

Comedy Opera Company 'B' 1879 ('2nd Pinafore Company' from 4th August)

16th – 21st June: Southampton

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee, Mr. Henry Davenport. – a great treat has been afforded to the patrons of this Theatre during the week by the engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, who have appeared in the enormously successful nautical opera *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The piece has drawn immensely, and, notwithstanding a morning performance is announced for Saturday, the demand has been so great for tickets that the pit is to be converted into stalls for Friday evening. The opera has been most admirably put upon the stage, whilst the performances of the talented company were so excellent that at the conclusion of each act the principal artists were called to the footlights and honoured with a perfect ovation. A new and original vaudeville entitled *After All* precedes, and in it Mr. R. Cummings as Pennyfather, Mr. Hogarth as Selworthy, and Miss Millie Vere as Maria, appear to considerable advantage. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 22, 1879; Issue 2126.]

23rd – 28th June: Bath

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – The advent of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* company has been welcomed by Bath play goers. The success which has attended the production of the work elsewhere has been its lot here. The individual and general ability of the performers, the care taken and taste exhibited in the rendering, combine to make an even, well balanced, and most enjoyable entertainment. Where all are good it is almost invidious to single any for especial mention, but notice may be taken of the excellent singing and acting of Mr. Wm. Hogarth as Captain Corcoran, and of the capital make up and truthfulness of character of Mr. W. S. Penley as Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B. Mr. Cadwaladr as Ralph Rackstraw, Miss Ethel Pierson as Josephine, and Miss Florence Trevelyan as Little Buttercup also deserve commendation. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 29, 1879; Issue 2127.]

SHOCKING ACCIDENT TO A THEATRICAL PARTY. TWO PERSONS DROWNED.

A sad accident happened at Bathampton yesterday. A party of "H.M.S. Pinafore" Company, who during the past week have been playing at the theatre, went up the river with some local residents. The party in one boat got too near the Bathampton weir, a dangerous spot, where many accidents have occurred, and the boat capsized. Miss Florence Hyde and Mr. Ives, members of the theatrical company, were drowned, and Miss Annie Walsh had a narrow escape. The bodies have not been recovered. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Monday, June 30, 1879; Issue 9710.]

30th June – 5th July: Exeter

"H.M.S. PINAFORE." – This highly successful nautical comic opera was produced at the Exeter Theatre on Monday evening, by a company specially selected by Mr. D'Oyly Carte for its representation in the provinces. It is still running at the Opera Comique, London, having been performed over 330 times, and continues to draw crowded houses. The opera throughout is of a very amusing character, whilst the music is highly popular. Mr. Penley's representation of the First Lord of the Admiralty was extremely diverting, and he admirably caricatured the official importance of a Lord of the Admiralty who had never been to sea. Mr. Hogarth sustained the character of Captain Corcoran with much ability, and his singing was received with repeated marks of approval by the audience, as was also that of Mr. Cadwaladr (Ralph Rackstraw). Miss Ethel Pierson, who represented the Captain's daughter Josephine, created a very favourable impression by her exquisite rendering of the various pieces

apportioned to the character; and Miss Florence Trevellyan admirably portrayed the Portsmouth bumboat woman Little Buttercup. The other characters were all well represented – Dick Deadeye, Mr. A. Rousbey; Bill Bobstay, Mr. R. Cummings; Bob Beckett, Mr. East; Hebe (Sir Joseph's First Cousin,) Miss Millie Vere; and Tom Tucker (Midshipmite), Mr. Fitzaltamont, jun. The stage appointments were very appropriate and effective, representing the quarter deck of a man-of-war at noon and by moon light. At the close the company were called before the curtain, and were received with rounds of applause. Before the opera a new vaudeville was performed, in which Mr. Hogarth, Mr. Cummings, and Miss Millie Vere appeared. The same programme will be repeated each evening this week, and on Friday there will be a morning performance at 2.30. A sad accident befell some members of the company the day previous to their coming to Exeter, when two of the chorus singers were drowned by the capsizing of a boat in the river Avon. The names of the deceased are Miss Florence Hyde and Mr. Ives. Arrangements were at once made to supply the vacancy so sadly created by other performers from London, so that the unfortunate accident will not interfere with the continued presentation of "H.M.S. Pinafore." [*Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser* (Exeter, England), Wednesday, July 2, 1879; Issue 5968.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – On Monday a six nights' engagement was commenced by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company to a capital house. The scenic effects and stage arrangements were excellent. We were immensely pleased with the performance of the nautical opera *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Mr. Cadwaladr, as Jack Rackstraw (sic), was in good voice and sang splendidly. Josephine had a charming representative in Miss Ethel Pierson. Her effective singing drew forth much applause. Mr. W. S. Penley's make up and acting of the First Lord of the Admiralty were capital. Mr. William Hogarth's voice told well as Captain Corcoran. Mr. Rousbey's impersonation of Dick Deadeye was remarkably clever; as was Mr. Richard Cummings's Bill Bobstay. Miss Florence Trevellyan represented with consummate tact the character of Little Buttercup. Miss Millie Vere was excellent as Hebe. The Carpenter's Mate was represented by Mr. East. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 6, 1879; Issue 2128.]

7th – 12th July: Plymouth

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. J. R. Newcombe. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, with *H.M.S. Pinafore*, commenced a six nights' engagement on Monday last, and met with a most enthusiastic and flattering reception from a house crowded to the ceiling. So great a favourite did the piece become on its first representation here that before the end of the second day every available seat was booked for the remainder of its short stay, which unfortunately cannot be prolonged on account of prior engagements. Mr. Ralph Horner is an excellent conductor, and Mr. Herbert Brook a gentlemanly manager. An amusing vaudeville entitled *After All* preceded the opera. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 13, 1879; Issue 2129.]

14th – 19th July: Jersey

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietor, Mr. W. Rousbey. – The famed *H.M.S. Pinafore* company, under the direction of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, opened this place of entertainment on Tuesday, for five nights. The attendance was very good and the success deservedly great. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 20, 1879; Issue 2130.]

21st – 26th July: Guernsey

H. M. S. PINAFORE COMEDY OPERA COMPANY AT ST. JULIAN'S HALL.

Startling announcements and loud promises of coming entertainments in Guernsey are seldom realized in such satisfactory style as was the first performance last evening of Mr.

