



REVIEW REVIEW W

On the Razzle, Wimborne Drama

WIMBORNE Drama is a theatre group that doesn't go for the easy options as their recent productions such as *The Crucible*, *The Madness of King George* and *David Copperfield* bear witness. *On the Razzle* - based on a 19th century comedy which in turn was drawn from earlier works - is not, as its title

suggests, a simple knock-about comedy.

It is a wordy play, with the comedy coming thick and fast, and it was easy to miss a gem. In fact, I felt that I ought to have seen it a second time in order fully to appreciate Tom Stoppard's clever script.

The part of shop owner Zangler, played by Dave Williams, was the toughest, requiring an ability to get the tongue around Spoonerisms without it appearing that lines had been misinterpreted or misquoted. Dave Williams did a good job, but a slower delivery would have ensured that humour wasn't lost. However, he, along with the rest of the cast, relaxed into their parts in the second scene.

And talking of scenery, huge credit must go to set designer Amanda Brown, who

masterminded innovative scene changes, which although visible to the audience, didn't impinge on our enjoyment.

For entertaining it certainly was. The audience clearly appreciated the humour, although I suspect the appearance of the pantomime horse created more guffaws than intended, as Yvonne Henley, playing the part of Christopher, clung on to its hind quarters for dear life.

Wimborne Drama draw from a very experienced pool of actors, and their productions always throw up some excellent cameo parts. Barry Baynton was delightful as the coachman, and Jan Stevenson, who has been with the group since 1979, stole a few scenes with her portrayal of the servant Gertrude. **MA**