

JUNIOR PLAYGOERS' CLUB

The Questors Junior Playgoers' Club, of which the leading spirit has been Mrs. Ann Hess, was started a year ago, and its first season covered an interesting and varied programme of talks and discussions, mixed with some practical theatre work. The aim was to instil an interest and love for the theatre among young people, mostly early teen-agers.

That this was being achieved was amply evidenced by the lively and pertinent criticisms of Junior Playgoers, which were a notable, not to say startling, feature of many of our after-show discussions last season.

Now, however, the Junior Playgoers are in danger. Mrs. Hess has regretfully had to give up, and unless some member will offer to take over the running of the group, we fear it will come to a stop.

Here is an opportunity for some member to come forward and, particularly for anyone who likes working with young people, there is an interesting and important job to do.

FORESTAGE

The Editor urgently requires advertisement copy for the magazine. If anyone wishes to advertise in "Forestage," will they write or phone the General Manager at the theatre, when a form of agreement, including the rates charged, etc., will be supplied.

THEATRE PARTIES—It's more comfortable by coach everywhere.

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THE QUESTORS



present

The Tragedy of Othello the Moor of Venice

by

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SEASON 1949—50

SECOND PRODUCTION

PRICE 6d.

NEW PLAYS

In the last two issues of "Theatre Newsletter"—the fortnightly theatre news-sheet which reviews professional and amateur plays in London—there has appeared under reviews of two plays presented professionally in London for the first time, the words "first produced at the Questors."

Firstly, "The Pastoral Symphony," by André Gide, was presented last month by the New Chepstow Theatre—the Questors having presented the English première in 1948. Secondly, Ostrovsky's delightful "Diary of a Scoundrel," adapted by Rodney Ackland, which has just been produced with Alec Clunes in the leading role, at the Arts Theatre. The Questors presented the première in 1947.

The Questors are very proud of these facts. The common criticism of amateur work—even serious amateur theatres—is that it is but a pale shadow and an imitation in standard and choice of play, of the West End and other professional theatres. It is by producing new plays and bringing new work to the attention of the public and the professional theatre that we can contribute to the theatre as a whole. This is one of the main items of our policy. The number of new plays which the Questors have presented in the last twenty years is large but, unfortunately, the Plays Committee has been unable to find a suitable new play for this season. Of course, it is not our aim to produce new or unusual plays all the time—it is as important for us to revive the great plays of the past and present them with freshness and vitality to our audience so that they will be acquainted with the widest range of the best drama in the world. It is our intention to do this to-night, whilst assuring our members that we are always searching for new plays of merit which can be presented in the future.

P. C.

THE TRAGEDY OF OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE

It might be thought that when presenting a play such as "Othello," a programme note about the play would be superfluous. Surely members of The Questors audiences would not be like the assistant in a local branch of a world-famous book store, who when asked by a member of the cast for a copy of "Othello," enquired whether it was a monthly or a quarterly. With that chastening experience fresh in mind, however, let us record a few known facts about the play.

"The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice," was written probably in 1604. The first recorded performance of the play was at Court on November 1st, 1604. One would think it had been played at the Globe Theatre before that, for the play has every mark of having been written for performance in a regular playhouse, rather than at Court with its somewhat different arrangement of stage. Chronologically, the play was written probably after "Hamlet" and before "Macbeth" and "Lear." It has regularly held the stage from the Restoration period to modern times, and indeed at many periods has been second in popularity perhaps only to "Hamlet." It has been less adapted or "improved" in the course of its stage history than many of Shakespeare's plays (such adaptations, incidentally, are not always vandalism: a recent production in London of "Lear" in its "happy ending" version by the Restoration poet Nahum Tate, showed it to have many merits).

Many critics would count "Othello" as Shakespeare's dramatic masterpiece. Macaulay wrote that "'Othello' is, perhaps, the greatest work in the world." Certainly such magnificent theatre, such intensity, such tight-knit construction, such mounting dramatic excitement, such sweep of passion, such superb language, have rarely if ever been combined together in such measure in a single play.

But critics are seldom unanimous, and here is what Thomas Rymer wrote of the play in "A Short View of Tragedy" (1693):—

"There is in this Play, some burlesk, some humour, and ramble of Comical Wit, some shew, and some Mimickry to divert the Spectator: but the Tragical part is, plainly none other, than a Bloody Farce, without salt or savour."

Our hope is that seeing our production will not drive you to be of Mr. Rymer's view.