D'Oyly Carte's Company, organised for the production of the exceptionally popular Comedy Opera "H.M.S. Pinafore," written by W. S. Gilbert, the famous author of the "Bab Ballads" and a hundred other clever and amusing satirical effusions, and set to music by the equally versatile composer of sweet and tuneful airs, Arthur Sullivan. This combination was indeed a "happy thought", for not only in London, where it was first produced at the Opera Comique, is it still running nightly after 360 representations, but it is ranging through the provinces with success everywhere, and has sailed across the broad Atlantic, where in all the important cities of the new world, this truly English musical tale of "the lass that loved a sailor" is being sung amidst the heartiest plaudits of our American cousins, and their numerous friends and acquaintances. It was not difficult therefore to predict for it a warm reception here, for we have ever found Guernsey audiences most appreciative of really meritorious performances. Last evening was no exception to this rule, and a large and enthusiastic audience assembled to welcome the debut of this (to the island) exceptional entertainment. The opera in itself possesses most attractive elements, it is patriotic, stirring, and true to nature, in design and conception; and being wedded to effective music appeals at once to the eye and ear of the most fastidious seeker after genuine amusement, refined but still bearing a strong comedy stamp. The plot of the piece is very simple and may be told briefly thus:— Ralph Rackstraw, an able seaman, falls in love with Josephine, the captain's daughter, against the wish of Captain Corcoran. The Admiral has also a passion for the captain's daughter, and entertains a high opinion of Ralph Rackstraw, but when he hears of the engagement he at once orders the able seaman into custody, and he is marched away handcuffed between two marines. Here, Little Buttercup, a Portsmouth bumboat woman, reveals the secret that she has been a baby-farmer, and that Captain Corcoran and Ralph Rackstraw were in her charge in their infancy, the former being of humble, and the latter of high birth, but somehow or other they got "mixed" up. This revelation brings about a change, and Captain Corcoran here comes upon the scene as an able seaman, whilst Ralph Rackstraw assumes the command. From this point a mutual feeling springs up between all parties, and the *dénouement* becomes one of extreme happiness all round.

The whole action takes place on the quarter deck of H.M.S. Pinafore; an admirable set scene, furnished with every realistic accompaniment, the main portion being supplied by the well-know stage artists, Messrs. Gordon and Harford. The illusion is complete, and the dresses and appointments add materially to the success of the performance. As the same artists have so often sustained the respective characters, and have been so favourably noticed for their excellent work, we shall content ourselves with a record of the cast and with a brief reference to some of the most salient points of the opera.

The cast as represented last night comprised:—

The Right Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B

(<i>First Lord of the Admiralty</i>).....	Mr. R. Mansfield.
Captain Corcoran (<i>Commanding H.M.S. Pinafore</i>)	Mr. W. Hogarth.
Ralph Rackstraw (<i>Able Seaman</i>).....	Mr. Cadwaladr.
Dick Deadeye (<i>Able Seaman</i>).....	Mr. R. Brough.
Bill Bobstay (<i>Boatswain's Mate</i>).....	Mr. Lackner.
Bob Becket (<i>Carpenter's Mate</i>)	Mr. Maple.
Tom Tucker (<i>Midshipmite</i>)	Mr. Fitzaltamont, Jnr.
Little Buttercup (<i>a Portsmouth Bumboat Woman</i>)....	Miss F. Trevellyan.
Hebe (<i>Sir Joseph's First Cousin</i>).....	Miss Millie Vere.
Josephine (<i>the Captain's Daughter</i>)	Miss Ethel Pierson.

First Lord's Sisters, his Cousins, his Aunts, Sailors, Marines, &c.

Where all worked so well it is needless to individualise. The opera is so composed as to play in two acts, the action of the first soon leads up to the main incidents, and we quickly

become proud of the gallant captain of the *Pinafore*, and enamoured with his lovely daughter, while our sympathy goes with the honest Ralph and our disdain with the Right Honourable "the Ruler of the Queen's Navee." The Bumboat Woman is an important feature in the plot, and earns our regard by rendering justice at last for her shortcomings as a baby farmer, while Deadeye, the Quasimodo of the piece, gives us satisfaction in the end by the fact that all his hopes are foiled by the revelation of Little Buttercup. Every character was well sustained, from the First Lord, to Midshipmite Tom Tucker. Of the airs, the Captain's boastful, "I'm never, never sick at sea," with the following queries: "What, never?" "No, never!" "What, never?" "Hardly ever!" elicited hearty applause, especially when repeated on subsequent occasions. Josephine's ballad, "Sorry her lot," the sailor's chorus, "We sail the ocean blue," and Sir Joseph's song, "I am the Monarch of the Sea; the Ruler of the Queen's Navee," were all admirably rendered and applauded, as well as the other important numbers in the first act. In the second act the Captain's song, "Fair moon, I sing to thee," [*sic*] and his duet with Little Buttercup, "Things are seldom what they seem," were well received, but the trio between the First Lord, Captain, and Josephine, in which the former is induced to believe that he has made a conquest of the Captain's daughter, was the most effective concerted piece of the Opera, and was enthusiastically welcomed. The scene between the Captain, Ralph, and the crew with the Boatswain's refrain and chorus, "He is an Englishman," was also very lively, and capitally played. Cousin Hebe and the First Lord's female relatives were a source of considerable amusement. Buttercup's revelation ("A many years ago") of her changing the babes, leads up with much spirit to the final *dénouement*, when Ralph having become Captain, and the Captain a common sailor, nothing remains but for the First Lord to give his blessing and retire to the arms of his aunts and his cousins, &c., and so the piece ends merrily with song and dance to the most jovial and inspiring strains.

Every character is charmingly sustained, and the whole piece sails cheerily along with flying colours from beginning to end. The points were admirably worked out, and several of the airs, which cannot fail to become popular, were applauded again and again. At the close of the first act, and at the fall of the curtain the company was most vociferously recalled. As conductor, Mr. Ralph Horner was most efficient, while the entire stage direction and management of the company devolving upon Mr. Herbert Brook, was complete in every respect. To Messrs. Hartwell and Woodward much praise is due for the general arrangement of the Company's visit, and we feel assured that those who have the opportunity of being present during its short stay will be well pleased to witness such a delightful entertainment. There will be a special morning performance tomorrow, for the benefit of those who cannot attend in the evening. We understand that for Wednesday evening, when His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor promises his patronage and presence, nearly the whole of the Hall is taken for reserved seats. [*The Star* (Saint Peter Port, England), Tuesday, July 22, 1879; Issue 18.]

