

JUNE AND FREDDIE TAKE THE HONOURS

MEMBERS of Chelmsford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society are putting on a good Show at the Regent Theatre all this week. They opened on Monday night to a full house. It was a great success.

Blonde June Gisby, as Virginia, shared the highest honours with Fred Munnion—the Funnion. June is new to leading rôles. Few could have known. She was outstanding.

Freddie Munnion, the ‘old hand’ at the game, has lost none of his touch. As Nicholas Ninnijohn he kept the audience highly amused with a performance that brought every trick out of the bag.

But they did not need to ‘carry’ the Show. Excellent work was put on by Leonard Pease as Silas P. Hock. He made full use of every good line in a meaty part. It was not his fault that there were not more of them.

Virginia—as a Show—begins to date. But there are still some famous songs. All the hit-tunes of yester-year were served up afresh and none better than ‘Roll Away Clouds,’ delightfully sung by Lizzie (Vera Warner) and chorus.

“Sun Am Waking” was another. Here, in the opening of Act II., Vera Stocks, as Edinburgh, received a special “hand” from the large audience. She has an excellent soprano voice, and used it effectively in an equally effective scene.

There was a fine absence of apparent first-night nerves. An occasional fumbling for lines kept the prompter on his toes. Undoubtedly that will be remedied.

Ken Warren (Lord Campton) and Dorothy Cox (Lady Campton)

provided the main love interest — with a little starch thrown in for good measure. But any weakness in her acting can readily be forgiven when Dorothy sings. That girl certainly knows how to use her voice.

Ken mimed well as Dorothy sang the whole of the song which he should have shared. A difficult business. Probably now wishes he’d chanced it and “had a go” at the number.

John Laing (Lord Bransmere) and Nick Carter (Cæsar) were very well cast, and Ken Fox (Quinn), Ted Foulsham (Jules), W. Rondel (Bournet), Peter Warner (a Valet), Reg. Cornell (Remus), Sid Collicott (Gendarme), and Brenda Sharpe and Roy Morris (picaninnies), all contributed wholeheartedly to build up their various scenes.

Members of the chorus—and dancing team—have obviously put in a lot of hard work. It is now paying ‘dividends.’

Miss Mavis Ward has another fine production to her credit. Rarely have I heard so many demands for ‘encore’ on a first night.

Mr. Herbert Dykes (Musical Director) handled his orchestra cleverly. Any anxious glances from the stage (and there were a few) always found aid in a friendly baton.

Honours:

- To June Gisby, for acting up to professional standard—and looking pretty at the same time.
- To the scene-shifters — for

moving mountains!

• To Lord Bransmere—for getting past with a split infinitive: “To even acknowledge your existence” Peer’s privilege?

• And to Margaret Parker—for re-mounting her ‘steed’ with a smile after taking a toss in the dance sequence.

Others in the Show were:—

Dancing Girls: C. Harris, D. Lawson, K. Amery, E. Sweetman, B. Wager, I. Davies, P. Smith, E. Roden, P. Williams, M. Summers, I. Smith, M. Parker.

Ladies’ Chorus: M. Clark, A. Warren, B. Keable, C. Paddon, V. Stock, P. Coward, V. Clark, Z. Arbon, B. Braun, B. Goulden, G. Brookes, J. Andrews.

Gentlemen’s Chorus: E. L. Foulsham, H. Heisterman, J. Parker, P. Warner, T. Richardson, S. Collicott, R. Cornell, L. Sharpe, P. Smith, P. McKenzie, K. Fox, J. Clarke.

Hon. Assistant Musical Director, Mr. G. H. Horrey; Prompter, Major F. W. M. Powley; Wardrobe Mistress, Mrs. W. R. Catt; Property Master, Mr. D. Catt; Call Girls, Miss R. Gornall and Mrs. D. Leech; Publicity, Mr. W. R. Catt; Perruquiers, Mr. Jules Marten and Miss Stella Scott; Hon. Perruquiers, Miss Peggy Green and Mr. Cecil Bocking.

R.H.

ESSEX BOYS TO LIVE IN AUSTRALIA

TWO Essex boys are among forty between 16 and 17½ who will be emigrating to Australia on the “Otranto” on May 4.

They are Michael J. Newman, of Butchers Lane, Walton-on-the-Naze, and Dennis H. Gibbs, of Queenborough Gardens, Ilford.

Conducted parties sail every eight weeks under a special scheme which includes boys from all parts of the British Isles.

The boys are sent to carefully chosen farms in New South Wales and Tasmania. They are all keen on farming careers, and are determined to own their own farms eventually.