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Play that dwells on cruelty of time

QUESTORS' STUDENTS IN PRIESTLEY PIECE

Watching now that play which Priestley wrote about the cruelty of time and the disillusionment of a generation, "Time and the Conways," it almost seems there should be another act to bring it up to date. The Questors Student Group did the play this week as the finale to their two-year training course, and it made one wonder what another 20 years would have done to this rather awful family.

We see them in 1919, light-heartedly looking forwards to a world of gay adventure and, of course, success. Then we see them 20 years older, with all their dreams shattered, gathered round to look at the wreckage of the family Conway for the last time. Nothing much is left then, would there be anything at all left to-day?

Mama at least would be dead, the selfish tyranny that helped in turn to ruin each of her children over, but not soon enough to save them. She dreamed so hard and so loud for each of her children that it was a foregone conclusion they would fail her. Mrs Conway is a mammoth figure who should brood over the play - something which unfortunately Lindsay Bouvet failed to do. She did not seem to realise that she was the pivot of the play, and was the only one who failed to bridge the 20-year gap with success.

firemen fight the blaze. W.H.

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Hers was a hard part, needing far more maturity than the others. It was strange, though, that the best and most convincing acting came from the students in the second act when they were playing middle-aged people.

FLIRTING WITH LIFE

In the first act Sandra Turner was a carefree enough Hazel, flirting with life and eating chocolates, but she was a better Mrs. Ernest Beevers in the second act, tragic wife of an indelicate bully. Kay was another tragic figure. While Hazel dreamed of romance in faraway places she dreamed of literary fame as she hopefully penned romantic lines—which 20 years later have got her as far as writing women's gossip in a popular newspaper. There was a lovely aloofness about Helen Blatch's Kay, and she acted well. She was as convincing as the hard Kay of 40 as the dreaming and sensitive 21-

year-old. And she had, too, a lovely voice. Carol dies, but somehow that seems less tragic than the others. She is all sweetness and goodness, and Dorothy Boyd-Taylor made her so truly delightful that we missed her on the stage in the second act. Madge is the hardest of the lot, after 20 years, and after another 20 years nobody will have heard from her for a long time, and they will have forgotten that one glorious release in her youth when she preached a sermon of socialism to a man she could have loved. Barbara Turpin was Madge—a true emotionless spinster, but allowing herself to let go with ferocity when necessary.

APPLE OF MAMA'S EYE

Another King played Robin, the apple of Mama's eye who slips almost too easily into failure, Hilary Sheath played Joan the girl who caught him on the rebound from the war and never quite realises it was the silliest thing she did, and Stuart Hartley was Alan, the only Conway who seems content, because he never aspires to anything. The man who married Hazel and took away her happiness, Ernest Beevers, was acted with humour, and a wonderful dour accent, by Derek Morris. Alistair Elliott was Gerald, the friend who stays like most small town people, a thing which not one of the Conways of Newingham seemed able to do. These students made a good job of a not very exciting play and most of them showed promise which a few years more experience will help. One or two of them, Helen Blatch and Dorothy Boyd-Taylor in particular, had a variety which lend them to greater things than Priestley. There will be a final performance of the play tonight.

A.W.

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