

CRITIC REVIEWS GLEE CLUB PRESENTATION

Patience Pleases Public

by LAURIE ALLISON

The return of common sense and intelligence to the stage and other literary arts can be seen quite readily in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. In *Patience*, Oscar Wilde is the butt of Gilbert's ridicule, and with Wilde, the whole aesthetic movement is satirically held up to shame. Satire is essentially pointing out what is wrong with life. Some men may rage, others may cry over man's folly, but the satirist chooses to laugh, and his very laughter is a knife in the side of his victim. In *Patience*, Gilbert and Sullivan changed something ridiculous into something super-ridiculous, sweeping the performer and listener alike into a world of delightful fantasy.

Perhaps the greatest task of the producers of *Patience* in our own day is to present fresh, balanced and sensible performance without letting it fall into the realm of mere farce. That the Dalhousie Glee Club successfully achieved this standard is beyond doubt, and as a result *Patience* is certainly the finest of the three Gilbert and Sullivan operettas we have seen at Dalhousie.

In this production, three of the soloists turned in superior performances; Brian Edwards as Bunthorne, Roy DeYoung as Colonel Calverly, and Eileen Cantwell as *Patience*.

Edwards, a newcomer to the Glee Club, filled the role of Bunthorne extremely well. His tenor voice, though soft, warm and true, was rather weak in volume. However, what it lacked in volume he made up for in his fine acting. His confidence and ease made it simple for him to present a highly sentimental interpretation of his part, from his first entrance with the "lovesick maidens" until his final undoing in the finale.

Roy DeYoung's singing of the role of Colonel Calverly was also on a level with that of Brian Edwards. His strong and pleasing bass, coupled with fine stage presence and superb diction were especially worthy of high praise. However, Roy DeYoung's supreme moment came in the pantomime scene in the second act. Whether he realizes it or not, he appears to be a born mimic, whose expressions, actions and vocal inflections leave little to be desired.

Patience, the centre of Bunthorne's attention, was sung by Eileen Cantwell, the owner of the finest voice in the operetta. Her acting throughout was quite competent, but one felt that at times the village milkmaid was a trifle too sophisticated. She too, was a dual character, and this air of sophistication appeared only when her part demanded the coquette. On the whole, Eileen Cantwell's *Patience* was of high calibre, a role of beauty and simplicity contrasted at times by a certain wiliness that placed her otherwise naive interpretation in fine perspective.

Lady Jane, whose charms were ripe and on the wane, was played, and almost overplayed by Julia Kaplan. The combination of age and the lack of male companionship demanded from her a reading that bordered on desparation. Jane had to get a man before the curtain fell. In the light of this Julia Kaplan was forced to play heavily upon sentiment in all her scenes, and at times one feared that she would overstep the bounds of sentimental satire and give us melodrama. However, she always stopped just short of this danger. While her pitch tended to waver at more than one point, her heartfelt devotion to her part always gave her performance the flavour it needed.

Mr. Bunthorne's rival, Archibald Grosvenor, completed the clash of two poetic temperaments. One cannot live without admiration, while the other must put up with it. Bob Johnstone played the part of Grosvenor, and when one realizes that this is the first time that he has appeared on a stage, much credit is due him. Though his voice and actions were not the equal of Bunthorne's, the contrast fitted well. Aware of his beauty, he is too disillusioned to do anything really active about it. Although he craves to be commonplace, he reveals to a certain degree in his martyrdom until he finally makes the change to a "matter of fact young man".

Major Murgatroyd, played adequately by William (Gibbie) Reid, completed the trio of Dragoon officers. Though he had not the vocal qualities of the other two men, his military appearance was quite convincing, and his acting was competent throughout. Both Pearson and Reid overemphasized their painful writhings a little too much, but on the final night this pain was surely more real than apparent.

The Ladies Angela, Ella and Saphir sang of the love of all the maidens for their poets. Of this trio, Anne Thexton as Lady Angela put in the finest performance. Although she sang with a warm and expressive mezzo-soprano voice, Angela displayed a rather marked tremolo that stood out too much, especially in the recitatives. However, her stage movements were so graceful, and her inflections of speech so "aesthetic" that one can safely say that her role was that of a minor part done in good taste. The same qualities were noticeable in Ella, played by Beryl Farmer, although to a lesser degree than in Angela. The part of Saphir, played by Phyllis Scott, as a solo part was the least successful in the whole operetta. Her voice was not always true, and one felt that she could have done much more with many of the punch lines she had. Her actions were a mere series of abrupt poses rather than a series of poses cast against and part of a unified plot.

Last but not least was the "walk-on" part of Arthur Hartling playing Bunthorne's solicitor. He appeared at the crucial moment when Bunthorne announced that he would have his solicitor raffle him off to see which of the ladies he would marry. To say that the legendary Hartling was a success is mere understatement.

A point worth noticing this year was the use of separate and smaller choruses on stage. Because of their reduced sizes, their entrances, stage deportment and exists were much smoother than similar scenes in the other operettas. While smaller in number, the quality and volume of musical sound was as great as when the stage sagged with choruses. There were moments in the first act when several maidens' facial expressions of rapture flattened out to the point of blankness. Despite this, the whole impression of the chorus was not spoiled. The costumes blended well with one another and with the stage settings, which is a sign of good stage placing. At times the precision of the Dragoons went awry, but their earnest concern

over their future with the ladies can forgive this sort of ill-timing. The use of the concert orchestra this year is a lesson in the art of subordinating a fairly large group of players to the point where it is mere accompaniment to a larger action. This was achieved more successfully in this performance of *Patience* than in last year's operetta *Pinafore*. The balance of the orchestra has improved and its pitch was generally even. The few uneven moments stemmed largely from the woodwind and brass sections, but the spirit with which they played cancelled out many rough passages. When a listener can watch and hear a stage action for a series of scenes without being consciously aware that the orchestra is in the pit, it is then that the

To The Editor

Editor of the Gazette
Dear Sir:

Since I seem to be the centre of all discussion regarding the issue of the Students' Council granting \$50 to the Ski team:

I would like, as well as the president, to make this point clear. When the discussion was before the Students' Council we didn't have to stand up and say "I object" to anything, when it was made clear that the D.A.A.C. Managing Committee refused to recognize the ski team by a vote of 6-2. Members are recognized because they are elected by various faculties on both campi.

