

RESIDENT'S SUGGESTION

Henham Dramatic Club maintain high standard

HENHAM Dramatic Club is one of the youngest of the local dramatic societies, presenting its first production, "The Farmer's Wife," in 1955, but in that time it has built up a reputation for sound, workmanlike performances. Their latest effort, "Rookery Nook," a farce by Ben Travers, maintained their previous high standard.

This is one of the famous Aldwych farces and it was a courageous decision to do this play as there is always a tendency on the part of the audience to compare the amateur performance with the professional. The original cast included such well known masters of comedy as Robertson Hare, Ralph Lynn and Tom Walls. When one bears in mind the difficulties under which the amateur companies present a play the comparison was not unfavourable to the Henham Dramatic Club.

Apart from a slight tendency to overplay the part in the early stages, Michael Turner gave a sound performance as the newly-married man with a gay past who, spending a night alone in a house he has just rented while he awaits his wife who is looking after her "seedy mother," is faced with the problem of giving shelter to an attractive girl wearing only pyjamas.

CHARMING VISITOR

Lily Dixon made a charming visitor, driven from home by her fierce German step-father, excellently played by Ralph Parkin. This role could so easily have been ruined, but he handled it intelligently.

What a delightful old "battle-axe" Margaret Mussell made as the sister-in-law of the newly-wed husband. The show was nearly stolen, however, by Hubert Doe in the role of her hen-pecked husband. One could see that Robertson Hare was very much in his mind throughout the performance and Mr. Hare would undoubtedly approve of his performance. The scrapes into which he got himself when he was browbeaten into helping to hide the fact that the girl is present and then, when it is discovered, into explaining it, were hilarious.

HELPFUL COUSIN

Ted Clarke, as the helpful cousin of the husband, and a participator in many gay adventures in the past, was sound, but his delivery needs to be a little smoother. Gladys Parkin made a completely convincing daily help who is only too ready to be shocked and pass on scandal.

Perhaps the most delightful performance came from Ruth Turner, as a local girl of a rather "sporting" nature. It was a matter for regret that more was not seen of her.

Ron Ridout was a typical "old salt" as an Admiral, golf-playing partner of the hen-pecked husband. His breezy manner was a little hard on the ears, however.

Minor roles were competently handled by Anne Maitland and Albertina Root.

The club's productions have always been noted for the excellence of their scenery and outstanding is the only word to describe the scenery on this occasion.

In addition to playing a leading part, Michael Turner was also responsible for the production and design of the play.

Behind the scenes workers were: Ken Suckling stage manager, Helen Mussell assistant stage manager, Fred Clayden lighting, Rosemary Hill and Jennifer Wickham properties, Joe Maitland effects, Margaret Mussell business manager.

K.E.C.

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