



FURTHER LOBBYING

The Constant Wife

The "First-Nighter" saw the "Constant Wife" March 1, and thought it might handsomely done. The Maugham piece was the first "drawing room comedy," with its volume of dialogue and brittle butler, that the Mummies have attempted since they covorted in the "Royal Family" last season and its selection is to be commended.

Although the play was, as a whole, painfully talky and lacking in action, it offered a splendid opportunity for the Mummies to drape themselves about one of the handsomest sets that has ever been seen on the Wilson stage, and seem quite witty as they unraveled Mr. Maugham's ultra-modern philosophy of married life. This philosophy is based upon the theory that a modern wife does nothing to earn fidelity from her husband. She no longer sews, cooks, scrubs or cares for children and hence is really indebted to her husband for her maintenance and has no hold upon him should he care to—in the words of Mr. Bacon—"have another string to his bow." In propounding this interesting little idea, Maugham has allowed everyone involved to remain remarkably civilized and objective even to the point of being a bit bored by the fact that there was nothing more startling than an intrigue to occupy their attention.

Director John K. Rose has gathered about him a splendidly balanced cast for the "Constant Wife," and all, with a few notable exceptions, gave fine performances. Jane Schrader, in the role

of the obviously named Constance, was truly excellent in view of the fact that she was appearing for the first time with the guild in this play. She displayed a poise and surety which lent her performance dignity, and this quality together with a fine voice should make her one of the most outstanding performers which the Mummies have had in quite a while. The role of the faithless husband was filled by Woodrow Hunter, and, except for one occasion upon which he forgot that he was a stolid Englishman and began playing "actor-fellow" to the cheap seats, his performance was excellent.

Margaret Lotspeich in another elderly characterization continued the fine work which she began in "Criminal Code." Hers was the character of Mrs. Carver whose primary function in the play was that of raissoneur. In the role of Bernard, John Sinn turned in an appropriately colorless but workmanlike performance. And May Toepfer as the thoroughly disagreeable sister of Constance was adequately antagonistic as well as decorative. The cast was completed by Molly Kallas, Maurice Wilson, and Stanley Lawwill who did little more than complete the cast.

Director Rose staged the "Constant Wife" splendidly. The single set which served for all three acts stood the test of seeming just as attractive as the final curtain fell as it did when it was first discovered.

We are told that the second and third performances of the "Constant Wife" was much better than the first and for this reason we regret that we were actually as well as nominally a "First-Nighter."

R. G. E.

THE DIRECTOR

