

# Stage full of flowers at close of 'Desert Song'

PRESIDENT COLLAPSED AFTER CURTAIN SPEECH

CHELMSFORD'S Regent Theatre was "sold out" on Saturday night, when the final performance of "The Desert Song" was given by the Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society. It was a gala night. Every one of the many popular songs in the show had to be repeated two or three times; the whole cast responded gaily to the loud applause from all parts of the house.

The principals, far from showing any effects of the eight performances, were at their best. So were the chorus and the dancing girls. They had to come on again and again. "A wonderful show" was the unanimous verdict.

Financially, too, the week proved most successful, and, despite the heavy production costs (over £1,000), it is certain there will be a substantial profit, which will go to local charities.

At the end of Saturday night's show, it took nearly half an hour to hand up the flowers, baskets of fruit, and other gifts which admirers had sent to the theatre for the performers.

Dorothy Cox, who played the part of Margot; Leonard Pease,

outstanding as the Red Shadow, and Audrey Parrett, a brilliant Azuri, were literally loaded up with presents.

Many others had armfuls of flowers and fruit.

By the time the last of the bouquets had been received, the stage was a mass of flowers, colourful costumes, and beaming faces.

## Gift for producer

THEN, acknowledging loud calls for "Producer," Miss Madge Macklin appeared on the stage, and was given an ovation, both from the company and the house. Miss Macklin was presented with beautiful flowers and other gifts, including a handbag from the members of the cast.

The President of the Society, Mr. Sidney C. Taylor, standing before the footlights, heartily congratulated the performers upon "this magnificent show." It was a proud moment for him as president, and he was delighted to pay his tribute to the grand work everybody had put in to make the production such a success.

Miss Macklin added her thanks to the performers for their loyalty, keenness, and cheerful co-operation in what had been the Society's biggest and most courageous venture.

Mr. A. R. Barneveld, chairman of the Society, who was also pianist in the orchestra and for the rehearsals, returning thanks, acknowledged the encouraging support from the public. But in future shows he hoped

more patrons would come to the earlier performances. As it was, they had had to turn away people from the concluding performances, although earlier in the week there had been plenty of seats available.

Nevertheless, it was very gratifying that all the expenses of the production, over £1,000, had been covered by mid-week, and there should be another substantial sum this time for local charities, which had already benefited by more than £1,000 from the Society's previous shows. (Applause).

## President collapses

AFTER Mr. Taylor had finished his speech and was making way for Miss Macklin, it was noticed that Mr. Taylor appeared about to collapse on the stage. He was caught in the arms of two of the men standing immediately behind. He was able to remain until the proceedings concluded, when he was joined by his wife.

There were many sympathetic inquiries for Mr. Taylor, who was afterwards conveyed home in a motor ambulance. After a fair night, he was a little better on Sunday.

It is thought the excitement of the evening caused a slight heart attack.

At the Chelmsford Cathedral on Sunday Provost Morrow referred to the illness of Mr. Taylor, and expressed the hope that he would speedily be restored to health.