

## ENTERTAINMENTS

### "CHRISTINE."

It is not often that Brisbane has the honour of a first production. That distinction was achieved last night when the Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society played "Christine," a delightful four act comedy from the pen of Mr. Vance Palmer, the Queensland author and playwright. "Christine" was written about two years ago, but Mr. Palmer did not make any attempt to have it produced. It was chosen, however, by the Repertory Society, as the year's Australian production; it is the aim of the society to produce one Australian play each year.

A distinguished gathering was present at the Cremorne Theatre last night and that the play met with unqualified approval was evident from the generous applause which was given at the end of each act and at the final curtain.

"Christine" is not a boisterous comedy; a ripple of quiet humour runs through it. The dialogue is clever—yet not too clever—and there is nothing that jars or grates or shocks.

The plot is not one of thrills, entanglements, and complications; it is a gentle satire on human nature. There is quite a comfortable feeling that everything is going to be all right. Nevertheless the element of surprise is never absent.

The story deals with a period in the lives of the family of Arthur Rankin, a comfortable widower, a Victorian orchardist and nurseryman. Apparently he has never taken his two sons and two daughters into his confidence or permitted them to enjoy the privileges of grown-ups, and in consequence there is a feeling of discontent, even revolt among them, a feeling that becomes ebullient when the father at the last moment casually announces that he is bringing back from Melbourne a second wife.

Before her arrival the family prepare to treat her as an intruder, but the stepmother—called "Christine" by all—turns out to be a tactful, thoughtful, clever woman, and she wins her way to their impressionable hearts. Christine brings joy to all four and makes possible of swift achievement plans that had too long hung fire. Through her efforts her husband gets into Parliament, the orchard is made over to George, the elder son, so that he is in a position to marry Freda Braddon, the pretty daughter of the village doctor; Jess is reunited with her lover, Brian Faloon; Nell gets a chance to prove her musical ability; and Don owns a car.

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Miss Dulcie Scott brilliantly portrays the role of Christine and captivates the audience as she does the step-children. It was a thoroughly convincing effort. Mr. Jim Pendleton, after an uncertain start, makes an admirable Arthur Rankin. Misses Babette Ferguson and Beryl Telford act naturally in the parts of Jess and Nell, the daughters, the former as the romantic "Cinderella" and the latter a vivacious girl of 18. George, the stoical farm manager, is faithfully impersonated by Mr. Leo Guyatt, and Mr. Jim Felgate makes a typical younger son, Don. Freda Braddon, George's fiancée, is briskly played by Miss Mary Luya. Smaller parts are entrusted to Mr. Douglas Henderson (Brian Faloon) and Mr. Bob Risson (Dr. Braddon), who do their work well.

The presentation of "Christine" marks another success for the Repertory Society. The play will be repeated to-night and to-morrow night.