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Shelford Walsh.

OPERATICS

OR

HOW TO PRODUCE AN OPERA

WITH

NUMEROUS GILBERTIAN AND OTHER
ANECDOTES

BY

SHELFORD WALSH

(Coach to the principal Operatic Societies in the United Kingdom)

IN PAPER COVER, 1/- ; OR, CLOTH, 1/6

Liverpool :

LITTLEBURY BROS., 3 CROSSHALL STREET

London :

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LTD.

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INTRODUCTION.



THERE being so many amateur Operatic Societies at present in existence in the United Kingdom, it has occurred to me that a small book on the working of such Societies might prove useful and of interest.

With this object in view I have written this little work, which I have arranged in three parts—Part I. dealing with the formation and management of Operatic Societies ; Part II. comprising many personal incidents and anecdotes ; and Part III. containing a small collection of the many witticisms attributed to that prince of humorists W. S. Gilbert.

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PART I.



THE
FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT
OF AN
OPERATIC SOCIETY.

*If you wish in the world to advance,
Your merits you're bound to enhance,
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!*

RUDDIGORE, Act I.

AMATEUR Operatic Societies are commendable institutions for many reasons. They provide recreation for young people in the winter evenings, they bring out latent musical and dramatic talent which otherwise would remain dormant, and above all they help to raise funds for local charitable institutions.

In most of our cities and towns these Societies already exist, but in many places they are little known. For the benefit

therefore of those who may purpose starting such Societies, I will in the first place point out the *modus operandi*.

Should a few musical friends think the formation of an Operatic Society advisable and feasible, the first thing to be done is to appoint the most energetic and suitable person to act as honorary secretary *pro tem.*, and to instruct him to write to those persons of the neighbourhood whom it may be thought desirable to have as members, inviting them to attend a meeting for the discussion of the proposal. We will presume that the meeting decides to start a Society forthwith, and that certain ladies and gentlemen have been invited to become active and honorary members thereof. It will then be necessary to call another full meeting of the members in order to appoint the following officers of the Society, viz., a president, secretary, treasurer, musical conductor, stage-manager, acting-manager, and a committee, and to decide whom from amongst the influential persons of the neighbourhood shall be requested to become vice-presidents of the Society.

The committee so appointed (including the *ex-officio* officers) should without delay elect

a sub-committee to draw up the rules of the Society.*

The rules having been settled by the sub-committee, they ought to be submitted first to the full committee for confirmation and approval, and then to the whole of the members for adoption. The newly-appointed honorary secretary should be instructed by the committee to apply for affiliation to the National Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Association, as the Society will thus obtain a better *locus standi* in the operatic world, besides deriving certain benefits and advantages thereby. The honorary secretary of the Association is Mr. Howard J. Hadley, "Woodcote," Albert Road, Worcester.

The Society now being duly formed the next important step is to decide upon the opera to be first produced, and in doing so great care should be taken not to select too difficult a work for the initial effort—also to choose one which will suit the "material" at disposal, so as not to get *square pegs in round holes*. The well-known humorous and melodious Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas are undoubtedly better suited to amateurs

* A list of suggested rules will be found in an Appendix at the end of this work.

than any others, and a Society would be well advised to perform them in the following order: "Trial by Jury," "H.M.S. Pinafore," "The Pirates of Penzance," "Patience," "Iolanthe," "The Mikado," "The Gondoliers," "Princess Ida," and "The Yeomen of the Guard." Neither "The Sorcerer," "Ruddigore," "Utopia Limited," or "The Grand Duke" are at all suitable for amateurs, besides being less attractive than any of those named. Therefore, when the nine works I have mentioned have been performed by the Society some of the following might be taken up with advantage, viz.: "Les Cloches de Corneville" (Planquette), "Erminie" (Jakobowski), "La Mascotte" (Audran), "Dorothy" (Cellier), "Falka" (Chassaigne), "Vicar of Bray" (Edward Solomon), "La Fille du Tambour Major" (Offenbach), "His Excellency" (F. Osmond Carr), "The Mountebanks" (Cellier), or "Cigarette" (a charming military opera by the late J. Haydn Parry).*

