

The Questors Theatre Archives
Questories
New Plays Festival
17th Festival 1976

MIDDLESEX CHRONICLE
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WELL IT WAS ORIGINAL IF NOTHING ELSE

JOHN Norman's play *Agitator*, which forms the second of the Questors' Festival of Three New Plays, is original if nothing else.

Directed by the author, it has only one character, yet is played by two players! How come? Holyoake, as a young man, is played by Robin Ingram, and as a not so very old one, by Tony Barber.

Then, in the second act, they swap parts! This seemed a good idea up to a point because, having to don Mr. Barber's beard and moustache, Mr. Ingram was greatly worried by keeping them fixed on Friday when I saw the play! However, all was well that ended well.

The piece has a motto theme taken from George Santayana: "If children did not see visions, good men would have nothing to work for."

Socialistic in tone from the old man, with counter-blasts from the young one, references to Gladstone pleading for the Liberal Party went on to modern times with the working man's claims for his rights.

In the second act, a lady's voice just behind me called out: "We have had enough of your socialist stuff," which was effectively if lengthily swept under the carpet by young Holyoake.

It was all in the script, of course.

Interesting if hardly "box office" material.

Though the two actors made brave efforts to project the part, it needed stronger declamatory power if anything was to be made of it.

MAURICE REEVE