Broadway Opening

DAPHNE LAUREOLA

(Opened Monday, September 13)


Maclean MacEachen — Joyce Lindon

Walter Weir — John O'Keefe

Naomi Smith — Mrs. O'Keefe

Original New York Cast

Daphne Laureola — Daphne Laureola

To be blunt, Daphne Laureola adds up to another of those importations which have been hot as a pistol in London and unwell here at something less than simmering temperature. There is an advance report from the West End that it has had a first-night congregation prepared to be amazed. However, at the curtain any cheers were for two stellar performances and not for the importation. Daphne amounts to no more than a recognition of the supersensitive talents of two top-rank British players and deserves no more than the enthusiasm of a first-night audience.

The play is tidy in the manner in which all its characters are drawn together by a plot that enables author James Bridie to reach an amiable and credible conclusion. One derives some humor and considerable literature from the characters at the expense of the central theme, which is as whole definitely runs down.

Briefly, Bridie appears to be concerned mostly with the fact that the 30-year-old woman married to an octogenarian peer for reasons of security. Safety being no panacea for boredom, she seems escape via the bottle, and during a pooled interval of acting, the element of pedantically romantic young Pole. A regard for the convenience of it finds her the Daphne to his Apollo. However, like the nymph of the fable, she is torn between love to a poetically passionate showdown and, when her philosophically amiable husband is in the parents of a handsome bodyguard. This drives the soul of the modern to a fainting frenzy. But the denouement is a happy one, and much of her psychoses by her second marriage has given her a sort of personal warmth and magnetism to make her frequently fascinating. Also, as one of her co-star, Cecil Parker, who gives a truly wonderful performance by her grace, and were it not for the dramatic substance of his stem stage debut, aloof already would have completely disarmed an audience.

At all events, Bridie's laurel bush should be shared of an indication of the play's product to the best scene of the play.

Another effective Broadway debut is that of the woman who bore the bolder and bewildered Polish heart. The critical report has been given as that all fine production and the benefit of some excellent acting, but as a