

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "D" Company 1881 ("E" from 7th March)

27th December 1880 – 8th January: West Hartlepool

GAIETY THEATRE, WEST HARTLEPOOL – A week's acquaintance with "The Pirates of Penzance" has not lessened the eagerness of the local public to witness Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's whimsical production. Arrangements have been made with Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, who have for their "guide, philosopher, and friend" Mr. J. W. Beckwith for six more representations and the first of these, given on Monday evening, was witnessed by a crowded audience, who evinced as much interest in the performance as ever. But genuine, innocent, hearty, harmless fun must always be welcome, and the fun of "The Pirates of Penzance" is absolutely free from reproach. The Archbishop of Canterbury might pay it a visit in company with all the British bishops and laugh their fill without the slightest fear of danger to the Established Church. The notion of mixing up an old-fashioned melodrama with all sorts of new-fangled ideas of modern life and fashion, with pirates in Greek costume on the coast of Cornwall and young ladies arrayed like professional beauties, might well cause some amusement. The introduction of the policeman, too, and the grotesque idea of the pastoral innocence and purity of the burglar when "he's not burgling," are irresistibly funny, and create no end of laughter. Much credit is due to the company for the admirable manner in which they give effect to Mr. Gilbert's quaint dialogue and Mr. Sullivan's charming music and in singling out Miss Ethel McAlpine, Miss Fanny Harrison, and Messrs. R. Mansfield, James Sydney, G. B. Browne and F. Federici for special praise it most not be supposed that the other members of the company are deficient in ability. Indeed, the chorus is worthy of the warmest praise. The voices are charmingly blended, and the intonation is excellent; whilst the band, under the direction of Mr P. W. Halton, to whose musical guidance the opera is also entrusted, acquit themselves in the most satisfactory manner. Altogether a more attractive and perfect performance it would be difficult to name. [*The Daily Gazette* (Middlesbrough, England), Tuesday, January 04, 1881; pg. 3; Issue 4221.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. J. Midgeley; Manager, Mr. E. Fowler. – A company, under the direction of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, has appeared at this house during the past two weeks in *The Pirates of Penzance*, which has attracted large audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 8, 1881; Issue 2207.]

10th – 15th January: Stockton-on-Tees

STAR THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. T. Nelson; Manageress, Madame Prescott. – The much-talked-of *Pirates of Penzance* was produced here on Monday last before a crowded audience, standing room being barely attainable in any parts of the house long before the rising of the curtain. The wonderful quaintness of the libretto, and the bright yet scholarly music to which it is wedded, are fascinating to a degree, and we may safely prophesy that the popularity of this truly comic opera will stand the tests of a good many return visits. The execution of the work was capital all round, each of the artists seeming to revel in the fun of the thing almost, if not quite, as much as the spectators themselves. Miss Ethel McAlpine as Mabel was dainty in appearance and charming in her acting, whilst her singing was delicious. Mr. Richard Mansfield as Major-General Stanley was in his best form, Mr. James Sydney distinguished himself as the Pirate apprentice. The choruses were splendidly given throughout. A morning

performance was given on Wednesday. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 15, 1881; Issue 2208.]

17th – 22nd January: Halifax

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Rawlings. – Our enterprising Lessee has provided a great treat for his patrons this week in the engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company. The piece is splendidly mounted, full of go, and has drawn crowded and delighted audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 22, 1881; Issue 2209.]

24th – 25th January: Chester

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE. – This popular opera was performed at the Music Hall on Monday and Tuesday evenings by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. On Monday there was a crowded house, nearly the whole of the reserved seats having been taken. The celebrity of the opera and the well-known efficiency of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company render any detailed criticism of ours unnecessary. Suffice it to say that the whole of the characters were faithfully delineated, and that all present seemed delighted with the performance. The choruses were rendered with particularly good effect, and were loudly redemanded. Mr. R. Mansfield as Major-General Stanley, the Pirate King (Mr. Geo. B. Browne), his Lieutenant (Mr. F. Federici), and his apprentice (Mr. James Sydney) all richly deserve a word of special praise. The police, too, under the superintendence of their sergeant, Mr. Hy. Cliffe, carried out the instructions of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan with commendable fidelity, and their chorus was rightly considered one of the great attractions of the performance. Miss Fanny Harrison as "Ruth" and Miss Ethel McAlpine as "Mabel" were enthusiastically received. Altogether the performance was a decided success, and must have given entire satisfaction to all who had the pleasure of witnessing it. [*Cheshire Observer* (Chester, England), Saturday, January 29, 1881; pg. 6; Issue 1486.]

MUSIC HALL. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's anxiously expected *Pirates of Penzance* company made its first appearance here, with Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest and apparently greatest success. A fashionable audience assembled despite the intense frost and dense fog which prevailed out of doors, and both the piece and the performers were accorded a very hearty reception. Many of the Gilbertian sayings and situations seemed to tickle those present immensely; none more so, perhaps, than those which the constabulary element indulges in. Mr. Sullivan's bright tuneful, and catching music was also greatly admired, and elicited frequent marks of approbation, several of the most popular "numbers" having to be repeated in response to the enthusiastic applause with which they were greeted. The company, most of the members of which are new to Chester, is a large one, and in all respects adequate. Miss Ethel McAlpine takes the lead with a most charming impersonation of Mabel. This young lady's performance is alike artistic, either from a musical or a dramatic standpoint. She possesses a light but eminently pleasing soprano voice, and her brilliant rendering of the waltz song "Poor Wandering One" at once installed her a favourite. Miss Fanny Harrison makes a handsome Ruth, and gives her share of the music with praiseworthy taste and expression. The Misses Arnott, Blanche Grosvenor [*sic*], and Hutchinson form a charming trio as Kate, Edith, and Isabel respectively. Mr. Richard Mansfield is exceedingly good as Major-General Stanley, giving the now famous patter song with great humour and raciness. The Pirate King loses nothing of his melodramatic demeanour in the hands of Mr. Geo. B. Browne, who, moreover, sings admirably. The Pirate Apprentice of Mr. James

Sydney is a passable performance dramatically, but we cannot say that that gentleman does full justice to the musical requirements of the part. The Sergeant of Police is capitally interpreted by Mr. H. Cliffe, who, although evidently suffering from a cold on Monday night, elicited a well merited encore for one of his songs. Mr. F. Federici worthily completes the cast as Samuel, the lieutenant. The choruses were splendidly given. The mounting was all that could be desired. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 29, 1881; Issue 2210.]

26th – 29th January: Shrewsbury

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietress, Mrs. Maddox. – Excellent patronage has been accorded to Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *artistes*, who performed, on Wednesday, 26th January, and three successive nights, to fashionable and most appreciative audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 5, 1881; Issue 2211.]

31st January – 5th February: Wolverhampton

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee Mr. Lindo Courtney; Acting Manager, Mr. C. E. Clark. – On Monday evening *The Pirates of Penzance* arrived in the theatrical waters of the black country Metropolis, and their presence at the "Royal" has drawn together large and well-pleased audiences. The Pirate King has an excellent representative in Mr. George B. Browne, who not only acts well, but also sings his music in good style. Mr. R. Mansfield as Major-General Stanley plays with considerable ability. His vocalisation, vivacity, facial expression, and droll movements are all well suited to the part. Miss Ethel McAlpine has a sweet voice, and her rendering of the character of Mabel is very pleasing. Miss Fanny Harrison deserves high praise as Ruth. The other parts were well sustained, and the chorus was very effective. The scenery and stage accessories were all that could be desired, and the present engagement is another instance of Mr. Courtney's praiseworthy determination to afford his patrons as rich and varied an entertainment as possible. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 5, 1881; Issue 2211.]

7th – 12th February: Worcester

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. W. Gomersall. – The Lessee is manifesting a thorough determination to provide a liberal bill of fare, and to maintain a high-class standard of entertainment. This week the "legitimate drama" has been succeeded by comic opera, Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appearing in *The Pirates of Penzance*. The opera was admirably mounted, the dresses, scenery, and accessories being of the most handsome and elaborate description; whilst the band and chorus were all that could be desired. Mr. R. Mansfield as Major-General Stanley was very successful and highly amusing; Mr. G. B. Browne proved an able exponent of the Pirate King; while Mr. F. Federici made a useful Lieutenant. Mr. James Sydney (Frederic), and Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe (Sergeant of Police) were also very successful in their respective roles. Miss Ethel McAlpine was a charming Mabel, her singing and acting being of the highest order. Ruth fell to the hands of Miss Fanny Harrison, and she achieved a triumph. Miss Blanche Grosvenor (Edith) [*sic*], Miss Arnot (Kate), Miss Hutchinson (Isabel), were all well received, and the performance was pronounced to be one of the best witnessed on this stage. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 12, 1881; Issue 2212.]

14th – 19th February: Cheltenham

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs. Maisey and Shenton. – *The Pirates of Penzance* was played for the last time here on Saturday (the 19th), before an immense

audience; in fact, the largest that had been in the theatre for a considerable period. The success of the company was very great, and during their brief engagement over 5,000 persons visited them, and general delight was manifested. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 26, 1881; Issue 2214.]

21st – 26th February: Gloucester

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Thomas Dutton. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company entered on a six nights' engagement here, appearing in Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest successful comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance; or, the Slave of Duty*, which was put upon the stage in an admirable manner. The music was excellently rendered, and the acting all round was capital, as the hearty plaudits of an appreciative audience and the calls at the end of each of the acts fully testified. An operetta entitled *Six and Six* has preceded *The Pirates of Penzance* every evening during the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 26, 1881; Issue 2214.]

28th February – 5th March: Cardiff

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE AT THE CARDIFF THEATRE ROYAL.

