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4-A PLAYERS NEED NO ALIBI FOR "THE PERFECT ALIBI"

Presentation Of Milne's Murder Mystery Play In Little Theater Good To The Last Drop
George Austin Director

By RANGNAR LIND
Former 4-A Player

Not an alibi was needed by those 4-A troupers responsible for presentation of the Annual Varsity Play, A. A. Milne's "The Perfect Alibi" at Little Theater last December 15 and 16.

Their task was not easy. The magic phrase "Varsity Play" on the program brought on them the same sort of responsibility borne by manufacturers of all widely advertised products "Good? They've got to be good," say Mr. and Mrs. First-nighter upon seeing the label on the "cover". True to tradition, the cast, headed by Clyde Holbrook, Ruth Benham, and Edward Curtin, by adroit handling of dialogue, and studied, astute definition of personalities, carried through a performance that stayed "good to the last drop" of the curtain.

Mystery Drama

At a time when the air is literally full of crime-club dramas, Fu Manchu mysteries and the like, "The Perfect Alibi" may be considered a happy choice for the public palate. It tells of an English Magistrate,

gloats a bit before consummating his revenge—gloats just long enough to be tricked off guard by Carter from behind. Judge Ludgrove disarms him and telephones the village constable. In doing this he gives the gun to Carter who startles the audience by shooting the Judge forthwith. The two criminals present a contrast before they take cover—Laverick, the frightened, nervous, hunted man; Carter, the cool, contemptuous, egotistic criminal planning the perfect crime. He leaves a letter to establish motive for suicide.

Constable Mallet is convinced that "hits a clear case of suicide, h'all right." His son, Sergeant Mallet, Scotland Yard rookie, is less easily convinced but, after filling a notebook with the alibis of household and guests, is prevailed on by his father to let the dead rest for fear of digging up scandal.

Midnight Meeting

But Susan, summoning her faithful James to a midnight tryst in the parlor, proceeds to prove that little girls who read detective stories do not waste their time. She has blotting paper on her mind, a note which her "man Watson" pooh poohs at first. He soon catches the spirit, however, takes up the scent "full cry" and tears apart the murderers' perfect alibis like a Philo Vance. A creaking door disturbs everyone's blood-pressure for a moment but the scene ends without bloodshed.

The action is saved from a too rapid denouement by Susan's bearing the beardless Mr. Carter along in the living-room, after his bearded accomplice, Laverick, has apparently escaped. She leads Carter into a confession and then shows him in what respect he falls short of being the perfect criminal. He had neglected to take his gun with him to the morning bath—result, unloaded revolver. The villain's sleek composure gives way finally in a burst of temper and as he bursts out of the door (to be captured backstage) the demure detective collapses on the comfortable shoulder of her dependable James.

Excellent Performance

If top honors were to be conferred, in this admirably cast production, they should go to the slender, suave international crook—Clyde Holbrook. By slight gestures of slender hands and subtle changes of voice he imparted just enough of the sinister to a character that was often elusive even to those watching him through the "fourth wall" of that English living-room in Sussex.

Ruth Benham, as Susan, who showed up the men folk by "playing" her womanly "hunch", and then had the grace not to say "I told you so," was our idea of what the sporting English-girl should be. She was

demure, bantering, timid, serene, or bold-spoken—each in their proper place. That she was attractive goes without saying, else could she never have so convincingly wrapped her fiancé (Edward Curtin) around her finger. Mr. Curtin made James a very natural and pleasing hero, and did not at all look the stupidity he showed in inviting two murderers for a peaceful week-end in the country.

David Foppish Major!

John David did a "jolly good job" as the foppish major with his weakness for widow hostesses at afternoon teas. He coaxed the full measure of comedy out of his traditional monologue by having the conventional number of accidents with it. Quite normal also was his English joke-interpretation-reaction-time when tested by the purring sarcasm of the feline Miss West (Ila Page) of the velvet voice and cushioned claws. We vote her an extra portion of cream for her performance.

Mr. Haver, as the kindly judge who had retired from active life to enjoy shirtsleeves and suspenders, played his role with fine repressed emotion. We were sorry to see him shot, especially since Mr. Laverick (John Curtis) was let live. The tested by the purring sarcasm of the made the better half of the audience regret that Mr. Gillette ever became an inventor, and, although this beard didn't hide the blackguard in him from the sleuthful Susan, it must have offered a tempting nesting-place to the objects of his solitary bird-walks.

Constable Mallet, whose complexion matched his tomatoes, was recognized under his chin-frieze of "spinach" as Russell Milnes '34. He carried the age and dialect very realistically and captured the heart of his audience by his homely honesty and kindness. "Sergeant" Mallet (Charles Povey) was a "son of his father", and we dare say, of his mother too, if his greater keenness were to be accounted for. He made a very snappy sergeant, whose brisk manner, crisp diction, and Frederic March features should carry him far in Scotland Yard, or elsewhere.

