

MUSICAL PLAY AT CHELMSFORD.

"MISS HOOK OF HOLLAND."

OPERATIC SOCIETY'S PRODUCTION.

The Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society on Monday gave the first of seven performances of the musical comedy, "Miss Hook of Holland," in the Empire Theatre, Chelmsford. Since the formation of the Society in 1920 fourteen light operas and musical comedies have been presented, and local charities have benefited to the extent of £670. This year's production, which is practically the only



"MISS HOOK OF HOLLAND."—Four of the principals in the Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society's production. Reading from left to right, they are Freda Voos (Margaret Robson), Capt. Adrian Paap (Jack Myall), Sally (Rowbotham), and Bandmaster Van Vuyt (Harry Dack).

musical comedy that treats of the scenic and costume effects Holland has to offer, is not new to Chelmsford as the Society first performed it in 1925.

of the people whose names were of all lived outside the parish

Mr. Hook, a ...
 distiller ... Jack Myall
 Capt. Adrian Paap ... Alick Ogston
 Lieut. De Coop ... Harry Dack
 Bandmaster Van Vuyt ...
 (Of the Mounted Artillery quartered at Arndyk).
 Ludwig Schnapps, foreman of distillery, in love with Mina ... Arthur Carrington
 An old policeman ... Tom Jarvis
 Van Eck, a very ordinary Dutchman ... Harold White
 Simon Slinks, a loafer by the Canal at Arndyk ... Cecil Bocking
 Freda Voos ... Margaret Robson
 Clara Voos ... Mary Phillips
 Gretchen, manageress of the distillery ... Emily Everitt
 An old market woman ... Mary Marriett
 Mina, maid to the Hooks ... Lilian Hamilton
 Sally, Miss Hook of Holland ... Rose Rowbotham

Chorus.—Ladies: H. A. Alden, D. Bocking, E. Brazier, C. Byford, M. Cripps, H. Fewell, H. M. Green, E. M. Hey, J. M. Howard, J. H. Hutton, E. Lummis, M. Mann, N. M. Marshall, M. I. Martin, I. M. Miller, J. Wells. Gentlemen: E. D. Barrett, F. D. Bateson, C. E. Bradbury, D. Catt, W. H. Hirst, G. Newcombe, J. L. Scott, H. Stock, L. Thorogood, G. Torry, K. Woodhouse.

The setting of the play is in the Cheese Market at Arndyk, near the Zuyder Zee, and the interior of a liqueur distillery at Amsterdam. The action centres round Miss Hook's discovery of a wonderful liqueur, "Cream of the sky," and the various incidents which occur following Mr. Hook's loss of the recipe. No doubt the play owes its lasting popularity in large measure to the tuneful songs and choruses, the pretty dances, and the scope offered to the fun makers. Some of the quips and sallies are, however, becoming somewhat time worn, and if at all overdone—as for instance the scene was on Monday when Mr. Hook was hilarious with his own liqueur—a good deal of the humour loses its effect.

After a slow start in which the action dragged a little, the opening performance went with a pleasant swing, and at the final curtain the players were warmly applauded. The outstanding feature was the work of the alert and lively chorus, whose concerted movements were excellent. Their singing was a real delight, and the principals owed much to their support.

PRINCIPAL PLAYERS.

Of the chief characters, four were taken by the same players who portrayed them when the comedy was first produced by the Society. They were Mr. E. T. Parfitt, who was happily cast in the role of good-natured old Mr. Hook, a part which gives every opportunity for his talent; Mr. Jack Myall, who, as Capt. Adrian Paap, made a convincing and dignified officer; Mr. Harold White as Van Eck, the slow-witted lazybones; and Miss Rose Rowbotham, who fully maintained her deserved popularity by her charming acting and singing in the title role.

Mr. Cecil Bocking another old favourite, gave one of the best individual performances as Simon Slinks, the rascal leader of a set of disreputable looking loafers; while Mr. Dack scored a success as the Bandmaster, though it is a pity his voice is not stronger. The other players who did well included Mr. Arthur Carrington as the distillery foreman with a weakness for the fair sex; Tom Jarvis as the old policeman; Lilian Hamilton as maid to the Hooks; and the other female players.

The singing and most of the dialogue were handled extremely well. The most successful musical numbers were "Lazy loafers," a song and chorus by Slinks and his sleepy colleagues; "Soldiers of the Netherlands," sung by Paap with chorus; "Tra-la-la," song and chorus by Van Vuyt and the company "Bottles," an unaccompanied madrigal for male voices; "Little Miss wooden shoes," and "Cream of the sky," by Sally and chorus; and "A pretty pink petty for Peter," sung by Mina.

The play is admirably staged under the direction of Mr. Montague Wynter. Mr. F. H. Spivey is the musical director; Miss Lily Arthur is responsible for the dances; and Mr. F. W. M. Powley and Mr. D. Dines are hon. prompter and call boy, respectively.

The orchestra which contributed in no small measure to the general enjoyment consists of the following:—

Violins, Mr. G. V. Giddy, Mr. J. H. Duncan, Mr. G. Ryder, Mr. T. Ponsford, Mr. V. F. Waldau, Mrs. D. Cole, Miss B. Duncan; viola, Mrs. D. Adkins; violoncello, Mr. H. M. Mann; double bass, Miss B. M. Gutteridge; flute, Mr. H. Smith; clarinet, Mr. G. W. Anderson; oboe, Mr. E. McGough; bassoon, Mr. E. J. Peacock; horn, Mr. V. F. Waller; cornet, Mr. W. Dellow; trombone, Mr. A. R. Dickerson; tympani, Mr. W. H. Wareham; piano, Mr. R. H. Marsden. Stage Band: Cornets, Messrs. Thomas and H. Brown; euphonium, S. Thomas; baritone, J. Thomas; sax horn, C. Lawrence.

There will be performances this (Friday)