













# The Inter-class Drama Competition Awards

In a recent issue of the Signum the judges of the Drama Competition were severely criticized. It is seldom that a judge's decision will receive unanimous approval. A judge in our drama competition has a very difficult task; I know it from experience. To choose the best play from several different kinds of plays is almost impossible when the plays are well produced. To help out of this difficulty the judge may award 'Special Awards'.

Two years ago the judge gave no award to a 'miniature', 'A midsummer night's dream', which I considered the most perfect production I have ever seen in a competition. It was of course very short, only 14 minutes in all, with music, dancing and special effects. The judge on that occasion was looking for straightforward acting and gave his awards accordingly. Was he right in doing so?

In the junior section this year there was a great variety of plays: The Sun, a miniature; The Tall, Tall Castle, a mime; The King Minds the Baby, a straightforward comedy; The Trial of Blessed Edmund Campion, a spectacle, presenting a historical tragedy; Red-Rose and Snow White, a charming fairy tale. All were well done. Which was the best?

The biggest difficulty was in judging the mime as it was very different from the other plays. I asked one of the Fathers present to observe the play closely and to consult

with the judge on the award. It received a 'Special Award' placing it immediately after the first award and before the second. I saw all the plays and I consider this a fair judgement.

The writer criticized severely the winning senior play The Proposal. He did not like the play. Many do not like this play, its theme is somewhat unpleasant and cynical. But the judge must accept the play as it is; an unpleasant play deserves the same marks as a pleasant one. The writer found fault with the music, dancing, speaking and acting; certainly there were faults in these and in the interpretation of the play, but the unanimous opinion of all whom I spoke to was that it was an outstanding production and head and shoulders over every other play in the senior section.

The writer is under a misapprehension concerning the plays staged in the two special performances after the competition. These are chosen independently of the judges' awards. A pleasant, not too long show is aimed at and difficulties of scenery, costuming, etc. are taken into consideration. It is not necessarily the prize winning plays that are chosen. That junior plays should receive help from boys of the senior classes has always been permitted and encouraged.

I thought the judges judged carefully and accurately; Shah's criticism was severe and in parts inaccurate.

John Foley, S.J.  
11th April, 1968.

## Results of our boys in the School Music Festival

### Verse Speaking Completion

Form 1 Open Class Michael Chu 2nd

Form 2 Open Class Paul Hsieh 1st

Chinese and Eastern Class

Joseph Chu 1st

Form 6 Open Class Bill Fang 1st

(INCOMPLETE)

# JUDGE STRIKES BACK

With regard to Shah's article in the last issue (5th April) --- My Opinion, the judge has this much to say:—

Your complaint was a 'good one', but it had no 'personality' (just as you commented on the supporting actor in F.A.C.'s play.) The facts you gathered were 'not clear'; your arguments 'poor'. Only the length of the article had 'some effects'.

I was very disappointed to find an article which sounded so much like one of those letters we find everyday in the Teenagers' Letterbox of The Star. However, it was a very good effort on your part to

pass judgement on some of the plays. I hope you will do the same for those plays other than the two award-winning ones as well!

One final piece of advice:— Do make very sure that you know all the facts before criticizing for it may often hurt other people's feelings.

BILL FANG

P.S. For more facts --- if you are still interested --- please contact the judge.

# SUGGESTIONS

The inter-class drama competition is always a big festival in our school. It not only arouses interest in play production, but also encourages class spirit.

It is very difficult to run such a big competition fairly. But it is possible to do so with regulations and a definite marking system. After years of progress, the competition has not yet reached a mature state. Troubles will certainly come sooner or later.

To set up official regulations and a marking system for next year's competition is necessary. These regulations and marking system must be announced before the competition. The break down of the marks given may be kept secret, but the system of marking

must be announced so that the producer can know what to do, and also the total marks of each play, whether it wins or loses, must be announced. With these regulations we can surely have a fair and successful competition.

As for criticism, one must base it on facts, not on guessing or on assumptions. Criticism is not helpful unless it is true criticism.

A song says, "Don't criticize what you can't understand."

Sing Sing

# FREEDOM AND EXPERIENCE

It has long been suggested that Hong Kong students are rather inert in social matters. It is generally accepted that this statement is quite true. Looking at the comments made by our University students, foreigners may be surprised at their ignorance and may doubt about their talent for administration (of affairs) as well as for dealing with difficult situations. However, comments are still being made and more childishness brought out. Even meetings of their Student Union have been postponed, and even worse, cancelled because the necessary quorum could not be obtained.

I just doubt if such a lack of zeal in our University Students

I suggest that secondary students be given more freedom and that they be encouraged to try to obtain more experience.

Just think more on the true means of EDUCATION.

Charlie

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# SIGNUM

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## YOUTH PROBLEM

MICHAEL

Much debating has been heard lately among the general public, members of the Legislative Council and students on 'The Youth Problem'. But what precisely is 'The youth Problem'? We determined to find out—by interviewing people young and old to learn their opinions, comments and advice on this very topic.

### PARENTS

"One of the main problems," said one of the Fathers in Wah Yan, "is that young people nowadays cannot talk freely to their parents."

Apparently he is right. The majority of Hong Kong's youths do, with very peculiar reasons, refrain from asking their parents for advice or consolation, but would rather turn to friends for directions or solutions whenever difficulties arise. Maybe it is all a difference of age.

