

Letter to the Editor . . .

10th Feb., 1952.
Editor;
Brunswickan.

Pacey has expressed the
last week's Brunswickan)
Drama Society should
policy of "alternating
ormance of a classic with
a modern play". Implying
the modern play has
turn this year next year
ch play should be put on;
ch has "stood the test of

I would agree to a cer-
ent with the above view I
ask Dr. Pacey what he be-
be suitable plays for the
as constituted as present,
on. Lear, Othello, Macbeth
classics. They have all
the test of time", but
they stand up to a student
ance; complete with dyed-
ear for costumes, hurried
regular rehearsals and pro-
on that primitive stage at
r's College. Decidedly, no!
some slight artistic success
ained, it would be, I am
financial failure.

tion, and a love of Shakes-
is not enough. Talent! and
necessary impedimenta
tion must be there. To have
Shakespearean production,
be equivalent musically to
g on "Eugene Onegin" with
nciple part filled by some
esom who didn't know B
on her backside.

is quite pointless to argue
the Globe was a barn, and
course on Shakespearean
tion in the sixteenth cen-
we have our privy purse to
er. We cannot offer bad
e to audiences accustomed
ad movies. Shoddy or taw-
Shakespeare is a good deal
than no Shakespeare at all,
us for the moment discard

tuming difficulties would
apply to Restoration plays,
ere also the stylised acting
ary would be outside our
ange. One might also add
the Sodom and Gomorrah
ct-matter would probably be
sive to Fredericton audiences.
t all this does not limit the
of choice. From Ibsen to
ese exists a whole body of
suitable for production, su-
artistically, and having the
g grace of adaptability.
ers of Society" for instance
d be a good Norwegian tonic
Fredericton, or Maugham's
ves and Fishes" or "The
e."

Why, on the principle that
swallow does not make a
mer, I suggest that the society
two major productions next
One in the fall and one in
spring, and, for reasons that
apparent to all who went
year to St. Stephen I suggest
the society does not waste it's
and money by entering the
vincial Drama Festival. May I
rest, as an alternative, that
rent a theatre in Saint John
play for two evenings. This
ld enable them to make money
ead of losing it. After all,
ma is basically entertainment,
every fifty cents dropped in-
the Society's coffers is, in itself,
adjudication. W. Barwick.

Writer's Workshop

★
By
JEAN
GASS
★

A slow, steady drizzle fell over the city and a heavy fog dulled the brilliance of the street lights. The great drawing room on Montague Street was a festive scene of music and gaiety. Couples stood murmuring together and roaming about from group to group. Mrs. James bustled about, ascertaining that the wants of everyone had been filled. No one must lack food or wine in plenty. She was flushed with triumph. The evening was a great success; only a few had refused her invitation and among those few there was no one that really mattered. She was now almost certain of a leading position in the society of her new home, a fact had bothered her not a little. And George—he had really been a perfect host; she was proud of him and she would tell him so when the guests had gone. And the necklace he had bought her for this special occasion; she smiled and touched it with the pride of possession. She had always loved rubies, and everyone had noticed how costly it was—she had distinctly heard Mrs. Nelson remarking on its value. She cast a smug look around the room—heavy carpets, noiseless under the feet, huge soft chairs,—oh, it

And outside, just beyond the French windows where the rain fell drip, drip, drip from the eaves, a furtive figure watched the scene of the gaiety. The rain was cold, and he pulled his thin overcoat closer around him, shivering. He tugged nervously at his hat brim, and the rain that had collected there rolled in shining rivulets over his face. He could be seen quite plainly in the light from the great windows. The light revealed a lean, young face, pale and pinched looking, as though he had not eaten in many days. He huddled closer in the shadows, as though aware that he could be seen, but did not once take his eyes from Mrs. James and her ruby necklace. They fascinated him—in the depths of each one he could see food and fuel for his family and himself. He dreamed of the things they might buy for his children as the cold drizzle continued to fall.

The last guests were saying good-night and the host and hos-

tes stood at the door bidding all a good-night. Mrs. James was still flushed with her triumph, they all had said such nice things about her beautiful new home and that she must come and see them, until she thought she would burst for sheer pleasure. And Mr. James, with several potent drinks in his pampered stomach was teetering on her side, saying good-night to everyone with great affability. They all must come again soon, and he would be to see them soon if they had lots of good food and lots of good wine. Of course, he followed this last with a hearty laugh for appearances' sake. He need to let them know that he spoke the truth.

Soon the last stragglers were gone and the lights began to wink out over the house one by one. The stranger outside grew even paler and his knees trembled. Was he afraid? Yes, desperately afraid, but he had to do it this way. No need to try for work, no one would ever trust him again. . . . the man in the garage when he asked where he had received his training. . . . and the look he gave when he was told. . . . and the woman in the restaurant wouldn't even trust him to wash dishes. It was funny, in stories they always found one person who would trust the criminal and help him to find his way back. . . . but this wasn't a story. . . .

He waited for what seemed hours. There, they must be asleep by now. . . . they would have to be. . . his nerves couldn't wait any longer. . . . it was now or never. And he crept around to the door and softly turned the knob. It was locked. . . . he had expected that. He drew a ring of keys from his pocket and tried the first one. . . . nothing happened. . . . the door did not swing back. Frantically he tried them, one after another, cursing nervously when each failed to work. Suppose someone should come and find him there. . . . suppose he was making too much noise and awakened the people inside. . . . there were only three keys left. . . . Ah, that one worked. . . . the door swung softly inward, and he advanced into the darkness of the hall.

He paused there a moment to gather his courage. The giant staircase was almost directly above him now. He closed the door gently behind him, shutting out the cold, fresh air and the slow drizzle. Now for the ascent of the stairs. . . . the carpet muffled his footfalls, there was no sound to warn the pair who slept above. He climbed the stairs with increasing swiftness and paused at the top.

