

# WIMBORNE CLUB'S 'BONAVENTURE'

## FINE PERFORMANCES AT PAMPHILL

Audiences totalling about 500 on Thursday and Friday evenings saw first-class performances given by Wimborne Drama Club of their latest production, "Bonaventure," at the County Modern School, Pamphill.

Having hitherto been accustomed to less spacious conditions for their presentations, the Club demonstrated that they were well able to take full advantage of the facilities offered by a full-sized stage. By the judicious use of simple, but effective, scenery, coupled with acting of a high standard, they gave a thoroughly satisfying performance.

Expressed in its simplest terms, "Bonaventure" might be described as "a whodunnit with a difference." Murder and the discovery of the criminal do, indeed, form the basis of the plot, but it is a story rather out of the ordinary.

Set in a convent in East Anglia—which, at a time when phenomenally high tides are breaking the sea-walls and flooding the countryside, becomes a haven for the influx of refugees—the play increases in tension from the arrival of three unusual visitors, until its final climax. These visitors are two prison officers and a condemned murderess, halted by the floods in their journey from hearing the dismissal of her appeal in London to Norwich Goal.

### DIFFICULT PIECE

The play asks much more from producer and players alike in presenting the reactions of the personalities involved, particularly as these personalities include those who were witnesses at the trial, a Sister who believes that there has been a miscarriage of justice and, of course, a real murderer.

Praise was doubly earned by Douglas Treharne, who, as producer, brought the whole thing to life, and who, as actor, gave a superb performance as the simple-minded odd-job man—a role in which he was never for a moment out of character.

An almost equally fine portrayal was given by Thelma Dryden as the wrongfully-condemned woman, while, as Sister Bonaventure, the sole believer in her innocence, Hazel Drewett gave a sympathetic performance, although she could with advantage have imparted to the audience a little more strongly the firmness of her belief. Similarly, a little less restraint would have benefited an otherwise sound performance by Frank Burley as the doctor.

Vida Jeffrey was an understanding yet authoritative Mother Superior, and excellent character studies were provided by Ethel Cornish, Daphne Young, Pam Mottram, Betty Viader, Elaine King and Harold Midmore.

The stage manager was Theodore Kendrick, the prompter Nicol Rowan, chief steward Leslie Young