

Brings out the best

Hello Dolly

CAODS at the Civic Theatre

HELLO DOLLY is a show which brings out the best in the redoubtable Ray Jeffery/CAODS team.

It has big production numbers — not only the hackneyed title song, but the Parade and Put on Your Sunday Clothes. It is a dressy show, the ladies like fashion plates from the gay nineties, the gentlemen in boaters or bow ties. And it is a dancing show, with plenty of full stage choreography.

Dolly Levi in this production was Gill Plumtree — a nice, gentle, human match-maker, appealing to the late Ephraim Levi like Tevye to his Maker. Her half-millionaire prey, Vandergelder, was played with relish by Robin Sampson.

Cornelius, the newly pro-

moted chief clerk in the Hay and Feed Store was played with enviable energy by Richard Clements. With his young side-kick Barnaby (Paul Dicker) he worked with “athletic polish and flair,” bringing all his scenes to life as soon as he appeared.

And, as we've remarked before, it's good to have a chorus of clerks who look the part; their It Takes a Woman was one of the liveliest numbers in an evening full of show-stoppers.

The waiters, for instance, drilled by maitre d' Peter Smith, or the spanking-paced yellow-dressed reprise that opened the second act.

Can we really all be 10 years older since Dolly last graced the Civic stage? Nice to see you back . . .

Eric Ashley