

## QUESTORS IN SHERIDAN COMEDY

Sheridan's semi - auto - biographical comedy, "The Rivals," of which the Questors gave three performances in their own theatre last weekend and will give two further matinees to-day and to-morrow, is one of those classical period pieces that appeals to adolescent and adult. Its appeal to youth lies in the fact that it was written when Sheridan was but 23 years old and largely mirrors his own adventures and peccadillos, and to older folk it appeals because of the caustic wit with which the author ridicules the extravagances of the false chivalry and romance in vogue in the latter 18th century. Full "houses" testified their appreciation by abundant applause.

The Questors are always particularly at home in any stylised drama, and "The Rivals," with its strong strain of satirical artificiality, was no exception to the rule. Under the direction of Mr. Alfred Emmet the fourteen characters in the cast made an excellent play-pattern, with histrionic honours remarkably evenly distributed among the principals.

### Sank Own Personality

Mr. Philip Allen, as the daring, debonair Jack Absolute, has never done better work. Disguised in a white wig and the gay, military uniform of the period, he completely sank his own personality under the buoyancy of this young captain. Mr. Albert Hooper, as the jealously lachrymose Faulkland, made a capital foil, and sustained the part well throughout.

Another asset was Mr. Tom Franklin's portrait of Bob Acres, reminiscent of Shakespeare's "valiant coward," Sir Andrew Aguecheek. This was a thoroughly sound piece of acting. Miss Joan Angel, as the languishing, wayward Lydia, shared the feminine honours with Miss Barbara Hutchins, as her aunt, Mrs. Malaprop, whose spate of misapplied long words came out in a fluent torrent. Mr. Frank White gave quality as well as quantity to his utterances as the irascible Sir Anthony, and Miss Jean Sheridan played the amiable but rather insipid role of Julia, Faulkland's beloved. The fiery, duel-loving Irishman, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, found a worthy actor in Mr. Eric Voce.

Of the remaining six characters, valets or servants, specially good character studies were given by Mr. Richard Wood (Fag), Mr. Maurice Ballinger (David), and Mr. Michael Kelly (Thomas). Miss Gwen Calcutt somewhat spoiled an otherwise good study by a tendency to over-act and to run where walking would have been better.

Genuine period costumes, loaned by Mr. J. C. Nairne, added greatly to the success of the production, which was repeated yesterday evening for local youth groups, and will be given on the afternoon and evening of March 10, for schools in Ealing and the neighbourhood.



# QUESTORS IN "THE RIVALS"

## Sheridan Comedy In Ealing

The Questors of Ealing announce their forthcoming production of "The Rivals." Evening performances will be held on Saturday and Monday, February 24 and 26, at 7.30 p.m., with matinees on Sunday, February 25, and Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4. These will be private performances for members and their friends only. In addition, special performances will be given at 7.30 on Friday, March 2, for local Youth Groups and at 2.30 and 6.30 on Saturday, March 10, for schools in Ealing and district.

Sheridan's famous play needs no introduction, and the Questors, confident in its robust humour, have no hesitation in offering their audiences another classic comedy. The production is in the capable hands of Alfred E. J. Emmett, which in itself is usually a guarantee of success.

It might, with advantage, be more widely known, that in addition to presenting a new play every seven or eight weeks and running a Drama Festival each year, this enterprising group is doing a considerable amount of work in other directions. It has now become an outstanding feature of their policy to extend the area of their influence over a much larger field. This is being done by the help and encouragement given to the local Youth Groups and, more recently, by the introduction of the Questors Travelling Theatre whereby they are enabled to take the best of the world's drama to the people who want it.

By this means many shows have already been given to members of H.M. Forces, A.R.P. workers and community centres. This valuable work is being carried on despite very serious handicaps, not the least of which is financial. In order to carry out their 1945 programme to the full it will be necessary to double the present membership. This may sound ambitious, but it is within the bounds of possibility. It was a big increase in membership over the last two years that made possible this new project and who knows what repercussions will result from it?

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M.C.T. March 3/45.