A. E.

The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice

By

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Characters in order of appearance :

Roderigo, a Venetian gentleman	...	...	...	WILLIAM BEESLEY
Iago, Ancient to Othello	...	...	...	WILFRID SHARP
Brabantio, a Senator	...	...	...	CYRIL BOX
Othello	...	...	...	FRANK WHITE
Cassio, Lieutenant to Othello	...	...	...	JOHN HOWARD
Duke of Venice	...	...	...	ALBERT HOOPER
Gratiano, a brother to Brabantio	...	...	...	DOUGLAS THOMAS
Lodovico, a Senator	...	...	...	JOHN BEESLEY
Another Senator	...	...	...	ROY MATTHEWS
A Messenger	...	...	...	ROY AMBROSE
Desdemona, daughter to Brabantio	...	...	...	JOYCE HORNETT
Montano, Governor of Cyprus	...	...	...	PETER BOWEN-EVANS
Gentlemen of Cyprus	...	...	...	{ NORMAN DEWHIRST ROY AMBROSE
Emilia, wife to Iago	...	...	...	CATHERINE BELL
A Herald	...	...	...	ROY MATTHEWS
Bianca, mistress to Cassio	...	...	...	ELIZABETH WELLMAN

The Play Produced by - ALFRED. EMMET

Associate Producer and Décor GRAHAM HEYWOOD

Costumes : Designed by - STELLA LEWIS AND JOYCE HORNETT

Executed by - HILDA COLLINS, MARJORIE IVES,
AND THE WARDROBE STAFF

Settings : Constructed by - PETER ELLIS AND THE STAGE STAFF

Stage Manager - - - GEORGE BENN

Assisted by - - - RUTH MILNER AND JUDITH DAVIES

Lighting - - - GERRY ISENTHAL

Assisted by - - - CARL JOHNSON

Properties - - - VERA HURFORD AND
MARGARET DAVIES

Sound - - - ALBERT GIBBS

Production Secretary - - ANN CHEETHAM

Wigs by "BERT"

SCENE: The action of the play takes place in Venice and later, Cyprus.

The play will be presented in Three Parts. There will be an interval of 15 minutes after Part I and 5 minutes after Part II.

Refreshments will be served in the first interval.

In the interests of both players and audience, you are requested to restrict smoking in the Theatre while the play is in progress.

THE QUESTORS' BUILDING FUND

THE PLAN UNFOLDED

Of course you know that there is a Building Fund, and you probably understand the reason for its existence, but perhaps you sometimes wonder just how things are getting along, and how YOU are affected by its efforts. Therefore we would like to place the following information before you.

THE REASON

On some unpredictable date, perhaps very soon, it will be necessary for us to buy the land upon which our theatre now stands. If we are unable, financially, to do this, we shall most probably have to vacate the buildings we are now using, and until we can find somewhere else to operate, the work of The Questors will come almost to an end. As these are the bare facts, those of us who derive pleasure from the productions and other activities of our own theatre will immediately realise the necessity for safeguarding the future of The Questors.

THE AIM

Without going into a lot of details, we must tell you that it has been considered necessary to have available in cash, the sum of £5,000, in order that we may be able to negotiate for the purchase, when the time arrives. Please do not regard this figure, in itself, as being the value that we have set upon the land and buildings. Consider it, rather, as the Working Capital of the Building Fund.

THE ATTAINMENT

The Building Fund is not a charity, and the Building Fund Committee is not, at this stage, launching an appeal for direct contributions of money. It is the purpose of that Committee to organise money-raising functions which in themselves will give pleasure or amusement to those who support them. The Committee wants to give something for, the money it is raising, and is working on the principle that those who have created The Questors, and feel there is a need for The Questors, will whole-heartedly support these efforts.

To date we have some £1,100 in the Building Fund, and this has been collected by means of Whist Drives, Christmas and Derby Draws, Raffles, Concerts, Dances, and special Building Fund performances of Questor productions.

We therefore ask all of you who find that The Questors fills a place in your lives to continue your support of the Building Fund, so that there will be no curtailment of the pleasure we all derive from productions hall-marked "Questors."

We draw your attention to the details of a concert to be held on Saturday evening, December 10th, in the theatre, and assure you that this will be a most enjoyable function. In this manner and in others now being considered by the Building Fund Committee, we intend to continue to hold your interest in the Fund, and for this purpose we promise to let you hear a great deal more from us in the future.

The Building Fund Committee has pleasure in announcing that a

CONCERT OF MUSIC

has kindly been arranged by

ELIZABETH YARROW

for

SATURDAY, 10th DECEMBER

in

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

at 7.30 p.m.

Artists :

JOHN DAVIES, Clarinet NORMAN TATTERSALL, Baritone
ELIZABETH YARROW, Pianoforte

Programme includes music by Purcell, Scarlatti, Mozart, Chopin, and Vaughan Williams.

The Artists will give a brief description of the works they will be playing during the concert.

ADMISSION, by Programme - 2s. 6d.

The Programmes are NOW ON SALE to Members only, and as the Concert is

IN AID OF THE BUILDING FUND,

Members are asked to bring as many friends as possible, and to buy their programmes TO-NIGHT. (Further programmes can be purchased by Members only at the Theatre.)

PAULS BUTTERY

Our new Buttery is now open. Designed for those of our clients who do not desire a full meal, it gives exclusive service and is fully-licensed.

THE MENU includes the following:-
Sandwiches, Salads, Savouries
on Toast, Sweets, Ices, Sundaes,
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