

## A PROBLEM OF TRUTH

### "Dangerous Corner"

"Telling the truth is about as healthy as skidding round a corner at 60 miles an hour," remarked Stanton, who was not the only character whose words recoiled devastatingly in the J. B. Priestley play in three acts, "Dangerous Corner," presented by the Toowoomba Repertory Theatre Society in the Princess Theatre, South Brisbane, on Saturday night. Freda was another to suffer the impact of a remark, that "Life's got a lot of dangerous corners."

The trouble among the relatives and business associates involved in the drama is that they disregarded Owen's warning that what most people mean by truth is only half the real truth, and "is rather dangerous stuff." In the continuous action of the play, in the drawing-room of the Caplan's house, during after-dinner social moments, a passing reference to Robert Caplan's brother, Martin, who had shot himself a year before, revives wonder about the motive, and whether it was really because £500 had been missing from the publishing house in which Robert, Martin, Stanton, and another (Gordon), had been associated. A casual discussion soon resolves itself into theorising, allegations, recriminations, and, finally revelations, that sheet the theft home to Stanton, and either occasion embarrassing astonishment at or confirm suspicions of illicit romances involving most of the characters, married and single. With a good deal of frankness Priestley has worked into dialogue and action a number of strong dramatic situations through a well-knit plot. Some of the skill and interest are in the dovetailing of a radio play suggesting the truth problem and providing an opening for the supposed drama proper.

In a general survey it may be said that the players made an excellent showing with a play full of difficulties for an amateur cast. It was made more awkward by the author's disregard of the "fourth wall," an audience not being considered as a factor and the story being lived on the stage as a self-contained entity. More experienced players might have taken this literally with success, but on Saturday night it led to ineffective stage group-

ings and arrangement. Few amateurs can speak sustained speeches or dia-

logue with their backs to the audience; a compromise was essential in the circumstances. Where the players scored was in the requirements of naturalness, as of people actually living their scenes and lines, staginess giving place to realism and earnestness bringing conviction. The characters were played by Misses Una Ha', Eulys Buchanan, Mignon Beirne, and Elaine Chessell, and Messrs. W. A. Turnbull, Idwil Davies, and Andree Lacaze. With the reservation mentioned, praise is due to Mr. John Lane (producer) and Dr. Mervyn Hall (stage manager).