

# MADGE TAYLOR MAKES A TANTALISING GHOST

THE Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, in putting on "Blithe Spirit," took a big risk. Farce is notoriously difficult, but Mr. Noel Coward's highly-sophisticated improbable flight into the occult was taking a tremendous risk. However, judging by the First Night audiences' reception, they thought the risk was justified, and I must say that, considering it was a First Night, I agreed with them.

I would like to draw attention to one minor production defect, right away, in the hope that it will be rectified as quickly as possible. Do please give Elvira her green aura; without it, her make-up and costume lose their full effect.

Edith (Jane Andrews) an ex-Wren, over-anxious to please and finding it difficult to throw off her R.N. training to do everything at the double was played with intelligence and imagination.

Ruth (Josephine Maisey) was first-rate—she never forgot the men in the back of the gallery, and her diction was particularly good, as was the manner in which she sustained her part.

Charles (Roger Massey) was inclined to be a little too conversational in Act I, but warmed up later. He very successfully portrayed all the emotions, from being very sure of himself as a successful author, through shock, terror, exasperation, to final peace.

Doctor Bradman (Wm. Broadly) sustained his part as a down-to-earth general practitioner. Mrs. Bradman (Sue Rebec) had a rather colourless part—it was meant to be—and she did her best with it.

## Tongue in her cheek

Madame Arcate (Amy Unstead) "brought the house down," but I felt that there were moments when she played rather with her tongue in her cheek.

Madge Taylor, who played

Elvira, quite rightly refrained from merely imitating Miss Kay Hammond.

Her appearance was eerie, her movements beautifully ghost-like, her mood exasperatingly "wicked" and her voice tantalising and taunting, in short—without any mere mimicry—she was—Elvira.

If you want to know all the twists of the plot you must go and see it. Serious-minded people are warned that it is described by the author as "improbable."

I recommend it, even to those who saw the play in London. The play was produced by Robert Vernon.