

Events And Reminders For Today

Anniversaries and Holidays. —
Dingnan's Day.
Bazaars. Opening of Students' Union Golden Jubilee Bazaar by Miss Barbara Black, at Hongkong University, 10.30 am.

Entertainments.—Hongkong Club—Dinner Dance and Floor Show, Garrison Players' "Jack & The Beanstalk", Missions to Seamen, Gloucester-road, 7.30 pm, Matinee at 3 pm; ter-road, 7.30 pm, Matinee at 3 pm; St. Stephen's Girls' College Charity Play "St. Joan", at Ho Tung Hall, 8 pm; European YMCA's Film "Seventh Voyage of Sinbad", West Leung, 8 pm; Quarry Bay School Christmas Play "Alice in Wonderland", Causeway Bay, 5.30 pm, Mrs. Duncan to present "House Cup", Sam Yau Middle School Concert, Morse Hay Auditorium, 17 Venetia-road, Happy Valley, 7.30 pm.

Exhibitions.—Paintings by Mr. Jos Keyser, Union House, 10th floor, 10 am-6 pm; Oil Paintings & Engravings by Mr. Lee Lau Dan, St. John's Cathedral Hall, 10 am-6 pm.

Meetings.—Annual Marzhan HK China Ltd, HK & S'hai Bank Extraordinary, 12.30 pm; Annual and Extraordinary, China Light & Power Co. Ltd, St. George's Bldg, 2nd floor, Noon and 12.10 pm respectively; Soldiers' and Sailors' Scripture Readers Assn Branch Meeting, European YMCA, 8 pm.

Miscellaneous. — Inter-Collegiate Oratorical Contest (English Section), and Prize-Giving Ceremony at Hongkong Baptist College, 90 Waterloo-road, Kowloon, 3 pm, sponsored by the Mencius Educational Foundation for Post-Secondary College Students; Recognition Service and Christmas Celebration for All Members and Candle-light service for newly confessed Christians shortly to be baptized, YMCA Hqrs., 1 Macdonnell-road, 7.30 pm; Chinese Catholic Club Christmas Party for 1,000 poor children of Holy Spirit School, Kun Tong, 3.30 pm; Hongkong Junior Chamber of Commerce Christmas Party for underprivileged children at Southern Playground, Wanchai (approx 1,000), 2 pm-5.30 pm; Y's Men's Club Christmas Party for Boys' & Girls' Club's Children, Methodist Church, Wanchai, 2.30 pm; Moon.—Ninth Day of the Eleventh Moon.

Socials.—Tombola, Cheero Club, Murray-road, 8 pm; Golden Jubilee Festival Celebration Party at Students' Union Bldg, Hongkong University, 8 pm.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Anniversaries and Holidays. — Sunday in Advent.

Entertainments.—Garrison Players' "Jack & The Beanstalk", Missions to Seamen, 40 Gloucester-road, Matinee, 3 pm; Open Air Concert, by the Band of Kowloon Motor Bus Co., at Victoria Park, 3-5 pm; Hongkong Concert Orchestra Christmas Concert, Paramount, 9 pm.

Exhibitions.—Paintings by Mr. Jos Keyser, Union House, 10th floor, 10 am-6 pm; Opening and Prize-Giving Ceremony of the Third Annual Student Photo Exhibition in Student Christian Centre Auditorium, 23C, Waterloo-road, Kowloon, 4 pm.

SCMP
December 16, 1961

Jack and the Beanstalk

SHAKY START, BUT THE CHILDREN ENJOYED IT

THE Garrison Players pantomime "Jack and the Beanstalk" got off to a shaky start last night at the Missions to Seamen theatre—but there are a lot of laughs and plenty of good fun for the children.

A number of criticisms can be made. The stage was too small by far. The beanstalk consequently was inclined to be unobtrusive. Indeed I did not notice it until Jack began his climb (up an ill-concealed ladder).

Players at various times seemed a little lost. The chorus on the road to market was sadly lacking in voice. There was an unexplained obstacle left on the stage in one scene which one of the back-moving dancers, of course, almost fell over. The jokes were often a little flat and certainly well above the children's heads.

The play, in short, seemed in need of a few more rehearsals and more critical direction in the early stages.

