

## REPERTORY THEATRE

### "She Passed Through Lorraine"

### Happy Choice of Play

#### CHARACTERS.

Blanche .....	Edith Rowett
Second Cousin Marie .....	Agnes Cullen
Robert .....	Robert Kelly
Father Michael .....	W. A. Blake
Pierre .....	N. Lewis
Simon .....	Paul Eve
Edite .....	Beryl Telford
Nicholas .....	John Cover
The Girl .....	Dulcie Scott
Giles .....	Tom McMinn
Blaise .....	Bob Risson
Yvette .....	Vivienne Taylor

"MOST interesting," said Pierre, as the final curtain went down on "She Passed Through Lorraine," the Repertory Theatre Society's latest production at the Princess Theatre.

Pierre was right. And it is made even more interesting because they had failed to classify the play by Lionel Hale, as they usually do in the printed programme. Most people would be content to call it comedy. But it is more than that. It is like the modern cocktail. It contains a little of everything, most of the "everything" being a little difficult to define. It has excellent characterisation and the vein of real drama is too strong to call it mere comedy, the satire in it is too gently barbed, except in one or two places, to place it unreservedly in that category. Nevertheless it fulfils one of the main qualifications of a good play—that all its characters are real people. This is even more astonishing when we recall that it is written in the modern idiom and is yet dated in the 15th century. The author has hit off certain Shavian mannerisms to a certain degree, even unto several long moralising speeches. But the characters differ in that they are themselves instead of the mere mouthpiece of the author.

The comedy in it is subtle, sometimes so subtle that the audience sat silent when some of the best lines were spoken last night. Admittedly some of the best lines were not handled quite as expertly as one could have wished. Nevertheless Miss Dulcie Scott, the producer, succeeded admirably in holding the balance neatly between straight comedy, satire, and sometimes mere farce. In some of the characters the subtle blending of these elements was very neatly done. In the first act, for instance, Mr. W. A. Blake must have surprised even himself by the way in which he maintained the part of Father Michael so deftly in the balance between these conflicting elements. Somehow he seemed to lose sight of Mr. Blake altogether. His

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voice was even that of Father Michael rather than Mr. Blake, and it was only when he came to draw the wine from the cask that he showed the slightest tendency to overdo the broadness and humour of the characterisation.

In the personages of Giles and Blaise we had undiluted and uproarious satire on the modern Press. At these moments the character of the whole piece changed as if Mr. Hale had encountered temptations which he could not resist.

The more serious characterisations, generally speaking, were excellently handled. Miss Dulcie Scott played Joan with her usual acumen and perfect self-possession. She seemed, indeed, especially in the second act to give more emphasis, in her characterisation, to the fact that Joan was a mere masquerader than the script really admits. But it was more helpful to the audience, and was quite justifiable under the circumstances. Miss Edith Rowett played Blanche with a nice appreciation of the difference between Blanche the virago and Blanche the reformed follower of Joan. Misses Beryl Telford and Agnes Cullen played with equally pleasant facility.

The menfolk were not all as clear cut in their characterisations. Mr. John Cover showed a marked improvement on anything he has ever done before. Robert Kelly and Mr. N. Lewis were a quaint pair, one being a perfect foil for the other. Giles and Blaise should not be allowed to pass without mention of the fact that they occasionally did not make quite the best use of their material.

The play was nicely staged, and the costumes were a credit to those responsible for them. In general the production went off more smoothly than has a repertory show for a long time.

The play will be repeated this evening.

A.H.T.