

Children in pantomime



Under the wand of Fairy Bow Bells (Winifred Exley), the Rat King (Jeffrey Clayton) joins the chorus in a number from Dick Whittington. The pantomime is being given by the Leeds Children's Theatre at the Leeds Civic Theatre this week. (A Yorkshire Post picture.)

The first of the season's Christmas pantomimes opened last night at the Leeds Civic Theatre. "Dick Whittington," written and produced by Arthur Ridley and performed by 50 children and grown-ups of the Leeds Children's Theatre, is a colourful, tuneful and amusing entertainment along traditional lines. Mr. W. Ratcliffe and Mr. S. Bates have designed some most professional-looking scenery.

Outstanding were the dancing of the young *corps de ballet* and the community singing of the large audience of children. The two comedians, played by Arthur Cox and Harry Dodd, played a large part in leading the singing and in making the pantomime the jolly, communal entertainment that all pantomimes should be and seldom are.

Joan Lake has a clear, attractive voice which makes her performance as the heroine one of the best parts of the show. Good performances are given by Margaret Bentley (Dick), Arthur Starkie (the Cat) and Winifred Exley (Fairy Bow Bells), while Jeffrey Clayton plays the Rat King with great relish and ability. An orchestra of boy recorder players from Cross Flatts County Primary School, with Mr. Tom Mason at the piano, contributes to the pantomime's success.

The show will continue until Saturday, December 13. Performances on week nights will be at 6 and on Saturdays at 2.30 and 7. The Leeds Children's Theatre is a group of the Leeds Arts Centre.

J. B.