

# The Daily Tar Heel

The official newspaper of the Publications Union Board of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where it is printed daily except Mondays, and the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Holidays. Entered as second class matter at the post office of Chapel Hill, N. C., under act of March 3, 1879. Subscription price, \$3.00 for the college year.

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CITY EDITOR FOR THIS ISSUE: BOB PAGE

Sunday, February 4, 1934

### Talent in "Princess Ida"

The performance given by the large cast in Gilbert and Sullivan's charming comic operetta, "Princess Ida," was excellent. The drama and music directors, after seeing the two brilliant amateur performances on Friday and Saturday evenings and after observing the peculiar satisfaction which the audience seemed to experience, should feel compensated for the enormous amount of hard work they have been putting forth day and night for the past weeks. The directors realized, of course, that a drama of that type would either be a total failure or a fairly big success. With a cast that had to maintain itself in scholastic work at the same time it was using all its spare time in practice, and with the double necessity of having performers who could both act and sing simultaneously, those directors displayed an admirable manipulation of resource.

The biggest reason for the success of "Princess Ida" was the cooperation of cast, directors, music department, costume technician, dance director, scenic technician, orchestra, and the audience. Most of the cast came to all the important practices, showing a spontaneous interest in the vivid little play and attempting to portray accurately the light atmosphere of woman warring desperately against man. The directors, as usual, revealed a sympathetic and tireless attitude. The music department should be especially commended for the time and talent it gave. Mr. Miller, the new director who has actually revived the spirit of vocal music on the University campus, demonstrated that in a short time amateur talent can be successfully polished. Oramae Davis worked day and night to create innumerable costumes; and they were a marvel of color. They were extremely vivid because of the flowing lines of the women's gowns and the brilliant belligerence of the men's. Phoebe Barr, formerly with the Dennis-Shawn dance troupe, added grace to the pantomime and the dance with instructive hints gathered from her own career. The scenery, supervised by Harry Davis, was appropriate and well-done. Thor Johnson and his string ensemble pervaded the opera with music that created the proper, amusing moods, and, finally, gave stimulating attention and enthusiasm.

All these were the sources of the sensational success of "Princess Ida." And they should all be given a big hand!—J.S.C.

### By the P. U. Board

The decision of the P. U. board to join the Audit System and to provide free copies of the DAILY TAR HEEL to faculty members mark two of the most constructive steps that this body has undertaken.

The latter move, since it concerns the DAILY TAR HEEL so vitally, is especially gratifying at this time. Free subscriptions for faculty members will be given only throughout a period of two months, but during that time the paper hopes to print its critical comment on possible curriculum change, which it has already begun, and on like subjects involving student-faculty relationships. It is obvious that such comment, reaching only the student body, would be to no avail unless it also reached the faculty, who, in

last analysis, will have the final say-so on University policies.

Besides this particular need, there is a broader one which involves the very purpose of a student paper. The faculty, as a whole, have heretofore had no common organ which would help to mould opinion among them, no common ground on which they would meet student ideas and criticism. It is to be hoped that the DAILY TAR HEEL will serve these purposes, at least for the two months in which subscriptions are being provided free of charge.

And we are also hopeful, but by no means over-optimistic, that these trial subscriptions or "free samples" of the DAILY TAR HEEL will stimulate faculty subscriptions in the future, after the P. U. board's provision for them has expired.—A.T.D.

### Attention, Student Entertainment Committee

Congratulations, and we were glad to see such a good attendance and such splendid appreciation of the campus fight into the operatic world, meaning the production of "Princess Ida." This was also one of the biggest productions to be staged in Memorial hall. The success of this production should predict more and larger entertainments in this place.

The nature of this entertainment was light and interesting. This success should give a good indication to the student entertainment committee of about what type of diversion is appreciated by the campus world.

After the ordinary wear and tear of the student's studious life, light and diverting entertainment is more to his liking than heavy, thoughtful subjects.