The "Pirates of Penzance" is announced for performance to-night at the Cardiff Theatre, and if adequately given should not fail to draw good houses during the week. It may be matter of regret to some that Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan (whose names seem as inseparably linked as those of Erckmann-Chatrian, or Meilhac and Halévy) should not turn their attention to more important work, and give us a National English Opera that should raise the opinions of musicians, both in England and on the Continent, as to the capabilities of Englishmen to produce work worthy to stand side by side with other examples of contemporary musical art. This latest work from their pens differs but slightly from their former productions. There is the same quaint distorting of modern life (as if Mr. Gilbert saw it reflected in a concave mirror), the same sort of good-natured satire, the same delight in the incongruous and the absurd, the same witty allusions to current foibles and follies, and the same disrespect for the old-fashioned legitimate drama. Dr. Sullivan's music is characterised by the piquant orchestration that has before charmed us, and made us almost forget that his melodies do not err on the side of glaring originality. The *tout ensemble* of picturesque scenery, bright dresses and faces, fun, frolic, and sparkle has, as heretofore, drawn all London, and the opera is now having a victorious march throughout the provinces. The principal characters are *Major-General Stanley*, who has an estate in Cornwall, and who is "the very model of a modern major-general," although he confesses that his "military knowledge has only been brought down to the beginning of the century;" his daughter *Mabel*, an impressionable young lady, whose mission in life seems to be to reclaim poor wandering pirates, and who falls in love naturally with the youngest and handsomest one of the horde that infests the neighbourhood of her father's abbey; *Frederic*, the aforesaid young and handsome pirate, who should have been apprenticed to a pilot by his nursery maid *Ruth*, but she "didn't catch the word aright through being hard of hearing," and unfortunately found, when too late, that she had doomed both herself and him to the vile lot of piracy. The *Pirate King* and the *Sergeant of Police* also play important parts, and the chorus is formed of pirates, police, and *General Stanley's* daughters, who take the place of *Sir Joseph Porter's* sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts in the "Pinafore." The most popular numbers are the song of the *Pirate King*, *Mabel's* waltz, the *General's* patter song, and the *finale* in

the first act, and the chorus of policemen, whose "lot is not a happy one," in the second act. The overture is a clever medley of the principal airs, and in the concerted music Dr. Sullivan has displayed all his usual skill. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Monday, February 28, 1881; Issue 3683.]

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE
AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, CARDIFF.

"The Pirates of Penzance" was produced on Monday night with every sign of a popular success before an audience that filled every part of the Cardiff Theatre, the pit and pit stalls being especially well patronised. Undoubtedly, curiosity was an important attraction on this occasion – curiosity to see whether Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan were progressing or retrograding in the branch of art they have made especially their own on the part of the educated playgoer, and on the part of the greater portion, the mere amusement-seeking public, curiosity to see what new combination could be made out of the old forms of jingle, glitter and fun – for, as we pointed out on Monday, there is little of novelty about this latest opera. It is merely a *réchauffé* of materials that some think have been sufficiently well worn. The plots – if, indeed, a slender and well-nigh incomprehensible story, which should form the background of the stage picture, can be so designated – may very briefly be sketched. The opening scene is laid on the coast of Cornwall, a rocky sea shore – which should, if any district could, give scope to the artist for a bright and effective set. It seems to us that this opportunity has been missed in the production of Monday night. There is little of picturesque or even rugged beauty in the scene as presented, and the gorgeous colouring and brilliant atmospheric effects of the Cornish coast noticeable at the Lizard and Mount's Bay, where the action presumably takes place, are conspicuously absent. Here the pirates, headed by their King (Mr. G.B. Browne), with Lieutenant Samuel (Mr. Federici), second in command, are celebrating the coming of age of the pirate 'prentice Frederic (Mr. J. Sydney), who disturbs the harmony of the proceedings by informing the band that it is his intention when freed from his indentures to at once make it his endeavour to exterminate his whilom comrades, while Ruth (Miss F. Harrison), the maid-of-all-work, explains how it came about that he ever joined them. A difficulty arises in the pirate's mind as to what is to become of Ruth, with whom Frederic is supposed to be deeply in love, when he goes away, and they press him to take Ruth with him. This he is loath to do, and an altercation ensues, during which the pirates leave Frederic and Ruth to settle the matter amicably. This would, no doubt, have been satisfactorily accomplished had not General Stanley's daughters, "all of whom are beauties" (?), arrived on the scene, and Frederic discovers that Ruth is not, after all, the beautiful woman he had taken her for. He then endeavours to soften the hearts of the young ladies, entreating them to recue him from his unfortunate position by making "worldly interest subordinate to sense of duty." They all decline, but at last Mabel (Miss Ethel McAlpine), the youngest and most bewitching of the General's daughters, comes to the rescue, and offers to take the "poor wandering one" to her heart. Before Frederic has time to explain that the young ladies are in danger the pirates are upon them, and are only stopped from carrying them off there and then by the timely arrival of General Stanley (Mr. E. Clowes), who, after recounting the capabilities that fit him for his post in Her Majesty's army, manages to deceive the Pirate King by telling him that he is an orphan, and as the pirates are tender hearted and will not attack orphans, the first act ends up with general rejoicing, and the betrothal of Frederic and Mabel. The second scene represents a ruined chapel of General Stanley's estate. Here the tones are too green and not sufficiently subdued,

and more of the grey stone could have been shown with advantage. The time is night, and General Stanley is mourning amongst the tombs of his ancestors (by purchase) that he has stained their escutcheon by telling a falsehood to the Pirate King that he was an orphan when in reality he is not; and, indeed, "never was one." Frederic explains that he has secured the services of a body of policemen, who forthwith come on the scene singing "Tarantara, tarantara," to assist him capture the pirates that night. On the departure of the police, The Pirate King and Ruth enter and tell Frederic that he was born on Leap Year, and that consequently, reckoned by birthdays, he is only five and a quarter, instead of 21, and bound to him by his indentures till his 21st birthday. By appealing to Frederic's sense of duty the King and Ruth make him promise to assist them and return to his old life. He gets an interview with Mabel, and promises to wed her in 1940, when he comes of age; and although she says that "the time seems so long," they plight their troth. The police, on hearing the pirates move about the abbey grounds, hide themselves behind the pillars, and the pirates ensconce themselves, also, awaiting the arrival of the General, who fancying that he hears a noise, has come from his room in dressing gown and nightcap, followed by his daughters, also more or less *dishabillé*. A fight ensues between the police and the pirates, in which the former are worsted, but on summoning the King and his band to yield in Queen Victoria's name. they submit, and the General bestows the hands of his daughters on them, discovering that they are all, or "nearly all," noblemen who have gone wrong, while Ruth pairs off with the Sergeant of Police, and Frederic and Mabel are of course happily united. With regard to the performance, we cannot speak like terms of unqualified praise, though the production was, for a small provincial theatre, on the whole meritorious. To begin with, the foundation of all opera, the orchestra, the strings were lamentably weak, and were at times almost inaudible, while the wisdom of having a perpetual euphonium obbligato may well be questioned. Mr. P. W. Halton, the conductor, worked hard with the materials he had to go upon, and kept his band and chorus well in hand, but there was an absence of life and *verve*, of light and shade, and of the true *timbre* to do full justice to Arthur Sullivan's music. In consequence much of the effect was lost, the overture in particular disappointing those who had heard it with a properly constituted orchestra. The choruses were, on the whole, well given, the "Ode to Poetry," which gained the first encore of the evening in particular standing out in prominent relief. Miss McAlpine has a pleasing voice and presence – a voice that is distinctly better in the lower and middle than the upper ranges, where the notes are thin and wiry, and this was probably why she failed to make an impression in the waltz song, which is generally the most popular number in the opera. The quaint madrigal in the second act was charmingly given and the lady narrowly escaped an encore. Her dress, of pale blue silk, with broad brimmed hat and feather, was piquant and effective, and while we are on the subject of the dresses, we may add that the whole wardrobe is copied from the original in London, so that spectators here and elsewhere are enabled to get a very fair indication of the *mise en scène* which is presumed to be one of the attractions of the piece. One or two of the dresses struck us as being better than the average – notably the three arrangements, as Mr. Whistler would style them, in maroon and sky-blue, amber and blue, and bluish grey and cardinal. Miss Fanny Harrison had the good quality of enunciating her words distinctly, but seemed rather methodical in her movements, especially in the ludicrously deliberate faint at the end of the last act. Mr. Clowes missed much of the humour of General Stanley's part – which, to our thinking, and in Mr. Grossmith's hands, is *the* part of the piece – and, from his inability to make himself heard, deprived the great patter song of its laughter provoking faculties. Mr. Browne and Mr.

Federici, as the Pirate King and Frederic [*sic*] respectively, sang considerably better than they acted; while the Sergeant of Police found an efficient exponent in Mr. Cooper Cliffe. The audience seemed somewhat slow at first to see the fun of the thing; but they were roused to enthusiasm by the policeman's chorus – which is evidently going to be a great success with the "gods" during the company's stay. The performance commenced with an operetta entitled "Six and Six," which no doubt served the purpose of the management in furnishing a *lever-de-rideau* to the more substantial entertainment. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Wednesday, March 2, 1881; Issue 3685.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. W. H. Daw; Manager, Mr. E. Bulwer. – ON Monday we experienced quite a change in the visit, for a first time, of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company with the successful *Pirates of Penzance*, and in the production the musical public of the principality have experienced a treat of an unusual character, and great has been the "booking." [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 5, 1881; Issue 2215.]

7th – 12th March: Bath

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company commenced an engagement here on Monday last, appearing in *The Pirates of Penzance*. It is beautifully put upon the stage, the scenery in both acts being really artistic. The acting and singing are all that can be desired, and the more the opera is seen the better it is appreciated. Miss Ethel McAlpine as Mabel was in excellent voice, and gave full effect to the character. Miss Fanny Harrison as Ruth gave evidence of high histrionic and musical ability. The Pirate King of Mr. George B. Browne is a bold and masterly production. He "brought down the house" with his rendering of the song "I am a Pirate King." Mr. Edward Clowes as Major-General Stanley, Mr. James Sydney as Frederic, and Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe as the Sergeant of Police, are all equally effective. The very amusing operetta *Six and Six* is capitally played each evening and evokes much applause. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 12, 1881; Issue 2216.]

