

"THE POLTERGEIST — a fantastic comedy & another success for Drama Club

Wimborne Drama Club scored another grand success with their presentation at the Women's Institute Hall last week of Frank Harvey's "The Poltergeist." The optimism by which the play was approached was fully justified by sincere and excellent performance by all participants.

WIMBORNE DRAMA CLUB'S SECOND HARVEY SUCCESS

FOLLOWING the big success of their production last year of Frank Harvey's "Saloon Bar," members of Wimborne Drama Club have chosen the same author's three-act play, "The Poltergeist," to present at the Wimborne Women's Institute.

The first of three performances given last night delighted a large audience.

As in last year's play, Joe Harris, an extremely lively Cockney, takes a leading part.

On this occasion Harris is an insurance assessor who calls at a Devon vicarage about a claim for damage done by fire to a bear skin rug.

CLEVER CHARACTERISATION

Ronald Small was again responsible for clever characterisation, his activities including the temporary exorcism of the vicarage poltergeist to the village.

Closely co-operating with him was Paddy Brooman as Vincent Ebury, an enthusiastic member of a psychic research society. Paddy carried through a difficult role with understanding and skill.

The part of the Vicar, the Rev. Alfred Prescott, was played with marked success by a newcomer, Donald Waterfield, and Winifred Caney, as Mrs. Prescott, distinguished herself.

Pam Mottram, as Audrey Prescott, the unwitting agent of the vicarage poltergeist, gave a masterly performance.

CAPABLE OF BETTER PARTS

As the maid, Olive, who later became the poltergeist's agent in the village, Elaine King showed herself capable of taking a more prominent part than in former productions.

Jane Westlake, making her first appearance for the club, did well as Joyce Prescott.

Hubert Trenchard as Bobby Ashley, and Leslie Young, as Tom Copplestone, both farmers, complete the competent cast.

Producers were L. H. Mottram and Paddy Brooman; H. M. Coles was stage manager; and Reginald L. Wilkinson did the stage lighting.

There will be performances this evening and to-morrow evening.

The Poltergeist is, first and foremost, a fantastic comedy, and certainly a comedy with a difference. Great credit for its success must go the joint producers, Messrs. L. H. Mottram and Paddy Brooman who undoubtedly have taken the trouble to go thoroughly into the whys and wherefores concerning that little fellow, the poltergeist, a "noisy agency with a wild and malicious characteristic."

The story is about mysterious and unusual happenings in a typical English household, which happenings, first accredited to the vicar's youngest daughter, and "exorcised," finally develop an interest in the kitchen, through the agency of the servant girl.

A rug is burnt by some force or forces which normally is not admitted to exist, and the efforts of subsequent visitors to the household to "excommunicate" the unwelcome intrusion provides this talented company with the greatest possible chances for laughter making at each other's expense.

Honours

Honours go to Elaine King who as Olive the servant "knows

Weak 'attack' robs 'The Poltergeist'

ALTHOUGH Wimborne Drama Club did not quite reach their "Linden Tree" pinnacle in last week's production of Frank Harvey's farcical comedy, "The Poltergeist," at the Women's Institute, they nevertheless put on a first-rate show, which fully merited the hearty applause of the packed audiences.

L. H. Mottram and Paddy Brooman's well-balanced production was robbed of essential vitality by its slightly slow "pace"—occasioned, in great measure, by rather weak "attack" on the part of most of the players. In other respects, however, it was excellent.

In spite of somewhat stylized mannerisms, Ronald Small's Joe Harris was a joyous Cockney character-study, requiring only a little more "bounce" to make it perfect. Elaine King scored many laughs with a good, though rather "jerky" performance as the maid, Olive; and Paddy Brooman was sound and humorous as the psychic investigator, Vincent Ebury.

As the Rev. Alfred Prescott, Donald Waterfield gave a convincing study of an elderly parson, though both he and his "wife" (Winifred Carey) showed rather more hesitance than was necessary throughout the play.

Full marks

Strong support was given by the "small-part players"—Pam Mottram (Audrey Prescott), Jane Westlake (Joyce Prescott), Leslie Young (Tom Copplestone) and Hubert Trenchard (Bobby Ashley).

In a play where so much depends on split-second timing of effects, full marks must go to stage-manager H. M. Coles, R. L. Wilkinson and those club members who achieved such slick and effective results.

R. L. Wilkinson was electrician, Daphne Anderson prompted and Ronald Small was general manager for the production. A.A.