

"ON THE ROCKS."

A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION.

BERNARD SHAW'S "On the Rocks" has none of the conventional features of a play. Many theatre-goers will not consider it a play at all.

It has no plot, no "situations," no developments, no climaxes. The characters just sit about and talk at each other. But that it holds the attention, and excites the mental faculties, and provokes the kind of laughter that greets the witty presentation of social satire, no one will deny.

To stage such a piece as this was a difficult task for the Workers' Art Club of Sydney to attempt. That the attempt was so successful was due not to individual performances only, but to the all-round excellence of the cast. There was hardly a weak spot in it. The play demanded more from some than others, of course, and that demand was met. Nevertheless it was the evidence of capacity right through its presentation at the King's Hall last Wednesday and Thursday that made it so satisfactory and so enjoyable.

As the Prime Minister of England Jerold Wells was good enough for any stage. His was the leading role, and he filled it with a keen understanding of this Shavian caricature of a political opportunist duped by his own ability to talk the leg off an iron pot, yet defeated in the long run by a genuine desire, apparently latent in him all the time, to do something for the people. His obstinate opponent in the National Cabinet, Sir Dexter Rightside, leader of the Conservative Party, was played with

the Conservative Party, was played with effective pomposity by Tim O'Sullivan, while Edward Janshewsky as the Chief of Police, Sir Broadfoot Basham, was a typical representative of a policeman strongly convinced of the fact that batons count when words fail. Mollie Hanson as the working girl, Aloysia Brollikins, spoke her lines with genuine eloquence, and the same can be said of Tom Mitchell as the wise old agitator, Hipney, and of Victor Arnold as the inflammable Indian capitalist, Sir Jafna Pandranath, patriotically furious at being called a "nigger." Frank Valentine, as that hard-up aristocrat and landlord, the Duke of Doomsday, had a good part, and made the most of its satirical opportunities.

Others who contributed to this unique comedy were Shirley Chudnow, Marucia Donovan, Tess Nicolls, Sylvia Lunn, Desmond Rowan, Richard Haines, Charles Reeves, Roy McDonald and William Marsden. The play was produced by Valerie Wilson.

There is plenty of talent among the working class, and the Workers' Art Club is amply demonstrating this, both histrionically and artistically, as far as Sydney is concerned.

H.E.B.