Russell Milnes as the butler, and Eleanor Libbey as the pink, fluffy matron whose behavior toward the major betrayed her to be at "the dangerous age", both impressed the audience as much as their parts allowed.

We must compliment Stage Manager Walter Gerke and his assistants, Charles Povey, Harold Gouleton, Roger Flynn, and electrician Julius Lombardi, for an extremely tasteful set. An amateur stage-set so pleasing as to attract the eye without suffering from the scrutiny, is quite rare.

Thelma Kittredge and Florence James must have been justly proud

President Gray Says That Bates Is Not In "Red" Losses On Investments During Year To Be About \$12,000

"There will be no 'red' in our current operations this year," said President Clifton Daggett, Gray answering the query last week of a Boston evening paper investigating financial conditions of New England Colleges.

Bates cannot economize except in minor particulars said the President "for limited funds have long ago taught the authorities to economize." The losses on investments during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1933 will be around \$12,000, more than twice that of the preceding year. Nevertheless salaries have not been reduced he added. Scholarships were increased by one-third a year ago, but this year even a larger increase is contemplated.

"The student body of 706," the letter concluded, "while slightly less than that of the preceding year is larger by 60 persons than the average of 1929-31."

TWO BATES STUDENTS COME FROM ORISSA, INDIAN PROVINCE

Robert And Kenneth Frost Tell Of Customs Peculiar To Worship Rites Among Indians—Both Can Speak Native Languages

By R. STOWELL WARE

If distance from home determines the degree of homesickness, there are now at Bates two brothers who should be very, very ill with nostalgia. They are Robert Frost '35, and his brother Kenneth, of the freshman class, who are separated from home by several thousands of miles of solid earth—straight down! Their home is in India, on the other side of the earth.

They live in the province of Orissa, in its capital city of Balasore. Balasore is about the size of Auburn. It is placed in a Kipling-esque setting, seven miles from the Bay of Bengal on one side, and ten miles from a charming jungle on the other.

Interesting Customs

Most of the natives who have not yet been converted to Christianity are devout Vaishnavas, who worship Jagannath, or Juggernaut. In fact, Balasore is only a few miles north of Puri, where the great car of Juggernaut is annually drawn in procession. The languages are Oriya and Hindustani. Both of the Frost brothers are fluent in both languages. Oriya is itself a very archaic language, and sounds like nothing else on earth.

Bob has been in America for two years and Ken, one, on his trip west, Bob followed a most interesting itinerary. He crossed the Persian Gulf from Bombay, and traveled overland to Bagdad, across the Syrian Desert to Damascus, then to Jericho. From Jericho he went to Cairo and Alexandria, then to Greece, Italy was next; during his stay there he "did" the country in the approved tourist style. He then visited Paris, before coming on to New York. This is the brothers' third visit to America. Once, when the European war was disrupting transatlantic service, they came by way of the Pacific route, touching Japan and Hawaii on the trip.

Parents are Missionaries

Their parents are missionaries. They have just completed a sabbatical year, spent in Lewiston, and returned to India. It will be seven years before they can again visit America. Bob, at least, may not see them again before that period has elapsed, as he is studying medicine and will have no time to travel to India.

Conditions of weather, of course, are much different here than in tropical India. The Frost brothers are very much aware of that fact. Asked for a comment on the New England climate, Ken said "Oh! TOO cold for me!"

PARTIES IN GYM TO BE CONTINUED

An evening of parties and games will be held Thursday, January 12, in the Women's Locker Building with Mrs. Percy D. Wilkins as chaperone. All girls and their friends are urged to come. A large crowd is desired, in order that these evenings may be continued for the benefit of the co-eds and their guests.

BATES JUNIOR AND DENTAL STUDENT PLAN TO WED

The engagement of Lucienne Blanchard '34, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Eames of Madison and Alva S. Appleby ex-'34 was announced during the Christmas recess. Miss Blanchard is prominent in the musical organizations of the college. Mr. Appleby, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Tyler Appleby of Skowhegan, is enrolled at Tufts Dental School. No date has been set for the wedding.

Calvin Coolidge

Continued from Page One

that comparatively the Coolidge administration was quite devoid of public scandal, indolence and ignorance of government.

He was called the emotionless orator and indeed went through life rather emotionless. One may wonder, however, if this silent goody man was so emotionless other than in words. He had been taught to use words to convey concrete thoughts rather than flowery expressions and he must have possessed the ordinary sentiments and emotions.

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