

THE GAZETTE VISITS . . .

THE GLEE CLUB

by SHERBURNE McCURDY

Many of the people who attend the Glee Club shows from year to year are probably unaware of what makes it tick. In order to clarify matters a bit the Gazette paid a visit to the Glee Club one day last week in search of information. It seems that that noble institution has experienced a great revival, a revival that really began in the college year 1945-46. Harry Zappler was President that year; and with the support of Mary Lou Christie, Leah Tremaine, and Jim Bell, began to get things rolling. Chief performances that year were "The Merchant of Venice" and "You Can't Take it With You". It was in the latter that Gene Machum made her debut and charmed the audience with her splendid performance.

Last year Gordon Hart took over the Presidency, and the Glee Club continued its revival, with Ken Dauphinee as Manager, and Mary Lou and Leah in their old positions giving the same strong support. "Twelfth Night" and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" were the two major plays; and to round out the year's work Geoffrey Payzant produced and presented Gilbert and Sullivan's "Trial By Jury". This was the first performance of its kind at Dalhousie, and it was most successful.

Frank Flemming, this year's President, is carrying on the tradition of the previous two years, and is providing skilled leadership to an energetic group of members. With an active membership of four hundred, Frank's job is no snap. It might be noted that the Glee Club is always ready to enlist the aid of new members. With a student body of over 1700 the already large Glee Club Membership could easily be enlarged.

"As You Like It" appeared last fall, and although the attendance on the two public nights was not too encouraging, it appears that the performance was enjoyed by those who did attend.

Those now working hard on "Dear Ruth" and "H.M.S. Pinafore" hope for a better attendance when these are presented next month.

A large share of the burden of the Glee Club is carried by the little-known and never-publicized departments behind the scenes. These include the Stage Crew, the Costume and makeup Departments.

Ukie Velcoff has given freely of his time and effort as head of the stage crew this year. Along with Bas Bloomer, Dave Jamieson, Bill Menchions and others, Ukie has handled his difficult assignment very well, and deserves a lot of credit. Frank Bursey, the Business Manager, comes in for high praise from the President. In addition to his tasks as manager, he is always ready to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever it is needed. The Costume Manager, Leah Tremaine, is faced with a thorny problem getting outfits for the large cast in "Pinafore", and reports the need of two U. S. Army Air-Force uniforms for "Dear Ruth". We feel quite confident that Leah, with able assistance from Fran Jubien, Katy MacKinnon, Connie Conrod and Lib Doull, will provide the necessary trimmings for both shows. Nancy Wilson of the make-up group will not meet her problems until dress rehearsal time rolls around. After that she and her busy assistants will have to work overtime.

The two departments responsible for the production and presentation of our shows are the Music and Dramatics Departments. Geoffrey Payzant is chairman of the former, and is the director of the chorus. Frank Padmore, with the able assistance of Noel Hamilton, directs the Concert Orchestra. Frank reports that the Orchestra is doing very nicely, and looks for a good

EDITOR'S NOTE

The series of articles on this page are the result of a fairly comprehensive survey made by Sherburne McCurdy, Associate Features Editor, whose work in the Glee Club has made him familiar with its many ramifications of which the average student is totally unaware. The fact that more work is done off the stage than on, for instance, is not generally known. The Gazette offers these articles to the general reader with a reminder that the Glee Club, from the point of view of the student, is one of the University's greatest assets, and that in no other Society can a student's time be more profitably employed—except, of course, in the Gazette.

The following appeared in the St. Mary's Journal of Dec. 19th. We reproduce it as a type of writing not seen much in these parts, and in which we all take an interest, if somewhat detached...ED.

"Halifax, notoriously barren of legitimate theatrical productions, is once a year enriched by the Saint Mary's College Playshop. This year, the organization further elevated its reputation with the revival of "Here Comes Mr. Jordan", a three-act comedy by Harry Segall on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. Directed by Rev. H. J. Labelle, S. J., with keen dramatic insight, and acted with vivid interpretation the play flitted from solemn realism to witty hilarity, from tender emotion to almost incredible fantasy, and held the audience all the way.

"It is only occasionally that a decade or even century produces such an histrionic phenomenon as the recent Playshop theatrical. Novices to the art performed like old troupers, set men came through like veteran architects, and production manager Tom Murphy's showing would credit Samuel Goldwyn. A theatrical involving nearly every device of dialogue and staging in the playwright's repertoire was set before the footlights with eminent success—truly a great and appropriate compliment to an enthusiastic and talented group."

