

REPERTORY, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

N.Z.'s "Ready-Made Leading Lady"

Elaine Hamill, Taihape Girl, Gains Praise From Sydney Press—Menuhin Opens N.Z. Tour at Auckland—Desmond McCarthy Praises "Sheppey"—Dramatic Recital at Oamaru.

LASHINGS of praise came the way of Elaine Hamill, the beautiful Taihape girl, at present in Australia, for the performance she gave in Sydney recently in Phillip Lewis's production of "The Shining Hour." Miss Hamill, who gave up nursing in New Zealand to try her luck on the Australian stage, was given wonderful Press notices after her first night's performance. Said "The Sun": "Elaine Hamill, out of the blue, via New Zealand! Sydney seldom has been faced with a leading lady ready-made. There have been manufactured ones, but not one with all the natural graces. The Fragonard beauty, poise, elegance and exquisite voice of Elaine Hamill in 'The Shining Hour' at the Savoy Theatre, with an uncanny knack of getting all her inflections just right, proclaim a real rising star. If Australia does not want her, London or New York will hold out inviting arms. She probably gained her poise from her experience of nursing after the Napier earthquake, but the rest is Nature's gift to an actress born."

One of the hardest critics in Australia said: "The two main women's parts were played respectively by Elaine Hamill and Sybil Davidson, and their scenes together were the highlights of the production. Sybil Davidson's excellent work is known already to most playgoers, but Elaine Hamill—a New Zealand girl—deserves to be better known. She has ability to take her far." Said "The Telegraph": "Winning a talkie star contest some 12 months ago, Miss Hamill appeared

MR. CLAUD KINGSTON, concert director for Messrs. J. and N. Tait, who is in New Zealand completing arrangements for the visit of Yehudi Menuhin, reports an astonishing amount of interest in the advent of the 18-year-old musical celebrity. Menuhin began his New Zealand tour at the Auckland Town Hall on Tuesday, coming direct from a record tour of Australia. Over 70,000 people attended the Sydney and Melbourne concerts, and never in the history of music in Australia have there been such unforgettable scenes of enthusiasm. Yehudi comes as a climax to the Tait direction of such famous personages as Paderewski, Galli Curci, Pavlova, Kreisler, Hofetz, Hislop, Hambourg, and the like, and it has been left to a lad still in his teens to lift audiences to their feet in wild appreciation of the most glorious violin music it has been their privilege to hear. The boy receives the highest terms of any artist ever to visit New Zealand. But then he is a genius for whom no praise is too flattering. Dates for the rest of the tour are: Wellington, July 10, 13, 17; Christchurch, July 20, 23; and Dunedin, July 27, 30.

MR. DESMOND MACARTHY in the "New Statesman and Nation" devoted a column to his review of Mr. Somerset Maugham's latest play, "Sheppey," which is to be produced by the Wellington Repertory Theatre under the direction of Mr. Léo du Chateau from July 17 to 20. "Yes, it is a comedy," he writes, "but a comedy which borders upon drama, and even upon religious drama. It begins in the saloon of a fashionable hairdresser's shop. Most of the humour lies in lines revealing selfish snobishness and genteel aspirations. Here Mr. Maugham has always excelled. . . . How does Mr. Maugham modulate from a fashionable saloon to the theme of Christian charity? It is deftly done and the management of the transition will excite the admiration of those who know anything about the playwright's craft. Sheppey has won £8500 in the Irish Sweepstake; we are naturally left guessing how his luck is going to affect him. I do not suppose a single person in the theatre anticipated the actual consequences."

IT is some years since a dramatic recital has been given in Oamaru, and when a recital was given in the St. Paul's Hall recently, a capacity house rewarded the efforts of the players. Those present were treated to a characterisation of dramatic impersonations seldom seen on the present-day stage. The Rev. A. Hunt, who possesses a Dominion-wide reputation as an elocutionist, gave an outstanding performance and his interpretation of several well-known Dickens characters was received with loud applause.

COMMUNITY singing has taken Dunedin by storm. Besides the weekly sings held in the Strand Theatre, which is always packed, a sing under the auspices of Toc H is to be held on Saturday night. The weekly sing held every Friday is proving very popular, hundreds having to be turned away every time, and, under the leadership of Mr. H. P. Desmoulins, a very enjoyable hour may be spent in the theatre. Toc H has come on the scene and, to aid the appeal for wireless sets for un-



"THERE'S ALWAYS JULIET."—Mary Jolly, charming Dunedin actress, who played an important part in the Dunedin Repertory Society's much-discussed production of John Van Druten's play, "There's Always Juliet." The season was a huge success.

employed relief camps, intend holding a sing on Saturday, June 29, in the Town Hall. According to advance reports over 1500 seats have been reserved so far, and probably many more will be reserved in a last-minute rush. Mr. Allan Brown and Mr. Bert Goodland, well-known song leaders, will be in charge, while a first-class dance band, as well as a number of prominent artists, will assist.



in one Cinesound film, but her appearance in "The Shining Hour" should prove a stepping-stone to further successes. In a difficult role she looked exquisite, and played with increasing sincerity as the dramatic intensity of the play developed." Miss Hamill joins the cast of the J. C. Williamson musical comedy, "Roberta," when it opens at His Majesty's Theatre, Brisbane, on Saturday evening.

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