14th – 19th March: Exeter

THEATRE ROYAL.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company appeared on Monday evening in Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's melo-dramatic opera. "The Pirates of Penzance," and was warmly applauded throughout by a very good house. All who have witnessed "H.M.S. Pinafore" will have been struck with the originality of the libretto, and as much might be said of "The Pirates of Penzance," which abounds with mirth-provoking wit. The scene opens with a rocky sea shore on the coast of Cornwall, introducing the pirates celebrating the coming of age of one of their number, Frederic (Mr. James Sydney), who has no sympathy with the crew, and determines on leaving and exterminating them. Never having met with any other female, he avows his love for Ruth (Miss Fanny Harrison), the piratical maid-of-all-work, who subsequently narrates how Frederic, when an infant, was apprenticed by mistake to a pirate instead of a pilot. The pretty daughters of Major-General Stanley (Mr. E. Clowes) now come upon the scene, and Frederic's love is transferred to the eldest, Mabel (Miss McAlpine), who consents to marry him. Their former comrade now determines on destroying the band, and calls in the police, who, headed by their Sergeant (Mr. H. C. Cliffe), complete a highly amusing scene. The pirates yield to the police in the Queen's name, and on the revelation of Ruth that "they are all noblemen who have gone wrong," Major-General Stanley consents to their wooing his

daughters, and the scene closes with a very pretty grouping of all the members of the company. An amusing operetta precedes "The Pirates of Penzance," but this evening (Wednesday) the order will be reversed, the performance commencing with the opera, in order that visitors from Exmouth might return by the 10.35 train. There will be a morning performance on Friday, commencing at 2.30. Next week Miss Lizzie Coote's comedy and burlesque company will occupy the theatre. [*Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser* (Exeter, England), Wednesday, March 16, 1881; Issue 6057.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederic Neebe. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened with, for the first time in Exeter, *The Pirates of Penzance*. The mounting of the piece was excellent, and the company well up in their parts; and the opera went capitally. There was a good house, the acting was frequently applauded, and the singing often encored. The opera was preceded by the operetta of *Six and Six*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 19, 1881; Issue 2217.]

21st – 26th March: —————

28th March – 2nd April: Torquay

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Manager, Mr. Charles Daly. – During the week we have had Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company. The opera was capitally put on, and the new scenery by Mr. H. C. Freeman was really good. *Six and Six* preceded. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 2, 1881; Issue 2219.]

4th – 5th April: Bridgewater

TOWN HALL. – D'Oyly Carte's opera company, with *The Pirates of Penzance*, proved an immense draw on the 8th and 9th inst. The principals of the company were Misses Ethel McAlpine and Fanny Harrison, Messrs. G. B. Browne, J. Sydney, E. Clowes, F. Federici, and H. C. Cliffe, and the performance gave every satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 16, 1881; Issue 2221.]

11th – 16th April: Swansea

THE THEATRES. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company began a week's engagement at the Theatre Royal. The entertainment was opened with the comic operetta, or, as it might well be called, the musical farce, *Six and Six*, in which Miss J. Woodward as Maude Daghish and Mr. Truro as Twister played the principal parts. Several pretty airs occur, which were well given by the artistes named and the other members of the company. The great attraction was, however, *The Pirates of Penzance* which followed. The music of this piece, which is now well known, is of the light and popular kind characteristic of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's productions. The piece was well put on the stage, the company being numerous, and the scenery – especially in the second act – effective. The main impression left on the mind by the opera is, as is no doubt intended, a vague recollection of a kaleidoscope jumble of gay dresses, bright scenery, and pretty faces. We must, however, mention with approval the singing of Miss Ethel McAlpine as Mabel, and Mr. James Sydney, the pirate apprentice, as well as the marvellously life-like make up of Mr. Greyling in the character of the Major-General. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Wednesday, April 13, 1881; Issue 3721.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Director, A. Melville. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company has been appearing here this week in *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Six and*

Six, with a gratifying amount of success. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 16, 1881; Issue 2221.]

18th – 30th April: Portsmouth

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"

A crowded house, as a matter of course, witnessed the first production in Portsmouth of "The Pirates of Penzance" at the Theatre Royal on Easter Monday, and from the very rise of the curtain it became evident that Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert were to be as popular with a provincial as they had previously been with metropolitan audiences. Throughout two long acts the interest of the spectators or listeners never flags, and it was with a sigh of regret rather than of relief that the somewhat hurried ending was witnessed. The general effect being so good and so unmistakable, there is, in truth, little need for detailed criticism. It has been asserted that both author and composer, more especially the former, have followed in "The Pirates" the "lines" which have proved so successful in "Pinafore," and no doubt this is the case to some extent; but with such exquisite workmanship before us it would be positively criminal to indulge in cavilling. The humour of the piece is as light and rippling as that of the "Pinafore," and just as inverted. It is full of quaint conceits, and we seem to see the world not so much through a magnifying glass as upside down. The opening scene is the pirates' den on the rockbound coast of Cornwall. The pirates are picturesque villains, as a matter of course, but they are also ridiculously tender-hearted – at least on one point. Orphans themselves they are full of pity for all who are in the same parentless condition; and as every ship's crew they capture appears to be composed of fatherless sailors, the humanity of the pirates plays havoc with the profits of their profession. This is pointed out to them by Frederic, an apprentice, who imagines that he will be free of his indentures at midnight, and who frankly informs the King that, his freedom once gained, he means to exterminate the lot. Frederic was originally brought to the pirates by his nurse Ruth, who thus accounts for the blunder she made:—

I was a stupid nursery maid, on breakers always steering,
And I did not catch the word aright, through being hard of hearing;
A sad mistake it was to make, and doom hi to a vile lot,
I bound him to a pirate –you – instead of to a pilot.

She did more than this. To keep near her precious charge she turned a pirate maid of all work, and as Frederic approached his majority she wanted to marry him. The apprentice has never seen any other woman, and he asks Ruth to tell him candidly how she is compared with the rest of her sex, and her answer is so satisfactory that Frederic is on the point of consenting to be made happy when a chorus of girls' voices close at hand suddenly surprised the reluctant lover and sends Ruth in a rage off the stage. The voices are those of Major-General Stanley's daughters, and as they swarm into the foreground we cannot help suspecting that the gallant officer must have committed quadrigamy at the very least to be blessed with such a numerous progeny. Not only are the young ladies vocalists, they are all beauties as well – at least their papa says so – and the scene becomes very lively when the pirates suddenly pounce down upon them and insist upon having a bride apiece. The King, indeed, seems partial to a couple, and as the demoiselles themselves do not appear to be very particular, perhaps nobody else has any right to protest. Both sides are so charmed with the impromptu arrangement that they break out into song:

PIRATES

Here's a first-rate opportunity

LADIES

We have missed our opportunity

To get married with impunity,
And indulge in the felicity
Of unbounded domesticity
You shall quickly be parsonified,
Conjugally matrimonified,
By a doctor of divinity,
Who is located in this vicinity.

Of escaping with impunity
So farewell to the felicity
Of our maiden domesticity
We shall quickly be parsonified,
Conjugally matrimonified,
By a doctor of divinity,
Who is located in this vicinity.

It is quite time that papa should appear upon the scene, and accordingly he comes down like an avalanche, introducing himself in a patter song beginning.

I am the very pattern of a modern Major-General,
I've information vegetable, animal and mineral;
I know the Kings of England, and I quote the fights historical,
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical, &c.

The General by no means relishes the piratical designs upon his daughters, and on hinting as much the incensed sea robbers are about to despatch him, when he pleads – with the usual result – that he is an orphan! The first act closes upon the General; retiring with his progeny, the pirates dancing with delight, while their King waves aloft the black banner with the typical death's head and cross bones. The second act discloses a ruined chapel by moonlight, with the silvery sea glimmering in the background, and it really forms a very effective picture. This one-time chapel of ease has become the General's by purchase, and he not unnaturally claims the ancestors whose bones repose within the weather-stained structure. The pirates, unable to make both ends meet at sea, have turned burglars, and they are about to make an attempt upon the General's house, seeking a hiding place in the ruins. In blissful ignorance of their proximity, half-a-dozen policemen enter, headed by a comical sergeant, and the singing and acting here really form the great hit of the piece. The make-up of the force was admirable, not forgetting the exasperatingly creaking boots, while their two songs are the very quintessence of burlesque humour. They are harangued by the General in a style suggestive of the "stump oration" of the Christy Minstrels, and that veteran warrior has only just retired when the pirates rush upon the police, whom they quickly put *hors de combat*. Fortunately the sergeant is equal to the emergency, and just as things are becoming desperate for the cause of law and order, he wins the battle at a stroke by charging the pirates yield "in Queen Victoria's name." This they do at once, and the irate Major-General would have quickly handed them over to summary justice when Ruth arrests him with the long deferred explanation: –

They are no members of the common throng;
They are all noblemen who have gone wrong!

"What all?" exclaims the general, "Well nearly all," retorts the Pirate King, whereupon the General indulges in this argumentative recitative,

I pray you pardon me, ex-Pirate King
Peers will be peer, and youth will have its fling.
Resume your ranks and legislative duties,
And take my daughters, all of whom are beauties.

Such is the comic story which Arthur Sullivan has wedded to appropriate music. In its choral and orchestral effects "The Pirates" may fairly claim to rank with the "Pinafore," but there are undoubtedly fewer airs in it of the popular and street-organ sort. The madrigal "O leave me not to live alone and desolate" is simply exquisite, and will doubtless become a favourite in the drawing-room and concert room. The whole performance was so effectively rendered that we shall content ourselves by simply giving the cast as it appears in the programme: – Major-General Stanley, Mr.

W. Greyling; the Pirate King, Mr. George B. Browne; Samuel (his Lieutenant), Mr. F. Federici; Frederic (the Pirate Apprentice), Mr. James Sydney; Sergeant of Police, Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe; Mabel (General Stanley's daughter), Miss Ethel McAlpine; Kate, Miss Constance Snow; Edith, Miss Grosvenor; Isabel, Miss Hutchinson; Ruth (a Piratical Maid of all Work), Miss Fanny Harrison. We have only to add that "The Pirates" is preceded by a very amusing operetta entitled "Six and Six," the scene being laid in a matrimonial agency. [*Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc* (Portsmouth, England), Wednesday, April 20, 1881; Issue 5083.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – For the Easter Holidays we have had *The Pirates of Penzance*, who made their first appearance on Monday, 18th, to an appreciative and most enthusiastic audience. The Major was capitally represented by Mr. W. Greyling. Mr. G. Browne essays the part of the Pirate King most effectively. The Sergeant of Police, by Mr. H. C. Cliffe, is a fine piece of burlesque. As Mabel Miss E. McAlpine sings and acts delightfully. Miss Fanny Harrison as Ruth is also well suited. The scenery is very pretty and effective, reflecting great credit on the artist, Mr. Miller. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 23, 1881; Issue 2222.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. H. C. Hughes; Manager, Mr. J. W. Boughton. – Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *The Pirates of Penzance* has been repeated this week to most enthusiastic audiences, Miss Ethel McAlpine scoring well each evening in the part of Mabel. As the Pirate King, Mr. G. B. Browne also won applause. In fact, all concerned must be highly praised. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 30, 1881; Issue 2223.]