ST, JULIAN'S HALL. — Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company commenced a brief stay with *H.M.S. Pinafore* on Monday evening, and met with a most flattering reception. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 27, 1879; Issue 2131.]

28th – 30th July: Ryde

H.M.S. PINAFORE.— Our townspeople are indebted to Mr. H. C. Hughes, the enterprising manager of the Theatre Royal, at Portsmouth, for the opportunity of witnessing at the Ryde Theatre Mr. D'Oyly Carte's successful opera company specially organised for the representation of Gilbert and Sullivan's nautical opera "H.M.S. Pinafore." Their engagement was for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and on each evening, and on the occasion of a morning performance on Wednesday, the Theatre was crowded with most appreciative audiences. To prove the ability and the all-round excellence of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company

we have only to quote a remark which we heard a gentleman make, to the effect that he had seen "Pinafore " at the Opera Comique, in London, and of the two he preferred Mr. Carte's company's performance. After witnessing the performance we do not think the opera could have been done much better. It is needless for us to criticise the celebrated opera in detail. Everyone has seen it, and all the boys in the streets are now whistling the lively music, or repeating the celebrated "catch" "What never, &c." It would be a work of supererogation therefore to detail the absurdities of the plot, or the sly hits. Suffice it to say that every character had a fitting representative, and the songs incident to the various parts were repeatedly encored. Mr. Richard Mansfield, as the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., was a refined piece of drollery, and his rendering of the songs incidental to the part, especially "Stick to your stool and never go to sea," fairly brought down the house. Mr. William Hogarth, as Captain Corcoran (commanding H.M.S. Pinafore), looked the very *beau ideal* of a captain, and his excellent acting and fine voice brought him plenty of applause. Mr. Cadwalader, as Ralph Rackstraw, able seaman, the lover of the piece, sang the music appertaining to the part with much sweetness; and Mr. R. Brough, as Dick Deadeye, showed comic powers of the very highest order. Mr. Lockner [*sic*] looked every inch a sailor as Bill Bobstay, and was encored for his capital rendering of "He is an Englishman." Miss Ethel Pierson, as Josephine, the Captain's daughter, looked very charming, and her acting and singing were as charming as her looks. She was several times encored. Miss Florence Trevelyan, as "Little Buttercup," gave an extremely fine rendering of her part as the Portsmouth bum-boat woman. We must not omit to add that in the original vaudeville, "After All," which commenced the performance, Mr. R. Brough, as the hen-pecked solicitor, Pennyfather, was exceedingly comic. Altogether the whole performance was of the very highest order and reflects the utmost credit on all concerned. [*Isle of Wight Observer*, 2 August 1879, p. 5.]

31st July – 1st August: Worthing

2nd August: Eastbourne

4th – 9th August: Southampton

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Manager, Mr. J. W. Gordon. – The *Pinafore* company paid a return visit on Monday, and have been playing to large audiences during the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 10, 1879; Issue 2133.]

11th – 13th August: Chatham

14th – 16th August: Tunbridge Wells

18th – 20th August: Margate

THE THEATRE. – Manager and Lessee, Miss Sarah Thorne. – Mr. Edward Compton had his benefit here on Friday evening (15th), when was produced, for the first time, Schonberg's farce of *Washington Watts*, the title role being taken by Mr. Compton. *H.M.S. Pinafore* was played here by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and each evening the Theatre was crowded to excess. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 24, 1879; Issue 2135.]

21st August: Alexandra Palace

22nd – 23rd August: Canterbury

25th – 30th August: No Engagement

1st – 2nd September: Bury St. Edmunds

THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared here on Monday and Tuesday in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, which was enthusiastically received by very large audiences. Miss Ethel Pierson made a charming heroine, both musically and histrionically, and she was well supported by Mr. Cadwaladr as Rackstraw, Mr. Hogarth as the Captain, and, indeed, by the entire corps, who rendered the various choruses, &C., with exquisite taste and ability. The leading artists were called to the front at the close of each act, and the whole performance gave great satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 7, 1879; Issue 2137.]

3rd – 4th September: Colchester

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietors, Messrs Nunn Brothers and D. Vale. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared here on Wednesday and Thursday in *H.M.S. Pinafore* to crowded houses. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 14, 1879; Issue 2138.]

5th – 6th September: Ipswich

THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company have given two performances here this week of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, which proved a treat to the theatre goers of this district. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 7, 1879; Issue 2137.]

8th – 10th September: Kings Lynn

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. H. Jex. – On Monday and the two following nights this theatre was crowded to hear Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The singing and acting gave great satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 14, 1879; Issue 2138.]

11th – 13th September: Peterborough

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Last *H.M.S. Pinafore* paid a three nights' visit. On each evening, notwithstanding unfavourable weather, the Theatre was crowded to excess with highly appreciative and fashionable audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 21, 1879; Issue 2139.]

15th – 17th September: Huddersfield

"H.M.S. PINAFORE."

At last! After being sung in London and the provinces for over 16 months, after overrunning the United States to such an extent that every funny paragraph writer has used it as a peg for a cluster of jokes, after the catch-words, "Well, hardly ever," have been caught up in three continents, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's nautical opera has found its way to the Huddersfield Theatre Royal, where it was greeted last evening by one of the largest houses we have ever seen within the Theatre walls. All that has been written about "H.M.S. Pinafore" has not been more than it deserved, for it is, without exaggeration, a combination of excruciatingly funny music and libretto. When the curtain rises on the quarter-deck of the ship (which is a very good scene) the sailors are discovered polishing brasses on the deck. Little Buttercup (a Portsmouth bumboat woman) comes on board and offers her wares, the nature of which will be discovered from the following:

I've treacle and toffee, and excellent coffee,
Soft tommy, and excellent chops;
I've chicken, and conies, and pretty polonies,
And excellent peppermint drops.

