

George Dann, Playwright

Brisbane Author's Successes

Interest in New Repertory Play

A quiet unassuming young man is George Landon Dann, Brisbane City Council employee, whose playwriting has brought him no little fame.

A few years ago the Brisbane Repertory Theatre produced his three act play, "In Beauty it is Finished."

Next Thursday evening the same society will present his "No Incense Rising," a play of unusual interest because it has justified its selection by winning two of the biggest play competitions held in Australia recently.

"No Incense Rising" was announced as the winning play in the competition conducted by the Australian Dramatists' Club late in 1937. The best plays were sent to England for final adjudication.

About the same time the Independent Theatre in Sydney conducted a competition, "No Incense Rising" again being awarded the prize.

A play which can receive recognition in such strong fields of competition should pique the interest of everyone interested in drama.

Mr. Dann saw his play produced in Sydney recently and expressed great satisfaction with the manner in which it had been handled. The play is tragic in general character, is set in a fishing village on the Australian coast, and centres round an old woman of Nor-

VILLAGE on the Australian coast, and centres round an old woman of Norwegian descent. The controlling motive of the play is the question whether children should sacrifice their own future for the sake of their parents.

"I got the idea," of the central character," said Mr. Dann, "when I was holidaying at a seaside place on the North Coast. I met an old lady there of Danish descent who struck me as being a perfect type. The idea gradually grew and grew, until the first motive was entirely lost, and out of it all came 'No Incense Rising.'"

MODUS OPERANDI.

Mr. Dann is a strong believer in writing a play and putting it aside for six months and then looking it over again. "It is astonishing," he said, "how the thing recedes so that you can see it in clearer perspective. Often I feel impelled to re-write 'In Beauty it is Finished' for that reason. It is lying at home untouched since it was produced. Some day I will take it down from the shelf and see what I can do about it. I feel even now that 'No Incense Rising' may be a little over-written."

His method of working may encourage others who find it difficult to develop the craft of playwriting. "I get an idea," he said, "It stays in my head



Mr. G. L. Dann.

perhaps for months. I say to myself that it is not worth all the work and midnight oil involved. Yet somehow I get down to it. I suppose what is in you must come out, and the play eventually gets written, usually after a bout of three months' hard work. After that I may not write again for weeks or months."

O yes! Mr. Dann has plenty of things stowed away in the cupboard that the world knows nothing about. Plays written and half written that he is not sure are good enough . . . things, he said, that he sometimes thinks ought to be burned.

In addition to the two major productions already mentioned, two one-act plays, "The Giant" and "Days of Roses," were presented some time ago by the W.F.A. Dramatic Society, and another one-act play, "Monday Morning," was produced by the Adelaide Repertory Society and the Hobart Repertory Society.

All of Mr. Dann's plays so far have followed tragic lines. He is at present working on a comedy, which he admits is harder to write than tragedy—"Just to satisfy myself that I can do it," he added.

The cast for the production of "No Incense Rising" gives Miss Ailsa Krimmer the lion's share of the work. Opposite her Mr. Colin Turbayne will be seen. Mr. Robert Risson, the only other man in the cast, has a small part only. Edith Rowett and Catharine Craig have fairly important parts.

