

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"

Burton Society's Best Show Yet

Inigorated by the sea air inhaled during their performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" in 1954, members of the Burton and District Operatic Society decided to remain by the briny, and for their current production, chose "The Pirates of Penzance." The week's run at the Little Theatre started on Monday and as on previous occasions, was greeted by a full house.

The small size of the theatre ceased to worry members of the society years ago, the limitations of the stage being accepted as a mere incidental, so much so, that for "The Pirates" the chorus is the largest ever, and includes 12 men.

PLENTY TO ENJOY

And there is plenty to enjoy about it—singing clear enunciation, excellent balance, authentic characterisations, and an infectious enthusiasm.

To a considerable degree the narrow confines of the stage have been offset by the scenery—some of the best that has been seen in Burton to date.

According to the programme, credit for the settings goes to Kathleen M. Budd and Alfred V. Read, for the designing and painting, and to Ray A.

Welton, Jack Last, Bernard Billings, John Woodcock, Peter Appleby and Eric Smith for their construction.

Alan Thompson appears as the major-general whose daughters are sought by the pirates, while Reginald Brunning again takes the leading tenor role, this time as the boy apprentice to the pirates (he should have been apprenticed to a pilot, but his nursemaid was slightly deaf and did not catch the instructions properly).

The pirate king is played by the only newcomer, Jack Heys, who has a good bass voice, and fits the part well and John Clews is his lieutenant.

Bernard Bourne takes his usual comedy role, this time as the police sergeant—a part notable for his singing (with the support of his police choir), of "The policeman's lot is not a happy one."

FEMININE LEAD

The feminine lead is again taken by Joy Appleby, with Margaret Bradley, Effie Cottrell and Ivy Smith as her three sisters, and Molly Kidger's contralto voice was used to good effect in the role of the nursemaid who did not hear straight.

The play is produced by Charles Pole, of Leicester, and the music direction is by Arthur Ormerod.

The heavy burden of the accompanist is again borne by Evelyn Woodhouse, who makes the piano do the work of an orchestra and she is assisted on the drums by Edward Prince.

Members of the chorus who put the seal on the show by their enthusiasm and qualities are:— Jean Aatkin, Doreen Barnes, Glenise Blant, Edith Foster, Rhoda Heys, Gertrude Kirkland, Gwendoline Osborne, Beryl Painter, Patricia Plews, Dorothy Plowright, Dorothy Sillita, Monica Walton, Mabel Whiteland, Jack Copeland, Leonard Farley, Norman Hasshill, John Hill, Albert Hood, Clifford Howse, Herbert Macey, Harry Scattergood, Alan Smith, Robert Smith, Richard Thomas, Edgar Williams.

The honorary officials are:—Ray A. Welton (stage manager), Jack Last (stage carpenter), Jean Smith (wardrobe mistress), Peter Cartwright and Kenneth Vye (lighting), Peter Appleby (house manager), Joy Appleby (performance secretary), M. Kidger (secretary) and H. N. Hasshill (treasurer).

Final verdict—the best show the society has put on and well worth the price of a ticket.

A.T.M.