

Midsummer Night's Dream

by EUPHEMIA WYATT



MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM — Says Puck: "I'll put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes." Equally swift are Shakespeare's transitions from farce to fantasy; from poetry to burlesque; satire to romance.

"Midsummer" is also a challenge to the producer's imagination. Max Reinhardt, the great German producer, made a point of opening his production with processional pageantry to Mendelssohn's musical score with the Greeks in vivid Elizabethan dress in contrast to the fairies' classic cherubies. Puck appeared as a faun in a leopard skin.

Nearly thirty years later the Old Vic from London brought "Midsummer" to the vast stage of the Old Met in modified ballet form, also to the orchestration of Mendelssohn, with leading dancers, Robert Helpman and Mosira Shearer — of the bright red hair — as Oberon and Titania.

Oberon, the royal Fairy, dominated the production. Robert Helpman, swishing about his five foot train as gracefully as he spoke his poetic lines. Puck, also a dancer, wore a girdle of flowers; Stanley Holloway, later to be famous as the father in "My Fair Lady" was a disappointing Bottom but his ass's head had jaws that moved.

Stratford, Connecticut, presented its first "Midsummer" in 1958 directed by Jack Landau with music by Marc Blitzstein. Richard Waring was a slant-eyed but less dictatorial Oberon in blue and silver with attendant elves in bat-like black Titania, June Havoc in white satin, had four tiny boys as Cobweb, Moth, etc.

Richard Easton played Puck as a fezzed Robin Goodfellow. Its hard to believe that among the clowns was Morris Carnovsky himself as Quince with Hiram Sherman as a small but determined Bottom; Will Geer as The Wall and Ellis Raab (Founder of APA) as the Man in the Moon with a dachshund.

In the current production at Stratford, directed by Cyril Ritchard with music by Conrad Susa, decor by the Eckarts and costumes by Robert Fletcher, Titania is in shimmering white, Oberon and the fairies in floating blue and silver with the elves a bit grotesque in green. So is Puck, squat and muscular.

Myra Eason has dignity and repugnance in a white and gold Egegnity uniform with Helena, tall and blonde and Hermia, small and fiery, in white highwaisted muslins. The long scarves of the period being used aptly in the action. Their bickering, never exaggerated, is very funny. So are the clowns.

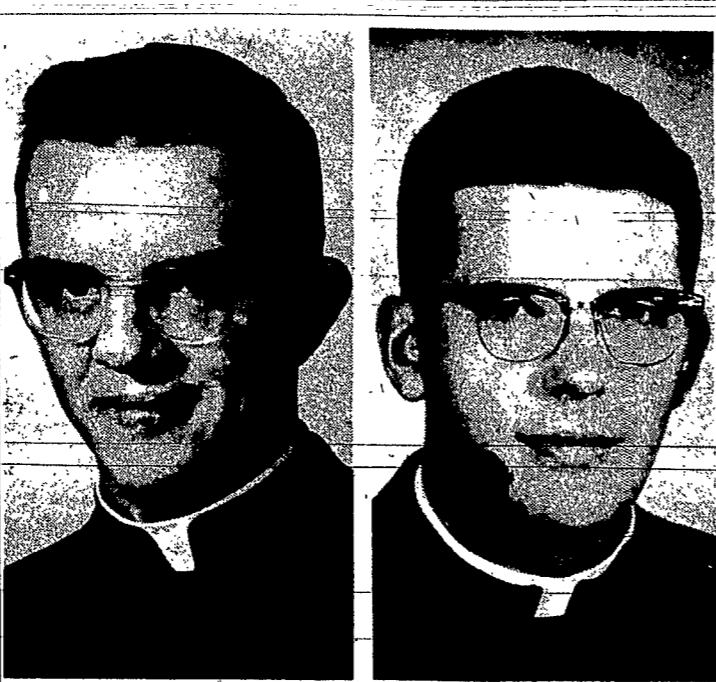
Mr. Ritchard has chosen to play both Oberon and Bottom — only once are they on the stage together and that is when Bottom has on the ass's head. Playing both parts, Mr. Ritchard is on the stage most of the time. I was afraid he might slight the poetry for the clowning but I was wrong. The poetry is music as ever; the clowning of the best.

Diana Davila and Dorothy Tristano are charming as Hermia and Helena; the Eckarts have symbolized the forest superbly in their one great silvery tree.

