

REPERTORY, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

Noel Coward Shocks New Yorkers

"Point Valaine" Described as "Drowsy Index of Sex Life in the West Indies" — Wellington Thespians Move to Larger Rooms — Kiore King Producing in Hawke's Bay.

IN his latest play, "Point Valaine," the British author, Noel Coward, has shocked sensation-seeking New York. He has given the footlight idols something they appear to want, but they will not admit it. It appears that the main vulgarity is that Alfred Lunt is required to deal violently with his wife, Lynn Fontanne—throw her on a divan, throttle and caress her alternately, growling, snarling and cooing all the while. That he should also have to actually spit at his wife eight times a week, including matinees, seems too much. A drowsy index of sex life in the West Indies, the play, which is considered far from Coward standard, has received a somewhat indignant reception. There are crude personal situations and the personality of Lunt, as Stefan, an ape-like Russian head waiter and lover in the "triangle" melodrama, is objected to. In this part, says one critic, Lunt loses to an art that justifies neither him nor the author. In spite of all the play was expected to have a long run.

AN indication of the popularity of amateur theatrical activities in the capital city is the amazing progress which has been made in the single year of its existence by the Wellington Thespians. Starting in May of last year, the society presented three productions, all of which were very well received by their audiences—an appreciation which was reflected in a large increase in the number of members. This year the society started its reading programme in February, and this has proved so popular with members who have attended in large numbers, that it is now necessary for the society

Wellington Town Hall on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 2, 3, and 4. The play selected is "Third Time Lucky," a brilliant farce by Arnold Ridley, author of "The Ghost Train," and the cast has been rehearsing for some time under the direction of Mr. Victor S. Lloyd, who is producing the play.



PRODUCING "SIXTEEN." — Mr. W. S. Wauchop, of Wellington, who is as present at work producing "Sixteen" for the Wellington Repertory Theatre. "Sixteen," which is by Aimee and Philip Stuart, was one of the successes of last year's English theatrical season, and it was seen at the Criterion by Mr. Wauchop when he was in London a few months ago.

THE Hawke's Bay Little Theatre Society's first production this year will be "Crime at Blossoms," by Mordaunt Shairp. This is a really powerful play, expertly constructed, original in theme, and enlivened by lively wit and penetrating satire. The play will be produced by Miss Kiore King, and rehearsals began at Easter. The cast includes: Margery Kelsey, Janet Crompton, Mary Campbell, Ewan Campbell, Hugh Baird, Gerald Faulkner, Beryl Whitlock, Denis Hursthouse, John Kelsey, George Rogers, Grace Fuller, Geraldine Miller, Alan Maxwell, Sheila Macgregor, Ian Macphail, Mrs. Maitland, A. R. Caro, Mary Rainbow, L. G. Roberts and E. L. Sutro.

THE Wellington Lyceum Club Play-reading Circle intends to hold a number of "open" readings during the forthcoming winter. At their last meeting they read "London Wall," by John Van Druten. At present the Play-reading Circle is joining forces

with the Drama Circle to present an evening devoted to scenes from some of Shakespeare's lesser-known plays.

WELL known to Auckland audiences, Eva Simson, the talented member of the Auckland Amateur Operatic Society, is to be tendered a farewell concert in the Town Hall Concert Chamber on Tuesday, April 30. Eva Simson is a firm favourite with Auckland audiences, and has delighted them in her many portrayals of leading roles for the society. Mrs. Simson is going to England with the intention of taking part in British film productions, and New Zealanders who knew her well on the stage will look forward to seeing her first appearance on the films. She is leaving Auckland about the middle of May, and will carry the good wishes of her many friends in Auckland.

THE Canterbury Repertory Theatre Society is holding a fortnightly play-reading. The first of the series was Evelyn William's very successful play, "The Late Christopher Bean," read by a group of readers selected by the organiser, Mr. Walter B. Harris.

REHEARSALS for Aimee and Philip Stuart's successful comedy in three acts, "Sixteen," which is to be produced by the Wellington Repertory Theatre, in the Town Hall Concert Chamber from the fifth to the eighth of June, under the direction of Mr. W. S. Wauchop, are now well advanced and another letter-perfect performance is assured. The cast of seven characters, which is said to be an admirable one, is as follows:—Mrs. McNeil, Mrs. Sydney Tingey; Irene Lawrence, Miss Vivienne Tait; Baba Lawrence, Mrs. Greville Wiggs (nee Edna Purdie); Mrs. Queen, Miss Phyllis Nicholls; Jennifer Lawrence, Mrs. Ina Allan; Sir John Corbett, K.C., Mr. T. V. Anson and Dr. Sloane, Mr. E. S. Baldwin. Mr. Wauchop was given the opportunity of seeing this play after it had been running for about six months at the Criterion Theatre, London, and in an informative letter to his Wellington committee, he stated, inter alia, "I was charmed with 'Sixteen,' and felt at once that it was very suitable for the Wellington Repertory Theatre which had just the types necessary. I would place it among the most interesting and satisfying plays produced during my stay in London."

MISS HARDINGE MALTBY (Wellington) acted as producer for the "Scenes from Shakespeare" recently given by the Lyceum Club Drama Circle. Most of the very beautiful period costumes were lent by Miss Hardinge-Maltby, who has frequently acted in Shakespeare when on the legitimate stage in England, and has had considerable experience in producing the plays of Shakespeare.

"Fresh Fields" To Open N.Z. Tour On May 11

WORD was received at the week-end that a new J. C. Williamson Company will present "Fresh Fields," the big English stage success by Ivor Novello, at the New Opera House, Wellington, on Saturday, May 11. The second production of the season will be that much-discussed and highly successful play, "While Parents Sleep." A New Zealand tour will follow.

to move to new and larger rooms. The new accommodation has been obtained directly opposite the Wellington Town Hall, and should provide ample room for all new members—80 have been secured since the beginning of the year—for some time to come. The society's first production for the 1935 season is to be presented for three nights in the Concert Chamber of the