

## "ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE"

### Fine Repertory Performance

Six years ago the Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society staged Ibsen's "A Doll's House," with very considerable success; last night they produced another of the Norwegian dramatist's masterpieces—"An Enemy of the People"—with even a more gratifying result. In this play the author proclaims the doctrine that the many are wrong, and the few always right.

Ibsen wrote this comedy—for it is actually comedy—with a pen lighter than any of his other plays. It is objective and satirical, and holds far more of the comedy element than one would expect from the author of "Ghosts," the work which immediately preceded it in the actual writing, and which also preceded it in Brisbane, in the sense that it was presented by the Sybil Thorndike company during their season here in 1932.

The big scene in "An Enemy of the People" is in the fourth act, when Dr. Stockmann flings the charge of hypocrisy and corruption at the officials and citizens of his native town, and when he is branded by his infuriated fellow-townsmen as an enemy of the people. He tells them how low is their average intelligence, and declares that only the thinking minority is fit to guide and rule. He speaks of the colossal stupidity of the authorities, amongst whom his brother, the Mayor, is an "excellent example." He cherishes the comfortable conviction, however, that these relics of a decaying order of thought are diligently cutting their own throats. But it is not they who are the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom, it is the compact majority. He points out that the majority of people in any country the world over are stupid, and asks if it can be right that the stupid should rule over the clever. "The majority," he says, "never has right on its side."

Mr. Jum Pendleton gave an excellent performance of the role of Dr. Stockmann. He caught the spirit of the man, his hot-headed geniality—perhaps the most genial, if not the only genial character ever drawn by the grim Norwegian author. He also splendidly realised the eager effervescence of his sanguine, expansive nature. Mr. Tom McMinn made good work of the pompous and none too scrupulous Mayor. Excellent character sketches were given by Mr. Ralph Taylor, as Morten Kill, and Mr. Andrew Hirst, as the Urian Heepish printer, Aslaksen. The remainder of the parts were adequately filled by Mrs. O. C. D. Gower, as Dr. Stockmann's wife, Miss Barbara Bancroft (his daughter), Masters Nowell Taylor and Allan Carson (his sons), Messrs. Ludovic Gordon, Jack Reading, Ray O'Hara, Norton Stable, Leo Guyatt, Tom Stephens, Jack Cover, and Roy-

O'Hara, Norton Stable, Leo Guyatt, Tom Stephens, Jack Cover, and Royston Marcus, who was also responsible for the production. The society's orchestra, under the baton of Mr. Erich John, provided a programme between the acts.

The performance took place at Princess Theatre, Annerley Road, South Brisbane, a lease of which the society holds for the next four months. "An Enemy of the People" will be repeated to-night.