The appreciation that the audience showed was well merited by the great amount of work and effort expended by those who made the production of "Princess Ida" possible.—J.M.V.H.

### Spring Nearly Here, So What?

Perhaps no more worth-while proposition has been set forth on the campus in recent times than that which advocates the setting up by the University of a college placement board. Spring is just around the corner, and with it will inevitably come another crop of graduates, a large portion of whom, if left to their own efforts, will not be successful in obtaining positions, and hence, instead of functioning in their intended capacities as builders in the social order, they will become dead weights on their respective families.

It is not to be expected, however, that such a board, if set up would be able to place the whole senior class, or even a large portion of it; the expense would be too great to be undertaken in such a time as this. A placement board would certainly be a great aid in securing jobs for some of those students who otherwise have no "pull" in the business world, though, even in this year 1934. And as normal times approach, the influence of the board could be extended until it might eventually be in position to handle the entire placement situation on the campus.

It is admitted that an effective placement board could not be put in operation without considerable expense, but, viewed from all angles, it seems that money so spent would not be foolishly invested. It might even be possible to get aid from the National Employment Bureau, at least until the board has been properly set up. If necessary, there could be a small fee for registration with the board, with a larger fee to be paid by those who were successfully placed by it.

Replacement bureaus are functioning satisfactorily at the other large universities and the time seems ripe for it to be given a trial here.—W.A.S.

### With Contemporaries

#### CWA and the Student (Daily Kansan)

Colleges and universities are actually floundering in new found wealth—and debt—through civil and public works grants and appropriations.

But the students do not work. Labor that would have been possible under old campus improvement projects has been taken away. Instead, there is an influx of unemployed workers who range from those with no education to those with college degrees. But very few students.

On only one campus, the University of Minnesota, can a student, no matter how needy or struggling he may be, take advantage of government relief projects through such agencies as the CWA.

Blanket elimination of all students on all other campuses from constructive public or civil work is an aimed blow at the student who must work to pay for his education.

Formerly, state appropriations were made to cover construction and repair on university and college grounds throughout the country. And students were employed.

But that is gone! State money is combined

## Playmakers' Production Of Opera Marked By Brilliance And Wit

Organization's Art of Fashioning Colorful and Sophisticated Stage Patterns Carries Spirit of Opera to Audience in First Moment and Sustains It Throughout Show.

PRINCESS IDA, by Gilbert and Sullivan. Presented by the Carolina Playmakers in Memorial hall on Friday and Saturday, February 2 and 3, at 8:30 o'clock in the evening.

### By Robert Barnett

As has been the experience of the Carolina Playmakers before, in the presentation of "Princess Ida" they successfully rose above mediocrity in one department of their production to offer a total impression marked by an extraordinary measure of brilliance and wit.

"Princess Ida" is one of the less known of the perennially popular Gilbert and Sullivan light operas. Based upon a comic theme strongly resembling Aristophanes' satiric comedy, its effect is heightened by the charming musical score of Mr. Sullivan.

The Carolina Playmaker's production of "Princess Ida" offers further substantiation of a view that this department has long held. The organization's real forte is that of fashioning colorful and sophisticated stage patterns that appeal immediately to the eye. When the stage was opened to the eyes of the audience on Friday night it contained a dazzling arrangement of costumes set against a soft pastel background. The effect upon the audience was immediate. The crowd broke out in enthusiastic applause. The spirit of the opera was caught in this initial moment and was sustained throughout the rest of the evening in spite of periods of inferior vocalizations, unintelligible line giving, and awkward stage business.

### Credit to Mrs. Davis

Credit for the costumes must be given to Mrs. Oramae Davis, who, I am told, has been working on them until four and five o'clock in the morning during the past week. At nine o'clock on Thursday night she was short a dozen costumes or so. It was thought that nothing less than a miracle could produce the garments for the members of some of the choruses. Apparently the miracle occurred for on Friday night the chorus was quite properly attired, giving not the slightest evidence of nudist propensities. The fact is that Mrs. Davis is quite a miraculous individual. The designs of the costumes were hers. Further, the actual execution of them was hers as well. The helmets were made from glue and paper towels. Leather boots were made from oil cloth; the silver and gold and velvet and silk all came to be by the wave of her magic wand.

