

"THE WITCH" A STRONG DRAMA Repertory Society's Production

A drama, by Wiers Janssen, translated by John Masefield. Presented by the Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society. Produced by Barbara Sisley.

THE CAST

Merete Beyer	Edith Rowett
Bente	Nancy Fowles
Anne Pederstotter	Dulcie Scott
Jorund	Betty Boulton
David	Colin Turbayne
Herlofa-Marte	Gwen Harrison
Absolon Beyer	Nigel Jackson
Martin	Stanley Hildebrandt
Jorgen Lucas	D. K. Cameron
Leader of the Guards	Robert Risson
Second Guard	George Gordon
Claus	Ernest Busch
Laurentius	Ludovick Gordon
Johannes	Robert Risson
Bishop Jous Skjelderup	S. A. Clayphan

"The Witch" is potent drama, with weird and tragic events in a Norwegian community, in days when witchcraft was very real in the lives of the people. It is developed with intensive writing, long speeches, with not a little nobility of expression and profound character study. A particularly strong cast is essential if the work is to be handled with any pretension to realisation and interpretation of situations that might easily be deprived of the conviction with which the author has invested them.

A cast exceptionally well equipped almost throughout fulfilled the requirements, and made of this one of the finest productions the society has given for a considerable time. There had evidently been careful rehearsal, though one of the players was uncertain of his lines.

It is an exacting play for an audience. The attendance in the Princess Theatre, South Brisbane, last night, was larger than usual for the society's presentations, and it seemed a most understanding and appreciative one, though a situation of strong dramatic interest, and well acted, excited in some quarters laughter, that might well have been suppressed.

FINE PORTRAYALS

Miss Dulcie Scott again rose to

dramatic heights with sheer intelligence, and in speech and manner embodied the character with a succession of truly-drawn touches. Hers was a gripping study of the daughter of a witch burnt at the stake; with overpowering love she exercised the transmitted maternal power to influence one man and cause by will the death of her husband. It was the restraint, almost gentleness, of her acting, until the tragedy was wrought, that gave it convincing strength.

Mr. Jackson's Lutheran priest, into whose life grievous ills were thrust, was a very human study. His speeches reached the heart, but some fine effects were marred by a decline of tone in final syllables.

The witch was a moving characterisation by Miss Harrison. Miss Edith Rowett played the mother of Absolon with a tension that always impressed. Mr. Risson's Johannes was an admirable piece of character work. Martin was a character invested with beauty by Mr. Hildebrandt, and in the final tragedy his acting was stirring.

Miss Sisley effected another masterpiece of production.