

REPERTORY, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

Fine Acting in Disappointing Play

"A Hundred Years Old" Produced by Wellington Repertory — British Drama League to Hold Summer School in Auckland—"Nine Till Six" Produced in Dunedin This Week.

IN many ways the choice of the Quintero brothers' play "A Hundred Years Old" by the Wellington Repertory Society for its latest production was a disappointing one. The play certainly calls for acting ability of a high order, but Wellington audiences already know that repertory members are capable of excellent performances, and there is nothing else in the play making it worthy of attention. In a charming enough setting, we wait for two acts for a story to unfold—at any minute, we feel, something is really going to happen. As the curtain descends on the second act it seems definite that the play is leading somewhere, and the audience holds its breath when the third act starts, waiting. For half an hour the audience continues to hold its breath, then, there being, apparently, no more good lines for Papa Juan, the curtain falls. There is comedy, pathos, charm and even beauty in the play, particularly in the second act, but when the curtain falls at last the only impression left is a vague feeling that we have been cheated somewhere: the authors practically told us that something was going to happen, but whenever there was the slightest chance of that coming about they have sheered off with almost comical abruptness.

Granted that the play is disappointing, however, the performances were mostly entirely delightful. If Mr. E. S. Baldwin, as Papa Juan, was scarcely one hundred years old in his movements, he played consistently on the knees he had laid down for himself, succeeding admirably in bringing to the audience all the humour and charm in his part. As his daughter and son-in-law—he calls them "the children" still—Miss Irene Wilson and Mr. Lees Bullock gave excellent renderings of delightful parts. Miss Wilson's air of the quiet and efficient manageress of the whole house was perfectly done, and Mr. Bullock's deliberately humorous caricature of fussy old age was one of the highlights of the evening.

As Trino and Currita, whose love affair Papa Juan so deliberately fosters, Mr. Norman Byrne and Miss Marjorie Murray were both seen to excellent advantage. Neither were easy parts to play, but both brought a delightfully easy stage manner to their performance. Some excellent minor characterisations were given by Mr. Vryn Evans and Mr. Harry Painter. As the everlastingly carping daughter-in-law, Miss Hilda Miles spoilt her chances by consistent over-acting, in contrast to the performance of Miss Joyce Dinnison, who played the part of her sensitive daughter with charming restraint. As usual in repertory productions the servants' parts were acted with outstanding success—Mr. George Cooper, Miss Dorothy Molenaar

and Miss Cara Aldridge doing good work.

The play moved—insofar as there was any movement—with a practised smoothness which reflected great credit on the producer, Mr. Leo da

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL COMPOSERS

B.B.C. Anxious to Receive Overseas Compositions

With the laudable desire of making the Empire Shortwave Programmes as thoroughly representative of the creative talent of overseas musicians as possible, Mr. Eric Fogg, Musical Director of the B.B.C., is making an effort to acquire from overseas all classes of compositions (both published and in manuscript). Not only popular music, but good vocal music, piano pieces and chamber music is sought after, and orchestral works particularly, which lend themselves to broadcast presentation, will be welcome. For the guidance of composers, the composition of special broadcasting orchestras for these programmes is given as follows: 2 first violins; 2 second violins; 1 viola; 1 cello; 1 double bass; 1 flute (doubling piccolo); 1 oboe (doubling cor anglais); 2 clarinets; 1 horn; 1 trumpet; 1 tenor trombone; drums and piano.

Composers are invited to communicate direct with Mr. Eric Fogg, Musical Director, B.B.C. Broadcasting House, London, who will be pleased to consider music submitted.

Chateau. This is not one of the best plays the Repertory Society has presented, but none has been better produced, or, in the main, better acted.

ON two successive Saturday evenings

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Bailey—well known to radio listeners and theatre-goers all over New Zealand—and their dramatic players are to entertain Aucklanders. On December 1 several one-act plays are to be presented in the Seddon Memorial Technical College Hall, and on the following Saturday an extremely entertaining musical extravaganza, "Round the World by Television," will be produced in the same hall.

ONE of the features of the Summer School of Drama to be held in Auckland in December will be the pro-

duction of a series of one-act plays or dramatic excerpts. Those students who wish to act in rehearsal classes, however, must come prepared to say some 20 lines from one of the plays selected for rehearsal, or something of their own selection, before castings are made. The senior auditions will be held on the evening of Friday, December 28, after the official opening of the school. All classes will be open to non-members, as well as members, of the British Drama League and students may attend for the full course of two weeks, for one week, or for single sessions.

THE third subscription concert of the Christchurch Liederkranzchen was given in the Art Gallery, Durham Street, on Monday, November 26. The programme included interesting partsongs by Vaughan Williams and Percy Fletcher. Solos were sung by Misses Phyllis Coombs and Phyllis Round. Mesdames F. E. Reeve and F. Nelson Kerr. Miss Mary Garland and Mrs. H. J. Quarrell sang a duet, and Mrs. J. E. Mason, Miss Constance Church and Mrs. R. Broadbent presented a trio. A feature of the programme was the performance of Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, by Frederick Delius, by Mrs. F. S. Grant and Mr. Noel Newson. Mrs. F. W. Simpson is honorary accompanist to the society.

"NINE TILL SIX," by Aimee and Philip

Stuart, the smart comedy-drama chosen by the Dunedin Repertory Society for its seventh production in His Majesty's Theatre on November 29, 30, and December 1, should give ample scope for the 16 women cast for the play. If, as has been suggested, amateur acting among women is of a higher order than among men in Dunedin, "Nine Till Six" should be a bright work. At all events the cast is determined to show the Dunedin play-going public what it can do without the assistance of the mere male. The principal parts have been allotted to Madame Winnie Fraser as Mrs. Pembroke and Dorothy Clark as Miss Pembroke. The 14 supporting players have all been carefully chosen from the large active members' list of the society, and they may be relied upon to put over a first-class performance. The D.I.C. orchestra, under the baton of Mr. Charles Martin, Mus. Bac., L.R.A.M., will render the musical programme.

THE League has a dignity to maintain.—Mr. de Valera.

THE tragedy of modern life was that our physical world had yielded marvellous discoveries, while the untended fields of the soul had borne thorns and thistles of inhumanity, hatred, and bigotry.—Rabbi Dr. S. M. Lehrman.