

# CHELMSFORD PRODUCTION

The Lord Chancellor ... .. E. T. Parfitt  
 Earl of Mountararat ... .. Alick Ogston  
 Earl Tolloller ... .. F. D. Bateson  
 Pte. Willis ... .. Cecil L. Bocking  
 Strephon ... .. V. C. Spurgeon  
 Queen of the Fairies ... .. Peggy Green  
 Iolanthe ... .. Dorothy Bocking  
 Celia ... .. Lilian Hamilton  
 Leila ... .. Margaret Robson  
 Phyllis ... .. Evelyn Lummis  
 Page ... .. Rose Rowbotham  
 Producer ... .. George H. Bush  
 Musical Director ... .. F. H. Spivey

To-day it is almost entirely left to amateur companies to revive the stage successes of the past. The more one sees of them, the more one realises what a revolution has taken place in theatrical entertainment during the last 50 years. But the Gilbert and Sullivan operas will always survive. Of their kind of theatrical production they are classics, and those operatic companies who produce them are doing a good work.

This week the Chelmsford Operatic and Dramatic Society are producing at the Empire Theatre, "Iolanthe," first performed at the Savoy in 1882, and running for 398 performances. The Chelmsford Society presented it before in 1922. At that time it was their third production. Several of the original principals again appear in their old parts—Cecil L. Bocking (Private Willis), V. C. Spurgeon (Strephon), and Peggy Green (Queen of the Fairies). Dorothy Bocking, who was the Phyllis of the 1922 production, is now Iolanthe. E. T. Parfitt, who this year is the Lord Chancellor, was in the chorus in 1922.

In "Iolanthe" there is of course the usual topsy-turvydom. But Gilbert is in every mood—now a subtle humorist, now a jester, and now pathetic. Sullivan responds with beautiful music.

The Society give an excellent performance. Indeed, it is one of the best things they have done, and reflects credit on everybody concerned in it. The performers are competent and speedy, and impart all the light-heartedness the piece calls for. The chorus work is good. Excellent team work makes it difficult to differentiate. E. T. Parfitt gives a fine study of the Lord Chancellor. He acts well throughout, and his singing of "When I went to the Bar" and the "Nightmare Song" are attractive. He is at his best in "He who shies at such a prize," with Alick Ogston (Mountararat) and F. D. Bateson (Tolloller). Rose Rowbotham, as Phyllis, is competent as usual, and her splendid voice is specially effective in "Good morrow, good lover," with Strephon, and "Tho' p'r'aps I may incur your blame" with the Sentry, Tolloller, and Mountararat. It is pleasant to see Peggy Green (Fairy Queen) and V. C. Spurgeon (Strephon) again with the company. Both are capable players. Their singing and acting are good. Cecil L. Bocking (Private Willis) is very amusing, and he sings the well-known song, "When all night long a chap remains," with gusto. Dorothy Bocking in the title part, Alick Ogston, and F. D. Bateson are also all worthy of praise. The producer, Mr. George H. Bush, is to be congratulated. The orchestra, directed by Mr. F. H. Spivey, plays exceptionally well.

Chorus.—Ladies: C. Byford, M. Cripps, E. Everitt, H. Fewell, E. M. Hey, J. M. Howard, J. H. Hutton, M. I. Martin, I. M. Marriet, I. M. Miller, N. R. Osborne, L. Smyth-Tyrrell.—Men: E. D. Barratt, A. Carrington, D. Catt, H. Casley, J. H. Edmond, K. Houlden, T. Jarvis, G. Newcombe, L. W. E. Osborne, H. Stock, L. Thorogood, R. Towers, R. B. Williamson, K. Woodhouse, C. E. Bradbury.

Orchestra.—Violins, G. V. Giddy, J. H. Duncan, G. Ryder, T. Ponsford, V. F. Waldau, Mrs. D. Cole; viola, Miss J. A. Wallinger; violoncello, H. M. Mann; double bass, J. Parrish; flute, the Rev. L. C. McGough; clarinet, V. D. Camillis; oboe, F. Waller; bassoon, J. Stanley; horn, V. F. Dickerson; cornet, G. Dann; trombone, A. R. piano, Miss Lottie Bacon.

At the close of the performance on Tuesday night the President (Ald. J. O. Thompson) offered hearty thanks and congratulations to all, and appealed for public support, so that not only might the heavy expenses of such a production be met, but a profit might remain.