

Prizes in Playwriting Contest

"Radio Record" Trophy goes to Masterton

At the foot of this page is given a list of the placings in the playwriting contest for trophies donated each year by the "New Zealand Radio Record" and "Tui's Annual." The following comment was written by Victor S. Lloyd, who has just returned from Taranaki, where he acted as judge at the British Drama League Festival.

AFTER judging the semi-final of the British Drama League Festival at Stratford on September 30, I was very much impressed with the play which won there, "Sordid Story," which I was delighted to find secured first place at the final at Hastings as the best play produced out of entries which came from all parts of New Zealand. The play was produced by Professor Sewell, who made an exceptionally good job of it. The play is an extremely difficult one, as it is set in the inside of a man's brain. It is essentially a producer's play, and its whole success depends upon the producer, and the actors being subordinate to his will.

The British Drama League is on the look out for new forms and new ideas in dramatic art, and the problems presented in the production of "Sordid Story" were enough to test the ingenuity and intelligence of any producer and any cast. I learned after the festival that the play was written by Mr. J. S. Coppard, of Auckland, who had sent the play home to England some time ago, where it had been select-

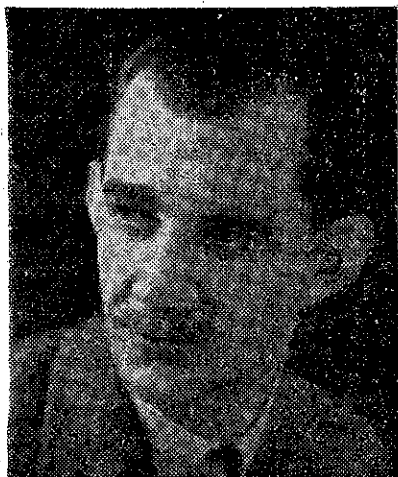
ed by a group of Glasgow amateurs, who had produced the play at a British Drama League Festival held there and where it was not only awarded first place but created something of a furor. Double column headings describing and eulogising the play appeared in the Glasgow papers next day.

It is very gratifying to think that with the enormous number of exceptionally good one-act plays which are available to-day to amateur groups a play by a New Zealander should be outstanding among all those produced by the various teams from Auckland to Invercargill. The plays entered for the British Drama League this year were on the whole below the average, although the winners of the two competitions were far above those of last year in technique and in literary quality.

The "Radio Record" trophy, which is awarded to the best play by a New Zealand author whose work has not previously been published, was won by L. G. Donald, of Masterton, with a play called "Voyagers." This is an ex-

tremely tragic and Hebridean play written with great sincerity. The author displays a fine poetical sense and a strong feeling for the theatre. Characterisation, dialogue, construction, climax and pace are all good.

The open competition was won by Eric Bradwell, of Wellington, with a play called "Clay." This is described by Mr. Bradwell as an experimental



VICTOR S. LLOYD, producer for the Wellington Thespians, who has recently returned from Taranaki where he acted as judge at the British Drama League Festival. The comment on this page was written for the "Radio Record" by Mr. Lloyd.

Drama League Trophy Results

Awards in One-Act Play Competitions for New Zealand Authors

RESULTS of the British Drama League Playwriting Competitions for 1935 are announced below. The judging in the "Radio Record" Trophy for the best one-act play by a New Zealand author whose plays have hitherto been unpublished was as follows:

Winner: "Voyagers," by Lawrence G. Donald, Te Ore Ore, Masterton.

Second: "Purity Fair," by Mavis H. Jack, Box 5, Wanganui.

Third: "The Mirror," by Vincent Graham, Box 1652, Wellington.

Fourth: "The Round Hill Block," by A. D. R. (Mrs. L. L. Wigley), 3 Kitchener Square, Timaru.

Fifth: "Follow On," by Lindo Lovat.

Sixth: "Boadicea," by G. Ethelwyn Geddes, 36 Lucerne Road, Remuera.

"Tui's Annual" Trophy for the best one-act play open to all New Zealand authors was judged as follows:

Winner: "Clay," by Eric Bradwell, Wellington. Although Eric Bradwell's plays are designed for amateurs, they possess the technique and polish of the professional drama. Four of his plays which are shortly to be published by George Allen and Unwin, are sophisticated, powerful sketches which display the author's talent for handling big themes and emotional situations.

Second: "Murder at Eight," by John Deane (J. T. Delaney), 66 Raroa Road, Kelburn.

Third: "The Strike Breaker," by James Wilson, P.W.D. Substation, Halfway Bush, Dunedin.

Fourth: "Prelude," by Mrs. V. Targuse, Nelson Square, Timaru.

Fifth: "Scene Iacabre," by Mrs. V. Targuse, Nelson Square, Timaru.

Sixth: "Sudden Rain," by Isobel Andrews (Mrs. E. S. Andrews), 131 Kelburn Parade, Wellington.

Equal: "No Other Way," by John Deane (J. T. Delaney), 66 Raroa Road, Kelburn.

one-act play for the theatre. It is an experiment which succeeds admirably. It combines most successfully modern expressionism, with the use of the classic Greek chorus. I feel inclined to say that, after judging New Zealand written plays ever since the inception of the play-writing competitions in New Zealand, this play by Mr. Bradwell's is the best one which has been entered, and it is my intention to produce it this year for the Wellington Thespians.

In past years the publication of the best New Zealand plays entered for the British Drama League play-writing competition has been arranged for and the various volumes published each year receive warm welcome from dramatic societies and groups throughout the Dominion. This year I should like to see included Mr. Coppard's play "Sordid Story."

Considering her isolation from the great centres of art in the world and her small population New Zealand has every reason to be proud of the high standard of plays turned out by her playwrights. Mr. Coppard's play "Sordid Story" and Mr. Bradwell's play "Clay" are worthy of inclusion in any volume of plays.