Ralph Rackstraw, able seaman, discloses to the crew (in an apostrophe to the moon) his love for Josephine, the captain's daughter. Dick Deadeye, another able seaman, warns him of the difference in station between the two, when Captain Corcoran, commander of the Pinafore, appears and enquires politely after the health of his crew. In the course of a song, in which he states that he is hardly ever sick at sea, he tells Little Buttercup that Josephine's hand is sought in marriage by Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., First Lord of the Admiralty. Josephine, on her appearance, confesses her love for Ralph, and at the end of her confession the First Lord appears, preceded by his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts. Sir Joseph tells, in a very funny song, how he has risen from being an attorney's clerk to be "ruler of the Queen's navee," and then delivers a panegyric upon the British seaman, and hopes that the captain's language is polite. He then retires to teach the captain how to dance a hornpipe, and in the meantime Ralph discovers his love to Josephine. The scene is one of comically exaggerated sentiment, which ends by the lady declaring her affection just as Ralph is going to blow out his brains. The scene concludes with a plot for the secret marriage of the loving couple. The curtain rises in the second act to a sentimental song by Captain Corcoran to the moon, and to a mock-tragedy scene between Little Buttercup and the Captain, who seem to have a "sincere regard" for each other. Dick Deadeye warns the Captain of the plot for the marriage of his daughter; and Sir Joseph, complaining of the coolness of Josephine, is encouraged to assure her officially that it is a standing rule at the Admiralty that love levels all ranks. This Josephine takes as a justification of her betrothal to Ralph, and she discovers the fact to the First Lord, who explained that although love does level all ranks to a considerable extent, it does not level them so much as that. Little Buttercup confesses that many years ago she practised baby farming; that then Captain Corcoran and Ralph were under her care, and that she mixed them up so that each occupied the wrong station in after life. Such a state of affairs seems very puzzling, but all is set right by Ralph becoming captain and marrying Josephine, by Sir John [*sic*] declaring his love for Hebe, his first cousin; and by Corcoran developing a passion for sweet Little Buttercup. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company present the opera most cleverly. All are clever vocalists and actors, and the many broad jokes and sarcastic touches are prominently developed. Easy and catching melodies, and artful melodramatic chords characterise the music, of the piece; and almost every line of Mr. Gilbert's contribution contains some smart phrase or laughable point. "Pinafore" will occupy the Theatre on this and the following evening. [*The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* (West Yorkshire, England), Tuesday, September 16, 1879; pg. 4; Issue 3780.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. J. W. White. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* drifted into port here for the first time on Monday, an engagement for three nights having been arranged by the Lessee. The merry doings on board the little craft have given much amusement to crowded audiences, who have manifested their appreciation in a marked manner. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's production has been carefully represented by the various artists engaged, chief among whom may be mentioned Messrs. R. Mansfield, W. Hogarth, Cadwaladr, Robert Brough, Federici; Misses Ethel Pierson, Millie Vere, and Trevellyan. A vaudeville, *After All*, preceded the opera, and was well received. The remainder of the week has been filled up by another visit – the fifth – of the celebrated Majiltons, who have become great favourites here, the programme being made up by *Round the Clock*, in which H. D. Burton re-appears in his original part of Bartle Burke, and the burlesque of *Aladdin*. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 21, 1879; Issue 2139.]

18th – 20th September: Halifax

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Rawlings. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company was to open here for three nights on Thursday, the 18th inst., with *H.M.S. Pinafore*. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 21, 1879; Issue 2139.]

22nd – 25th September: York

"H.M.S. PINAFORE" AT THE THEATRE. – The engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company attracted a crowded audience to the theatre yesterday evening. The performance commenced with a new production called "After All," in which some smart acting and several good songs are introduced. The characters are as follows:– Pennyfather, a solicitor, Mr. Robert Brough; Selworthy, Mr. Hogarth; Maria, Miss Millie Vere. The piece is highly amusing. "H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass that loved a Sailor," followed. This popular opera, written by W. S. Gilbert, and composed by Arthur Sullivan, has reached its 500th representation under the management of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, at the Opera Comique, and its performance for the first time in York was looked forward to with great interest. The opening scene is on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. Pinafore. The sailors are all at their posts, and are visited by Little Buttercup, a bumboat woman (Miss Florence Trevellyan), which is the occasion for much joviality on board. Presently the captain of the ship – Captain Corcoran – (Mr. W. Hogarth) arrives, and the sailors salute him after the nautical fashion. Josephine, the captain's daughter (Miss Duggan) is introduced, and soon afterwards Sir Joseph Porter, First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. Mansfield). The fair one prides herself in loving one of the sailors – Ralph Rackstraw, and in spurning the offer of Sir Joseph. She has thus two admirers, and the varied love scenes between them constitutes the main features of the piece. The situation brought out by the end of the first act discloses the mutual affection between the captain's daughter and the sailor. In the next act Sir Joseph and the captain meet, and talk of Josephine, on the appearance of whom they retire to watch and listen. Soon Sir Joseph confronts her, and on offering his hand is apparently accepted, but discovers she has given her heart to his rival, whereupon he orders the latter to confinement. Directly afterwards, however, he changes place with the captain, and this has the effect of turning Sir Joseph's desires from Josephine, and the affection of the two lovers is sealed. On the conclusion of the opera the leading characters appeared before the curtain, and were warmly applauded. The music of the piece is varied and brilliant, and the singing excellent. The scenery, by Messrs. Gordon and Harford, is very effective. Mr. Herbert Brook is the acting manager of the company, the conductor is Mr. Ralph Horner, and the stage manager Mr. Robert Brough. The engagement for York was for four nights. [*The York Herald* (York, England), Tuesday, September 23, 1879; pg. 7; Issue 7054.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – The long looked-for comic opera *H.M.S. Pinafore* was introduced to the citizens of York on Monday last, and met with a hearty reception from a well-filled house. The lively and tuneful music throughout was admirably rendered by the various members of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's excellent company. The engagement was for four nights only, but if this gallant ship and her splendid crew should return to these waters we have no hesitation in predicting for them a renewal of their success. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 28, 1879; Issue 2140.]

26th – 27th September: Darlington

"PINAFORE" AT DARLINGTON.

