

ETHICAL PROBLEMS IN REPERTORY PLAY

"The Late Christopher Bean"

The pictures of "The Late Christopher Bean" had a posthumous value of thousands of pounds each, and the story of the greed and intrigue on the one hand and the simplicity and devotion on the other, when the poor painter's genius was recognised after his death, was told in the play of that name presented by the Brisbane Repertory Theatre Society in the Princess Theatre, South Brisbane, last night.

London art circles were set agog and the village in which Chris. Bean had painted was set aflutter by the revelation of the treasures he left. There was something in a remark among a group interested in art, during an interval of the play—"Pity this couldn't happen in Brisbane to stir things up a bit about art!"

The theme of the play has been put in a few words. The moral is the reaction of average human nature, as the author saw it, to a chance of unexpected wealth, to be got by fair means if possible, but if not, then by hook or by crook. So eminently respectable and respected folk become the prey of avarice, that would shock them in others and would shock themselves were the stakes not so high. Tension is held to the final curtain, when a grasping gamble with ethics is defeated and the virtue of honesty in the simple foil has its quite proper reward.

Brisbane has waited long for this well-evolved play on the stage. It has been screened, and has been hailed as a shrewd and searching reflex of life through the stage productions in Britain, on the Continent, in America, and Australia. The local production was well worth while, for the human interest and dramatic merits of the play and the manner of presentation. It will be repeated to-night, when it may be expedited a little, with a more active spirit infused into some of the action, and a few cuts to get it over a little earlier. These needs do not detract from the fine work of the two principal characters, and the good general standard, or from the general excel-

standard, or from the general excellence of the work of the producer (Miss Barbara Sisley), which was betokened by many effective stage pictures and smooth action. The strength of the presentation was in the fidelity to the obvious faith of the author (Rene Fauchois), that his story was true to life.

Revealing studies of the mental processes and inner characters of Dr. Haggett and Gwenny respectively were given by Mr. Ludo Gordon and Miss Rhoda Felgate, and they carried conviction. Comedy amid the ethical problems and codes of conduct was appreciated by these two players in particular. Others who played well were Misses B. Telford, K. Radford, J. Archibald, Messrs. W. B. Wilson, V. Fogarty, L. Guyatt, R. O'Hara.