The selection and cast of your opera having been made by the committee, the rehearsals must now commence. The honorary secretary should at once send out notices to all the active members of the Society, informing

* See Appendix.

them of the opera selected, and of the day, hour and place for the first musical rehearsal. It will be advisable to rehearse the ladies and gentlemen of the company separately at first, and for that reason the ladies should be called together one clear hour before the gentlemen. Promptly at the time fixed for the attendance of the ladies, the honorary musical conductor should be present, for punctuality in a conductor and stage-manager should be rigidly observed. When the ladies have been rehearsed in their separate chorus work and the gentlemen have arrived, the conductor should take up the double chorus numbers. After releasing the ladies, the separate male chorus work should be practised. Some ten or twelve of these musical rehearsals will be necessary before any stage "business" can be attempted, for until the music is perfectly mastered by everyone without the use of their scores it is useless for a stage-manager or coach to commence giving instruction in any stage work. The principals should sing all their numbers connected with the chorus at all chorus rehearsals, but their separate solos, duets, trios, quartettes, etc., must be practised at specially arranged rehearsals for principals only.

Before the stage-manager begins his work he should make out his prompt book. In doing this he must have the libretto of the opera interleaved with blank sheets, and then write in minutely all the "business," together with the positions of the principals and chorus on the stage, and their entrances, crosses and exits; also draw diagrams of the several scenes, mark down all changes in the lights, and note all calls and properties used throughout the opera. He can then attend his first rehearsal with the plan for production thoroughly mastered. Before the arrival of the members at rehearsal, he should mark out the stage with the several entrances and exits, and so enable the artistes to become perfectly acquainted with the stage setting. This can be done by placing chairs where the flats, doorways, etc., would be. The stage-manager should endeavour to rehearse with all "*props*" at each practice.

During the first five or six of the "business" rehearsals a stage-manager should have complete control of affairs, for the conductor must expect the music (however perfectly learnt) to be "*at sixes or at sevens*" during this period. The stage-manager should be patient and painstaking, yet exceedingly strict; and on all

matters of stage business his word must be law. He is responsible for the production, and therefore the opera should be played according to his directions. Unlimited patience and extreme firmness are two necessary qualifications for a good stage-manager. A professional coach is to be recommended, as he not only has the special knowledge and ability, but has also more authority and a firmer hand with the members taking part than a local gentleman can possibly possess.

Should the stage-manager think a lady or gentleman chosen for a principal character incompetent to play his or her part he must report the matter to the committee of the Society. It is an unpleasant duty, but "*we all have unpleasant duties to discharge at times,*" and "*painful though that duty be, to shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee!*"

The "business" of the chorus should be rehearsed separately in the same way as the music; that is to say, the ladies of the chorus should be trained first, then the double chorus work, and afterwards the male chorus. The stage-manager, after getting the members into position on the stage, must explain to them clearly what is the business of the scene, and show them how it is to be performed. Great

pains should be taken in drilling the chorus, as smart chorus work is always most effective. While the chorus have been rehearsing, the principals should be coached from time to time in such parts of their work as is connected with chorus, so that when the chorus are fairly conversant with their part the principals' work can then be incorporated. When the principals and chorus are being rehearsed together, the former should be taught their separate work unconnected with chorus, and then during the last few rehearsals this separate work of the principals should be introduced and the whole opera taken right through at each rehearsal. At the last two rehearsals every possible encore must be thoroughly rehearsed to prevent any hitch therewith at a public performance.

It is advisable that at least two full rehearsals with the band be arranged before the first public performance, and the conductor must see that all likely encores are duly marked in the band parts and properly rehearsed by the members of the orchestra.

One full-dress rehearsal should be given at the theatre or hall with full band, costumes, wigs, make-up, scenery, "*props*" and lights exactly in all respects as at a public per-

formance. The artistes will thus become accustomed to their dresses and the stage setting, and also familiar with their entrances and exits. The stage-manager should always ring up punctually to time, and make the waits between the acts as short as possible.

* * *

Now a word or two as to rights, costumes, wigs, make-up, scenery, "*props*," lights, and other matters.