Hardly ever has the Central Hall, Darlington, been more closely packed; never-that is, hardly ever, has a local audience been delighted and amused with a brighter or more laughter-provoking piece; and hardly ever has fun been presented in a more innocent, and burlesque in a more refined manner. If ever an entertainment could I dispense with introduction, "Pinafore" may. It and its phrases are household words. In London and the provinces it has been performed close on a thousand times, and in America it is more than a rage-it is an infatuation. There are white "Pinafore" companies, and companies of coloured people, church and chapel Pinafore companies too. Its music is heard in every orchestra, and

its "hardly ever" has, been a godsend to the small wits of fashionable society- at no time over brilliant with humour. Ladies' costumiers have cause to be thankful for the advent of Pinafore. In the States almost everybody has joined one of the performing companies, and as a consequence the representations are distinguished by various degrees of ability and the absence of it. Some performances are received with thunders of applause, others by showers of cabbage stalks. Its talented authors, Mr. W. S. Gilbert, the author of the "Bab Ballads," and Mr. Arthur Sullivan, must be as much surprised as anyone else at the marvellous popularity of their charming little operetta. They wrote it to supersede more than questionable French opera-bouffe, and they have succeeded. The satire contains no malice, nor the fun any vulgarity, nor the burlesque any coarseness. If anything may be taken exception to it is the character of Dick Deadeye, because it is poor fun obtained at the expense of physical infirmities. However, last night the audience were not disposed to be over critical, though when the rising of the curtain was delayed they were a little impatient. But they probably did not know the difficulties under which the company laboured. Travelling from York yesterday afternoon, they missed a train and arrived in Darlington four hours late. Consequently, it took them all their time to rig the ship, for which they had to enlarge the stage. As they could not put up another scene, the farce "After All" had to be omitted. This was, however, of little consequences. "Pinafore" was quite sufficient for the evening's entertainment. It would be rather late in the day to give a detailed outline of a play which has been so long and so much before the public. Of course there is a love difficulty. Josephine (the captain's daughter), Miss Ethel Pierson, loves one of her father's crew, Ralph Rackstraw (Mr. Cadwalader), but her father wishes her to marry Sir Joseph Porter (First Lord of the Admiralty), Mr. W. S. Penley; and the difficulties which arise out of the conflict between the parental preference and affection form the plot of the piece. The captain's daughter is a very energetic young lady, with a sweet voice, and competent manner in the various humours she has to assume. Miss Millie Vere was as charming a Hebe as the name of her character implies, and the bevy of sisters, and cousins, and aunts, would have made Sir Joseph Porter an enviable man had they not been his own relations. Miss Trevelyan, Little Buttercup, sang the song which has been translated into, it is said, fourteen languages, and throughout as the Bumboat Woman was most animated. Mr. W. Hogarth, as captain of the ship, kept up his dignity, but *the* burlesque of the piece was the First Lord, who, because he knew nothing of a ship, and always voted with his party, was made the chief of the "Queen's Navee." The "hits" of the piece were fully appreciated. Though the first "hardly ever" fell tame, the big D "fetched" the house. The "Buttercup Song," "If You Please," "First Lord's Song," the love scenes, and the rest of it, were loudly applauded. At the end of the acts the company were enthusiastically recalled. The scenery was, it is said, a faithful representation of the quarter-deck of the *Victory*. The music was light and brilliant, and the singing very much superior to the acting, which our local amateurs considered very "small beer." The honours of the evening were certainly divided between the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B. and Josephine; and Tom Tucker (midshipmite), a small gentleman with the great name of Mr. Fitzaltamont, jun., deserves a big word of praise. The performance will be repeated this evening. [*Northern Echo*, Saturday 27 September 1879, p.4.]

29th September – 4th October: South Shields

H.M.S. FINAFORE AT SOUTH SHIELDS.

Never, or at any rate "hardly ever," has more interest been taken in theatrical matters in South Shields than last night, when Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's well-known nautical opera, "H.M.S. Pinafore," was produced in the Theatre Royal, before a large audience, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's, Opera Company. The popular opera has reached its 500th representation under the management of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, at the Opera Comique, and its performance for

the first time in South Shields was looked forward to with great interest. The opening scene is on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. Pinafore. The sailors are all at their posts, and are visited by Little Buttercup, a bumboat woman (Miss Florence Trevellyan), which is the occasion for much joviality on board. Presently the captain of the ship—Captain Corcoran (Mr Hogarth), arrives, and the sailors salute him after the nautical fashion. Josephine, the captain's daughter (Miss Ethel Pierson), is introduced, and soon afterwards Sir Joseph Porter, First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. Mansfield). The fair one prides herself in loving one of the sailors—Ralph Rackstraw, and in spurning the offer of Sir Joseph. She has thus two admirers, and the varied love scenes between them constitutes the main features of the piece. The situation brought out by the end of the first act discloses the mutual affection between the captain's daughter and the sailor. In the next act Sir Joseph and the captain meet, and talk of Josephine on the appearance of whom they retire to watch and listen. Soon Sir Joseph confronts her, and on offering his hand is apparently accepted, but discovers she has given her heart to his rival, whereupon he orders the latter to confinement. Directly afterwards, however, it transpires that little Buttercup practised baby-farming in her youth, and that the position of the sailor should be that of the Captain and *vice-versa*, she having "mixed the children up." This has the effect of turning Sir Joseph's desires from Josephine, and the affection of the two lovers is sealed. On the conclusion of the opera the leading characters appeared before the curtain, and were warmly applauded. The music of the piece is varied and brilliant, and the singing excellent. If none of the principals succeeded creating a *furor* either by their singing or acting, it can be said of them that they did their work in conscientious way, which the audience were not slow to acknowledge ; while the chorus of sailors, being well up in the music, sang together with much tunefulness, expression, and spirit. The engagement of the company at South Shields is for a week. [*Shields Daily Gazette*, Tuesday 30 September 1879, p. 3.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Cooke. – On Monday evening, through the spirit and enterprise of the respected Lessee, the frequenters of this Theatre had the great treat afforded them by the engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* company, who were received in a most hearty manner. On the opening night, as well as the other evenings, there was an exceedingly large audience, whose appreciation of the performance was testified by frequent applause. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 5, 1879; Issue 2141.]

6th – 11th October: Sunderland

H.M.S. PINAFORE.

