a performance of ception was a performance of "King Lear" several years ago at the Ashland, Ore., Shake-spearean Festival.

TO ADMIT THIS shortcom ing in Stratford would be like saying you're a Republican at a Democratic convention. So I

a Democratic convention. So I tried to keep my eyes open and my big mouth shut.

Last night Baxter and I, plus several London imports, attended a dress rehearsal of "Henry IV, Part II" by the Royal Shakespeare Company in what is unquestionably the most hideous building in all of Britain—the Memorial Theter here in Stratford, an enormous pile of red brick with a stainless-steel box office and an artificial fountain in the foyer.

It looked as if it belonged on the UCLA campus. The fact that it was built by U.S. funds is not a happy thought.

"DUE TO AN enormous ig-nerance of the way Shake-speare is best played, the arch-itect separated the audience from the actors by a prosceni-um arch in a manner that the Elizabethans would never have tolerated.

Existe thans would never have tolerated.

Ever since it opened, the Stratford theater has been trying to cover up the error by the construction of ramps and forestages over the orchestra pit. And although they are guarded in their statements. I am sure everything is blamed on too much American money.

The orchestra seats have nameplates of famous Shakespearean performers. I sat upon the plush law of "Sara Siddons" and thoughts of the dear lady, long since gone, enabled me to face the problems of Henry IV with considerably more assurance than had I been sitting elsewhere.

"Henry IV, Part II" is not the most interesting of Shakespeare's plays, but it does provide the actor who plays Falstaff with a fine opportunity to prance. In this case it was Hugh Griffith, whose role of the father-in-law in the movie, "Tom Jones," won him an Oscar nomination.

The acting and the direction might have been accept.

car nomination.

The acting and the direction might have been acceptable, if not exceptional, were it not for the dreary stagecraft which cast a pall on everything. The production was designed by John Bury, whose mame carries a subtle suggestion for the future disposition of the settings.

AT THE intermission Pay

AT THE intermission, Bax-ter broke the ice with the statement: "Of course, I don't like to see Shakespeare per-formed. Long ago I learned to stay away from productions of his plays."

It seemed incredible that

It seemed incredible that America's number one Shake-speare salesman didn't like

his product.

"Oh no," said Baxter, "I think that he is meant to be read and savored. I can produce a better version of 'Hamlet,' in my own mind than I can ever see played on the stage. I know all the characters. I know the stage directions. I can use my imagination to build the castle at Elsipore that is far more realistic than any on the stage.

"Shakespeare wrote 'Ham-

"Shakespeare wrote 'Ham-

Santa Fe Street Work Authorized

Improvement of parts of Santa Fe Avenue north of Del Amo Boulevard in the Dominguez area has been authorized by the Board of Supervisors. An appropriation of \$5,200 was voted Tuesday.

The project includes widening of the street to join recently installed curbs and gutters. A 20-foot section of existing street will be repaved.

School Bus Accident Rate Termed Good

California's 9,343 school ards," he said. "Patrol officers A total of 1,763 motorists buses operated an estimated also conduct written and be-were cited for passing a stop-

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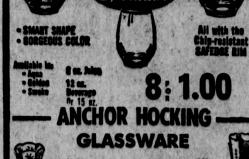
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