



SCENES FROM MACBETH

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GLEE CLUB'S PRODUCTION OF MACBETH RATED OUTSTANDING

By LEW MILLER
Gazette Drama Critic

It is with a feeling of humility that I approach the task of trying to do justice to a review of the Dal Glee Club's recent production, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. My lack of sufficient knowledge to enable me to form adequate standards, and my inexperience must necessarily color my judgments, and hence my remarks are inevitably subjective.

And so, personally speaking, I think that *Macbeth*, directed by H. Leslie Pigot, and starring Art Hartling and Holly Fleming, was by far the most outstanding Glee Club production that I have seen in my three years at Dal. To qualify my statement I further declare that it was one of the best amateur productions that I have ever seen. Weaknesses in the play were more than over-balanced by its several outstanding scenes.

Dalhousie is fortunate in having the invaluable Mr. Pigot. His abridgement of the Senecan-type five act play to three acts by the linking of several scenes and the entire cutting of several other scenes preserved the continuity of the play without detracting from the averredly tampered-with version that has been passed on to our age. The cutting of a rather long monologue by Hecate, and indeed the cutting of Hecate, removed an irrelevant distraction. MacDuff appears nobler in the three act version without the scene in which he is vilified by his wife; and without reference to a seeming intemperate nature Malcolm emerges as a greater Romantic hero.

Art Hartling as the fearless, essentially noble, but ambitious "Macbeth" impressed me greatly. His performance was so consistently brilliant that I find it difficult to select any one scene in which he excelled. Embryonic Glee Club actors would do well to note Art's stage movements and the natural ease with which he dominates, or bows out of, a scene.

Lovely Holly Fleming, appearing in the extremely difficult role of "Lady Macbeth" in this, her first major production, is truly a "find". The success of the production may be attributed in no small measure to the manner in which she presented Shakespeare's psychological study of the Lady's malevolent influence on her husband. The subtle blending of deceitful sweetness with violence as portrayed by Holly made her interpretation of the

Lady exceptional. Especially will she be remembered for her intensely dramatic interpretation of the "sleep-walking" scene.

Excellent cast in the role of "Malcolm," elder son of "Duncan," was George Tracy, another thespian discovery. The couple of occasions in which I thought George was inclined to be a trifle melodramatic need hardly be mentioned when one considers his otherwise splendid performance.

Frank Fleming, last year's President of the Glee Club, and one of the few responsible for bringing first-class productions to Dal, most ably portrayed the role of "Duncan," King of Scotland.

Playing the part of "Banquo," a lengthy role in which it is difficult to be outstanding, Eddy Grantmyre was steady and convincing throughout.

Warming up to his part as the play progressed, Heber Kean, as "MacDuff" acted splendidly in the scene in which he was informed of the slaughter of his wife and children.

The role of "Ross" is another in which it is difficult to be outstanding; but playing easily and naturally, veteran Vince Allen handled it capably.

Special mention must be made of the "Witch" scenes. Sally Newman, Anita Simpson, and Nancy Allen as the witches, teamed up with the technical staff to make their scenes nothing less than professional. The whole effect left little to be desired.

In the role of the "Porter" was

Alan Marshall; "Donalbain," John Reeves; Albert McMahon as "Lennox"; Dave Graham, "Sergeant"; John Pauley, "Angus"; Malcolm Graham, "Fleance"; Alf Harris and Don Urquhart as the "Murderers"; Keith Mason, the "Doctor"; Margaret (Dear Ruth) Goode as the "Gentle Woman"; Aubrey Hudson, "Seyton"; J. Nesbitt, a "Messenger"; Al MacIntosh, the "Attendant"; "Soldiers" were Don MacDonald, Eric Cook, J. Anglin, T. Scrobie, Earl Smith, Roberts, A. Cuzner, J. M. MacCaulay; as "Apparitions" were E. Grantmyre, Margaret Stevenson, and Ida MacKiegan; as "Attendants" were Joyce Parker, Elizabeth Clarke,

Betty Cousins, and Barbara King.

I wonder if "sound" experts might not do something to the gym to improve acoustics? It is almost beyond human possibility to act without some form of amplifying system. Consequently back-stage noises are inevitably picked up, and, as in one of "Macbeth's" soliloquies, they almost detracted from the effect.

Concerning distractions I should like to mention a small point that might be easily remedied. On several occasions my attention was attracted from the key figures by sudden movements on the part of supporting actors. The movement of a sword, the adjusting of a cape, or the movement of a head is sufficient to catch one's attention. When the main action is on the part of "Macbeth", for example, rendering an "aside", the supporters must give the appearance of being engaged in conversation or

some other action. Then it is difficult to estimate how active or inactive one must be. When the action centers on two or more central figures, however, other actors on stage must remain as inconspicuous as possible while forming integral parts of the picture.

Another minor point was that my attention was attracted to the faulty leg-attire of several members of the cast. It is difficult to be flawless in strange clothing, but leg bands at different heights on the same pair of legs drew a bit of mirth where it was not intended.

The technical staff is to be most highly commended for their exceptional handling of lighting, mood music, sound effects, swift and efficient property changes, and the considerable work with little praise that has been going on for the past six weeks. Without the technical staff and their great contribution the play could not have been as successful.

President Frank Bursey, Vice-President Frances Jubien, Mr. Pigot, and all members of the Glee Club are to be congratulated

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