

## THE NEWEST BOOKS

## N. Z. Playwrights' Work In Print

Two Excellent Volumes of One-Act Plays Published in Wellington—Victor S. Lloyd Gives Advice to Budding Playwrights—A New Book for Contract Bridge Enthusiasts.

THERE is a rapidly growing demand for one-act plays and the play writing competition held in New Zealand last year for this type of play brought forth some talent which should be recognised abroad in the near future. Twelve of the best plays in this competition by new writers, will shortly be available. Victor S. Lloyd, the Wellington producer, who has written the foreword in these two publications, gives some really sound advice to those embarking on the writing or producing of plays.

One of the most outstanding plays is "Mopsy" by V. Targuse, which is in the second volume. It is an admirable play for producing, being a fine character study of a half-witted girl. The brother responsible for the accident which caused the girl's condition, feels that now his parents are dead he is responsible for the girl's fate and must devote his life to her. This sister, now sixteen, idolises her brother and is jealous of his lover and with the cunning of a certain type of half-wit she makes him promise that he will never leave her, because of her "broken head." The broken head of this sweet but selfish sister's doll plays a prominent part in this play which is surely one of the best New Zealand has yet produced. "Black Sheep," by H. C. D. Somerset has as its setting a room above the boilers in a freezing works. It starts on a note of supposed tragedy, but ends in laughter. The works manager is said to have been murdered by a new hand, who is proved guilty and admits the crime. At the critical moment this murderer reveals himself as the works manager in disguise, whose motive of masquerading was to get the view point of the workers who were wanting a strike. B. R. O'Brien has given a fine portrayal of a crafty business man in "The Reckoning," which has wit provided by the clerks and typist in the office. The curtain falls when the swindler is becoming overpowered by his conscience. "Potatoes" by Mabel Brackenbush Latter is a rather beautiful and fantastic play about twins, one of whom is secretly married and is adored by her husband, but who does not return his affection. Instead, the twin sister secretly loves him and when he is killed by a falling tree in the Mary Angel Garden, of which the twin sisters are proprietors, this unmarried sister is the means of giving him his last and only happy moments. He thinks it is his wife and dies in perfect peace.

It seems unfair to single out any particular plays in these two books because they are all distinctly different and entertaining. The other plays are: "The Ayes Have It" (H. C. D. Somerset), "School For Cynics" (S. H. Whitehead), "Jael" (Helen Parker), "Father Against Son" (James Wilson), "The Substitute" (L. A. Charles), "Just a Little Bit of Life" (Gwynne Peacock), "Men for Pieces" (V. Targuse),

and "Agnes in Autumn" (Gertrude Webster).

"Six One-Act Plays (1935)" and "Further One-Act Plays (1935)." National Magazines Limited, Wellington. Our copies from the publishers. These volumes were compiled under the auspices of the New Zealand branch of the British Drama League.

"SLAM Bidding at Contract," by Lieut.-Colonel J. Grose, is something new in bridge books and one which should be welcomed by all keen players. The author sets out twenty hands together with the bidding to illustrate the expert's method of approach when a slam is "in the offing."



There are also interesting examples showing how danger signals should be observed, which signals should automatically warn watchful partners that a slam is impossible. The explanatory notes headed "for non-experts," which accompany each hand illustrated, make the reasoning behind the bidding understandable by all. Perhaps the

outstanding feature of the book is a set of cards (in pairs) contained in the cover pocket. On the cards are printed hands to be used in practice calling by a player and his prospective partner. After the final bid is arrived at, the players can refer to the author's opinion as to what the correct calling should be. However, there are a few bidding examples which are obviously not intended for the beginner. One in particular shows how a Little Slam is arrived at in three calls, viz:

EAST 1 Heart, WEST 5 Spades,  
EAST 6 Spades.

Certainly 6 Spades is the correct final bid on the hand given, but reflecting on the "modus operandi" in arriving there, calls to mind the remarks by a well-known Bridge authority when discussing a certain freak hand as follows:—

"An absolute novice would call 7 diamonds on the hand, an average player 5 clubs, a good player 6 clubs and a master player, 7 diamonds!"

So with the 6 Spade call mentioned above, opinions may differ. However, should a player A make the bid and miss (any bid that succeeds is excused by a partner), his partner B might be in doubt as to which of the "two classes" player A really belongs.

"Slam Bidding at Contract." Lieutenant-Colonel J. Grose. George Allen and Unwin, Limited. Our copy from the publishers. The above review was written by Mr. O. Glen-Doepel, one of Wellington's expert contract players.

PEOPLE are so much inclined to take broadcasting for granted nowadays that a little "boosting" by a first-class station is not out of place. 2UW, Sydney has produced an artistic sixteen-page booklet explaining its service in the radio world not only to Australia, but even further afield, and introducing to listeners some of the many outstanding members of the regular staff. Those who have tuned in on 2UW will appreciate the station's claim to being the leading broadcast concern in Australia. Many of the names of their artist-announcers are as familiar in New Zealand as in Australia. There are Mr. J. M. Prentice, formerly Auckland's most popular announcer, Len Maurice, a frequently recorded baritone, Charles Lawrence, the Cinesound talking reporter, and Vernon Sellars, who runs the cheerful early morning session.

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## SIX ONE ACT PLAYS, 1935 FURTHER ONE ACT PLAYS, 1935

These companion volumes, each containing the six best plays submitted in their respective classes in the British Drama League Festival for various trophies, will be published next week.

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