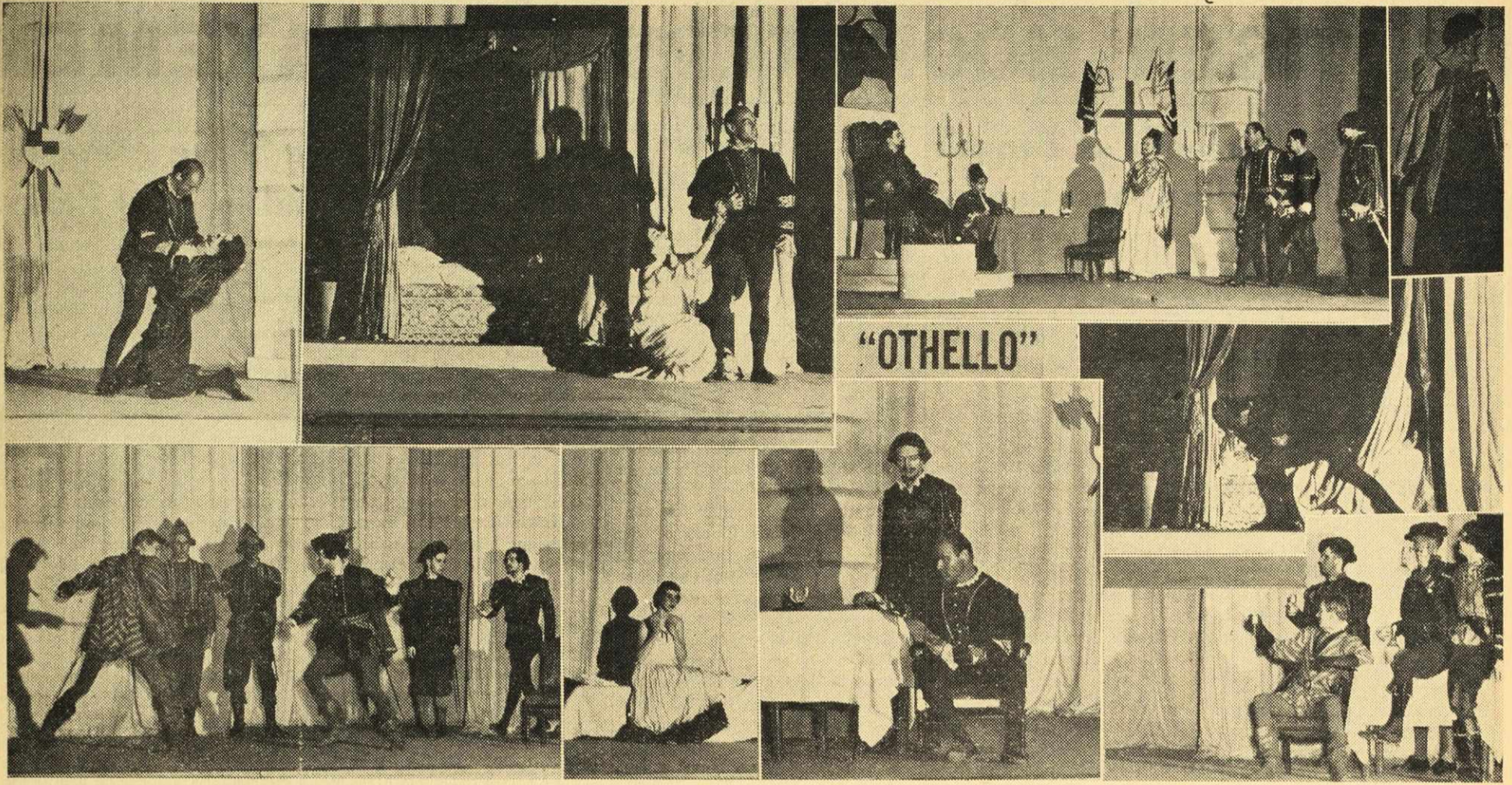


# Scenes From "Othello"



## "Othello" Is Glee Club's Finest To Date; Tracy And Hartling Star

During the past few years, the Glee Club has given Dalhousie a fine series of Shakespearean plays. The "Merchant of Venice" "As You Like It", and "Twelfth Night", were the three earliest plays. Last year the Glee Club turned to tragedy in their production of "Macbeth", and in spite of the many obstacles involved in the presentation of tragedy for the first time, they gave a good performance. This year's production of "Othello", however, marks the high water mark in the Glee Club's Shakespeare series.

