

# QUESTORS' 'HENRY' PLEASED THE ADJUDICATOR

VERY complimentary comments upon the Questors' production of "Henry the Fourth, Part One," were made by Mr. John Izon, the adjudicator at the Ealing drama festival. With this play the Questors are participating in the festival, although not competitively, and Mr. Izon watched the performance on Tuesday evening.

In a subsequent talk to the cast and Mr. A. Emmet, the producer, Mr. Izon said he thought this play the best of Shakespeare's histories.

It had been very well acted with intelligence and agility, and he had enjoyed the performance very much.

Mr. Izon particularly praised the presentations of the king (Bernard McLaughlin), Hotspur (Tony King), Falstaff (John Howard) and Mistress Quickly (Dorinne Ingram). Miss Ingram's performance, when she got thoroughly into the part, was an admirable one.

## Small points

Mr. Izon's criticisms were only on small points, one or two of which led to friendly arguments between him and Mr. Emmet.

He said that he thought the big scene between the king and his son might have started a little more formally. He thought Hotspur was occasionally too reflective for so impetuous a character.

## "Clever" fight

The fight, he said, was cleverly managed; but he would have preferred the noises of a little less staccato and more piano!

He concluded, however, by repeating how much he had enjoyed the evening.

He also paid a tribute to the Questors' audience, which was "receptive to Shakespeare."

W.H.

# Questors bring to life a rich tapestry

**I**MPOSSIBLE, somehow, to consider "Henry IV," Part One, by itself: to detach it from "Richard III," its forerunner in the great tetralogy, or most importantly from its successors, Part Two and "Henry V"—which go to make up a trilogy, and a portrait of a young man, only comparable in historical and personal insight with that of the youthful Gorki.

The young man here, of course, is Hal, Prince Harry, Henry V to be. And throughout the innumerable episodes in this first chapter of his adult development, throughout his scrapes and japes with Sir John Falstaff at Eastcheap and his fight against Hotspur's rebels at Shrewsbury, pass hints of the events to come: the assumption of the crown by the sick King's bedside; the final, inevitable and necessary split from the fat knight; and Harfleur, and Agincourt, and Katharine of France.

## Rich tapestry

What a rich, spreading tapestry, then: for it seems to embrace the whole of England, high and low (both geographically and socially).

Perhaps there are a few long speeches too many; perhaps not. Certainly we accept them with readiness because of the treasures in between: above all because of the tavern scenes which form the heart of the thing, culminating in one of those sudden flashes of inspired invention that are the mark of the master-dramatist, as Falstaff cries in jest during a charade, "Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world," and the Prince replies prophetically, "I do, I will."

## Moment of truth

In Alfred Emmet's production now at the Questors

Theatre until November 14, Myles McDowell arguably fails to give this moment of truth sufficient evocative emphasis.

But Mr. McDowell (though in general more convincing as mischievous Hal than royal Henry) doesn't make any mistake with the character's other touches of seriousness, his sincere and moving words over Hotspur's corpse (and the supposed corpse of Sir John).

## Original detail

And Mr. Emmet's handling of the entire piece affords little scope for criticism. Upon a stage appropriately echoing the old Globe, he deploys his company with proficiency, valuably assisted by Tadeusz Orłowicz's sets, Marjorie Golsby's costumes and Bill Rudderham's vigorously arranged duels.

The battles are full of original detail, ranging from lusty shield-thwacking to soldiers spitted by arrows in mid-stride and finished off by vulturine scavengers.

## Loving treatment

As for the comedy sequences, they receive leisurely but loving treatment: dominated, thank Providence, by a Falstaff worth the name.

Eyes rolling in cherubic calculation, lips parting in cherubically self-satisfied smile or mountainously shaking chuckle, John Howard can never hope to be better cast—or better.

DOUGLAS McVAY



# QUESTORS PLAY-AND PLAN



The Questors presented *Henry IV (Part I)* at the Questors Theatre, Ealing, on Tuesday, in the Ealing Drama Festival. The Questors took a non-competitive part. Talking to the cast here is their director, Mr. A. E. Emmett. Meanwhile the Questors have revised the building plans for their new theatre, which will now be on the lines of the model (below). The new plans incorporate the present house in Mattock-lane. The buildings on the right of the model have already been completed—mostly by voluntary work by the Questors (see page 16)

