

REPERTORY, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

English Play-Writing Competition

Valuable Prizes Offered For One-act Plays by International One-act Play Theatre—New Revue Company Opening in Auckland at Xmas—Production by the Thespians in Wellington This Week.

IN the Empire shortwave programmes on December 11, a play, "Drought," by an Australian author, Miss Milliecent Armstrong, was broadcast. This play was the third prize-winner in the last competition held by the International One-act Play Theatre, London, an organisation which has done a great deal for the cause of the one-act play in England and the Dominions. A very rich prize is offered to authors who submit their plays in this competition—last year's winner, in addition to the £10 prize money, had his play published, and the royalties on the first 1000 copies were added to his prize. Also, a London professional production, on which £160 was spent, was given to the play. Entries for the 1935 competition close at the International One-act Play Theatre, 9 Wardour Street, London, W.1., on February 26, 1935; the rules and regulations governing the contest are published on this page.

BOXING Night will see the New Zealand premiere of the latest J. C. Williamson-Frank Neil revue season, and Auckland has been chosen for the big theatrical event. Fresh in the memory of amusement lovers is the excellent show that toured the Dominion headed by Ella Shields and George Wallace, and proved a sensational triumph. Mr. Neil completed arrangements with J. C. Williamson, Ltd., for a tour of the international stars whom he brought specially to Australia for the Melbourne Centenary, and the full company and production in its entirety will open at Auckland on Boxing Night, presenting the variety revue "New Faces." The company comprise Nice, Florio and Lubow, America's sensational dancing trio, the like of which has never before been seen in the Southern Hemisphere; Joey Porter, comedian, from the London Palladium, who is the originator of all he says and does. Les Diamonds, Parisian adagio experts and poseurs; Hope and Ray; McDonald and Graham, dancers; Grace Hartington, soprano; The Three Ambassadors, melody makers, and a shapely Australian ballet.

IT is a considerable time since any amateur society in Wellington has attempted the production of anything as dramatic as Patrick Hamilton's "Rope," which is to be presented by the Thespians in the Concert Chamber of the Town Hall this week. An intensely macabre play, with comedy interludes skilfully mingled with the drama, it demands acting ability of a high order from the entire cast, notably from the three leading male characters, of whom Brandon, to be played by Mr. Carl Watson, is practically never off the stage throughout the whole play. From the moment the curtain rises a note of high dramatic intensity is struck, and it is sustained until the no less dramatic climax to

the third act. Mr. Victor S. Lloyd, the society's producer, has designed an extremely novel modern setting for the play, and the modern furniture used in the production has been constructed by members of the society. The lighting and stage effects gener-

ally have an important part in developing the macabre qualities of the play, and some surprises are in store for audiences in this connection. The cast of "Rope" is as follows: Mrs. Joye Taylor, Miss Marguerite Thompson, Messrs. Carl Watson, Ralph Hogg, Norman Hannah, E. R. Render, Redmond Phillips and Myles Wright.

Rules for Entrants in English Play Competition

BELOW are printed the rules and regulations for entrants in the play-writing competition, held by the International One-Act Play Theatre, which is mentioned in the notes on this page to-day:

1. All plays must be in one-act form, typewritten and securely bound.
2. No play will be eligible which has been either published or professionally produced. An amateur performance will not disqualify.
3. The final selection for first, second and third prizes will be made at the theatre on the night of the performance.
4. The author's name should not appear on the script but on an envelope stamped for the return of the play.
5. Names and addresses should be in plain block letters.
6. Each play entered must be accompanied by an entrance fee of 10/6, and reach the office before February 26, 1935. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to The International One-Act Play Theatre.
7. Every possible care will be taken of scripts, but the directors cannot be responsible for loss. Scripts will be returned immediately the judges have made their selection.
8. Authors of plays shall be deemed to have consented to production.
9. All competitors to abide by the rules and the findings of the judges.
10. The entrance fee includes membership of the International One-Act Play Theatre for one year.
11. In the case of competitors abroad, the postage for return of scripts should either be sent in exchange coupons or the amount added to the entrance fee.

THE next production of the Wellington Repertory Society will be presented early in 1935. It is a play called "The Laughing Woman," which was first performed in London in April, 1934. The author is Gordon Daviot, who wrote the well-known "Richard of Bordeaux." The cast of "The Laughing Woman" is a large one of 32 characters, and those who see this outstanding play are assured of a first-class entertainment.

"THE 1st or Grenadier Regiment of Foot Guards," said Major George Miller, M.B.E., when giving at a reception in Auckland some details of the history of the band, of which he is musical director, "received the name 'Grenadier' in 1815, after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo." The bearskins were termed bearskin caps and they were worn only by the Guards. Referring to the black band on the arms worn by the drummers, Major Miller said it was first worn at the funeral of Charles II, and it had been worn ever since. After the war, when there was talk of cutting down expenses in connection with uniforms, this band was one of the things that was condemned, but so vigorous a protest was made by the drummers that they were allowed to keep it.

COMMENTING upon the "astonishing enthusiasm and interest" in the theatre in England, particularly through amateur dramatic societies, little theatres and repertory theatres, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, the noted English actor, said recently: "I think the greatest blessing the theatre has ever had is the cinema, which has lifted from the theatre a burden which it had been unable to sustain—that of providing entertainment for the millions. It has taken away the burden of supplying plays of little literary quality merely for the amusement of the masses. Consequently the theatre has more time to concentrate on first-class plays with first-class players. The cinema has, moreover, driven from the theatre all those who were interested in it merely as a business and as a means of making money. Those left are there purely for the love of it."

IT is announced that the murder thriller "Ten Minute Alibi," by Anthony Armstrong, will be presented in New Zealand by a J. C. Williamson Company, beginning its season at the Grand Opera House, Wellington, on January 19.