In the production of amateur drama, it is always difficult to maintain a consistent level of good acting throughout. In "Othello", our dramatic group came as close to this ideal as is possible under existing conditions at Dalhousie. Last year's production of "Macbeth" hinged too much upon the performance of two or three persons, creating a wide gap between them and the minor players. This year we had three groups of actors, supported by bit players who formed a fitting background for the major players. In addition, all these plays of Shakspeare have been produced under the excellent direction of H. Leslie Pigot, who can surely feel satisfied with this year's performance.

In a sense, Mr. Pigot has built up a small stock company on this campus, with several old hands who can always be relied upon, with new talent making itself apparent each year.

Now let's take a look at individual performances, in terms of the three groups I have mentioned above. The two most outstanding roles were those of George Tracy as Iago, and Arthur Hartling as Othello.

Most of the play hinged upon the plot of Iago; its planning, its development, and its final results. Tracy turned in an excellent role here. Sometimes sinister, sometimes consoler, at other times the gay reveller, Tracy was at all times subtle and understanding in the reading of his part. With so much variation of interpretation demanded of him, Tracy could have hardly over-acted; the play, in one sense was his until the last act. His stage deportment was good, and above all, relaxed. However, perhaps more important were his voice and diction. Tracy's inflection and phrasing revealed one who understood what to do with Shakespeare's poetry in this play. It is partially through the mind of the scheming Iago that the play-goer is forced to accept the almost incongruous reactions of Othello to Iago's suggestions. Once the listener has accepted this, he has admitted the success of Iago as an actor, and has prepared himself to follow Othello in the development of the tragedy. Tracy accomplished this effect with a skill that never once flagged during performance; and it is still more to his credit when one realizes that this is only his second performance in Shakespeare.

Closely allied in importance and quality was the performance of Art Hartling as Othello. I feel that Hartling's performance as Othello was much more convincing than his role as Macbeth last year, Othello's character is of an open, almost simple nature, at times naive in his reaction to the schem-

ing going on about him. His physical strength is enormous, but his mental strength is not enough to offset the physical. As a result, Othello can give vent to his emotions in a manner almost unreasonable compared to Macbeth or Hamlet. In the light of these comments, Hartling's role was extremely convincing; he has a striking stage presence and manner, and possesses a magnificently full and resonant voice, the deeper tones of which are a delight to the ear. Perhaps the only objection to Hartling's performance can be levelled against an occasionally over-emotional scene, when his voice rose in volume and intensity; the result was often an enormous torrent of sound, which could not be understood by the listener. However, this criticism is minor in relation to the generally excellent reading he gave his part. It must be remembered that in such a taxing role, complete control of one's mind in the midst of so much emotional conflict is not an easy thing to accomplish. In a sense, Hartling's emotional outbursts can be justified when compared to the coldly calculated reasoning of Iago; the contrast is striking and complete.

The second important group of players turned in very good performances too. Cassio was played by Robin MacNeil; Desdemona by Willa Jean Seeley, Emelia by Holly Fleming.

Cassio was well played by Robin MacNeil, a newcomer to the Glee Club. As a rather light-hearted and irresponsible young courtier MacNeil gave the part the dash and youthful vigour it required. Only after the full effects of the tragedy unfold does Cassio become a man of weight. MacNeil's clear diction and his easy agility on stage at all times gave added force to his role.

Willa Jean Seeley, as Desdemona, is another newcomer to Dalhousie. Willa, (Widge) was admirably cast as Desdemona. She gave the part the simple and innocent character it required. Desdemona was the

victim of her own innocence, the innocence of a child. Her reactions to the slander thrown upon her were those of childish wonder, simple amazement and finally resigned grief to her fate. Willa's easy and unaffected stage appearance and manner only added to the simple beauty of her role; her voice was small but warm in tone, and helped create that air of complete incomprehensibility that enveloped her mind so much. Willa's voice was at times too small to be heard throughout the gymnasium, especially when she spoke upstage, and her voice became lost in the wings.

Holly Fleming, last year's Lady MacBeth, played Emelia very well. Holly has fine stage deportment, and a voice that can be heard distinctly at all times. Holly had the tendency to over-act slightly during the last act, and used her vocal powers a little too strongly, with the result that her voice sounded hard and blurred. Aside from this, Holly acted with ease and agility, especially in the ironically humorous scene where she and Iago tussle over the handkerchief, visual symbol of the tragedy to follow.

