

"BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON"

Repertory Ventures into Detective Fiction

THE CAST.

Mr. Puffett D. Kellett Cameron
 Bunter Gordon Marshall
 Mrs. Ruddle Ailsa Ladewig
 Harriet Katharine Cook
 Lord Peter Wimsey .. W. Binning Wilson
 Miss Twiterton Jean Whitfield
 Frank Crutchley George Gordon
 Rev. Simon Goodacre Ralph Taylor
 Mr. Macbride W. Williams
 Constable Sellon Ernest Busch
 Superintendent Kirk Pat Roberts
 George J. H. Dolby
 Bill Alan Bourke
 Play produced by Marjorie Mant.

In the silences of the night our doctors, our men of knowledge, and even our University professors burn the midnight oil occasionally over the detective novel. Invariably, when they rather shamefacedly confess it, they append the excuse that they read these things for relaxation . . . an excuse as good as any other, which can be applied to this society after struggling with "The Tempest." The shame is sometimes, indeed nearly always, the result of intellectual snobbery.

The Brisbane Repertory Theatre cannot be accused of such snobbery for they openly and publicly performed "Busman's Honeymoon," a rank (let not the word be mis-interpreted) detective play, last night in the Princess Theatre, complete with a body in the cellar and the knowledgable layman-detective lording it over Superintendent Kirk, the official policeman. Like many another of its type the authors, Dorothy Sayers and M. St. Clare Byrne, have gone to greater pains to invent an unusual method of killing off the victim, than they have to create a really convincing and effective play, although it presents many difficulties to the producer.

Despite the weaknesses of this play, and the opinions we may form of the society's taste in plays, Miss Marjorie Mant did very well when we remember that she got the performance on the boards in ten days in spite of those difficulties. While there were obvious evidences of miscasting, which were not her doing, it should be said that there were several very pleasant surprises in the way of good character parts. The best of these was D. Kellett Cameron in a study of a chimney sweep. He prodded at the "sut" in the chimney on stage with real gusto and no little professional skill, and occasionally emerged to culvulse the audience with his comments on the

sionally emerged to culvulse the audience with his comments on the situation, or to remove one of his numerous sweaters. Ralph Taylor gave us the perfect curate as usually depicted in detective fiction. W. Binning Wilson's accents stern and wild from Caledonia did not appear quite to meet the case of Lord Peter Wimsey, a kind of amateur detective who always wore a knowing air and watched the blundering steps of the official police with something akin to real pity. Katharine Cook was always the perfect wife, the rose amongst the thorns in this cast. But there were half a dozen other characters who bore their burdens with a distinctly amateurish touch. It was difficult at times to decode Mr. Wilson's English, so therefore some of the finer points of his detecting went over head. Mr. Wilson showed the greatest courage, however, in attempting the part.

The first act of the play contained some really amusing comedy built mainly around the aforesaid chimney sweep and his "sut." And in spite of the comparative smallness of their parts I still retain a certain affection for Bill and George, not so much for what they were as for what they looked like. Jean Whitfield drew from the tense audience a round of applause after a particularly tearful and nerve wracking session in which she poured out her woes. But she seemed to be the tearful kind.

A.H.T.