

# Girl of 22 stars in 'Desert Song'

A 22-YEAR-OLD girl clerk and a schoolmaster get most of the applause in this week's £1,000 production of "The Desert Song" by the Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society at the Regent Theatre. On Monday the large and enthusiastic audience gave them an ovation at the successful opening performance.

Miss Dorothy Cox is the girl—she's a supervisor in the Land Agency Department of the Essex War Agricultural Executive Committee, and on leave this week. Her acting and singing in the soprano lead of Margot are as good as anything the supporters of the Society can remember in its past high record. This is Dorothy's first appearance in the lead of a local show.

Leonard Pease, the schoolmaster, no stranger to local amateur operatics, puts into the part of Pierre Barabeau some of his best work yet on a Chelmsford stage. Both these leads have excellent voices, which the enchanting tunes in "Desert Song" enable them to give full expression to.

Funny man of the show, Freddie Munnion, is an established Chelmsford favourite. Jan Frewer's General Birabeau, Audrey Parrett's Azuri, and Odette Clarke's Susan are outstanding among the other characters in this all-round successful post-war revival of the Society's activities.

Here is the full cast:—

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Sid-El-Kar .. .. .          | Reginald Bowler |
| Mindar .. .. .              | Jim Welham      |
| Hassi .. .. .               | Cecil Bocking   |
| Hadji .. .. .               | Douglas Catt    |
| Neri .. .. .                | Phyllis Rowe    |
| Pierre Birabeau .. .. .     | Leonard Pease   |
| Benjamin Kidd .. .. .       | Fred. Munnion   |
| Azuri .. .. .               | Audrey Parrett  |
| Capt Paul Fontaine .. .. .  | Richard Wood    |
| Lieut. La Vergne .. .. .    | Jim Welham      |
| Sergeant De Boussac .. .. . | Tom Haroer      |
| Susan .. .. .               | Odette Clarke   |
| Edith .. .. .               | Jose Hadler     |
| Margot Bonvalet .. .. .     | Dorothy Cox     |
| General Birabeau .. .. .    | Jan Frewer      |
| Clementina .. .. .          | Vera Stock      |
| Ali-Ben-Ali .. .. .         | Reg. Brown      |

A vivacious troupe of dancing girls, who include last year's Chelmsford Carnival Queen (June Gisby), come in for much well-deserved applause. The ladies' and men's chorus give good support. Bert Sharpe capably conducts the orchestra.

It is a well-dressed production. Through it all is recognised the mark of Miss Madge Macklin's first-class work as producer. Miss Macklin, also as producer of most of the Society's pre-war shows, has played a great part in building up its high reputation.