His stomach seemed tied in a knot. . . . sweat stood out on his forehead and rolled over his face, large as the drops of rain that fell from the eaves. . . . he shook uncontrollably. . . . but he tensed and willed himself to go on. No. . . . he stopped. . . . he couldn't do it. . . . what if they caught him and sent him back? But he had to do it. The thought of his family huddled in that cold room drove him on. There, this must be the door. . . . the night light's on and the door's half ajar. And as he peered into the room, to accustom his eyes to the light, the gleam of the rubies thrown carelessly on the night-table caught his eyes and held them. They gleamed, and seemed to say aloud. . . . "You have only to reach out and take me. . . . it's as simple as that. . . . just reach out and take me." And he took one faltering step into the room. . . . and another. . . . and another. Now he was at the bedside table and his hand was on the necklace. . . . now! Away with it, before they waken and catch you. Fly, fly. . . . and he stumbled in his eagerness to get away, running down the stairs like a thing gone mad, racing away, all caution forgotten.

The thief sped through the streets, the necklace still clutched tight in one hand, never stopping until he reached the dirty, cluttered section on the other side of town. About midway along the street he entered a bare, brown-stone building and rushed up to the third floor to catch his waiting wife in his arms. He hushed her when she tried to ask questions, hiding the uneasy look in his eyes. And she, blind in her trust and love feigned happiness to conceal her fears. That night, each dreamed separate dreams; she of him being dragged from her by unseen hands, so that she awakened many times with starts of fear; and he of the money that he would receive from a stealthy little pawn broker in the morning.

The next night, all was gaiety on the third floor of the brown-stone house. The children slept peacefully, full of good food and warm from the fire that glowed in the grate. The man laughed joyfully as he picked up his wife and tossed her in the air.

Then the man stiffened. . . . had he heard it? Oh, God. Yes, there it was again. . . . he bowed his head in his hands as his wife went forward to answer the authoritative knock on the door.

Household Hint: The way to test good whiskey is to pass electricity through a quart of the stuff. If the current causes a precipitation of lye, tin, arsenic, iron-slag and alum, the whiskey is fair. If however, the liquor chases the current back to the generator, you've got good whiskey.



By Harold Buchwald

ad lib

LEAP YEAR

WINNIPEG, (CUP) — After a three-year absence, emancipation of "girl" in boy-girl relationships is with us again. It is said that when they were setting up the calendar many hundreds of years ago, they discovered that fickle old sun preferred to remain around one day extra every four years. This day naturally had to be accounted for, and in a gesture of unprecedented benevolence, they gave this extra-day every four years to little February, the mite among months.

Being a resourceful type, woman immediately claimed this extra day as her own. Her arguments ran something like this: Man is master of every situation every day of every year. You've got this extra day, and it's just a teensy-weensy iddy-biddy one every four years. Whaddya say, big boy?

And so man gave her February 29 as woman's very own. But man underestimated his foe, and, being the resourceful type, woman drove home the thin edge of the wedge she had thus established, and now she has the whole year—officially. Soon they named it "Leap Year," upon discovering that every year in four woman was leaping at the opportunity, and man was leaping out of the way. Historical data, released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, reveals that more of the former have been successful than the latter.

At first man tried to fight against it—after all man is the rational animal. The draughtsmen of the American institution decreed that every fourth year there should be elections for the president of that great republic, hoping that the populace, both male and female, would be so absorbed with this quadriennial three-ring circus, they would forget about leap year. There was also the underlying suggestion that to thing of anything but elections every fourth year was un-American.

But even the members of the constitutional congress, these paragons of so many other virtues, underestimated their foe. An eternal orchid for subtlety must go to she who successfully cultivated the idea that it is only consistent for woman to run for man at the same time as man is running for office.

The hand that rocks the cradle is always careful to school her daughter for the time when the younger one must go into the world and find a mate. Consequently, technique after technique is passed down from generation to generation, with slight adaptations to particular environmental conditions. Only the blatant aspect of this purpose is revealed during Leap Year. Actually woman's aim in life remains fixed all the time.

The late, bewhiskered George Bernard Shaw (a married man himself) warned his brother men in *Major Barbara*, when he stated: "A man chases a woman until she catches him." Therein lies the key to the whole matter. By playing on man's vanity, by allowing man to think he is the master of the situation, woman leads man into the trap which he springs for himself when he proposes, and she generously accepts. Then he spends the rest of his life blindly recounting how he wooed her.

Coyness and reluctance, with just the right degree of interest seem to be the main characteristics of the various techniques utilized by woman. Such feminine statements as "You really want little old me to go out with you" should put the would-be bachelor on his guard, but the natural line of reasoning which inevitably follows it: well, I must really be something, and here's a girl that appreciates it, at last. He's hooked. . . .

The girl who seems distant and aloof is equally dangerous. To the average man she presents a challenge (that damn vanity again), and in the process of meeting the challenge . . . well, you know the rest.

There is the type who plays a number of her gentlemen friends off against each other until the one she wants finally comes through to keep her away from the rest.

The sneakiest trick of all, however, is utilized during Leap Year itself. This is the habit of running pictures of eligible bachelors on the society pages of the newspapers. This is as much as to say: "Here are your targets, girls." The effect on the men is the desired one, for, although openly ridiculing the unfortunates selected by the society editor, they are secretly jealous and set out to show they are just as eligible as the eligibles pictured.

By being on his guard against these mixed subtle and blatant activities, the average male may yet survive 1952. Let this be the clarion call for the preservation of bachelorhood. . . . opps, there goes a button off our shirt—and we wanted to wear it to the sorority party tonight.

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