Mr. Ritchard seems to have infused the whole cast with his own natural gaiety. This is a "Midsummer Night's Dream" that has both high spirits and beauty.

ARMS AND THE MAN — It was written by Shaw in 1904 and Alfred Lunt once said of it, "I like a play in which at some point I can make the audience feel sorry for me." The play is a spoof on amateurs as seen by a professional who in this case is a Swiss Captain in the Serbian army who enters Hains' bed chamber from a balcony to escape the Bulgarian snipers.

Lunt's Captain was exhausted enough to win the sympathy he desired. Richard Mansfield



FATHER ERBLAND

FATHER DONAHUE

Maryknollers from Diocese Given Peru Assignments

Two Maryknoll priests, natives of the Rochester diocese, have just received their new assignments in Peru.

Father John M. Donahue, son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Donahue, Elmira, has been assigned to San Martin de Porras Seminary at Puno, Peru. This seminary is considered to be the highest in the world, located on the Peruvian altiplano, better than 12,500 feet above sea level.

While studying to become a Maryknoller at Ossining, New York, Father Donahue could watch the cargo boats, tankers and excursion cruises on the Hudson. Now on Lake Titicaca, he also sometimes sees excursion boats of tourists; more frequently it is the strange-looking

balsa wood craft of Aymara Indian fishermen.

Father Philip N. Erbland, son of Mr. Walter J. Erbland of Fairport, will be working among the Indians in Juli, Peru in his first mission assignment.

Juli, though not one of Peru's larger cities, is the administrative center of the prefecture of Maryknoll Bishop Edward L. Fedders. The prefecture — an area in mission lands roughly equal to a diocese — takes in a large part of the Peruvian area around Lake Titicaca and includes more than a quarter of a million at least nominal Catholics.

City Leader

Sees 'Financial Ruin' If Catholic Schools Close

Cohoes — Common Council President Robert M. Curran of Cohoes, a city where 2,400 pupils attend parochial schools and 2,200 attend the public schools, recently stated that "if Catholic parents all decided to send their children to public schools, which they have a perfect legal right to do, our city would face financial ruin."

"It would cost more than seven million dollars to build public schools to state standards to accommodate our parochial school pupils, and I doubt that there is sufficient land available within our city facilities. Our school tax rate would be more than tripled at a time when other municipal expenses are increasing by leaps and bounds."

An appeal by Father Francis J. Lane, Elmira Reformatory chaplain and president of the American Prison Chaplains Association, to have many inmates of prisons given opportunity to serve in the U.S. Armed forces was widely featured in the American press.

Vital wartime role of Catholic women volunteers on the home front was emphasized and discussed by national and diocesan leaders at the "Call to Service" Institute, first of its kind in the country, was conducted in four key points in the Diocese of Rochester.

A missal was to be presented to each Catholic entering the armed services from Chemung County by Elmira Council, Knights of Columbus.

"I have little sympathy, too," he added, "for those who express the fear that repeal of the Blaine Amendment will reduce the revenues available for public school education because

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Bonsignores Plan Family Reunion

Third Annual Bonsignore Family Reunion will be held at the Pavillion Lodge, Ellison Park, on Sunday, July 16, with four generations present.

Priest's Work: Like Pulling Teeth—And Is!

By VERN K. RICHEY (NC News Service)

Livingston, Guatemala—Emalina reached up with the towel to wipe the wet brow of Father Anthony Briskey. He gave a slight shake of his head, peered down intently.

Then there was the gleam of metal in his little office and he reached with a sure hand toward the open mouth of a young boy of the parish. A slight grunt from Father Briskey, then the gleaming metal—

which were a pair of dental forceps—emerged in his hand with a tooth firmly grasped in its jaws.

The story of how the Chicago priest got into the dental business begins two years ago in Kansas City, Mo. It was at about that time that a Kansas City dentist, Dr. John Kendrick, along with his wife and dental assistant, Lila, decided to plan a vacation of work.

There is in the United States a small organization known as the Christian Dental Society. Its primary function is to get together dentists who are willing to volunteer their services—and pay for the privilege—in places overseas which need dentists.

As Dr. Kendrick and his wife began to dump their pocket change into a piggy bank each day, they also began to look around for a spot which appealed to them and which had the need for their skills.

