



President Mackay shows Brunswickan editor Toole his new home. Recently completed the attractive red ranch style bungalow was built by the University as a permanent residence for UNB presidents. Situated near the Federal Biology Building, the house commands a superlative view of the St. John River.

Generally Good Production

"END" WELL EXECUTED ALTHOUGH IT LACKED FINISHED POLISH

The Drama Society's presentation of Journey's End by R. C. Sherriff made an impressive debut in the Memorial Hall last Saturday evening. This production deserves the fullest support from the University, not only because it is entered for the Dominion Drama Festival, but simply upon its own merits. These merits are patent. It is a fine play, skillfully written. Its presentation is vigorous and often moving. It is, above all things else, excellent entertainment, a credit to the cast, the Director and his assistants.

Sherriff's focus is narrow but penetrating. It concentrates upon a small group of English soldiers in a squalid rat-infested dug-out awaiting the final German offensive in the Spring of 1918. Disillusion, cynicism and despair have synthesised into the prevailing mood. Glory has long lain in the muck. Patriotism is a pathetic light in the eyes of a naive school boy subaltern. Life is threadbare and tenuous; values are corroded and nerves at screaming point. A singing bird is, as one of the characters puts it, 'funny', and the scent of the May-tree, sinister enough to induce the adjustment of a gas mask. It is a world from which Wilfred Owen and Isaac Rosenberg distilled their finest and most poignant poetry. Sherriff's concern, like theirs, is to salvage from the holocaust, lunatic in its futility and waste, the essential dignity of man.

This underlying theme shines through the production, despite faults in the mechanics and individual weaknesses of interpretations.

Mr. Alvin Shaw's mise en scene, for instance, though adequate is tactically unsound. No Man's Land is disconcertingly elevated over the open and vulnerable dug-out. The lighting is crude and often capriciously independent of the basic necessities of illumination and atmosphere. The sound effects are distracting; sometimes obscuring passages of dialogue. It is a pity that the dug-out, which is very properly a filthy mess at the beginning under Hardy's ministrations, did not show some signs of rehabilitation after Stanhope had taken over. Its commanding squalor, remains for the rest of the play, out of key with the character of the new Company.

Much of the acting is promising. In one or two instances, extremely so. Michael Gordon (Stanhope) is a very interesting young actor to watch. His sense of timing in action and delivery is shrewd, his variations of speech tempo, skilful. His movements are assured and his emotional range considerable. He attempts, with some success, the most difficult thing an amateur actor can do, and that is to act with the whole body. He harmonizes features and limbs into a controlled response at the dictates of his conception of the characters' inner life. This gives him a depth and quality which his less gifted colleagues never achieve. He has yet to learn to make his authority over his part subserve the larger design. His self-assertion, for instance, completely obliterates the scenes he shares with his Colonel (Frank Good), whom he disrespectfully reduces to a mere puppet. As a result these scenes lose in subtlety, variety and credibility.

Phillip Reynolds as the Orderly, (Pte. Mason) is another excellent performance. Again good timing and intelligent characterization lend distinction to a satisfying portion in which timidity,

impudence and deference are nicely blended. Patrick Blake (Lt. Osborne), Michael Pick (Lt. Trotter), John Drew (Lt. Hibbert) and John Gelland (Raleigh) all have their moments. But in each case they have hinted at rather than fulfilled the basic traits so strongly embodied in their respective roles. Osborne is not avuncular enough and misses, though narrowly, some supremely tender moments, especially in his relation with Raleigh. The comic aspects of Trotter's gluttony and dim-wittedness need much more emphasis. The neurotic Hibbert, although containing many fine touches, would be more convincing if he did not look so absurdly young. After all it was a period when moustaches were popular! Osborne needs aging as does Hibbert. John Gelland captures Raleigh's naivete and boyish enthusiasm very well in the early scenes. His realisation loses its suppleness towards the close and his death is a rather wooden affair. He fails to recognise the exploit the pathos of his last line:

"Could we have a light—it's so dark and cold." It is charged with a potent symbolism and irony which, in the context of his relation with Stanhope, should grip and move our feelings and not be thrown away in a monotone.

None of these criticisms need detract from the overall promise and genuine merit of the production. The Drama Society has given us a good play, directed and performed with skill and sensitivity. Again it seems right to stress its excellent entertainment.

Whether or not it fulfills itself and so achieves Festival standard, remains to be seen. It has, as it matures, our best wishes.

—T. Lennam

Letters to the Editor

Everyone who reads The Daily Gleaner must have noted the treatment accorded those who write a letter voicing views contrary to the editor's unusual (often mistaken, we feel) ideas about such subjects as Canadian politics, the U.N., the Suez fiasco, etc. The result is frequently a bitter editorial that is often a personal attack on the letter writer PLUS a long editor's note designed to make the letter writer appear to the public as a fool.

In this regard, The Brunswickan has patterned itself on The Gleaner. The most striking example occurred last year when a letter of well-founded criticism from a McMaster student resulted in as rude and bitter a personal attack on the student as could be written.

This year, by a false comparison, it was INSINUATED that the UNB Bookstore (and, therefore, its staff) was gypping students. When the ridiculousness of this insinuation was pointed out by two students, the result was a long editor's note (Nov. 15) and an editorial (Nov. 22).

The point is this: the two students were right—the editor wrong. However, by sheer volume of writing and by the strategic placing of "Editor's Notes", an attempt was made to create the impression that the students were mistaken.

Many students who could contribute something worthwhile hesitate to put themselves in such a disadvantageous position. They have our sympathy. Red 'n Black

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