This celebrated nautical opera, which has achieved success in England only second to that of "Our Boys," and has reduced the Americans to despair, was produced last evening for the first time in Sunderland by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company. The evening's entertainment opened with a musical absurdity, in which the fortunes of the Duke of Peckham and the Marquis of Hammersmith were funnily depicted, and after a time the curtain rose and disclosed the quarter-deck of H.M.S. Pinafore, with the crew bustling here and there about the musical tasks. The opera passed off without a hitch, and so heartily were many of the now familiar airs applauded that only twice were *encores* vouchsafed. We need not follow the fortunes of the various characters. Mr Mansfield made a satirically dignified and self-elated First Lord of the Admiralty, with a proper sense of his own greatness, and not even the terpsichorean extravagances into which he is led at the thought of Josephine could reduce him to the common level of humanity. Mr. Wm. Hogarth, the captain of the Pinafore, was a powerful aid to the success of the piece, and Mr. Cadwalader warbled the now hopeful and again despairing strains of Ralph Rackstraw with sweetness and fine vocal effect. Mr. Robt. Brough, Dick Headeye [*sic*], Mr. Lackner, as Bill Bobstay, Mr. Maple, Bob Beckett, and Mr. Fitzaltawont, jun., [*sic*] as Tom Tucker, were all efficient in their parts. Then Miss Florence [Trevellyan] was a pathetic and characteristic Little Buttercup, and Miss Ethel

Pierson made a charming Josephine, her singing and acting, especially the second act, bringing down the house again and again. Miss Millie Vere was Sir Joseph Porter's first cousin, and along with her there was a perfect bevy of sisters and cousins and aunts, whose devotion to their exalted relation was, to say the least of it, remarkable. The words and music of the opera are alike novel and pleasing. They abound in vocal surprises, and although here and there we noticed a slight weakness, we have little doubt that the Theatre Royal will be visited by large audiences during the stay of the company, and that Pinafore Sunderland will become just as popular as has been other places. [*Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, Tuesday 7 October 1879. p. 4.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Manager, Mr. A. Davis. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been produced this week by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, and has fully upheld its reputation. There have been large houses in the face of the disadvantages of wet weather. A musical absurdity, composed by Mr. Ralph Horner and entitled *Four by Honours*, was recently produced here with success. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 12, 1879; Issue 2142.]

13th – 15th October: Carlisle

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE AND OPERA HOUSE, – Lessee, Mr. W. R. Cogan. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company presented *H.M.S. Pinafore* on the first three nights of the week before crowded and fashionable audiences, who testified by frequent applause their appreciation of the excellent performances. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 19, 1879; Issue 2143.]

16th – 18th October: Preston

20th – 25th October: Halifax

27th October – 1st November: Huddersfield

THEATRE ROYAL – Lessee, Mr. J. W. White, – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company A, which created such a furore here a few weeks ago, commenced a return visit on Monday, and have again met with a hearty reception, the nightly cruise of *H.M.S. Pinafore* being attended by large and amused audiences. *Four by Honours* (a new absurdity, for which Mr. Ralph Horner, the conductor of the company, has provided some catching music), has preceded the opera. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 2, 1879; Issue 2145.]

3rd – 8th November: Bolton

TEMPLE OPERA HOUSE. – Mr. J. P. Weston, Proprietor. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company has been occupying the boards of this Theatre during the past week with *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The piece has been excellently put upon the stage, the scenery being most effective, and the acting as well as the singing throughout of a first class character. The opera has been followed by a pleasing musical piece entitled *Four by Honours*. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 9, 1879; Issue 2146.]

10th – 15th November: Hanley

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. James Elphinstone. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company commenced a six nights' engagement on Monday in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The house was crowded in every part although the prices were doubled. A musical absurdity *Four by Honours* precedes the opera which causes great amusement. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 16, 1879; Issue 2147.]

17th – 22nd November: Wolverhampton

THEATRE ROYAL. – Secretary, Mr. E. Barnett. – The arrival here of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* opera company (A) has awakened local playgoers from their lethargy, and the Royal has this week presented an unusually gay and busy appearance. The favourite nautical opera has been capitally played, the scenery, dresses, and stage appointments were excellent, and the whole production was a great success. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 23, 1879; Issue 2148.]

24th – 25th November: Leamington

<p>ROYAL MUSIC HALL, LEAMINGTON.</p> <p>MONDAY & TUESDAY Evenings, Nov. 24 & 25, 1879. Only appearance in Leamington of the OPERA COMPANY Specially organized for the representation of Messrs. GILBERT and SULLIVAN's immensely successful Nautical Comic Opera, H. M. S. P I N A F O R E, Under the Management of Mr. D'OYLY CARTE, of the Opera Comique, London.</p> <p>The performances will commence, at 7-30, with FOUR BY HONOURS, A Musical Absurdity, written by HENRY TINSON; music by RALPH HOBNER. To be followed by H. M. S. P I N A F O R E, Or, THE LASS THAT LOVED A SAILOR. Written by W. S. GILBERT; composed by ARTHUR SULLIVAN.</p> <p>For the convenience of County Residents, A DAY PERFORMANCE Of H.M.S. PINAFORE will be given on TUESDAY, November 25th, commencing at Two o'clock.</p> <p>ADMISSION:—Reserved Stalls, 5s. each; Second Seats, 3s.; Back Seats, 1s. 6d.</p> <p>A Plan of the Room may be seen at Messrs. Bezan and Son's Music Room, Victoria Terrace, Leamington, where Tickets and Seats can be secured. Tickets can also be had at Warwick, of Messrs. H. T. Cooke and Son, The Library, High Street.</p>

Leamington Spa Courier Saturday 15
November 1879, p. 5.

audiences, numbering altogether upwards 1.200. [*Leamington Spa Courier*, Saturday 29
November 1879, p. 4.]

ROYAL MUSIC HALL. – Manager, Mr. E. Holmes. – ON Monday and Tuesday
evenings last Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company appeared in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The Hall was
crowded to excess on each occasion, and on the first evening numbers were unable to obtain
admission. The piece was excellently mounted, and reflects high credit upon the
management. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 30, 1879; Issue 2149.]