2nd – 7th May: Southampton

THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's talented opera company commenced a week's engagement at this theatre, on Monday evening, when that most popular, melo-dramatic piece, the *Pirates of Penzance*, was performed before a numerous attendance, and gave, we need scarcely say, the utmost satisfaction to everyone present. Last night there was a full and brilliant house to witness the entertainment, and the opera was performed in splendid style, from first to last, so that all left highly delighted at the rare treat they had enjoyed. We have not space to particularise, suffice it to state that this joint production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan fully deserves the great popularity it has attained. The various parts are most skilfully rendered by the capital company Mr. D'Oyly Carte has brought together, consequently those who avail themselves of the opportunity of realising its attractiveness will find they have taken the best possible means of spending a pleasant evening. We were pleased to see the house, which owes so much to Mr. J. W. Gordon, so well filled last evening, and hope that during the remainder of the week both he and Mr. D'Oyly Carte may have the satisfaction of seeing fashionable and crowded audiences enjoying the rich operatic treat now offered to the public of Southampton. [*The Hampshire Advertiser* (Southampton, England), Wednesday, May 04, 1881; pg. 4; Issue 3640.]

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee, Mr. J. W. Gordon. – A rare treat has been afforded the Southampton playgoers this week in the production of the famous opera *The Pirates of Penzance*, by Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, and represented by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. The piece was splendidly mounted, the scenery and dresses being everything that could be desired; whilst the rendering of the opera was so excellent that the charming melodies, songs, and concerted pieces were again and again encored, and the talented artists called to the footlights after each act amidst the greatest enthusiasm. The opera has drawn immensely, and has been

witnessed by highly fashionable and crowded houses. Miss E. McAlpine has a splendid soprano voice, and must be warmly congratulated upon her success in the part of Mabel. Miss Fanny Harrison as Ruth may also be sincerely complimented on her admirable singing. Mr. James Sydney entered thoroughly into the spirit of the piece, and as Frederic sang the music allotted to him in excellent style. Mr. G. B. Browne, the Pirate King, was remarkably good; whilst Mr. W. Greyling as Major-General Stanley was wonderfully made up, and quite in his element. His song "I am the very model of a Modern Major-General" elicits nightly thundering applause, and a most flattering encore. Mr. F. Federici as Samuel, Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe as Sergeant of Police, Miss C. Snow as Kate, Miss Grosvenor as Edith, and Miss Hutchinson as Isabel, acquitted themselves in a most creditable manner. A charming and highly amusing operetta entitled *Six and Six* precedes, and should on no account be missed. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 7, 1881; Issue 2224.]

9th – 14th May: —————

16th – 21st May: Reading

THEATRE ROYAL. – Sole Proprietor and Manager, Mr. Eliot Galer. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company with *The Pirates of Penzance* terminated a most successful engagement here on Saturday last, the piece being staged in a very faultless manner, and the dresses and scenery being superb, and the melodious songs and choruses meeting with loud and enthusiastic applause. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 28, 1881; Issue 2227.]

23rd – 24th May: —————

25th – 26th May: Bury St. Edmunds

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. John Chute. – On Wednesday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company occupied the stage, and were alike successful in drawing a large audience. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 28, 1881; Issue 2227.]

27th – 28th May: Ipswich

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE." – Tonight is the last performance of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance" at the Public Hall. The merits of the piece are too well known to need comment. All the parts are admirably and suitably personated, and the scenery and appointments are all that could be desired. None should miss this chance of witnessing one of the finest productions of modern dramatic skill, There is also to be a performance in the afternoon. [*The Ipswich Journal* (Ipswich, England), Saturday, May 28, 1881; Issue 7952.]

PUBLIC HALL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared here on Friday and Saturday last week in *The Pirates of Penzance*, to large and appreciative audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 4, 1881; Issue 2228.]

30th – 31st May: King's Lynn

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. H. Jex. – Last Monday and Tuesday evenings Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company was at this theatre. The principal artists were well up in their parts, and the chorus was also exceedingly good. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 4, 1881; Issue 2228.]

2nd – 4th June: Colchester

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietors, Messrs. Nunn Brothers and D. Vale. – On Thursday last this theatre was again filled to excess to witness the production, for the first time here, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, of *The Pirates of Penzance*, which was splendidly put upon the stage, and gave unbounded satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 4, 1881; Issue 2228.]

6th – 11th June: Southport

THE WINTER GARDENS. – Mr. J. Long, Manager. – The management have been wise in providing an attractive entertainment for this week, and the thousands of visitors have not failed to show their appreciation by crowding the Pavilion nightly. *The Pirates of Penzance* has been given each night. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 11, 1881; Issue 2229.]

13th – 18th June: Lancaster

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."

On Monday evening – thanks to the enterprise of Mr. E. Fletcher – the public of Lancaster had the opportunity of listening to the charming songs and attractive choruses contained in the above opera, and of witnessing the quaintly pretty scenes and grotesque situations which have been provided by those skilful and clever caterers for the public amusement Messrs. Arthur Sullivan and W. S. Gilbert. There was a good house, and the opera was exceedingly well received. The company numbers about forty, including the principals, chorus of pirates, policemen, and a troop of General Stanley's daughters, for the most part pretty young women. The dresses, especially those of the ladies, were bright and becomingly gay, and when the full company were gracefully grouped on the stage, the new proscenium – provided specially for the Music Hall by Mr. Fletcher – flanked with great advantage and most harmoniously a very brilliant scene. The full title of this new dramatic opera is "The Pirates of Penzance; or the Slave of Duty." It is in two acts, and the first scene discloses a rocky sea-shore on the coast of Cornwall. The rocks were very effectively painted, and on the canvas which forms the background of the scene presents to view a calm sea, in which a schooner is lying at anchor in the distance. When the curtain rises the pirates are discovered carousing, and Samuel, the Pirate King's Lieutenant is seen distribution pirate sherry to his comrades. Frederic is in a desponding attitude, and his nursemaid Ruth, is kneeling at his feet. Frederic, the Pirate apprentice, has attained twenty-one years of age, and the event is being celebrated, as the opening chorus indicates:

Sam – "For to-day our pirate 'prentice
Rises from indenture freed;
Strong his arm and keen his scent is,
He's a pirate now indeed."

All – "Here's good luck to Frederic's ventures
Frederic's out of his indentures."

The merriment of the pirate, however, is ruthlessly interrupted by Frederic's declaration that he intends to leave them that day for ever. He had been bound apprentice to the Pirate King by mistake, and he was a slave to duty and had remained with them against his inclinations. It was an error but he would not explain it, as it would reflect on his well-beloved Ruth. The nurse steps forward, and declaring that they had "better have it out at once," explains how the mistake arose, which may be given in a few lines of the song she sang very prettily:–

"I was, alas, his nursery maid, and so it fell to my lot,
 To take and bind the promising boy apprentice to a *pilot*."
 "I was a stupid nursery maid, on breakers always steering,
 And I did not catch the word aright through being hard of hearing;
 Mistaking my instructions, which within my brain did gyrate,
 I took and bound this promising boy apprentice to a pirate."

Frederic confesses the words were very much alike, and are so to this day, and he freely forgives Ruth's mistake. He tells his comrades that he loves them individually with an affection unspeakable, but collectively he looks upon them with a disgust that amounts to absolute detestation, and such is his sense of duty that once out of his indentures he will feel bound heart and soul to effect their extermination. Samuel, the pirate king's lieutenant, is bound to admit that there is little temptation to remain in the band, as they don't make piracy pay, Fred knows why. They make a point of never attacking weaker party than themselves, and when they attack a stronger party they get thrashed. Then, again, they make a point of never molesting an orphan, and that fact has got about, and everyone captured says he is an orphan. On the conclusion of the dialogue and the song – "The Pirate King" – the pirates leave Frederic, who endeavours to solve the question whether Ruth is a pretty woman; he has seen no other and cannot answer the question for himself. He thinks he loves her, and is almost on the point of accepting her when the very numerous daughters of Major-General Stanley, delightfully and quaintly dressed, come tripping on to the scene through the rocks. One of them proposes that they shall paddle about in the water, and they have all taken off one shoe, when Frederic, who is hiding, comes suddenly forward. The ex-pirate is delicate and shy, and knows that the young ladies would be hurt if they found that they had been watched. Of course, he loves them all, and musically asks –

"Oh! is there not one maiden heart
 Which seems to feel the moral beauty
 Of making worldly interest.
 Subordinate to sense of duty?"

who would not, in fact, devote herself to the task of reforming him? All refuse except Mabel, who accepts the position at once, and sings love duets with him while her numerous sisters talk, or rather sing, with the greatest earnestness, about the weather and the crops. Upon this pleasing scene the pirates enter, seize the Misses Stanley, and are about to send for the nearest clergyman when the Major-General appears. His identity he declares in a song, the peculiarity of which is that he can never at first catch a rhyme for the last line; thus, having said "Then I can hum a fugue of which I've heard the music's din afore," he has to stop and think hard before he hits on the next line: "And whistle all the airs from the infernal nonsense 'Pinafore.'" The Major-General knows the pirate's weakness, and to save himself and daughters does not scruple to declare that he is an orphan boy, upon which the Pirate King lets him go, and elects him an honorary member of the band. There are some very petty situations before the close of the first act, and really charming music. The Major-General waves the British ensign over his daughters rescued from the pirates, and the King carries the black flag with skull and cross-bones, and the curtain dropped amidst enthusiastic demonstrations of applause.

