

James H. Aitchison

## Profile

Professor J. H. Aitchison, Head of the Political Science Dept., was acclaimed last week-end to the formidable sounding position of Acting Leader-President of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party. The Gazette asked Professor Aitchison exactly what this meant, and he replied that the title Acting Leader was simply a formalization of his role for the past three years as "spokesman" for the provincial New Democratic Party. He emphasized that he would not be spending more time on party activity with this title than he would as the unmodified President of the provincial organization.

For time availability is indeed a scarce resource for Jim Aitchison. In addition to his hours spent preparing and giving lectures and seminars, he is a member of the Senate, the Senate Council, and the Faculty Council. He is a Past-President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, and last year was Chairman of the Social Science Council and a Vice-President of the Economics and Political Science Association. For a number of years he has been a member of the Advisory Board of the Dalhousie Review, and in his spare time he attends regularly the meetings of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Halifax Branch, an organization of which he is, of course, a past Chairman. Professor Aitchison is particularly proud that he was the first President of the Dalhousie University Faculty Association.

Jim Aitchison was born in Scotland but raised in Saskatoon from the age of four. After graduating from the University of Saskatchewan, he taught high school in Prince Albert for three years. His first university post was at Brandon College, a breeding ground for Canadian left-wing leaders. In 1938, he began his doctoral studies at Toronto. However, before he could complete his degree, war broke out and he was asked to replace Kenneth Taylor at McMaster University, lecturing in Economics. Later in the war he joined the armed



Prof. Aitchison

forces, staying there until 1946 when he went to Victoria College in Victoria, B.C. He completed his residence requirements for his Ph. D. in 1948 while lecturing at University of Toronto, and in the fall of 1948, he came as an Associate Professor to Dalhousie.

Asked about the key issues in the next federal election Professor Aitchison named the "reform of Parliament" as the major question, followed by the flag controversy. He also said that "majority government will be less of an issue than before, because the people of Canada now understand that the difficulties of the present House are not due to the minority situation". As an example of this, he cited the fact that under the present rules, the Conservatives could obstruct the business of the House regardless of whether or not the Liberals have a majority.

Finally, when asked when he thought the next federal election would be, Aitchison replied in true professional rather than political style: "There is no reason why there should be an election before 1966, nor any reason why this present Parliament should not continue for four years or more, provided that the Liberals resist the temptation to abuse the power to dissolve."

# ABERRATIONS

## The Marriage Mart

Appearing in the September issue of one of the digest-size magazines which are intended primarily for sale to young North American Women is an article which explains why scientists in general are great catches as husbands, and then goes on to present a comprehensive five-year plan for catching one. The significant thing here is not the article itself, for one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one magazine article create a trend. The article is worthy of note only because it is typical: there is a whole new generation of women's magazines apparently conceived and executed upon the assumption that the young woman's only task in life is to find a suitable husband. Major considerations in this pursuit are the prospect's earning power, job security, mental stability, and fidelity; compatibility does not seem to enter the picture at all.

Campus morality has been the focus of increasing concern among educators, clergymen, and others in positions of moral responsibility. It is frequently assumed that sexual morals are in

a state of decline, to wit, restrictions are being eased and promiscuity is not held in the contempt which is formerly experienced. The "blame" for this state of affairs is usually directed to "girlic" magazines, European movies, etc. But if the values inherent in the respectable women's publications are being adopted within our society, the cold calculation of inter-personal relationships and the frank commercialism, it can be no surprise that sexual activities have lost their fairy-tale luster. As in all other areas, there is a price to be paid for social change. If marriage is to be approached practically, it may be at the expense of romanticism.

The epistle points out some pertinent facts, such as "Men with a degree of Master of Science average \$12,000 per year, against slightly less than \$10,000 for those with a degree of Master of Arts," or again that scientists are involved in far fewer divorce actions than other occupational groups.

Then comes the Great Scheme. (It is not a great scheme

to land some particular scientist that has caught a girl's attention, it is a Great Scheme to get any scientist.) There are loads of good little tips; the hunter is advised to attend a co-educational university which offers science credits, she is advised to take science courses which she thinks she cannot pass, then to hire male science student to tutor her... on no account should she appear smarter than the average girl... she should take math courses... and so forth.

In an effort to a more practical approach to marriage the idea of "romance" has been completely supplanted. Where a man used to court a woman, it has now become fashionable (at least in women's magazines) for a woman to court a man.

Of course, it is not necessarily true that a great proportion of coeds subscribe to these attitudes. On reading the article in question, one attractive Dal girl said "That's ridiculous!" But is it possible that such a marked trend in "respectable" journalism can have no effect at all?

### HAMLET IN HALIFAX

## Barbour on Burton

In the 4th act of Hamlet, the King mentions "the distracted multitude who like not in their judgement, but their eyes;" and perhaps this electrovision production (Capital Theatre) was aimed at them. If so, it still failed of its objective, because visually, the production was as dull as dishwater. Sir John Gielgud's scheme for presenting Hamlet in rehearsal clothes proved one thing, at any rate. Ruffs and chilterlings, Elizabethan costumes, appreciably help a production. Mootor, even if his bearing is kingly, which Alfred Drake's was not, cannot look very kingly in cardigan and white pants. Besides, there was enough slight costuming to confuse the audience, as sword, sword buckles, and other properties appeared where the text demanded them. Moreover, the shadow

of the ghost was dressed in armour. In other words, the cast looked out of place.