26th – 28th November: Cheltenham

THE FIRST REPRESENTATION OF H.M.S. PINAFORE in Cheltenham last Wednesday
evening attracted, as might have been anticipated, one of the most crowded and fashionable
audiences that have ever been present at the Old Wells Theatre; stalls, pit, and gallery being
alike crowded before the curtain rose for the performance of this popular Comic Opera,
which was produced under the auspices of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, who had specially arranged the
present Company for the representation Gilbert and Sullivan's celebrated piece after its
production at the Opera Comique, in London, for upwards of five hundred nights. The
leading parts Pinafore were all well sustained, especially "The First Lord of the Admiralty,"
undertaken by Mr. R. Mansfield; "Ralph Rackstraw," Mr. Cadwallader; "Dick Deadeye," Mr.
Brough; "Capt. Corcoran," Mr. Hogarth; and "Little Buttercup," Miss Florence Trevelyan;
all of whom were heartily applauded throughout the piece. The music of this Comic Opera is
exceedingly lively, and the vein of satire running through the various soliloquies is intensely

amusing. The well-known songs, *I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee*, *He is an Englishman*, and *I practised Baby Farming*, were all vociferously encored, as was also the trio, *Ring the Merry Bells*, which was excellently rendered by Miss Ethel Pierson, Mr. Mansfield, and Mr. W. Hogarth. At the close of the Opera the Company were called before the curtain and received a perfect ovation. There was morning performance of Pinafore on Thursday which was numerously attended, and the Theatre was again crowded last night. The final representation of this popular piece is announced to take place this evening at seven o'clock; and for next week the Peril Company are announced to give six performances. [*Cheltenham Looker-On*, Saturday 29 November 1879, p.8]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietor, Mr. John White. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* was produced here on Wednesday, and has been playing during the remainder of the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 30, 1879; Issue 2149.]

1st – 6th December: Cardiff

"H.M.S. PINAFORE" AT CARDIFF.

The Theatre Royal Cardiff, was crowded last night to witness the first performance in the town of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's highly popular nautical opera, "H.M.S. Pinafore." It is just as impossible to account for the tremendous success of this particular production as it would be to try to find a reason for the unexampled run of "Our Boys" at the London Vaudeville. Both performances are in their respective spheres bright and sparkling and talented, but not more so than many other productions which have achieved only a very moderate measure of success. If, however, we cannot explain the phenomenon, we can bear testimony to the fact that in Cardiff, as elsewhere, "H.M.S. Pinafore" is the theatrical "rage" of the season. Before the little house in Wood-street opened last night very nearly every seat in the dress circle, in the orchestra stalls, and the private boxes was bespoke. And we believe that they have also been "booked" for every night this week. The pit was crowded to overflowing, and even to the gallery the interest extended. To what height the popularity of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's work has reached may be inferred from the fact that the company performing at Cardiff last night was one of three *corps dramatique* organised by Mr. D'Oyly Carte for its provincial representation. The original company of the Opera Comique has already represented the piece for upwards of 500 times, and, as all readers of law reports know, another performance of the opera is being simultaneously conducted every night at the Aquarium Theatre, Westminster. In America the success of the opera is so great that it has been performed at no fewer than seven different theatres at one time in New York, and by 150 different companies altogether in the United States. The music and *libretto* of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's opera are so well known that they need neither description nor eulogium at our hands. The piece was put upon the stage last night in a manner that reflected credit upon the mechanical and artistic resources of the establishment. And the impersonation of the characters and the rendering of the music allotted to them were very efficiently undertaken by the ladies and gentlemen enlisted under the flag of Mr. Herbert Brooke, the intelligent acting manager. With such differences as the physical constitution of the various performers rendered inevitable, the parts were all played in strict accordance with the original models upon which the several characters are founded. For the most part the singing was satisfactory, but one or two of the ladies were at times a little flat, and our countryman, Mr. Cadwaladr, who impersonated *Ralph Rackstraw*, was not quite as orthodox with the use of his h's as he might have been. Considering the difficulties with which the band had to contend, it got through its work very fairly, the credit in this matter being especially due to Mr. Ralph Horner, the skilful and energetic conductor associated with the company. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Tuesday, December 2, 1879; Issue 3296.]

"H.M.S. PINAFORE." – Those who are unable to witness that most successful comic opera, "H.M.S. Pinafore," at the New Theatre Royal, in the evening, will have the opportunity of seeing it this (Saturday) afternoon. The success which has attended the piece in Cardiff has been extraordinary, and the theatre has been crowded at each representation. The performance, which will commence at 2.30 this (Saturday) afternoon, will, we have no doubt, be appreciated by those who live at such a distance from the town as to be unable to attend the evening representations. "H.M.S. Pinafore" will be played for the last time at the New Theatre this evening. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Saturday, December 6, 1879; Issue 3300.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. W. H. Daw; Manager, Mr. E. Bulwer. – On Monday D'Oyly Carte's *Pinafore* company commenced a week's engagement, the enterprise of the management being rewarded by the very largest receipts it has been his pleasure to record. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, December 7, 1879; Issue 2150.]

8th – 13th December: Bath

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* company is paying us a return visit, and the interest which it excited upon its first appearance is in no way abated. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, December 14, 1879; Issue 2151.]

15th – 20th December: Exeter

"H.M.S. PINAFORE." – This highly successful nautical comic opera is, for the second season this year, being warmly received at the Exeter Theatre this week. Although some of the members of the company were here on the last occasion, the majority made their first appearance in Exeter on Monday evening, when the performance gave entire satisfaction to a large audience. The stage is capitally fitted up, and represents the main deck of a man-of-war, and when seen by moonlight in the second act has a very pleasing effect. The change in the personnel of the company has not deteriorated the character of the acting or the warmth of the applause which greeted the rendering of the various pieces, which was cordially bestowed throughout the entire opera. It is preceded by a musical absurdity "Four by Honours;" but tomorrow evening "H.M.S. Pinafore" will be presented first, to give visitors an opportunity of returning by a special train from Queen Street for Honiton and intermediate stations. A morning performance will be given on Friday, at 2.30. [*Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser* (Exeter, England), Wednesday, December 17, 1879; Issue 5992.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened with *H.M.S. Pinafore* for six nights. Mr. Cadwaladr appeared as Ralph Rackstraw, and Master Fitzltamount as Tom Tucker. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B. was capitally represented by Mr. R. Mansfield; Captain Corcoran by Mr. Federici; Mr. Billington acted Dick Deadeye; Mr. Lackner, Bill Bobstay; Mr. Blythe, Bob Beckett; Miss Fanny Harrison represented Little Buttercup; Miss Haigh, Hebe; and Miss Petrelli, Josephine. The chorus was excellent, and the company throughout sang and acted spiritedly, and gave the utmost gratification to an appreciative audience. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, December 21, 1879; Issue 2152.]

22 December – 2 January: Torquay

**Single Performance of *The Pirates of Penzance* to Secure English Copyright.
Royal Bijou Theatre, Paignton, 30 December 1879**

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

(FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT)

London, Wednesday.