The second act opens on a new scene. General Stanley is seen seated and showing signs of distress surrounded by his daughters. The scene in the background is principally the ruins of a chapel. The General has left his bed when

"The midnight hour is past,

And the dews are falling fast,"

to humble himself before the tombs of his ancestors. He has a conscience, which is troubled because he had described himself to the pirates as an orphan. Frederic, in reply to an appeal from Mabel, to say something that will relieve her father's sorrows, points out that his prospective father-in-law has only just settled down in the neighbourhood; but this does not comfort the sufferer. 'Frederic,' he says, 'in this chapel are ancestors; you cannot deny that. With the estate I bought the chapel and its contents. I don't know whose ancestors they *were*, but I know whose ancestors they *are*, and I shudder to think that their descendant by purchase (if I may so describe myself) should have brought disgrace upon what I have no doubt was an unstained escutcheon.' The extermination of the band is, however, the chief work in hand, and for this end a sergeant and company of policemen have been secured. The daughters bid these rather timid constables 'go to death and go to slaughter,' and promise them regretful tears if, as is very probable, they fall before the fierce and ruthless foes they are about to assail; and the sergeant does not at all like this way of putting the thing. He sings :

"We observe too great a stress
On the risks that on us press,
And of reference a lack,
To our chance of coming back,"

Nevertheless after many declarations of 'We go! we go!' from the police, and expostulations, 'Yes, but you don't go!' from the Major General, away they march. The scene in which Frederic is made aware of the circumstance that he was bound apprentice to the Pirate King until his twenty-first birth day is most amusing. Born on the 29th of February, his birthday came only once in four years. He sings:

"How quaint the ways of paradox!
At common sense she daily mocks!
Though counting in the usual way,
Years twenty-one I've been alive,
Yet reckoning by my natal day
I am a little boy of five!
All – He is a little boy of five, ha, ha!
At common sense she gaily mocks;
So quaint a way is Paradox.

In the end the pirates and police meet, when the former come to revenge themselves on Stanley; the police fall, but the victors are quelled when urged by their prostrate foes to be good enough to yield in Queen Victoria's name; after which Ruth explains that the band are all – that is, nearly all – noblemen who have gone wrong, and universal matrimony is left to follow.

We have been tempted to give this brief outline of the opera to assist those of our readers who have not yet seen the performances to understand more readily the various scenes and grotesque situations. The parts on Monday night were cast as follows:– Major. General Stanley, Mr. Walter Greyling; The Pirate King, Mr. George B. Browne; Samuel (his Lieutenant), Mr. F. Federici; Frederic (the Pirate Apprentice), Mr. James Sydney; Sergeant of Police, Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe; Mabel (General Stanley's Daughter), Miss Josephine Woodward; Edith, Miss Blanche Grosvenor; Kate, Miss Constance Snow; Isabel, Miss Hutchinson, Ruth (a Piratical Maid of all work), Miss Fanny Harrison. Chorus of Pirates, Police, and General Stanley's Daughters.

The songs and choruses were most effective throughout. The Pirate King has a

full mellow voice, and did full justice to his part. Mr. Walter Greyling makes an admirable Major-General, both in vocalisation and deportment. Mr. Sydney, the pirate's apprentice, has a slight lisp, which mars the effect of some of his sentence, but his singing was very effective. The Sergeant of Police, Mr. Cooper Cliffe, was very successful in the policeman's song, and the grotesque chorus brought down the house. Mabel (General Stanley's daughter) Miss Josephine Woodward (who took the part in the temporary absence of Miss Ethel McAlpine), was very successful in the management of her sweet soprano voice. Ruth found an artistic exponent in Miss Fanny Harrison. who made such a favourable impression here last year as Buttercup in "Pinafore." The rest of the principals were all that could be desired, and there was but one opinion when the curtain fell, that this company, provides a most excellent, innocent, and enjoyable entertainment. People could not readily make up their minds as to the relative merits of "Pinafore" and "The Pirates." There is this to be said for "Pinafore," that it was a decided novelty, while "The Pirates" is on the same lines, and of course less of a novelty. But the scenes and situations in the last opera are, on the whole, prettier and more quaint; the company is more numerous, and there is greater opportunity for display in dress. And there can be no doubt that Mr. Gilbert has a wonderful aptitude for discovering the humorous side of things and putting them before an audience in a way that can be easily appreciated. And he has an able colleague in Mr. Sullivan, whose consummate art in this class of music is unrivalled. The audience on Monday evening, at all events, appreciated the music, as was shown by the frequent encores and the hearty demonstrations of applause throughout. The opera is to be repeated to-night (Tuesday) and on Wednesday evening.

MUSIC HALL. – D'Oyly Carte's opera company with *The Pirates of Penzance* opened here on Monday to a good house, and the piece passed off successfully. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 18, 1881; Issue 2230.]

20th – 22nd June: Dumfries

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. A. D. McNeill. – The long looked for *Pirates of Penzance* company has at last paid us a visit here. The engagement of the troupe for three nights, viz. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, has indeed proved a success, crowded audiences each evening hailing this charming work with acclamation. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 2, 1881; Issue 2232.]

23rd – 25th June: ?

27th June – 2nd July: Carlisle

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. C. Barnard. – The fashionable and crowded audiences assembled here to witness the first production of *The pirates of Penzance* were deserving of something better than a pianoforte accompaniment. It is not the first time that the absence of an orchestra has occasioned a feeling of disappointment, and, to some extent, marred the efforts of an excellent company, hence the necessity of directing attention, once more, to a matter which really is of considerable importance. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 9, 1881; Issue 2233.]

4th – 9th July Barrow-in-Furness

ALHAMBRA THEATRE. – Proprietors, Messrs. Bell and Atkinson; Manager, Mr. T. Ramsay. – One of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies opened here on Monday last in *The Pirates of Penzance*. *Six and Six*, a very funny little musical farce, precedes the

opera, and the whole goes immensely. Enthusiastic audiences pack the house at double prices. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 9, 1881; Issue 2233.]

11th – 16th July: Douglas

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE." — It is rarely that insular playgoers have the opportunity to enjoy in this town such excellent operatic music as that which has been provided by Mr. Elphinstone at the Gaiety Theatre during the past week. Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan's latest London success, "The Pirates of Penzance," as represented by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company at this theatre, must be ranked amongst the successes of the season; and the patronage that has been accorded to Mr. Elphinstone's expensive venture must be taken as an earnest of the wish of the public to support every effort that has for its object the representation of the latest and best productions of the play wrights. The company has evidently been well selected, and several of its members give good promise of still further successes. Mr. Walter Greyling, as *The Major General*, faithfully presented the creation of the author; and Mr. George B. Browne, as *The Pirate King*, sustained the character in a manner that showed a careful study of the part allotted to him. Miss Ethel McAlpine as the general's daughter, and Miss Madge Evans, as the "piratical maid of all work," acted carefully throughout, and were well supported by Miss Kate Cohen, as *Edith*; Miss Constance Snow, as *Kate*; and Miss Hutchinson, as *Isabel*. Mr. Jas. Sydney made a favourable impression as "the pirate apprentice" and the *role* of "lieutenant" was well sustained by Mr. F. Federici, and Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe infused just sufficient "business" into the character of the *Sergeant of Police* as to render it amusing without being at all exaggerated. Although the company was not assisted by a very powerful band, the choruses were given in excellent time and tune, and were repeatedly redemanded by the audience. Next week Offenbach's comic opera of "La fille de Tambour Major" will be produced, and lovers of good and sparkling music, interspersed with amusing dialogue, should not miss the opportunity of visiting the Gaiety. [*The Isle of Man Times and General Advertiser* (Douglas, England), Saturday, July 16, 1881; pg. 5; Issue 1054.]

18th – 23rd July: Blackpool

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. — Mr. T. Sergenson, Manager. — On Monday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company opened at this theatre with Gilbert and Sullivan's successful opera *The Pirates of Penzance* to large audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 23, 1881; Issue 2235.]

25th – 26th July: —————

27th – 28th July: Derby

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE" IN DERBY.

Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's famous "pirates" paid their first visit to Derby last week, the opera being produced on Wednesday and Thursday evenings in the Corn Exchange. On Wednesday evening a very full audience assembled, but they were not a little disappointed to find that the orchestra, which had been provided to produce the instrumental portion of Dr. Sullivan's charming music, consisted of nothing more than a piano! This certainly qualified very much the success which otherwise the performance would have to be pronounced, for the company of vocalists was a very fair one. Miss Fanny Harrison finds in "Ruth" a character for which she is exactly suited. Miss J. Woodward is a pleasant little "Mabel," and most of the other ladies are well fitted for their parts. Mr. Walter Greyling makes a stiff and

stately "Major General," but does not enunciate so well as the creator of the part, Mr. Grossmith. Mr. Federici, as the tender "Pirate King," and Mr. H. Bolini as his sensitive apprentice, sang and acted commendably. The choruses were all well given, in spite of the adverse circumstances mentioned above, which showed that the company, like all those organised by Mr. D'Oyly Carte, had been thoroughly trained. [*The Derby Mercury*, 3 August 1881]

CORN EXCHANGE THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. James Harwood. – Two very pleasing and successful performances of *The Pirates of Penzance* were given here, by Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's company, on Wednesday and Thursday last. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 30, 1881; Issue 2236.]

1st – 4th August: Margate

THE THEATRE. – Miss Sarah Thorne, Lessee. – As might have been expected, the production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, attracted large audiences on the first four evenings this week. The scenery and stage accessories were good, and the singing and acting were throughout of a superior character. The music, which was under the conductorship of Mr. J. T. Haines, was rendered by Miss Thorne's own band. The piece is too well known to need description here, but a few words in reference to the assumption of the various characters may not be out of place. Miss Fanny Harrison as Ruth (a piratical maid-of-all-work) displayed some good acting, and her songs were admirably suited to her rich and deep contralto voice. Mr. H. Bolini as Frederic also sang capitally; and General Stanley as represented by Mr. Walter Greyling was a success from first to last, his acting and singing being alike good. Mr. F. Federici made an excellent Pirate King, and Miss Henschel's rich soprano was heard to advantage as Mabel (General Stanley's daughter). As the Sergeant of Police, Mr. L. Roche displayed considerable vocal ability, especially in his song early in the second act. Mr. Truro's powerful bass voice was advantageously used as Samuel, and the other prominent parts were very creditably sustained by Miss Katie Cohen, Miss Constance Snow, and Miss Hutchinson. The choruses were remarkably well rendered, especially the one at the end of the first act. Altogether the representation of *The Pirates of Penzance* in Margate has been a success. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 6, 1881; Issue 2237.]

5th – 6th August: Ramsgate

ST. JAMES'S HALL. – Miss Sarah Thorne has become Lessee of the above hall for the season. ... On Monday and Tuesday evenings the comedy-drama *Meg's Diversion* was put on in capital style. ... *Milky White* occupied the boards on Wednesday and Thursday, and Friday and Saturday evenings *The Pirates of Penzance* was promised. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 6, 1881; Issue 2237.]

