

HAMLETS EVERYONE!

Core of a Great Secret

The Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society is to attempt its most difficult production of the year on September 12—"Hamlet."

It is difficult for many reasons, not the least of which is its universality as a true masterpiece . . . difficult because a Shakespear-

ean production can be made or marred by so many things, and because the demands on the actor are as great or even greater than they are on the actor's ability to speak with a fluency and emphasis that will make the lines real.

There have been many Hamlets in the past, —Sir Henry Irving, Forbes Robertson . . . a dozen others. In more recent times John Barrymore, John Gielgud, Donald Wolfit.

All of them has succeeded in putting their own stamp upon the part. Irving has been said to give the part a scholarly treatment, Forbes Robertson a philosophic, and yet another player may emphasise the psychic quality that lies inherent in the part.

A CUSTOM OF HISTORY.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has some interesting things to say about this fashion that stretches back into dramatic history or should we call it a

fashion that stretches back into dramatic history or should we call it a custom, of speaking of So and So's Hamlet. "Garrick's, Sir Herbert Tree's. . . . This custom of speech if it mean anything" he goes on would seem to imply that each of these gifted interpreters has given the world a different resolution of that mystery and that each has made an individual success of it; which, when we come to think of it, approaches the miraculous, if not the absurd. By various paths they all arrive at the core of the great secret:

arrive at the core of the great secret; and yet there would seem to be some mystery about a mystery that turns out to be a different one every time it is explained. Now I suggest that all these fine fellows in their turn have made a success in Hamlet simply because it was there all the time; ready made by a man who had been beforehand with them and, having a capital interest in the play, had unconsciously taken care that their self-conscious displays should never attain to spoiling it It is rather the triumph of a masterpiece—the triumph definitely paying it for a classic that all men in their degree can understand and enjoy it

But all the great masterpieces we rank in the first class have this essential . . . a noble and naked simplicity."

When we consider the sum-total of thought that has been expended on Hamlet by every great actor of this and earlier generations, we do not envy the lot of Mr. Leo Guyatt, who will essay the part to-day week. We know him to be an actor of ability and poise, a player who can use his intelligence. And therefore one who can attain to some standards in the presentation of this classic character.

THE SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE.

In using the Shakespearean stage Miss Sisley is following the later developments in the evolution of the stage of having three components, the front stage, back stage, and inner stage, each being curtained so that scenes may be set while the action is proceeding. The audience will be enticed as close as possible to the stage itself, footlights will be dispensed with, and generally an attempt will be made to create some illusion of a stage other than the purely modern type.

The idea of lighting the action by torches instead of by electricity was dropped as being a little too drab for modern audiences.

The adoption of this modified stage plan gives rise to many fresh problems of production. But generally speaking the cast itself, and the careful eye to detail, which Miss Sisley always employs, should ensure a production worthy of the society.

At all events it will give a golden opportunity for some of our younger

opportunity for some of our younger players to show their mettle.



JOHN BARRYMORE.



JOHN GIELGUD.