The fees to be paid for the performance of an opera vary considerably. For instance, it may be necessary to pay as much as ten guineas each performance for the rights of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, and as little as a couple of guineas for one of the French operas. It depends also to a great extent upon the size of the town, and the holding capacity of the theatre or hall, as to the fees charged.

* * *

The dressing of an opera is a very large item in the expenditure; yet it is most necessary that the opera be well and correctly mounted. Smart and clean costumes greatly enhance the prospects of success. There are several costumiers who can supply correct and

excellent dresses for any of the well-known comic operas.

* * *

To have a good make-up is most important; in fact, quite as necessary as it is to be correctly dressed for a part. It is a mistake for amateurs to attempt a "make-up" after their own ideas, for in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it ends in utter failure. We all know "make-up" is an Art (with a capital A) which cannot be learnt in a day; it requires a great deal of practice. Most theatrical costumiers supply wigs and send out competent men to "make up," so that when arranging for the hire of dresses it would be advisable to get estimates to include the hire of wigs and the services of one or more persons to "make up." Considerable expense will thus be saved.

* * *

First-class theatres usually have the correct scenery in stock for the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and can also mount most of the other comic operas sufficiently well. Yet it often happens that the theatre or hall at which a performance is given has no appropriate stock scenery for the production. It then becomes necessary to hire, or to have some specially

painted for the occasion. When hiring scenery care should be taken to send to the scenic artists the proper measurements of the cloths and flats required. If the theatre management are providing the scenery it will be necessary to forward to the lessee or resident manager a full and descriptive scene plot at least two or three weeks before the date of the performance.

* * *

Many of the properties used in the performance of an opera can perhaps be easily found by the local stage-manager, whilst others may be supplied by the costumiers or management of the theatre respectively. Information should be sent to the lessee or resident manager with a property plot, placing an asterisk opposite those "*props*" which he will not be required to find. On the nights of the performances the stage-manager should check every "*prop*" before he rings up, and he should also see that each artiste has his or her particular "*prop*" before making their entrances.

* * *

The subject of lights is one which cannot be gone into fully in a small work of this kind.

One thing, however, to be borne in mind is : always have the stage well lighted, even if the Society has to pay for an extra limelight more than allowed by the theatre contract. Care should be taken to send in the gas and lime plots to the lessee or manager a few days before the opening night.

* * *

“ Tips ” are a necessary evil in all walks of life, and there is no exception in stageland. The stage staff can do much to make or mar a production. They may prolong the intervals unnecessarily by taking unlimited time to strike and set the scenes between the acts, whereby an audience will become irritated. A little gratuity in this direction goes a long way, and is never money ill spent.

* * *

Most Societies economise too much in the matter of advertising, being under the impression that the members of the Society will advertise the performance sufficiently well. This is certainly a great mistake, for an amateur performance requires advertising and booming quite as much as a professional one. Friends may fairly well fill the circle and stalls, but those who occupy the popular

parts of the house and help to fill the coffers are reached through a well-billed show. A few pounds extra spent in this direction will always bring in a good return—

“Of that there is no manner of doubt—no probable, possible shadow of doubt—no possible doubt whatever.”

PART II.



PERSONAL INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES.

*I've jest and joke
And quip and crank,
For lowly folk
And men of rank.*

* * *

I have a pretty turn for anecdote.

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD, Act I.

A GENTLEMAN playing the part of Strephon in one of my productions of "Iolanthe" was most incompetent, and amateurish in the extreme. On the opening night he had just spoken the lines "What's to become of my upper half when I've buried my lower half I really don't know," when one of the stage staff, standing near in the "prompt" entrance, dryly remarked: "I should cut it up for sausages if I were you, old fellow!"

The plaintiff in "Trial by Jury" in her opening solo sings as follows :

O'er the season vernal,
 Time may cast a shade ;
 Sunshine, if eternal,
 Makes the roses fade :
 Time may do his duty ;
 Let the thief alone—
 WINTER HATH A BEAUTY,
 THAT IS ALL HIS OWN.