8th – 13th August: ?

15th – 18th August: Portsmouth

""THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company re-appeared at this house on Monday evening in the "Pirates of Penzance," to fulfil an engagement of four nights only. This popular comic opera is well known, and as it has been already criticised in our columns further comment on it is scarcely called for. To the discerning eyes of our all-judging musical and dramatic critics it would seem that the happy collaboration of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan has resulted in a school of comic opera the most distinctive and

meritorious, as well as the most popular, ever seen in England. Amid the general chorus of wholesale approbation, a dissentient voice has been raised in a literary journal of some repute. Reviewing a volume of plays, the joint work of the distinguished composer and the eminent literary humorist – a volume which includes "The Pirates of Penzance" – the writer expresses his opinion that the popular appreciation of these productions does not give a lofty idea of the pabulum required by the theatre-going British public. The note of sentiment struck in them is false and artificial; the comic part is mere drivel, and the only one of the series the reviewer had seen on the stage – "H.M.S. Pinafore" – bored him almost beyond endurance. Most of us can agree with Sterne in pitying the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba and cry "'Tis all barren," and the man who can find nothing to admire or to laugh at in the series of brilliant works which began with "Trial by Jury" and ends, for the present, with "Patience" may, perhaps, not be what Dr. Johnson would term "a barren rascal," but he is evidently deficient in a certain class of perceptions which generally afford much pleasure to their possessor; and is as little qualified to appraise the works in question as the late Dean Stanley, who could not tell "Rule Britannia" from "God Save the Queen," would have been to criticise Beethoven's "Choral Symphony," or a man afflicted with colour blindness to pass judgement on the Cartoons of Raphael, or the corregiescity of Corregio. But, considering that the comic operas of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan are the fashion of the hour, and that to be, ignorant of or to fail to appreciate them is almost a social delinquency, we must admire the courage of this critic, whatever we may think of his taste. No competent judge, however, would deny to Mr. Gilbert great powers of comic invention, of subtle and incisive satire, and a humour both rich and peculiar, any more than he would dispute the fertility of Mr. Sullivan's genius and the brightness and melody of his numbers. That their compositions will achieve more than an ephemeral popularity we do not believe; but in the judgment of all those who prefer solid pudding to empty praise they possess the superlative merit of exactly hitting the humour of the time and bringing the ducats to the theatrical exchequer. To this an overflowing audience bore emphatic testimony on Monday evening. The opera is well put on the stage, and the scenery is very effective. The company, which is a moderately good one, contains one or two performers who appeared in the same parts a few months ago. Mr. W. Greyling is now, as then, the adequate impersonator of the impotent imbecilities of Major-General Stanley, and his rendering of the idiotic patter song assigned to that gallant officer is as hugely ridiculous and as keenly appreciated as before. The piratical maid of all work, Ruth, finds an excellent embodiment in Miss Fanny Harrison. She has a capital voice and admirable elocution, and her acting is full of intelligence and spontaneity. The representative of General Stanley's daughter, Mabel, is Miss Henschel, the owner of a pretty face and a pretty voice. She is an actress of charming promise; but at present her apposition with the representative of Ruth is expressive of the distinction between rawness and ripeness. Mr. Federici looked sufficiently picturesque and truculent as the Pirate King, and his acting was full of character, while Mr. Bolini's assumption of the part of Frederic, the pirate apprentice, was undoubtedly praiseworthy in a dramatic sense. Of the vocal capabilities of these gentlemen it may be said that the voice of the former is powerful but not uniformly pleasing, and that of the latter is very pleasant but deficient in power. Some of the songs were encored. The choruses were wonderfully effective, and several were redemanded; notably the concluding chorus of the first act, which was given with smoothness and *verve*. The first piece is a whimsical operetta entitled "Six and Six" at which the audience laughed consumedly. The "Pirates of Penzance" will be repeated to-night and to-morrow, and the Theatre

will be closed on Friday and Saturday. It will be re-opened on Monday, the 22nd of August, when Dion Boucicault's "Forbidden Fruit" Company will take possession of the boards. [*The Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 17 August, 1881]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. J. H. Franckeiss; Manager, Mr. J. W. Boughton. – We have had a return visit this week for four nights of *The Pirates of Penzance*. The very flattering reception on the first occasion has been repeated, and the houses have been liberally packed. The rendering of the pirate King by Mr. F. Federici is in every way most artistic and commendable. Mr. L. Roche as the Sergeant of Police is as irresistible as can be, and his song has to be repeated over and over again. Miss Fanny Harrison again comes to the front with her fine contralto voice, making the piratical maid Ruth a great success. The choruses are rendered with completeness, and Mr. J. T. Haines ably conducts. The opera is preceded each evening by an operetta entitled *Six and Six*. During the latter part of the week the theatre has been closed. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 20, 1881; Issue 2239.]

19th – 20th August: Bath

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Fred. Neebe. – On Friday and Saturday last week Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company gave three representations of *The Pirates of Penzance*, and secured capital audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 27, 1881; Issue 2240.]

22nd – 25th August: Jersey

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietor, Mr. W. Rousby. – *The Pirates of Penzance*, as played by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, has been drawing good houses. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 27, 1881; Issue 2240.]

26th – 27th August: Guernsey

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"

Seldom has such an audience been gathered together as that which crowded St. Julian's Hall last evening, on the first production in the island of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera, "The Pirates of Penzance." Two thirds at least of the hall was occupied as reserved seats, and for the remainder the applicants were far in excess of the accommodation. The company engaged for the production was that of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, which has represented it in almost every important town in England during the last sixteen months. The plot of the piece evidently inspired by "Pinafore," though slight in character, abounds in amusing details, while the music – the main feature, id full of life and light, the principal airs being applauded again and again. The leading characters were sustained as follows:–

Major-General Stanley	Mr. Walter Greyling
The Pirate King.....	Mr. F. Federici
Samuel (his Lieutenant)	Mr. Truro
Frederic (the Pirate Apprentice)	Mr. H. Bolini
Sergeant of Police	Mr. L. Roche
Mabel	Miss Katherine Henschel [<i>sic</i>]
Kate	Miss Constance Arnott
Edith.....	Miss De Lacy
Isabel	Miss Hutchinson
Ruth.....	Miss Maude Grosvenor

The Pirate King was in the early portion of the opera the chief feature, and the interpretation of the part very able and effective. But the main point of the piece centred in the Major-General, "the slave of duty," whose manner and bearing gave great effect to the part, the complications arising from the mistake of the nurse in apprenticing the hero of the piece to a "Pirate" instead of to a "Pilot" giving room for the principal course of amusement, and the whole plan of the opera hinges on this circumstance, combined with the incident of his birth, which having occurred on the 29th February in Leap Year, gives him only one legal birthday in five [*sic*] years, so that on arriving at the ostensible age of 21, and the consequent termination of his apprenticeship, his "sense of duty" leads him to continue his servitude until according to this peculiar circumstance it would virtually end. Much effect is drawn from this episode, but in the end justice is done and as a consequence all ends happily. The principal lady of the piece has a somewhat similar part to that in "Pinafore" as the haughty Major-General's youngest daughter, she, of course, falls in love with the pirate's apprentice, and in spite of the remonstrances of her numerous sisters remains true to the last, vowing that if through the unfortunate circumstance of his birth she has to wait for his ultimate coming of age which in the course of his leap-year birthdays would not occur until the year 1940, still she would be true! As it proceeds, it is evident that this eventuality will not occur, and in the end her devotion is duly rewarded. The introduction of the police force on the scene created considerable merriment, and the manner in which that stalwart body displayed their "sense of duty" was amusing in the extreme. Each member of the company appeared to be well fitted with the particular character called upon to portray, and the whole ensemble was complete throughout. The dresses are picturesque and appropriate, and the groupings charming and effective, considering the limited area upon which the piece had to be represented. So much has been said and written about entertainments of this special class that criticism to a certain extent is disarmed, and for the present purpose it is enough to say that it most completely answered the object intended of providing a very enjoyable evening's entertainment, and to individualize any particular effort would only detract from the merits of the whole. The entire performance was a novelty for Guernsey, and its brightness was not at all dimmed by the previous productions of "Pinafore." Under the management of Mr. Beckwith, Mr. D'Oyly Carte's courteous representative, the production was admirably mounted, and the large audience appeared to appreciate it to the fullest extent. Mr. J. T. Haines, as conductor, kept the musical department well in hand, and proved himself an admirable accompanist. Mr. Wybert Rousby, by the engagement of this admirable company, has afforded the public a treat of a very high order. [*The Star* (Saint Peter Port, England), Saturday, August 27, 1881; Issue 35.]

ST. JULIAN'S HALL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared in *The Pirates of Penzance* on Friday and Saturday last week, giving three performances. On Friday hundreds were turned from the doors. The opera was well received. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 3, 1881; Issue 2241.]

29th – 31st August:?

1st – 2nd September: Ryde

THEATRE ROYAL. – Sole Lessee, Mr. F. Vokes; Manager, Mr. F. Belton. – On Thursday and Friday, 1st and 2nd inst., Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared here, playing *The Pirates of Penzance* with great success before tremendous audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 10, 1881; Issue 2242.]

3rd September: ?

5 – 10 September: Hastings

MUSIC HALL. – Lessee, Mr. Chas. Lockey. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company in *The Pirates of Penzance* are attracting large audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 10, 1881; Issue 2242.]

12th – 15th September: Dover (2 nights)

WELLINGTON HALL. – *The Pirates of Penzance* occupied the above Hall two days this week. Fred. French's musical and mirthful entertainment will conclude tonight. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 17, 1881; Issue 2243]

16th – 17th September: Canterbury

THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company, under the engagement of Mr. Beckwith, finished a short tour in Kent here on Friday and Saturday last week, and played to excellent houses. The opera was received with every mark of approbation, the rendering of the choruses being certainly above the average, and special commendation was awarded to Miss Fanny Harrison for her excellent representation of the maid-of-all-work, and to Mr. Federici, the Pirate King. The old city seems to have been aroused to something like enthusiasm by the recent visits of *The Pinafore* and *Pirates* companies under the local guidance of Mr. E. Dale of Folkestone. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 24, 1881; Issue 2244.]