"Princess Ida," however, was far from a costume pageant. Mr. Davis' direction of the comic business was evident throughout the performance. Particularly good was Mr. Fitz-Simons' work as King Gama. His buckling knee, hooked nose, shred of beard, and gleaming teeth gave his voice a physical setting of which he made good use. Charles Templeton and Alfred Barrett as Cyril and Florian performed their roles with admirable grace and subtlety. Mr. Barrett's exaggerated feminine mannerisms brought howls of amusement with federal money. The student who must work, packs his bag and applies to charity for the right to work on his own campus. There is no other alternative; he must pack his bag and get out of school in order to work.

This is a discrimination that must be remedied.

ment from the audience. Jesse Parker as Hilarion showed himself to be ill at ease by his self-conscious wringing and waving of hands. Miss Cortese, as Princess Ida, showed herself to be an accomplished actress as well as a pleasing singer. She quite dominated the stage with her beauty and dignity and the crisp authority of her voice. Oakley, Guernay Briggs, and Raymond Brietz as the three sons of King Gama introduced a broad, farcical element into the business of the stage that was quite irresistible. Throughout the play it was possible to see Mr. Davis' hand moulding his actors into visible comic patterns and sequences.

### Fail to Exploit Music

That the Carolina Playmakers failed to exploit the musical possibilities of this light opera may be explained by the rather evident fact that there is a startling paucity of good singers on the campus. The "Princess Ida" failed to uncover a single voice of more than passing talent. Miss Cortese's work as Princess Ida was at intervals quite impressive. Mr. Fitz-Simons'

singing as King Gama possessed at least one desirable characteristic. His articulation was almost perfect. Mr. Parker's singing as Prince Hilarion was, perhaps, the best of the male singing, although the audience continually felt that he was straining for his notes. This was due, in all likelihood, to Mr. Parker's inexperience as an actor and the nervous tension which resulted from his divided attention, divided between acting and singing. Miss Frederick's, Miss McCauley's, Miss Bradley's singing was sweet, but lacking in power. The choruses were moderately effective, but lacked the thrilling power, and the tender harmony that one comes to expect from the best choruses. No one could possibly become ecstatic over the musical effects produced by the Playmaker cast on Friday night. On the other hand, at no time did the music become offensive, an agony, as is so often the case in amateur musicals.

As soon as one reconciled himself to the fact that he wasn't going to hear the very best, it was even possible to get real

(Continued on page four)

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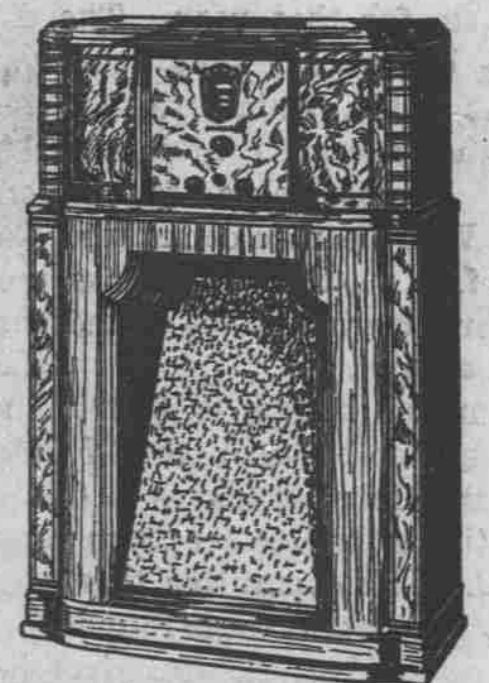
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