By a curious coincidence, in one of my productions of the above cantata, a lady playing the plaintiff and a gentleman acting as conductor were a Mr. and Mrs. Winter. It can be imagined how heartily everyone enjoyed the joke when she sang the first time at rehearsal "Winter hath a beauty, that is all his own."

* * *

An unfortunate *contretemps* occurred to a gentleman playing the Lord Chancellor in "Iolanthe" one evening. The lady enacting the title-rôle was half-way through the beautiful ballad in the second act, and the Lord Chancellor was apparently much moved by her pleading, when a titter was heard throughout the house. No one behind the scenes could understand the cause, as Iolanthe was

rendering the song extremely well. We, however, ascertained afterwards that his lordship had worn "*a dicky*" instead of a dress shirt, and that, the button hole having burst, the "*dicky*" had gradually slipped down, exposing the flannel shirt which he wore underneath.

* * *

A bank manager, who was an exceptionally clever character actor, was cast for the part of Gaspard in "*Les Cloches de Corneville*." "*Rising early in the morning*," he would sally forth to rehearse his part whilst meandering along the country roads. One morning he was rehearsing with full dramatic action the miser's scene in Act II. of the opera when he heard a piercing shriek, and, turning, saw a woman, who had been cleaning the doorstep of a wayside cottage, rush wildly indoors crying out "*Murder! Murder! He's mad! He's mad!*"

* * *

Amateurs sometimes get very excited on the stage. A gentleman who was once impersonating a pirate was so carried away in the combat scene between the police and pirates in "*The Pirates of Penzance*" that in the encounter he cut off the end of a

policeman's finger. The poor "*copper*," who had only a truncheon with which to protect himself, being placed "*hors de combat*," was obliged to leave the boards to have his bleeding finger attended to. Indeed, "*A policeman's lot is not a happy one!*"

* * *

During the duet "None shall part us from each other" in "*Iolanthe*," the buckle of Strephon's knee breeches became entangled in the lace on Phyllis' skirt. After vain endeavours to part from each other whilst singing the duet they made their exit still linked together, to the amusement of a vast audience.

* * *

In "*The Gondoliers*" (or as the Americans termed it "*The gone dollars*") the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro, their daughter Casilda, and their attendant Luiz are rowed along the Grand Canal in a gondola to the Piazzetta steps of Venice. One evening, during an amateur performance of the opera, the wheels of the truck on which the gondola was placed stuck when in full view of the audience, which necessitated the ducal party having to alight and walk along the canal to the steps. The

effect was most ludicrous, and very humiliating for the Duke and Duchess.

* * *

Whilst rehearsing "Carefully on tiptoe stealing," in "H.M.S. Pinafore," a conductor pointed out to the chorus that there was a pause after the line "They're right, it was the cat." "Yes," said one of the jolly Jack-tars, "evidently a cat's-paws!"

* * *

In the first act of "The Mikado" (as all Gilbert and Sullivan students are aware) Ko-Ko endeavours to persuade Nanki-Poo to be beheaded handsomely at the hands of the public executioner. Pointing out the benefits thereof, he continues, "Then, when it's all over, general rejoicings, and a display of fireworks in the evening—you won't see them, but they'll be there all the same." During the dialogue between the two in the second act, just before the arrival of the Mikado, one of the Ko-Kos was insisting on Nanki-Poo fulfilling his contract to die in the way desired when a fuse from one of the limelight perches began hissing and buzzing very loudly. Ko-Ko (who was a most ready comedian) thereupon turned to Nanki-Poo, and with perfect *sang-froid* said, "Here, Nanki-Poo, my boy, hurry up,

they're letting off your fireworks before the time!" This was vociferously applauded by the audience.

* * *

A gentleman playing Wilfred Shadbolt, in "The Yeomen of the Guard," said to Phœbe: "Another brother! Are there any more of them? Produce them all at once, and let me know the worst!" And then adding "Let 'em all come!" when that popular expression was on every tongue. A descent from Gilbert indeed!

* * *

Another *gag*. Some time after the return of the Imperial Yeomanry from South Africa, I produced Audran's charming opera "La Mascotte" for an Operatic Society. During the chorus at the conclusion of "The Attractive Girl" in Act III., Fiametta, disguised as a strolling minstrel, goes round the stage collecting from the soldiers. Directly the military had made their exit, King Laurent (who was also disguised) turned to Fiametta, and the following dialogue between them took place:

King Laurent: What's the take?