19th – 24th September: Norwich

VICTORIA HALL. – Proprietors, Messrs W. and F. E. Hunter. – On Monday evening Mr. W. H. Poole introduced Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, and we may congratulate Mr. D'Oyly Carte upon the excellence of the company who represent the opera, Miss Henschel being in every respect a really charming Mabel, and Mesdames Katie Cohen, Constance Snow, and Agnes Taylor are able and pretty assistants. Miss Fanny Harrison (one of the most esteemed favourites who has ever trodden the boards here) plays Ruth. Mr. F. Federici (another old favourite) is capital as the Pirate King. Mr. Walter Greyling is an excellent Major-General Stanley, Mr. H. Bolini sang and played well as Frederic, and Messrs. Truro and L. Roche were decidedly good in the respective roles of Samuel and Sergeant of Police. The opera was, as regards dresses, scenery, and appointments, most admirably placed upon the stage, and the musical arrangements, under the conductorship of Mr. J. T. Haines (another old favourite), were admirable. Excellent audiences have attended during the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 24, 1881; Issue 2244.]

26th – 28th September: ?

29th September: Boston

SHODFRIARS HALL. – Messrs. Roberts and Archer having made arrangements with Mr. Dudley Smith, Acting Manager for D'Oyly Carte's opera company, for the representation of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, this place was filled on Saturday night. On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings Mr. T. H. Scott gave recitals on the piano and harmonium, and was well patronised. On Thursday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company again occupied the stage, and performed *The Pirates of Penzance*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 1, 1881; Issue 2245.]

30th September – 1st October:?

3rd – 5th October: York

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE." – Following close upon the heels of "Pinafore," the above melodramatic opera, the production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, was presented to a full house at the York Theatre last evening. The company entrusted by Mr. D'Oyly Carte for its representation on this occasion is an entirely new one to York, and for strength, merit, and general excellence bears favourable comparison with its predecessors. The hearty and enthusiastic reception accorded the performance last night testified in an unmistakable manner that this opera is no ephemeral production, but on the contrary one that grows in favour with the general public. In respect to solos, it may not perhaps take precedence of those in "Pinafore," but as regards choruses, scenery, picturesque grouping, and scenic effects, it takes the foremost position. Without entering into a lengthened criticism of the various characters, we may cursorily allude to one or two features in the cast especially noteworthy. Miss Henschel as Mabel, although rather weak at times, sang with considerable taste and sweetness in the songs allotted to her. Miss Fanny Harrison, as Ruth, gave a vigorous and artistic representation of the somewhat masculine piratical maid; Edith, Kate and Isabel, were also done ample justice to. Among the male members of the company we recognise the face of an old citizen, we allude to Mr. Walter Goodbody [*sic*], who in the character of Major-General, following, too, the highly finished performance by Mr. Fisher on a previous occasion, had no easy task to accomplish; possessing excellent musical and histrionic abilities, however, he acquitted himself in a highly creditable manner, going through the "Model Major-General" song with verve and gusto, fully deserving the liberal applause accorded him. Mr. Bolini as Frederic was much appreciated. The Pirate King of Mr. Federici was eminently successful, and he was efficiently supported by Mr. Haw [*sic*] as his Lieutenant. The Sergeant of Police and his band were also capitally personated. The choruses generally were engendered with spirit and precision, the chorale. "Hail Poetry," being highly effective. The company completes its engagement tomorrow evening, and for the remaining two nights of their stay deserve liberal support. [*The York Herald* (York, England), Tuesday, October 04, 1881; pg. 7; Issue 7682.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. W. A. Waddington. – *The Pirates of Penzance* company, which appeared on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last in Gilbert and Sullivan's popular work, compares favourably with that which was here before. Certainly the chorus is very much weaker in point of numbers, which is to be regretted, but the principals are in almost every case fully qualified for their respective parts. The cast is as follows:– Major-General Stanley, Mr Walter Greyling; Pirate King, Mr. F. Federici; Samuel, Mr. Truro; Frederic, Mr. H. Bolini; Sergeant of Police, Mr. L. Roche; Mabel, Miss Henschel; Edith, Miss Katie Cohen; Kate, Miss Constance Snow; Isabel, Miss Agnes Taylor; and Ruth, Miss Fanny Harrison. The scenery was expressly painted for the occasion by Messrs W. T. Hemsley and G. F. Venimore, and speaks well for their artistic skill. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 8, 1881; Issue 2246.]

6th – 8th October: Scarborough

LONDESBOROUGH THEATRE. – Mr. W. A. Waddington, Proprietor and Manager. – *The Pirates of Penzance* has been produced here for three nights with the expected success. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 8, 1881; Issue 2246.]

10th – 15th October: Middlesborough

Theatre Royal. – Proprietor, Mr. John Imeson; Manager, Mr. George Imeson. – On Monday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company commenced a six nights' engagement in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and had a splendid reception. The piece was well acted and well mounted, new scenery having been painted for it by Mr. T. Evans, the talented artist of the theatre. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 15, 1881; Issue 2247.]

17th – 22nd October: Sunderland

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. E. D. Davis; Manageress, Mrs. Hunter. – This week one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* companies holds the boards of this theatre, and Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's popular opera, interpreted by a creditable corps of singers and actors, has attracted large audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 22, 1881; Issue 2248.]

24th – 29th October: Newcastle

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. Charles Bernard. – Before an excellent attendance at this theatre on Monday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened for a six nights' engagement in Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's successful opera *The Pirates of Penzance*. The opera was mounted with the usual care of the management, and, having the further advantage of a more than usually strong cast, went with much spirit throughout, and was received with marked applause. Mr. Walter Greyling, for his capital make up and clever acting and singing, was deservedly the recipient of a large share of applause; Mr. F. Federici being also received with especial favour, his powerful baritone voice being heard to great advantage during the course of the evening. Mr. Truro as Samuel, Mr. H. Bolini, as Frederic. Mr. L. Roche as the Sergeant, Miss Henschel as Mabel, and Miss Fanny Harrison as Ruth, were all deserving of commendation. The operetta of *Six and Six* concluded, supported by Messrs. Hodges, J. D. Young, and Clowes, and Misses Keeping, Grosvenor, and Woodward. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 29, 1881; Issue 2249.]

31st October – 3rd November: Stockton-on-Tees

ROYAL STAR THEATRE. – Lessee, Madame Prescott. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company commenced an engagement of four nights on the 1st inst. [*sic*] The house was crowded. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 5, 1881; Issue 2250.]

4th – 5th November: Darlington

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietor, Mr. George Hunter. – Mr. Chas. Kelly and his company opened here on Monday for four nights with *Pair o' Wings*. The piece was much appreciated. On Friday and Saturday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* takes possession, and will be warmly welcomed. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 5, 1881; Issue 2250.]

Now "No. 2 Company" in *Patience* only.

5th – 17th December: Portsmouth

"PATIENCE; OR BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE," AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

The æsthetic opera by Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan entitled "Patience; or, Bunthorne's Bride," was produced here on Monday night with conspicuous success. The theatre was crowded, and continuous laughter and applause resounded from all

parts of the house. It has been very truly observed by George Eliot that of all forms of error prophesy is the most gratuitous; but we will nevertheless hazard the prediction that during the stay of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Patience" Company there will be no vacant seats at the Theatre Royal.

After a melodious overture, the curtain rises and reveals the exterior of Bunthorne Castle at the gate of which a group of young ladies, with lutes and mandolins and other archaic instruments, and dresses which are ignorantly termed æsthetic, are singing a chorus. "Twenty love-sick maidens we," which is set to a charming phrase that recurs frequently throughout the opera. It is followed by solos from the Ladies Angela and Ella, and choral passages with the refrain "Ah, miserie!" from the rapturous maidens, who are all vainly sighing for the love of the fleshly poet, Reginald Bunthorne. We may mention that though the words of the chorus are "Twenty love-sick maidens, &c.," there are not that number of ladies on the stage. A little is therefore left to the imagination. Patience, the sprightly and unsophisticated dairy maid, with whom the fleshly one is enamoured, now trips gaily on to the stage, and sings a song, which was encored, "I cannot tell what this love may be." She then informs the young ladies that the 35th Dragoon Guards, with whom they were in love a year ago, have halted in the village, but Lady Angela explains that their tastes have been etherealised, their perceptions exalted, and they can now see the Dragoons in their true aspect. They are fleshly men, men of full habit – they care nothing for them; they will lift up their voices in a morning carol to their Reginald. The Dragoons and their officers – Colonel Calverley, Major Murgatroyd, and Lieutenant the Duke of Dunstable now appear on the scene of their former triumphs; and the Colonel sings a song of the rapid patter sort. Bunthorne also appears, followed by the ladies who are singing and playing on their harps and lutes. His aspect is grim, grotesque, pre-occupied; and though his poetry is fleshly, his figure is gaunt and lean. He is in the agonies of composition, and the mental effort is too much for him. He staggers and falls into the arms of the Colonel, and on recovering says, "I am better now. The poem is finished, and my soul had gone out into it. That was all. It occurs three times a day." The æsthetic vestals supplicate him to read the composition, and he says, "It is a wild, weird, fleshly thing; yet very tender, very yearning, very precious. It is called 'Oh, Hollow! Hollow! Hollow!' It is the wail of the poet's heart on discovering that everything is commonplace. To understand it, cling passionately to one another and think of faint lilies."

