

# National Players' Merchant of Venice Criticized

(The principal reason I am writing this criticism is to learn for myself how to write a decent criticism. The first problem I face is ignorance of the theater and Shakespeare. The second is that it is hard to speak from one's self rather than saying what one is supposed to say.—Ed.)

**THE MERCHANT OF VENICE** is a play depicting antagonism between Jew and Christian revealing at the same time little difference between the two.

The best way to watch such a Shakespearean play is to be well familiarized with it before curtain time. If one is familiar with the play, he will not totally miss out on the beginning action while he is adjusting to the elevated speech which often, for me at least, pre-

sents a fairly serious problem.

The recent production of **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE** presented by the National Players 18 Feb. in Moore Auditorium did not present this problem to me. However, my impression of the National Players is that they, being a young and mischievous crew, felt that no one would notice in "them thar hills" if they played around with Shakespeare and did with it what they wanted.

Whether or not this is truth doesn't really matter. What is important is how the performance came off, and to that I could only answer "fair to middling." The power that should have been there

simply wasn't.

There were two reasons for the weakness. First, there was much too big a play upon the humorous lines. This seems to do Shakespeare injustice, for the humor of Shakespeare is in content rather than presentation. Still, it must be admitted that the sissy prince of Arragon played by James Beard, came out a pleasing figure. Second, almost none of the players had the sonorous voices that are pre-requisite to Shakespeare. Shylock played by Benjamin Hess Slack probably came closer to being the traditional Shakespearean actor than any of the others simply because of his

melodramatic voice. Antonio played by Alan Share, had a pleasing, mellow voice which he used a little too meagerly.

Oddly, my favorite players were Nerissa and Shylock. Nerissa, played by Emily Michaud, sparkled with mischievousness and for that reason seemed quite right for the part. Shylock, too, was enjoyable as he raged, frothed, and sputtered across the stage. His only flaw was occasional poor enunciation. He also played his role well. Antonio would have been just as good if he had been just a little more dramatically expressive. Portia, played by Ilona Dulaski, was good but some-

how did not appear outstanding.

Bassanio, Charles Murphy, and Lorenzo, Hugh G. Kelley, were not the actors of the major roles. They seemed too much like modern "cools." Jessica, Noreen Bartolomeo, wasn't bad, but neither did she have the strength that she should have had.

All in all, this play was neither the best nor worst Shakespearean production I have seen. Though it did, indeed, leave something to be desired, it also provided the all too rare experience at Mars Hill of the great English dramatic tradition.

—cey

Take Part I of the TIME Currents Affairs Test on pages four and five. Part II will be published next issue. Answers for Part I appear on page five.



the Mars Hill College

# Hilltop

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Stars of the forthcoming drama production are (standing l. to r.) Candy Coles as Louka and Brick Tilley as Sergius; (seated l. to r.) Barbara Blythe as Catherine and Mike Yelton as Petkoff.

## Arms and the Man To Be in the Round

**ARMS AND THE MAN**, a play by George Bernard Shaw, will be presented by the drama division 9-11 Mar. under the direction of Dr. Charles Cox. The drama will be produced arena-style on the main stage of Moore Auditorium with the audience seated on each side of the actors.

This seating arrangement "in the round" allows a closer identification by the audience with the characters and their actions. The first arena-style play, **NO EXIT**, was sponsored last spring by the Scriblerus Honor Club.

Included in the cast are Kathy Young, Raina; Barbara Blythe, Catherine; Candy Coles, Louka; Perry White, Bluntschli; Brick Tilley, Sergius; Mike Yelton, Petkoff; David Jones, Nicola; and Andy Biro, an officer.

Working on the stage crew are Katie Swofford, assistant to the director; Mike Yelton, technical director; and Wayne Slagle, stage manager.

Since only a limited number of seats will be available each night, students planning to attend the production must obtain tickets in the Fine Arts lobby at a time to be announced.

The play, which takes place during the last days of the Serbo-Bulgarian War, concerns an enemy soldier who takes refuge in the bedroom of a Bulgarian woman and the complications which arise as she tries to protect him. Shaw begins his play by creating an illusion of the hero's being a villain and of the villain's being a hero.

Plans are also being made for a presentation of Shakespeare's **TWELFTH NIGHT**, which will be performed this spring in the amphitheater. The cast has not yet been selected.