Hamlet is a difficult play. It demands the absolute best that any actor can give, in even the minor roles. But there is more to a production than just arranging for a group of good actors to be on the same stage. They must learn to work together. The actor who essays the part of Hamlet must try to arrive at a unified conception of the character and then carry that conception out throughout the length of the production. This production was typically Broadway in construction. It was jerry-built, slapped together for the rubes. Everyone tried to upstage everyone else. Lines were sped across the footlights in an effort to wrest attention to the speaker. Sir John Gielgud's perpetrated what can only be called a triumph of miscasting. Laertes was a football player. Claudius was a musical-comedy villain. Alfred Drake kept taking stances - he would place his feet and then say something. No one could possibly mistake him for an Elizabethan king. Polonius (Hugh Cronyn) was a comedian, although he at least kept the audience interested. In many scenes he was completely believable. An old busybody who accepted abuse so as to get further in his little schemes. Linda Marsh did not look the way Ophelia somehow should. She could only prove she was mad by screaming her beautiful lyric songs. That isn't enough. Some international comedy, for a change, was sup-

plied by George Rose as the just grave digger.

Richard Burton is a very good actor. I still believe this. But his Hamlet does not help me to sustain this belief. Mr. Burton has given in to the mob. He evokes Hamlet a spoiled movie star. He yells and screams. His voice is one of the finest vocal instruments in the acting world today, and yet he seemed to be continually fighting against honest expression. Occasionally he would begin a scene with such poetry that you found yourself praying that he could keep it up. Immediately he would start ranting again. His conception of the part was not coherent. We could recognize no personal Hamlet, no discernable individual beneath all the posturing. Why? No one can say. Burton did act the witty exchange with Polonius, and the scene with the king after Polonius' murder beautifully, but he completely messed up the famous "Get thee to a nunnery scene" with Ophelia.

There were a number of little pieces of business that made one realize that some thought had been spent in the production but always on minor things.

Electrovision is certainly no revolution - especially with the fuzzy images, bad, ill-timed closeups and rough sound reproduction.

This production was designed to make it on the strength of its big names alone. In terms of sales, I guess it does. As a valid production of one of the greatest plays in the English language it is an abysmal failure.



### COME BLOW YOUR HORN

## Little Leon Blue

Review by Douglas Barbour

"COME BLOW YOUR HORN" is a quintessential Broadway comedy - "light and witty", by which I mean it has no ulterior intellectual motive. It is designed solely to please. Nonetheless, let no one assume it is thus easier to produce than an avant-garde piece of theatre by Albee or Brecht. It is not. Such a play is designed to float like a balloon; heavy acting will weight it with lead and the well known bomb will result. It's my pleasure to report that the Neptune's production of Come Blow Your Horn is no bomb. It is played as lightly and gaily as could be asked and some of the performances are scintillating. The quality of emotional balance, so necessary in a comedy of this sort, is always evident. No one takes unjust advantage of the many opportunities to overact, an action which would have destroyed the delicate unreality of the whole thing.

For the play is concerned with a real situation, but it deals with it in a land of fantasy, somewhere between the insidious unconsciousness of America and the happy hunting frouds of a slight-

ly grownup Peter Pan. The old double standard is presented as an absolute - it is good for a man to sow a few wild oats and then settle down with a good (substitute "nice") girl to be a success in business. The plot of the play is more concerned with the wild oat sowing, but the ending is happy because the older son comes home to the roost. Surprisingly this goes very well on the stage. The dialogue skirts the truly obscene and terrifying by sticking to the unspoken euphemistic all the way through. It is for the most part titillatingly funny.

The Baker parents are excellently played by Bernard Behrens and Mary MacMurray. Mr. Baker is an ogre of sorts and represents the sole source of conflict in the play. Despite this fact, the audience must be able to reserve some sympathy for him at the end. Mr. Behrens accomplishes this. We laugh heartily at his every appearance, but in the final scene we are happy as all get out to see him break down and accept Coonie Dayton. The role of the mother is one an actress could

sleepwalk through, but the audience would soon be asleep too. Mary McMurray does not do this. Instead she gives a rich characterization of the woebegone, excitable mother and has the audience holding their sides. She is dumpy and impossible on the phone, but she always seems to know what to say. This is perhaps, Miss McMurray's triumph of the summer, even better than her sparkling Maria in "Twelfth Night."

The minor roles are well played by David Renton, David Brown, Roberta Maxwell and Milo Ringman. The scenery, the Neptune's only "fourth wall" set of the summer, was well displayed. Leon Major, always proficient in staging comedy, pared the parts well and integrated them skillfully. Another sign of progress is that the actors are beginning to assume the dimensions of a cohesive group - absolutely essential in a repertory theatre. The Neptune has shown itself capable of taking both the modern Come Blow Your Horn and Twelfth Night and making them scintillate.