LIFE

Show me the man who said, "Life is a Song." He was right, life is a song, a bitter melody which goes on from day to day, monotonous in its abject sameness. A song which starts out hopefully, rises into a full-throated crescendo only to sink again into dull, heavy, meaningless chords, which in turn are inconsistent and soon merge into a series of dischords which are seemingly incessant. Yes, life is a song, but it is a certain type of song. It is a loathsome dirge.

Life is like a long dark street, having but few lights, none of them very bright. The weary traveller's eyes light up with a new expectancy as he perceives the first of the dim shops, and his heart grows stronger as he plods painfully along, dragging

performance in "Pinafore". The position of Dramatics Manager is not officially filled, the management of that Department being a function of the Executive of the Society. H. Leslie Pigot has become a familiar figure around the Glee Club the last few years, and as director of the main dramatic performances has done his work thoroughly and well. He reports that "Dear Ruth", now being rehearsed, is coming along very nicely, despite their late start.

To an outsider it would appear that Glee Club activities are proceeding quite smoothly. Let us wish them every success in their work.

his weary body towards food and drink, and afterwards, rest. With his last surge of strength, he places his foot upon the step and looks about, joyful triumph erasing the grim lines from his forehead. But what is this? His expression has changed to a puzzled frown. A moment later the light

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DEAR RUTH

by SHERBURNE McCURDY

When a young bobby-soxer writes pulsating letters to a lonely airman overseas and uses her pretty sister's name and photograph as bait, things are liable to happen. Things are just beginning to happen as the curtain rises in "Dear Ruth". Ruth Wilkins, whose part will be played by Marg Goode in the Glee Club show, is found to be engaged to a rather foppish civvy. Miriam, Ruth's younger sister and a vociferous advocate of total war, ducks out of the house just before handsome Bill Seawright, just back from Italy, walks in on Judge and Mrs. Wilkins. To their surprise he begins to talk volubly about their charming daughter. Apparently he and Ruth have carried on a lively correspondence, of which the senior Wilkins were quite unaware. The fun starts when it is discovered that Ruth is as much in the dark as her parents. From there on it is mad-house; and the play should draw large crowds on each of its three performances. Art Hartling as Judge Wilkins will find ample scope for his dramatic prowess, and Lorna Inness as his partner-in-crime has an interesting role. John Trim, honoured and respected member of the Gazette staff, will get a chance to practise up on that line of his, as Bill Seawright, the devastating flier. John Pauley, as Albert, has miraculously changed from a great brawny wrestler to a rather effeminate creature whose greatest weakness is his cluelessness. Patty McKinnon has been selected to play the role of the romantic Miriam, and we have no doubt that her great experience in such affairs will enable her to play it realistically. We can just see Patty dreamily quoting Shelley! Connie Conrod, as Martha, will have to go through a marriage ceremony, but we are informed by local experts that Art Hartling's ceremony cannot be made binding. Wonder if Connie was relieved when she heard that? Edith Hills will be Dora, the maid, and is probably finding her lines a trifle different from the poetic words of Celia in "As You Like It". Marg Good says she is enjoying her part very much, and says she feels much more at home as Ruth than she did in the somewhat notorious role of Lorraine last year. We all know she

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H.M.S. PINAFORE

by SHERBURNE McCURDY

If anyone sees a dismantled ship foundering on the Gymnasium steps, he will know that H. M. S. Pinafore has been deserted by her gallant crew. We don't anticipate such a calamity, however. Rather we expect to see her make her majestic way across the Gym stage in full sail on the nights of February 26th, 27th, and 28th.

Geoff Payzant says he thoroughly enjoys directing the show, and hopes for a good performance. No doubt he will be glad when it is all over. In fact he was heard to say the other day that he could hardly wait till spring. That could mean one of three things - he wants to get "Pinafore" over with; or he wants his B. A.; or perhaps he has more interesting matters to deal with. In any case "Pinafore's" accompanist seems to concur with Geoff in his yearning for spring.

Whatever Geoff's outside interest may be, his enthusiasm for "Pinafore" hasn't waned. They have now reached the stage where orchestra and chorus rehearse together. Eileen Cantwell says she is enjoying her role of Josephine very much, but admits it requires a lot of work. Julie Kaplan is enjoying the role of Buttercup hugely and says that she wouldn't have missed it for anything. Lloyd Soper, who last year established himself as a capable Gilbert and Sullivan performer when he took the role of Judge in Trial by Jury expects to enhance his reputation this year. As Sir Joseph Porter K. C.B. and ruler of the Queen's Navy he is afforded ample scope for his talents. Maynard Taylor finds himself once more in the familiar role of hero. His efforts are more successful this year than last. Alen Wilson takes the leading bass role, that of Captain Corcoran, a somewhat lofty gentleman who at the end of the piece finds him-

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