Fiametta (looking in her tambourine):
Ninepence.

King Laurent : What ! A battalion ! A regiment ! An army on full pay, and only ninepence ? Why, these must be some of the unpaid Yeomanry !

* * *

A certain retired tradesman in a Midland agricultural town, who was a well-known local Malaprop, prided himself on his knowledge of theatrical matters. On a certain occasion, when the late D'Oyly Carte's provincial company visited the town with "The Gondoliers," he was heard to remark in the bar of one of the leading hotels that he had enjoyed the performance of "The Chandeliers" very much indeed !

* * *

A propos of the above, a maid servant in the employ of a member of an amateur Operatic Society, when asked what she thought of the performance of "The Pirates of Penzance" by the Society, exclaimed, "Oh, mum, it was splendid, and quite as good as the *professionals* !"

* * *

Two amateurs were making themselves up in a dressing room. One, representing an old man with lines all over his face, turned to the other and said, "Jack, old fellow, what do you think of that for a good make-up ?" Jack

replied, " Well, if you are supposed to represent Sir Clapham Junction it is deuced clever, old boy ! "

* * *

One evening after rehearsal, at a neighbouring hostelry the conversation turned upon the question as to which was the *chef-d'œuvre* of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. After some discussion a gentleman who had imbibed rather freely, and who had listened to the expression of divers opinions, said, " Well, gentlemen, I think the two best of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas are ' Pirates of the Guard ' and ' Yeomen of Penzance. ' " Like his drinks, a little bit mixed forsooth.

* * *

It is remarkable what curious printers' errors appear sometimes in playbills. A certain Society played " Patience " *in aid of a deserving charity*—to wit, the local infirmary—and the only words on the rough proof of the day bill which were set in large, bold type were " INFIRMARY " and " PATIENCE " (Patients).

* * *

It is extraordinary how actors (especially those playing small parts) mix up their lines on the boards. Like the merry mummer who

had to say, "Aside, my lord, and let the coffin pass," and in his anxiety said "Aside, my lord, and let the parson cough," one of the comedians playing in J. Haydn Parry's military opera "Cigarette" said, "Still, I'll bet a bunch of socks to a pair of watercress there's more in it than that," when he should have said, "Still, I'll bet a pair of socks to a bunch of watercress."

* * *

A very ludicrous incident once occurred during a rehearsal of "Dorothy." At the finale of the second act, one of the huntsmen brings on the foxhounds in a leash through the centre doors at the back. In the rehearsal room there were two swing doors in the proper position, but when they were opened, to the astonishment of all, in place of the dogs (which of course were not used until the dress rehearsal) appeared two members of the Society on all fours, and strings round their necks, led by the huntsman, who looked as stolid as possible. Peals of laughter greeted their entry.

* * *

"Patience" had been produced the night before, and the boys of the company were gathered together in a well-known hostelry,

chatting over the local criticisms and opinions on the show. The part of the Duke had been played by a local tenor who stood about 5 ft. 2 in. at the most, even with the elevators worn to increase his height. During the conversation he observed, "WE dragoons knocked 'em last night, boys, with our evolutions," when one of the party laughingly exclaimed, "WE dragoons indeed! Yes, you certainly are a '*wee*' dragoon, old man!" He is known among his acquaintances as "the *wee* dragoon" to this day.

* * *

It is very easy to make a blunder on the stage. In the trio "The criminal cried," in the second act of "The Mikado," Ko-Ko sings "With a frightful, frantic, fearful frown, I bared my big right arm." A left-handed Ko-Ko, however, during a performance of the opera, bared his big left arm instead of his right and yet no one in the audience apparently noticed the error.

* * *

Another anecdote on the same. The gentleman playing the character named had such a very thin arm that when he "bared his big right arm" a countryman in the pit

exclaimed, "Lor! luk at 'is arm, why it's no bigger nor a babby's leg!" Result, an encore.