John Roberts, another newcomer, played Roderigo, who unfortunately for him, was in love with Desdemona, and like her, paid for his innocence with his life. John took over the part only two weeks before the performance, when it was vacated by the former owner of the part, John presented an understanding interpretation of the role. The only hitch was in his stage technique, which was not as smooth as some of the other players. However, in terms of the short time available to him for work, Roderigo did extremely well.

The third group of players all had smaller roles, but were all played quite well, with certain limitations.

Brabantio, father to Desdemona, was well acted by Murray MacInnis, who has a good strong voice, a fine appearance, and a relaxed stage manner. The Duke of Venice,

## LAW NOTES

By ALF HARRIS

The annual Osgood Hall-Dal debating tryouts were held Wednesday. From the eight contestants two were chosen to represent Ye Olde Lawe Schoole. The debating manager went before the Students' Council last week and with the co-operation of the Sodales president Ian was able to get a reallocation of \$50 to help finance the trip. The remainder of the money required for the trip will be supplied by our Law Society and donations.

In the sports field our teams came across with a victory in the Inter-fac Basketball league by defeating Pine Hill 26-18. The game was close and the score was tied at 18-18 up till the last five minutes, then Law rushed and sank one basket after another to win the contest. Keep it up boys.

In hockey Law plays Pine Hill February 13th at 7 p.m., and Pharmacy February 14th at 8 p.m. By the way everyone is waiting for that Law-Varsity game, so get in shape.

February 18 is the day set for the Law party. The party will be held out at Mulgrave Park. Party chairman Grant says that it will be a real doo so be sure to attend. The committee will meet Monday to finalize plans. It is estimated that the event will cost in the neighborhood of a dollar a couple.

Mock Parliament date has been set for Friday, February 10. The party leaders are at work and may be seen nearly any time in the corridors or in the common room instructing their followers on bills or explaining points of procedure. We are fortunate to have Mr. L. W. Fraser, K.C. as our speaker for another year. Mr. Fraser has shown a keen interest to our aid for this event.

Looking at some of the newspapers from other colleges I see where Mr. George Drew attended the Mock Parliament at Queens. Mr. M. J. Caldwell spoke for the C.C.F. at the model parliament of one of the western universities. Wonder if something similar will be tried here?

## Letter to the Editor (continued)

this year's Pharos last fall. Moreira knew of the danger in waiting and told me so—there is no reason why the Council should have delayed. If necessary, they could have had a temporary editor appointed to get graduate and undergrad pictures begun and so forth. Then, when the request came through to explain what had been done re the '50 Pharos they could have pointed

to work completed. With work in the stage it should have been in, there would have been little danger of action by the college authorities to drop the compulsory levy. But the Council procrastinated and some are seeking to avoid blame and place the burden on me. Enough said.

RONALD CALDWELL,  
ex-editor

played by Dave Janigan, presented quite a strike and regal figure in appearance on stage. Dave's most serious lack was a clear voice. He had lots of volume, but the voice was a trifle thick, and when he spoke upstage, his voice, like Desdemona's was lost in the wings.

Margot MacLaren played the part of Bianca, mistress to Cassio. Here we had the only serious mis-cast of the play, but once again, we had a girl who put all she had into the part, and one must admit that she did look very pert and coquettish, but not hard and worldly enough.

Newcombe Bloomer, as Montano and Jim Cruikshanks, as Lodovico, turned in competent performances. It is too bad that Cruikshanks had never tried out before for drama work. He has a strong appearance, and a good voice, although untrained, with the result that many of his lines fell flat. However, he has a voice, which, if trained, could make him a valuable asset in many character roles.

The stage settings and lighting features for "Othello" were the

finest yet seen on the Dalhousie stage. The combination of tremendously high sets, new, neutral colored curtains, and superb off-stage lighting gave the stage a vastness of area never seen before, and beautiful settings to fit every mood of the play. The stage crew this year was handled by Albert MacMahon, while much of the lighting was created by Ray Fiske and his crew. To these two groups, plus the make-up and costume department, much credit is due, for they did much to make the play as satisfying as it was to the audience.

Of all the Shakespearean plays produced here at Dalhousie, "Othello" was given the most smooth and balance performance. The chain of thought set in motion by Iago was given continuous flow, without some of the roughness that broke the unity of other plays. This is not to retract the faults that existed in this play, but rather to say that the general impression of this play as a whole has been rewarding beyond the hopes of many persons on the campus.