## Newscape

Belated congratulations to Ann Kirby, whose name was omitted last issue. Miss Kirby won a Home Economics Scholarship Award.

Two of our junior music students will be giving a joint voice recital on 17 Mar. in Spainhour Hall in the Fine Arts Building. Miss Mary Rome Rector, mezzo-soprano, and James Claude Richardson, tenor, will begin their program at 8 p.m.

The 30 students who attended the missions conference at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., returned last Sunday with glowing reports about their weekend. Mars Hill was well represented at this conference. John David McGee, a former student here, planned the conference at Southern Seminary along with his various committee chairmen, three of which are Mars Hill graduates, Martha Penley, Andy Good, and Glen Davenport.

John Kollen, pianist, will be presented in recital in Moore Auditorium on 13 Mar. at 8 p.m.

## Venture in Faith Planned

The Rev. Ed Stach is coming to Mars Hill next week through the auspices of the Mars Hill Methodist Church. This will be a part of the "Venture in Faith" program sponsored by the Methodist churches in the Southeast.

On Tuesday, 7 Mar., Rev. Stach will speak at the Brown Dormitory devotions. Thursday, 9 Mar., he will address block students of the College at 9 a.m. That evening at 10:00 he will be holding informal discussions in the Alley Door. The next day Rev. Stach

will speak at student prayer service.

From 12-15 Mar., at 7:30, Rev. Stach will be speaking nightly at the Mars Hill Methodist Church.

During this time Rev. Stach will be available to meet with any group of students or interested persons. For further information, contact the Rev. Durwood Hofer at the Mars Hill Methodist Church.

Rev. Stach grew up in the inner city of Chicago.

## BSU Undergoing Re-organization

"The Baptist Student Union has a serious responsibility as the coordinating organization for religious activities on our campus," according to Paul Campbell, BSU president. "Therefore, this responsibility must be examined frequently in order to see if it is being fulfilled.

"Resentment against the organization and its Christian pur-

pose may be easily justified when the organization functions poorly and exclusively. It is for this reason that the BSU desires to change its structure and seek to serve the entire campus by providing more activities for involvement.

"The new structure will consist of six councils: 1) Enlistment Council, 2) Worship Council, 3)

Current Issues Council, 4) Social Actions Council, 5) Missions Council, 6) and Promotion Council. Each council will be composed of the various chairmen of committees and organizations which apply to the work of that particular council. Also, each council will have stated responsibilities, but will be urged to use creativity and experimentation in their endeavors. The chairman of each council will serve along with the president and the secretaries on the Executive Council. This council will appoint the ones who will compose the other councils, will coordinate the activities of the other councils, and will evaluate their work.

"The idea of the council structure is one used effectively at Baylor University and should work well on our campus. It gives more opportunity and flexibility in a service to the entire student body."

The whole structure cannot be adequately explained at this time for lack of space and also due to the fact that it has not been reviewed by the Religious Life Committee. However, the basic council structure has been approved. The election of President will take place on Tuesday, and at the same time nominations will be made for the chairmen of the various councils. On Thursday the election of the council chairmen will be held.

## Deputies Approved by SGA

SGA has been active in approving new deputies to the judicial branch, circulating petitions for student body officers, installing new phones in the dorms, and establishing the new President's Council.

The Senate has approved new deputies to aid in the judicial branch on campus. Tony Hawkins, the first appointee to the office of Defense Attorney, which was created last semester, and the Senate have approved Robert Davis as the Deputy Defense Attorney. Approved as Deputy Attorney General is David Smith. Senator Sheila Shephenson has said that this evidences that the MHC judicial system is continuing to grow and that students are gaining more power and responsibility in campus life.

Petitions have been circulated for student body officers since 22 Feb. The campaigns are slated from 7-14 Mar.; speeches in

chapel are slated 9 Mar.; and the elections are 15 Mar.

Additional dormitory phones are in the works. Although it is not possible for the college to obtain extra phones for the dorms on the free local call basis which is presently used, the phone company is working with the Senate and administration in trying to install two pay phones in each dorm, thus alleviating the phone traffic somewhat, reports Senator Stephenson.

The newly established President's Council met Monday, 21 Feb. for the first time. This council is made up of the presidents of each class and those of the major clubs on campus, and is presided over by Dr. Fred Bentley. This is a new concept in campus communication and is described by Dr. Bentley as giving "a clearer picture of the feelings of the student body and administration."