

Presentation of Arsenic and Old Lace

The University Dramatic Society undertook a very difficult task in presenting Joseph Kesselring's farce, *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Contrary to common belief, there is no more difficult type of play for amateurs than the sophisticated comedy. Such a play calls for pace and polish, and these are qualities which can be adequately developed only by professional training and months of concentrated rehearsals. Necessarily lacking these things, the university players deserve to be congratulated on the fine effort they made to compensate for them by enthusiasm and verve. Professor and Mrs. Smet-hurst did wonders with the cast in the limited time at their disposal.

The play opened (on the first night at least) somewhat slowly and hesitantly; it picked up pace as it proceeded, but it never attained the machine-gun rapidity which it demands. Cues were not picked up quickly enough, and there were too many awkward pauses. Much of this was no doubt attributable to opening night "nerves". The grouping, however, was almost always expertly arranged, and the two sisters in particular showed a good sense of stage position. Most of the players spoke their lines clearly and distinctly, though there were occasions when some of them seemed to forget that they were really addressing the audience rather than their fellow actors.

Charlotte VanDine, as "Abby", gave an outstanding performance; she gave one the impression of complete self-assurance arising from a mastery of her lines and a comprehension of the total fabric of the play. Margaret Vince, as the other sister, impressed one by her constant alertness to the demands of the part; she rarely fell out of character and managed her stage business very effectively. The two sisters maintained the illusion of their age and character more successfully than the other characters, partly because their make-up was more convincing.

Make-up would have helped Russell Alcorn to carry off the role of "Dr. Harper" more successfully; he managed his voice and gestures

ROUGE ET NOIR

Well, all you members of the campus 600, it was a long, long wait for the Nov. 22nd issue of this rag, wasn't it. It would appear that either the editor had too good a time at the formal or that it was getting so close to exams, or—well any way, there must have been some reason for it besides that old line about the linotype operator. Why do Brunswick editors always use that worn out excuse?

The moochers extraordinary, J. Baxter and J. Lawrence were hard at work at the formal. Someday they will get tired of that and give the girls a break, as well as the guys.

It has been whispered in my ear that there was an added attraction at Choral Club last Sunday. At least the men in the bass section thought Patty Saunders had something else besides a voice. I must get my last season's vocal chords out and give them a try. I always did like singing in mixed choruses.

Stu Barter seemed to be able to keep Hotpants under control at the big dance. And he doesn't seem to

well, but his face was altogether too youthful. Cam Macmillan made an energetic "Teddy Brewster", though he too would have been better with a few lines in his face and a tinge of gray in his hair. The young lovers, played by Dorothy Johns and Joe Margolian, had good looks and gusto to commend them, and provided one of the highlights of the evening when Joe accidentally caused Dorothy to trip over his suitcase. Dorothy deserves praise for the way in which she managed to regain her composure after the unforeseen tumble.

Vernon Acker, as "Mr. Gibbs", gave a short performance of very high quality; his scene came close to stealing the show in this reviewer's opinion. Douglas Rice and Stuart Davis made a good pair of crooks. Both managed their voice and accents cleverly, and were consciously a part of the play at all moments. Rice was admirably dressed for the role, in a cheap tight-fitting brown suit and loud green shirt; unfortunately Davis appeared in immaculate Sunday best, and thus looked much more like a successful city

specialist than a broken-down underworld hack (or should that last word be "hacker"?). Cyril Buchanan, as "Mr. Witherspoon", looked the part to perfection, and evoked gales of laughter every time he opened his mouth. J. V. Clark, John Gandy, Murray Meltzer, and Jim Macmillan gave yeoman service as policemen.

Certainly the play gave us all an enjoyable evening. But I feel obliged to return to my original point. Should not serious consideration be given to breaking-away from the current tradition of presenting Broadway comedies? There are many great plays both of past and present which would be no more—and I believe less—difficult than the Broadway fare, and which would more richly repay the labour expended. In Professor and Mrs. Smet-hurst we have directors equipped to produce important plays—why not give them a chance?

Thorns to those individuals who sit in the back row at S. R. C. meetings and amuse themselves by talking for the sake of talking. And paper roses to Ted for some good attempts and some very silly ones, too.

Roses to all the cast and staff in the Dramatic Society for a wonderful job and in appreciation for the work and time that went into the production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

And what do I hear about the Residence boys having an Indian war dance around the flagpole complete with council fire and war-whoops. Next time have it at a respectable hour so more people can enjoy it.

Merry Christmas to all the gang from me and the kids.

Snoop and all the Little Snoopers.

Canadian Campus

(Continued from page one) lem from ice cream for a prom, to buses for the football game in Fredericton.

The college meeting place at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish is reported to be a combination soda-fountain, confectionery store and magazine rack. "It is small but Leo's in late afternoon greets more people than any other spot in town. Leo's is the meeting place of students living on and off the campus and has by its 'beyondful' milk-shakes tempted many a would-be scientist to cut a lab short."

The campus rendezvous is uniformly small and overcrowded, but the eds and co-eds seem to like it that way and college spirit flourishes despite the fact that six crowd into booths meant for four. "Boomers" favourite restaurant of University of Western Ontario, is a case in point.

"Boomers, one of the oldest restaurants in the city, is divided into two sections: a long counter at the front usually lined up three deep with drooling students, and a dim smoky back room lined with tables and more students. . . . Tables meant for two support six cokes, and six-man tables manage to crowd in twelve students. It has been a tradition to 'Meet me at Boomers' for as long as anyone at Western can remember."

Fall Formal

(Continued from page one) revival of Supper Dances. Yes cake, cookies and icecream were served to each couple. The couples waltzed over the spacious gym floor to the sweet strains of the Merry Makers.

The introduction of wall lamps did away with the necessity of having overhead lights. Another unique feature was the new orchestra stand. It consisted of three tiers with the drummer sitting on the top rolling out the rhythm.

The receiving line consisted of President and Mrs. Gregg, Professor and Mrs. Stewart, Professor and Mrs. Pacey, Ted Owens, Blanche Law and Edith MacFarlane.

The Social Committee under the President Edith MacFarlane consisted of Pat Ritchie, Ruth Cummings, Pat Wright, Gery Merritt, Al Cameron, John Weyman and George Robinson. The members have spent a great deal of time preparing for the Fall Formal and their effort has certainly been worth while.

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