He went on to give an example of a well-to-do father who liked very much his daughter to remain home after her office-hours and play mahjong with him every evening. Yet his daughter would prefer to go out to a picture or for a stroll with her young friend.

This is yet a very extreme but typical example of that lack of mutual understanding, likes and dislikes between the adults and the young, and it is becoming more of a problem for the youth with regard to their parents and vice versa.

A teen age girl with a miniskirt six inches well above her knee, told us musingly on being interviewed. "My father and mother always let me do whatever I choose; he is ever busy with his social gatherings and she is only concerned with her 'Chung Fat Pak'."

A Mother Superior, while visiting our school, gave us some notions on this closely discussed subject. She said, "Almost all of the youths' problems begin from a lack of love, either from their parents or from their families. And it is plain to see that these youths will endeavour to seek comfort elsewhere and eventually end up in a booby-trap."

### THE OTHER SIDE

But a boy of eighteen told his phase of the story when I approached him one Sunday after church. He

remarked, "My parents never told me they love me, but I can see that they do; or else my father would not have to come home from work long after I have gone to bed just to earn enough money to see me through school. I simply can't see how many of my schoolmates can spend fortunes on clothes, records and parties and still complain that their parents don't give them enough pocket-money; they can appreciate what their parents do for them. I think it's more just to say that the youths have no love for their parents."

### INSECURITY

A senior student here gave us his own comment: "If you asked me, I'd say that nearly all of the youths' problems are due to a sense of insecurity." Hong Kong today is such an insecure place that anybody who cares to give it some thought will soon come to realise its delicacy. People living or toiling here in this colony all have but one object in common—primarily to benefit from this land, by either making lots of money or by securing social status. But in the meantime, all of us are equally conscious and worried sick of the situation that Hong Kong is faced with. The intellectual youths make sound plans for their careers while the poorer ones with less education through ignorance, follow blindly anything that is profitable. **Everybody is selfish and always tries to gain in one way or another, and young people are definitely no exception** — they make use of their chances to grasp hold of whatever they need or desire.

### RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

A dentist said "The young people here in Hong Kong are today very much westernized, and they are certainly growing each day more aware of themselves as citizens of Hong Kong."

His feelings are the same as those of Father in Wah Yan who added: "The youths, frustrated as they march on to maturity, are demonstrating more than is needed to prove that they are just as worried and responsible for the prosperity of this small city with such a terrific population of four million."

### STUDENTS VS WORKERS

We also notice that although much has been done for the school boys and girls in answer to their problems, like the setting up of youth councils, little or practically no action has been taken towards changing the poor conditions of the less fortunate youths who have to strive for a living.

We asked those we interviewed how they felt about this. One of the Fathers stood for a few moments with pursed lips, then continued to tell us that he always feels angry whenever he hears people claiming that the government or the authorities should found more recreation centres or plan more activities for the young people in Hong Kong. He believes that the youths should gather together under good leadership and start organizing things for themselves—in a nice, civilized manner. He agrees that little has been done for the working youths who in plain fact comprise the larger portion of young people in Hong Kong and who actually are more badly in need of counselling and recreation.

However, he spots one difficulty which may account for all these delays. Those who have the most time and interest in social work such as helping to solve the youths' problems are people like him who, unfortunately know little or scarcely enough of the Chinese language which is most essential for communication with the working youths who in turn can understand little English. The students, however, have been more fortunate and received assistance much earlier than the latter who are still left forsaken.

Indeed we agree with his opinion. The need for the establishment of recreation centres is really rather doubtful as we have actually seen many a time young boys who would rather gamble outside such institutions than go in to play a decent game of ping-pong or chess. And there certainly are many vacancies in such recreation centres.

### WHAT ABOUT TEDDYBOYS?

One parent has a suggestion which obviously will win much support. He said, "I am referring to the mop-haired teddies who are always lazing round town, neglecting their work or their studies, but always on the look-out for a chance to assault a lady or to steal a car just for kicks. It is Juvenile Delinquency I am talking about; I think if the authorities apprehended all this group and put them all behind bars, the government would stand a better chance of providing the remaining majority of youths with better and more thorough solutions to their present problems."

Another educator has a similar appeal: "It is easy to see that the modern youths are wearing far too 'way-out' clothes like the hipster trousers and the tiny mini-skirts. Many of them are also crazy about dance-parties and soul music, and as a result their school work is far from satisfactory. I regard this as a serious and major problem and I earnestly call on these youths to be more sensible and give up this craze which is evidently bringing them to no safe place."

### GOVERNMENT

Further questions to others interviewed on Hong Kong's government and educational system could only draw from them sighs of disapproval. None had any brilliant idea or suggestion to give.

One said, "There is an attitude of the government that cannot be praised. Whatever it does for the community it seems to grant as a favour."

Another said, "The government or the authorities rarely respond to our suggestions and requests."

A third said, "I don't know if I should suggest anything regarding this subject; I am not that anxious to get myself into trouble."

### CONCLUSION

The Youth of Hong Kong do meet with and create a lot of problems, both major and minor. But talk and debates alone will definitely not do them much good. **The problems are in actual fact closely related to adults**, and if anything is to be done to solve them, it must be initiated by all ages and all classes of people; the certainly not be left simply to the youths themselves.

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