* * *

In the second act of "The Gondoliers" Marco and Giuseppe have to meet His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro Limited. Marco on one occasion made his entry alone, Giuseppe meanwhile unconcernedly having a bottle of stout in the green room. A stage wait was imminent, but the Duke was equal to the occasion and saved the situation by remarking to Marco, "Eh! Shouldn't your majesty be a double event"? A big double event having come off that afternoon at a race meeting in the town, the audience enthusiastically greeted the remark, and by the time the applause had subsided Giuseppe had been called and was ready for his entrance.

* * *

During the full-dress rehearsal of an opera, written and composed by two local gentlemen of a well-known manufacturing town in the North of England, one of the artistes playing a baritone part was requested by the stage manager to run through the encore to one of his songs. The singer most humorously replied, "Well, perhaps I may as well, for it's about the only chance I shall ever get!"

A conductor named King was rehearsing the male chorus of a certain Society in "The Pirates of Penzance" one evening, but they sang the opening chorus in such a slovenly manner that he had to remonstrate with them, saying, "Gentlemen, the words of this chorus are 'Pour, O King, the pirate sherry, Fill, O King, the pirate glass,' but, as you are singing it, it sounds to me more like 'Poor Old King' than 'Pour, O King,' and I assure you, gentlemen, I don't need your sympathy."*

* * *

Ralph Rackstraw in the finale of the first act of "H.M.S. Pinafore" points a pistol to his head and sings "For Josephine I fall," when Josephine rushes on the poop deck singing "Ah! Stay your hand! I love you!" But, alas, one night Ralph forgot his "*prop*," so in his dilemma seized a piece of rope which happened to be lying on the stage and, winding it round his neck, sang "For Josephine I die!" The situation was thus saved.

* * *

A propos of the foregoing and the resource-

* The words of this chorus were altered by Gilbert to "Pour, oh pour the pirate sherry, Fill, oh fill the pirate glass," but they still remain in the score as "Pour, O King."

fulness of some amateurs, a certain "Ko-Ko" one evening forgot his Japanese money, which had to be given to Pooh-Bah in Act II. of "The Mikado." He, however, happened to have in his belt the certificate written on rice paper, which later in the act had to be handed to the Mikado. Crumpling half of this up in his hand, he showed it to Pooh-Bah, saying, "It will be a ready-money transaction, and you will be paid in notes!"

* * *

Some years ago I was playing the part of Gobo in "Les Cloches de Corneville" for an Operatic Society. In the third act before Gobo's dance one of the chorus girls should pull off his wig as she runs off the boards, but the young lady chosen for this part was evidently so excited that she grabbed off not only the wig but the bald scalp as well. The audience, it is needless to remark, were highly amused as Gobo gave the dance without either.

* * *

The call boy is a necessary evil, especially in amateur performances. In a production of "The Pirates of Penzance" he once neglected to do his duty, and the consequence was that when the pirates in the second act sing, *with-*

out, "A rollicking band of pirates we," there was only one solitary pirate ready in the wings, who therefore warbled on his own account "A rollicking band of pirates *me!*"

* * *

In "La Mascotte" King Laurent XVII. is pursued by aggravating and persistent ill-luck at every turn, and whenever any evil omen appears he requests everyone on the stage to turn round three times to break the spell and thus avoid the catastrophe. In an amateur performance of the opera one of the characters was not ready when he should have made his entry; so after an awkward pause, in which those on the stage looked anxiously into the wings, a galleryite shouted out, "Turn round again three times, guv'nor, and the bloke may come on!"

* * *

A lady playing the title-rôle in "Iolanthe" declined to say the lines "He's extremely pretty, but he's inclined to be stout," because the gentleman taking Strephon was very much on the slim side. She consequently at the first rehearsal substituted the words "not at all stout" for "inclined to be stout," to which the stage-manager strongly objected, and insisted on Gilbert's lines being rendered

strictly to the letter. She at first refused, but finally gave way, saying, "Well, if I must say them I must, but I sha'n't *mean* them!"

* * *

Some curious names are given by the public to those taking part in plays. In "The Mountebanks" Luigi and Giorgio in Act II. are made up as jovial and cadaverous looking monks respectively. One of my Giorgios was humorously dubbed "the fellow with the coffin-dial-no-flowers-by-request face."