He accordingly recites it, and the subject proves to be the uses of aperients, and the value of calomel in relieving the woes of the "writhing maid, lithe limbed, quivering on amaranthine asphodel." The ladies exclaim. "How purely fragrant!" "How earnestly precious!" and presently retire to the tune of "Twenty love-sick maidens we;" and the Dragoons, who find that they are out of the running, walk off in astonishment and disgust. Bunthorne is now alone and unobserved. With frankness which is not only superfluous, but which would require explanation of the character, or any of the characters in the piece, had they any semblance of reality, he confesses that he is an "utter" humbug, an æsthetic sham; that his mediævalism is an affectation, "born of morbid love of admiration," and he sings a capital song which explains what you must do "If you're anxious for to shine, in the high æsthetic line." Presently the idyllic poet, Archibald Grosvenor, appears. He succumbs at once to the charms of the simple and sprightly dairymaid, and they sing the duet "Prithee, Pretty Maiden" with the refrain "Hey Willow Waly O!" This charming composition has the fragrant freshness of an early English madrigal, and would be considered by many the choicest and daintiest thing in the opera. Grosvenor explains to Patience that although he is

gifted with a beauty which probably has not its rival on earth – he is, nevertheless, utterly and completely miserable. It is his hideous destiny to be madly loved at first sight by every woman who sets eyes on him. We have not space to explain the far-fetched and clumsily devised motive which compels the mutually attracted pair to separate for a while. Enough that they acknowledge its force, and with a little more of the "Willow Waly O!" business they part despairingly. Later on the ladies again acknowledge their allegiance to the Dragoons; three of whom join them in singing the superbly melodious sestet, "I hear the soft note of the echoing voice." But while the maidens are still in the embrace of their amorous admirers, the fascinating Grosvenor glides in. He cannot escape from his hideous destiny. The fickle damsels withdraw from the arms of the military, and kneel at his feet; and the curtain of the first act falls as the wretched Bunthorne recognises that he has a rival.

At the commencement of the second act the Lady Jane is discovered in a glade, leaning on a huge violoncello. She is soliloquising on the ravages of time and the evanescence of female charms; and taking the violoncello she pretends to accompany herself to the song, "Silvered is the raven hair," the music of which is graceful and pathetic, but the absurdity of the lines

"Little will be left of me

In the coming by and bye,"

And

"There will be too much of me

In the coming by and bye,

especially when associated with the particularly massive physique of Lady Jane created a sense of incongruity which found expression in inextinguishable laughter. Archibald Grosvenor is in his turn pestered by the admiring maidens, who grovel at his feet in lithe and languid postures. The attentions of his pretty persecutors are found to be cloying; and at last he says, "Ladies, I am sorry to distress you, but you have been following me about ever since Monday, and this is Saturday. I should like the usual half-holiday, and if you will kindly allow me to close early today I shall take it as a personal favour." A capital duet follows between Lady Jane and Bunthorne, in which the former urges the fleshly poet to quarrel with and demolish the idyllic one. This was one of the greatest successes of the evening. Another richly humorous episode occurs when the Duke, the Colonel, and the Major, in order to regain the affections of the æsthetic maidens, discard their uniforms, clothe themselves in mediæval dresses of a grotesquely exaggerated description, and assume the constrained postures and angular stained glass attitudes of the æsthetic brotherhood. We hardly know whether to agree with Lady Angela when she says that they are "quite too all but" or with Lady Saphir, who exclaims, "They are indeed jolly utter." Subsequently Bunthorne, whose appetite for admiration is insatiable, coerces Grosvenor into a renunciation of his claims to æsthetic honours and qualifications. He is to be no longer an ultra-poetical, super-æsthetical, out-of-the-way young man. He is to abjure the intense, have his hair cut, wear a tweed suit, and become absolutely commonplace.

The transformation takes place, and the two poets sing a lively, decidedly unæsthetic, and rather music-hallish duet, "A most intense young man." This duet and the dance which accompanies it, is tremendously applauded, and the enthusiasm is increased when the rapturous maidens appear in ordinary costumes, and throwing off their languorous airs, dance joyously, and join in the chorus

"We're Madame Louise young girls,

We're prettily pattering, cheerily chattering,

Every-day young girls."

Lady Jane still remains æsthetic and faithful to Bunthorne, whom she has frequently pursued across the stage with heavy and unrelenting foot. But a sore temptation awaits her, and she yields. The Duke of Dunstable makes her an offer, and she promptly rejects the fleshly poet, and submits her mature and buxom charms to the ducal endearments. The other ladies pair off with the military fellows, and Grosvenor is rewarded with the hand of Patience. "Crushed again," he exclaims in disgust. He has to be contented with a tulip or a lily, for notwithstanding the title of the opera, Patience is *not* Bunthorne's Bride.

People are perhaps growing a little wary of this banter, and it is an ignorant misnomer to call the people ridiculed in this play æsthetics. They are all lunatics, every one of them. They no more belong to the domain of rational authentic human beings than do the philosophers of Laputa. It is a topsy-turvy composition throughout; a piece of extravagant fooling – not always very delicate, and not always very happy. The fertility and melody of Mr. Sullivan's music extorts general admiration; and some of the airs and duets we have mentioned are probably destined to a more than ephemeral popularity.

Of the performance we have little room to speak on this occasion. The cast was:–

Reginald Bunthorne (a Fleshly Poet).....	Mr. Richard Purdon.	
Archibald Grosvenor (an Idyllic Poet)	Mr. Walter Greyling.	
Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor.....	Mr. Chambers.	
Colonel Calverley.....	} Officers of Dragoon { Guards {	
Major Murgatroyd Mr. F. Federici.
Lieut. the Duke of Dunstable Mr. Edward Clowes.
	 Mr. H. Bolini
Chorus of Officers of Dragoon Guards.		
The Lady Angela.....	} Rapturous Maidens {	
The Lady Saphir Miss Katie Cohen.
The Lady Ella.....	 Miss Constance Snow.
The Lady Jane Miss Dysart.
 Miss Fanny Harrison.	
and		
Patience (a Dairymaid)	Miss Marion Grahame.	
Chorus of Rapturous Maidens.		

Mr. Walter Greyling, Mr. Federici, Mr. Bolini, and Miss Fanny Harrison are favourably known to Portsmouth audiences, before whom they recently appeared in "The Pirates of Penzance," as the Major-General, the Pirate King, the Pirate Apprentice, and Ruth, the Piratical Maid-of-all-work. Miss Marion Grahame gave an excellent and highly finished delineation of Patience. Her manner is at once modest and arch; she was the object of many recalls, and of emphatic laudation. Lady Jane comes next in importance. The breadth, massiveness, and drollery of Miss Harrison's impersonation cannot be too highly commended; and, as we previously knew, she has a capital voice. Mr. Richard Purdon (Bunthorne) acts and dances better than he sings; but he is so excruciatingly funny that one can scarcely wish him other than he is. Mr. W. Greyling (Grosvenor) sings with fine expression, and acts with intelligence and ease. The three leading rapturous maidens were very excellently represented vocally and dramatically; and the performances of the officers of Dragoons were highly meritorious. The opera is very well staged. The scenery is good, and the dresses and other accessories are tasteful and harmonious. The smooth and excellent manner in which the choruses were given, as well as the remarkably effective support rendered by the orchestra and piano, deserve special praise. "Patience" will be repeated every

evening during this and next week. *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc* (Portsmouth, England), Wednesday, December 7, 1881; Issue 5149.

THEATRE ROYAL. — Lessee, Mr. J. H. Franckeiss; Manager, Mr. J.W. Boughton. The event of the week has been the production, for the first time here, of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience; or, Bunthorne's Bride*. The opera is as diverting as it is satirical, and its performance on Monday night was one of the greatest successes of the season. The amiable acting and singing of the artists leave nothing to be desired. The cast includes Miss Marion Grahame as *Patience*; Miss Fanny Harrison, the *Lady Jane*; Mr. Richard Purdon, *Bunthorne*; Mr. W. Greyling, *Archibald*; Mr. F. Federici, *Colonel Calverley*; and others. The dresses and surroundings were simply superb. The opera has been repeated each evening, preceded by a musical sketch called *Mock Turtles*, in which Mr. J. D. Young and Miss Agnes Taylor appear. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 10, 1881; Issue 2255.]

THEATRE ROYAL. — Lessee, Mr. J. H. Franckeiss; Manager, Mr. J.W. Boughton. — Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is still here, and *Patience* continues to draw large and enthusiastic audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 17, 1881; Issue 2256.]

19th – 24th December: Southampton

THEATRE ROYAL. — Our local playgoers have now an opportunity of witnessing the popular comic opera, entitled *Patience*, the joint production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, who have turned to good account the æsthetic craze which had, at one time, at all events, numerous disciples in the realms of fashion. The first representation of this amusing piece in Southampton took place on Monday evening before a good house. and last night the attendance was still better, as the performance was under the patronage of Colonel Sir Charles Pearson, K.C M.G., &c., Commandant at Netley Hospital, and the principal medical officer and officers of that important establishment. Many of our readers are doubtless acquainted with the plot of this amusing opera, which has decidedly proved one of the best hits of the late season in the Metropolis; it will, therefore, suffice to state that it consists of only two acts, in which it exposes, in a series of humorous scenes, the grotesque exaggerations of which the æsthetic school of literature and art, as well as manners, is capable. The choruses and songs are highly diverting, and when the piece concludes the audience naturally feel regret that it is so soon over. The applause has been hearty both evenings in fact the opera is sure of a cordial reception wherever it is performed with the efficiency with which Mr. D'Oyly Carte's excellent company renders it from first to last. The singing and acting are alike meritorious, and as an entertainment the performance is one of the best that has ever been witnessed on our local stage. It certainly deserves the encomiums bestowed upon it by the London critics, and all who wish to pass a pleasant evening could not do better than give it their patronage while they have a chance of doing so. [*The Hampshire Advertiser* (Southampton, England), Wednesday, December 21, 1881; pg. 4; Issue 3706.]

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. — Lessee, Mr. J. W. Gordon. — On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Patience* company commenced a six nights' engagement here, and have played to overflowing and delighted audiences. The cast is uncommonly strong, the chorus effective, and scenery appropriate, and the success attained excels that of any previous opera company that has appeared here. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 24, 1881; Issue 2257.]

26th – 31st December: Bath

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager. Mr. Frederick Neebe. – Instead of the usual pantomime, we have this years a decided change by the production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's æsthetic opera *Patience*, which was given on Boxing Night to a crowded house. Put on the stage with every attention to the minutest detail in dress and appointments, and rendered with great care and taste, the whole performance is a treat, and an undoubted success. Mr. Richard Purdon takes the part of Bunthorne, and makes a great deal of it. Mr. Walter Greyling as Archibald Grosvenor is very painstaking and pleasing. Messrs. Federici, Edward Clowes, and Horace Bolini, as the Officers of Dragoon Guards, were most entertaining. Miss Marion Grahame is *Patience*. She has a sweet voice. Miss Fanny Harrison plays the Lady Jane, and makes as much as possible of it. The other prominent characters are taken by the Misses Katie Cohen, Constance Snow, and Florence Dysart. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 31, 1881; Issue 2258.]