

REPERTORY, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

An Array of Women in Dunedin Play

"Nine Till Six," a Play With an All-Woman Cast, Successfully Produced by Dunedin Amateurs — Canterbury Repertory's Latest Production — Macabre Drama in Wellington.

LAST week in Dunedin the Dunedin Repertory Society presented the play "Nine Till Six," by Aimee and Phillip Stuart, with outstanding success. A large all-woman cast, with a woman producer, Miss Bessie Thomson, gave a delightful rendering of this popular piece, which was universally praised in Dunedin. The "Otago Daily Times" said: "Do not be afraid of such an array of women. They are absorbingly amusing, instructively profound in many ways, generally beautifully gowned, and strictly confined to the stage. It is an admirable production and well worthy of special success."

"'Nine Till Six,' although the type of play that will keep people lightly entertained after dinner, and put them in a humour for their supper, is not without a prevailing sombre tone. The dialogue is interesting and frequently brilliant; the situations are punctuated with profound thought, and, above all, the authors show an impressive and remorseless knowledge of feminine nature which enlivens the somewhat slight theme. The society's 'Nine Till Six,' however, has the additional distinction of being splendidly interpreted. The entire cast found scope to show of what they were capable, and they were not found wanting. Much of the credit for this must go to Miss Bessie Thomson, who reproduced that brilliance which made her production of 'The Dover Road' so peculiarly satisfying."

"MARY, Mary, Quite Contrary," with which the Canterbury Repertory Society concluded its 1934 programme last week, is an extremely amusing comedy by St. John Ervine, regarded as one of the most witty of present-day writers of comedy. The interest centres in the part of an actress, played by Mrs. Guy Cotterill, who has given notable performances in previous productions by the society, and it is safe to say that she enhanced her reputation in the latest show. Playing opposite Mrs. Cotterill was Mr. G. S. Salter as her Cockney manager, displaying indignation and despair in a manner which showed that the society has discovered in him a real comedian. Other important parts were taken by Miss Agnes Richardson, Mr. Cyril Wheeler, Miss Winifred Smith, Dr. Robinson Hall, Messrs. Hunter and Tothill—all of whom are well known to Christchurch Repertory supporters—and Mrs. I. McIntyre and Miss Elsie Smith.

THE next amateur production to be presented in Wellington will be the Thespians' presentation of Patrick Hamilton's "Rope," which is to be given in the Concert Chamber of the Town Hall on December 19, 20 and 21. This extremely dramatic play—described by

its author as "a De Quinceyish essay in the macabre"—will be interpreted by a cast which includes several well-known Wellington amateurs, and one or two new performers. "Rope" demands acting ability of a high order from several of the characters, but the producer, Mr. Victor S. Lloyd, is very pleased with the way the play is shaping in rehearsal. That the Thespians have plenty of talent available was demonstrated at the social evening held in the Little Theatre last Saturday, when two one-act plays, "The Step mother" (A. A. Milne), and a bright farce, "The House Agent," were presented, with a number of sketches and items by members of the society.

THE first session of the Summer Community Drama Society was brought to a successful close with the presentation of three one-act plays. Considering that the society has been in existence under three months, the productions were of a remarkably high standard, and reflect the greatest credit on Mrs. Spence-Clark both as an instructor and as a producer. The acting was uniformly good, and in a number of cases showed an ease and finish surprising in so young an acting community. The next session of the society is being looked forward to with keen anticipation by both performers and those interested.



Australian Basso Will be Heard in N.Z. . . . RAYMOND BEATTY ARRIVING THIS MONTH

WITHIN a few weeks New Zealand listeners are to hear Mr. Raymond Beatty, the Australian basso-cantante, who has been engaged by the New

Zealand Broadcasting Board for a tour of the national stations. Mr. Beatty commenced his musical career at the State Conservatorium of Music, Sydney, in 1924, where he was holder of a Dame Clara Butt scholarship. While studying there he took part in the Conservatorium tours and opera performances. He was also a winner of the New South Wales section of the Welsh Championship of Australia. Mr. Beatty has toured the Commonwealth as soloist to the principal choral societies and orchestras, broadcasting from main stations in every centre.

In 1931 Mr. Beatty went to England, and he spent nearly three years touring England, the Continent and America. While in England Mr. Beatty took part in the B.B.C.'s Empire Broadcasts, and recorded for the H.M.V. company; he also took part in concerts, opera and oratorio in various parts of England, and has to his credit performances in all the principal London concert halls—such as the Albert Hall, Queen's Hall, and Grottrian Hall. His first English engagement was with the world-famous Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, under Sir Dan Godfrey, and he has taken part in a performance at the Mansion House, London, before Royalty.

Since his return to Australia, Mr. Beatty has broadcast several times under contract to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and he has also had sound film experience in that country. He will arrive this month in New Zealand and spend some weeks here, singing from all the Board's main stations.