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Having said all this, I can imagine that more than half the audience who saw last night's show — the younger half and possibly a good many of the older half — will heartily disagree with me.

For there were many laughs, particularly when the cast came belting off the stage and chasing around the hall.

Esid-headed Mario Ferras as Egg and Norman Roper as Chips got a good many well-deserved laughs while Odorous

Egg, played by Patricia Haynes, worked hard in her ever-indignant role.

Jack, played by Chris Barber, seemed to have an almost incidental role. It was a night for the clowns—and for their own part they were a downing success.

The plant was a wee bit too garish and might give some small boys and girls a scare. I remember in Tientsin in 1934 seeing the same "panto" at the church hall. But all we saw of the giant on stage was one huge boot. I remember going out afterwards and looking up at the roof for the rest of him.

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One compliment I feel I must pay goes to David Hall and Peter Ryan who provided the four legs for Claribelle the cow. Their cha cha was delightful.

The sets were on the whole excellent.

The Garrison Players deserved greater success on their first night. They had obviously put a lot of work and time into it. Tonight's and the succeeding performances will undoubtedly go more smoothly.

The children will enjoy themselves and I recommend this as a good Christmas treat for them. —RH.

'Jack And The Beanstalk'

GIANT IS SUCCESS OF EVENING

BY ALEC M. HARDIE

If you are prepared to suspend all belief of age, mental and physical, and to ignore all standards of production and theatrical conventions, then in a mood of seasonal peace and good-will visit The Garrison Players' pantomime, "Jack and the Beanstalk" at the King George's Hall, Missions to Seamen.

However magnanimous your good-will may be, let it be admitted that this is not a good production. Some years ago I saw my first pantomime "Dick Whittington" in Hongkong. It was good. The Garrison Players gave us a theatrical treat in "The Drunkard" quite recently.

This pantomime is a sad affair; I was confirmed in this opinion by the fact that even our younger audience were not impressed or amused except in the Third Act when David Kondell - Carpenter's Giant

brought life to an otherwise dead script.

It would be invidious to probe too deeply into this evening, yet so slow was the tempo that we had plenty of time to contemplate some more attractive theme.

Either a pantomime must be spectacular—and this is impossible in such a hall—or humorously sophisticated. And speed is an essential. Lack of cooperation between orchestra and cast last night increased the slowness. And while the music struggled hard and effectively, only in the last Act were the actors able to throw their voices above the competition.

The slowness was general, cues were hardly taken, appearances were delayed and a complete uncertainty governed nearly all the cast. I think the Producer did not realise the difficulties that such a performance presents.

LACKED WIT AND POINT

The script was certainly lacking in wit and point; the topical references were thrown away. Even the easy lines were without natural emphasis in the mouths of most. We know Hongkong amateurs can do better than just "recite" lines without sense or humour.

What a pity that so much effort has been wasted! Chris Barber as Jack and Patricia McTavish as Jill both had good voices and personalities. With more "punch" and opportunity they might have been more outstanding and deliberate.

Of the comics Mario Ferras was comfortable. He gave the impression of understanding the situation, of enjoying playing with an audience, but he was restricted because he received little assistance.

The Giant was the success of the evening, and I wish he had appeared more often.

I would prefer to draw a seasonal veil over the rest. Claribelle, the cow, tried hard without much encouragement or disguise. The "extras" tried to add vivacity and enjoyment to the general effect, but they had little chance to sing audibly or dance with grace.

Lionel Levin's sets were imaginative and too good for the costumes that appeared in front of them.

I would like to believe that later performances will be better. I hope so, as on this first night showing the production is a sad conclusion to the present year in which the local standard has been so high.

SCMP-
December 15,
1961

CHINA MAIL
December 15, 1961

SCMP- December 14, 1961

"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"



A scene from Act 1 of "Jack and the Beanstalk" currently staged by the Garrison Players at the Missions to Seamen. Left

to right are Giles (John Lemaire), Jack (Chris Barber) and the Egg (Mario Ferras). — (Staff Photographer).

SCMP-HERALD
December 17, 1961

SCMP
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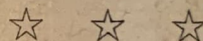
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CHINA MAIL
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Scmp. December 14, 1961

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