According to Article 30 of the D.A.A.C. Constitution, we can designate sports from time to time, and as this wasn't one of the sports, the granting of \$50 was between the Students' Council and the person who organized the Ski team. That is the reason why I didn't object too strongly. I remain,

Yours truly,

Larry LeVine,
Secretary-Treasurer, D.A.A.C.

Sam Peeps--

(continued from page 2)

the fact that he was to speak at a brotherhood of medical students—whereat I resolved to avoid that same brotherhood sedulously, of which one Hoggins is Fuhrer. And so to house, but not to bed. To the cellar, and with a fine bottle of old moselle I did drink to the damnation of Parliament, which exists only to impose taxes.

Lindsay Receives--

(Continued from page one)

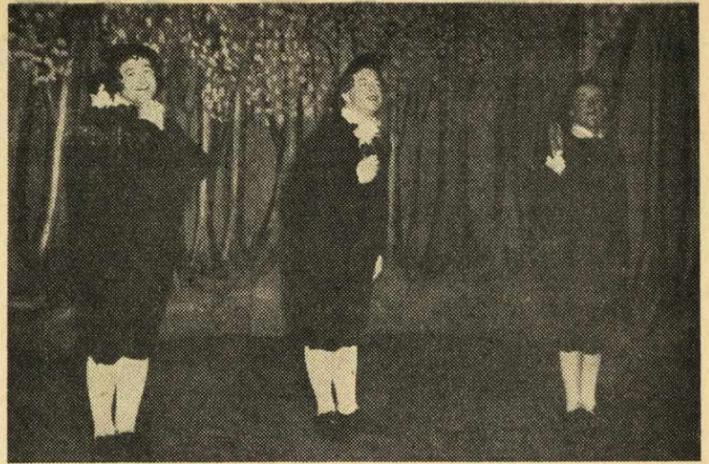
ing anecdotes. Professor Murray Macneill, who was attending his forty-third annual Engineers' Banquet, also spoke.

The principal speaker of the evening was Mr. Ira P. Macnab of the Public Service Commission. Mr. Macnab, an engineer for 47 years, told of the marvelous development his occupation has made in the last half century, using his own career as an illustration.

Great credit is due to the committee which arranged the banquet, Ralph Hill, T. Grayston and Don Waller, and to the Master of Ceremonies, Bert Cull.

conductor and his players are doing a fine job. The concert orchestra performed this duty this year in admirable style.

There were two key men behind the production of *Patience* aside from the stage crew and executive. They were Noel Hamilton, the chorus director, and Reynold Mitchell, the orchestra conductor. To these two persons most of the praise may be given, for between them they worked out the actions, pace, balance and sensible good taste of the whole performance. Their task with *Patience* was a great deal harder than it was for those who directed *Pinafore*. Where *Pinafore* was obvious satire, *Patience* was particularly subtle in comparison. There were, furthermore, in *Patience*, elements of dramatic texture that needed much careful thought and polish; portions of the musical score that demanded subtle and delicate handling; complex situations in spoken dialogues, recitatives and arias that were not as difficult in *Pinafore*. This was a whole operetta that depended as much upon the fine phrasing of a first violin as upon the spectacle of the finale. To say that this took a great deal of their time would be to beg the question. In the light of this performance of *Patience*, and its great hurdles, one can thank Noel Hamilton and Reynold Mitchell for the finest Gilbert and Sullivan we have yet seen at Dalhousie.



DeYoung, Pearson, and Reid wax aesthetic



Patience—Eileen Cantwell

—Gazette Photo by Holmes.

Letter To The Editor

The Editor, Feb. 28/49
The Dalhousie Gazette.

Considerable concern has been shown by some students re the use of the city's sound car in campaigning for the presidential elections. Since the sound car has been used throughout the year in aiding the Publicity Department, this unfortunate incident places our organization in a slightly uncomfortable position.

I contacted City Hall and was informed that the sound car was

procured in the name of the campaign it supports, not in the name of the publicity organization. Any person or group of persons wishing to use it may do so. Secondly, I contacted John Trim, who informed me that he is a member of that campaign's committee.

To those who would draw hasty conclusions, I would like to make it clear that the Publicity Organization, as such, supports no candidate or group of candidates.

Jack Wilcox.

Ode To Clocks

AND ESPECIALLY ALARM CLOCKS

Others may praise you clocks
So will not I.
I loath you from the bottom of my heart
All that is crude and mean of our crude day
You typify.

When there are sounds of revelry by night
Whether at dance or rink or play
And you would be content to laugh till dawn
The clock will never let you stay.

When winter dawn's cold light which never
Should be seen
Begins to filter in across your bed
That rude and uncouth screech rings through
Your head
And marks the breaking of a rosy dream.

The sleeping, like the dead, are pictures,
So they say.
But clocks will never let you
Stay that way.

Marnie Stevenson
written 8:00 a.m.

With apologies to several poets; you name them, and I'll apologize.