Yesterday afternoon Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert's new extravaganza "The Pirates of Penzance" was announced to be performed for the first time on any stage at the theatre of the little town of Paignton, in Devonshire. The representation was, of course, a purely formal one, and was in compliance solely with our curious copyright law, which declares that, to secure the various rights attending to it, a work by English subjects must be first performed in England. Therefore one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's travelling companies was ordered to come across from Torquay, and, although the score was only expected by the Bothnia from New York yesterday, the provisions of the law will have been duly complied with. The new piece, which will not succeed "H.M.S. Pinafore" in this country till Easter, is a burlesque upon the sensational stories and the sensational melodramas of the present day. The bold pirate is represented as a very effeminate individual, who woos the daughter of a Major-General – a part, by the way, destined to be played here by Mr. George Grossmith. A policeman, a former nurse of the pirate, and two or three subordinate buccaneers also figure in the *dramatis personæ*. The piece will be produced next Saturday at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York – Mr. Arthur Sullivan conducting. [*Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), Friday, January 2, 1880; Issue 12491.]

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S NEW OPERA

The long-expected new comic opera, written by Mr. W. S. Gilbert and composed by Mr. Arthur Sullivan, has been produced at last, but in a locality where few London playgoers were likely to witness the performance. We venture to say there were few admirers of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan who anticipated that their new comic opera would be first given so far from the Metropolis as Paignton, where it was produced on Tuesday afternoon last with the greatest success. The new opera, which is entitled *The Pirates of Penzance; or, Love and Duty*, is to be produced in grand style at the Fifth-avenue Theatre, New York, and the performance at Paignton, of course, was only to satisfy the requirements of the law. Nevertheless, the work, even in this far-off place, was greeted with the most enthusiastic marks of approval, and there is little doubt that when it is heard in London another remarkable success will be scored for the accomplished author and equally talented composer. The Bijou Theatre, Paignton, is not a very elaborate temple of the drama, and it could hardly be expected, especially at this time of year, that a large audience would be present. A public performance being necessary, a public performance was given, and here and there on lonely posts, and by the side of forlorn outhouses, might be seen some buff coloured bills announcing the fact that Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* would be given at the Bijou Theatre, Paignton, on Monday. It was not, however, performed until Tuesday afternoon. Possibly the legal authorities will not make a quibble out of this fact to furnish new materials for gentlemen of the long robe to discuss. Messrs. Ralph Horner and Herbert Brook are the Managers of the Bijou Theatre. The prices of admission, we may here remark, are not less modest than the name inscribed over the portals of the Theatre, being for sofa stalls, 3s.; second seats, 2s.; area, 1s.; and gallery, 6d. Under the circumstances, the rehearsals of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's work, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company from Torquay for the occasion, could not be of the careful kind which a piece of some importance demanded. Nevertheless, it was generally well rendered, and the following is the plot:– The hero of the piece is a young pirate named Frederick [*sic.*], whose father died when he was very young, and who left him in the care of a nurse name Ruth, to whom he gave instructions that she was to bind her charge apprentice to a pilot. The nurse, however, mistook the word, and bound Frederick to the Pirate King. The hero, under a high sense of duty, but abhorring his calling, serves his apprenticeship faithfully. The first act opens on the last day of his servitude, and he then tells the pirate chief that in the future he will devote his life to the

extermination of the band. His nurse, hearing of his determination, discloses her love for him; but, he being only twenty-one years of age and she forty-seven, he declines to marry her. The pirates leave the cave on an expedition, and while they are away a number of girls, the daughters of a Major-General, appear on the scene, and the eldest, named Grace [*sic.*] immediately falls in love with Frederick, and he with her. While the love-making proceeds the pirates return, and a most laughable scene, which is likely to be received with the greatest favour by London audiences takes place. The "rovers of the sea" make offers of marriage to the whole of the young ladies, requesting them in a body, or rather in their several bodies, to become "pirates' brides;" but the Major-General appears on the scene, and attempts to save his children by declaring himself an orphan, being aware that the pirates have taken a solemn vow never to injure an orphan. The Major-General's effort is successful, and his daughters are permitted to retire. So ends the first act, the opera being, like its lively predecessors, in two. The second opens in the ruins of an ancient chapel, where the Major-General goes every night as an act of penance for the "awful crammer" he has told the pirates as to his being an orphan. His daughters are endeavouring to console him, while Frederick informs him that he has determined to exterminate the pirates. When Frederick is left alone the Pirate King and the nurse emerge from the ruins, and the latter informs him that, owing to his refusing her, she has disclosed the secret of his birth, which was that he was born in leap-year, and on the 29th day of February, and that, therefore, in the ordinary course of things instead of his being twenty-one years of age, he was only a little over five years; and, that consequently, the term of his apprenticeship would not expire until the year 1940. Seeing that he was in duty bound to return to his pirate life, he discloses the fact that the Major-General was not an orphan; whereupon the Pirate King swears to take the old man's life, and shortly returns to carry out the threat. But the pirates are met by a body of police, whom they soon put to flight. The Sergeant, however, tells them that their victory will be short-lived, and calls on them to surrender in the name of Queen Victoria, to which the pirates reply by singing the song "Queen Victoria," the magic of whose name is so great that the pirates at once yield, saying they can no longer resist its spell, nor would if they could. Mr D'Oyly Carte's company had been playing *H.M.S. Pinafore* with great success at the Lyceum Theatre, Torquay, where, at the Queen's Hotel, they were entertained at Mr. D'Oyly Carte's expense on Christmas Day. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, January 4, 1880; Issue 2154.]

THE THEATRES

The performance of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new comic opera at Paignton on Tuesday last attracted an audience which, under the circumstances, may be said to have been considerable. Forty-seven persons in all attended this curious "first night," or about sufficient to fill one row of stalls at Covent Garden Theatre. It may interest some readers to learn that the total money paid for seats on the occasion amounted to 3*l.* The musical score having only arrived in England on the previous day it was not possible that the interpretation it received could be entirely satisfactory; but the company which had come over from Torquay for the purpose are a very efficient little troupe, well known in provincial towns as Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Pinafore Company; and the whole of the music and words were got through with creditable success. From a cable message just received from New York we learn that "The Pirates of Putney" [*sic.*] was produced under every advantage, and with complete success, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre on Wednesday night, and has since been played to crowded audiences. Its first performance in London will await the return to England of Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Sullivan. It is expected to take place at Easter. [*Daily News* (London, England), Monday, January 5, 1880; Issue 10519.]