About six months ago Father Briskey and his colleague in Livingston, Father Gregory Zimmerman, also from Chicago, received a mailing from the society, inviting applications for the services of a dentist.

Father Zimmerman wrote back immediately. Then, spurred by favorable reports about Guatemala from a professional friend, Dr. Kendrick and his wife decided that Livingston would be the location of their vacation of work.

Livingston is carved out of the steaming jungle at the point where the slow, green-gray Rio Dulce emerges from the trees to join the sea. It is usually 85 degrees by 9 a.m.

Father Briskey gave a carpenter the job of constructing the dental chair which would occupy the center spot in which usually is the parish office. The man had never seen one before, but "thought about what it ought to be like" and produced a workable model which had a sliding headrest.

Work started at 8:30 in the morning. At first, the array of tools and medicines which Dr. Kendrick laid out on his desk meant nothing to Father Briskey. But as the dentist worked he explained and taught the priest.

The heat was oppressive, the humidity sweltering. A woman of the village was soon devoting most of her time to wiping off the brows and arms of the dentist—and later of Father Briskey and Mrs. Kendrick.

He Learned Fast
The second day, Father Briskey took the forceps in his hands for the first time and, under the direction of Dr. Kendrick, pulled his first tooth.

"The student worked hard and learned fast," Dr. Kendrick said later. "When, in a couple of days, he was beginning to get the physical feel of pulling a tooth, I knew we could leave him at the end of our stay and he would be able to carry on the work."

On the last of the nine days, Dr. Kendrick turned over to Father Briskey a particularly hard extraction and the priest, with only a little coaching, did the job without fault.

"If I weren't wet from my work, I'd take off my jacket and present it to you," Dr. Kendrick said. "It's your graduation certificate."

To make the trip to teach Father Briskey the trade was not an inexpensive undertaking for the Kendricks. They brought with them \$350 worth of dental instruments which they left behind. They brought and used or left \$500 worth of supplies. Including their transportation, their actual outlay was over \$1,500. Considering the fees lost from home and the cost of keeping the office open, the

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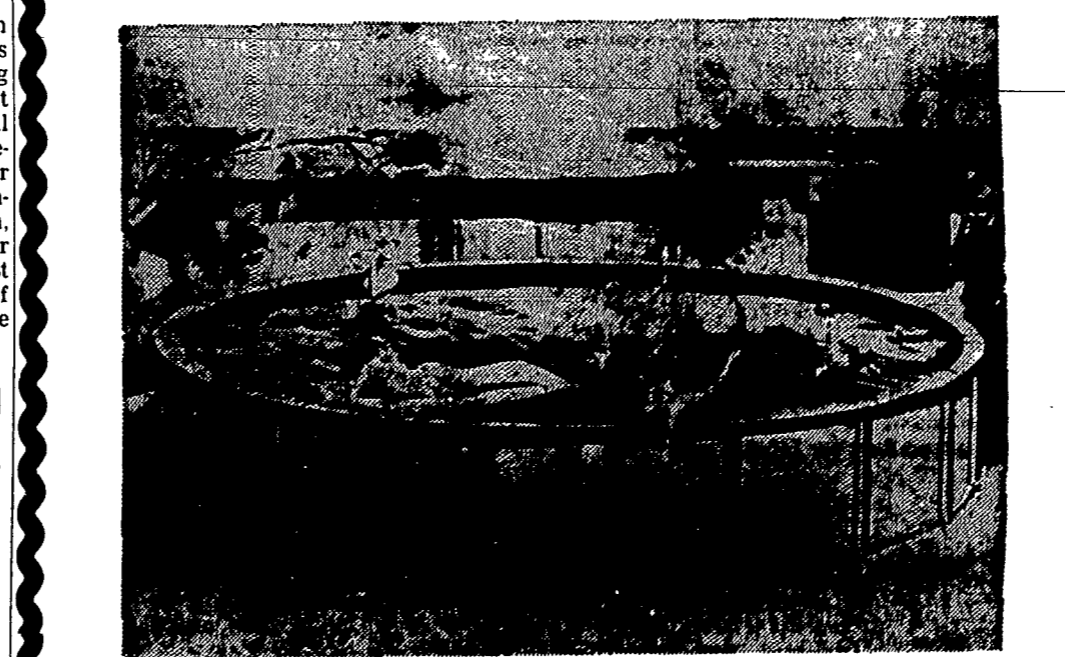


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