* * *

Cries from "*the Gods*" are sometimes most disconcerting. A policeman named Murphy had got into great disfavour in a town in which an amateur performance of "The Pirates of Penzance" was being given. He was like the constable who was said to have arrested "a pair of boots for being tight," as he was always running in some poor beggar for a trivial offence. When the gentleman impersonating the sergeant of police in the opera made his entry, accompanied by the stalwart members of the force, a local gallery wag shouted out, "Hallo! Murphy, who're you after now?" And yet the noble band of "Coppers" maintained that stolid expression which is required in the scene.

A comedian playing Ko-Ko in "The Mikado" was singing that well-known ditty "He's got 'em on the list," and was illustrating in dumb show the line "And apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind" by representing Mr. Balfour playing the fashionable game of golf. When, however, the comedian said "fore," and gave a mighty swipe towards the audience, a brawny tyke in the pit shouted out "Good old Jackson!" evidently under the impression that the popular Yorkshire cricketer of that name was being impersonated in the act of hitting one to the boundary for four.

* * *

An ambitious amateur who longed to soar "*to a height that few can scale*" was cast for the small character of Postiche, the barber, in "Olivette." Part of his business consisted in dressing the hair of one Marvejol, a bald-headed old *roué*. On the eve of the performance the barber uttered a dire threat to "*queer the show*" unless the stage-manager allowed him to introduce into his part the line "I have seen better hair on a piece of fourpenny bacon than you have on your head, sir." There being no understudy for the barber, he had to be coaxed with some difficulty.

Gilbert says "Things are seldom what they seem, skim milk masquerades as cream." A member of the force in "The Pirates of Penzance" stuffed his tunic out at the chest with a many coloured cricketing blazer, but omitted to tighten his belt sufficiently, with the result that after a vigorously contested combat scene his false chest slipped down, showing a portion of the blazer under his tunic.

* * *

Bits of "*business*" originate in a peculiar way. At a rehearsal of "The Mikado" a lady taking the part of Katisha had concluded her lines ending "As for my circulation, it is the largest in the world." When Ko-Ko came down the stage and said to her "And yet he fled" she hit him sharply on the top of the head with her fan, causing him to suddenly flop. This caused a roar amongst those present at the rehearsal. I have since introduced this piece of "*business*" into every production of the opera and it has never failed to raise a good laugh.

* * *

The chairman of a certain Operatic Society at the conclusion of their week's performances proposed a vote of thanks to those who had

taken part, and referred to me as "coach" in the following words:

"Gentlemen, at the present day we hear a lot about motors, automobiles, and other speedy vehicles, but for my own part I much prefer a good, sound, reliable stage coach, which we possess in our old friend, who has so successfully piloted us through another production."

* * *

At the conclusion of a production of "Iolanthe," a magnificent silver reading lamp was presented to me, on which was inscribed the following slightly altered quotation from the opera:

When tempests wreck thy bark
 (We hope they won't)
 And all is drear and dark
 (Then light this lamp)
 If thou should'st need an ark,
 We (in —) will give thee one.

Some day I may call upon them to fulfil their promise. Who knows?

* * *

Here are a few amusing cuttings from provincial papers:

"The passers along the streets have had a novel spectacle provided for them this week. As some joker put it, the performance of

‘Iolanthe’ was heralded by a parade of ‘influenzial fairies.’ It was curious to see decrepit yet light-hearted old men wobbling along the principal thoroughfares of our city, bedecked with vari-coloured wings, advertising the performance of the above opera by the local Operatic Society.”

* * *

“The young gentlemen of — who for the nonce assumed the garb and mannerisms of youthful clerics last week at the Theatre Royal may be interested to learn that the real Vicar of Bray is just now in want of a curate. Here is the chance for an appointment for one of the half-dozen or so of the black-coated ones who have been dancing attendance upon the stage representative of that historical personage, and seeking relaxation from clerical study by flirting with the lady teachers, and casting sly glances at the ladies of the *corps de ballet*. Mr. — and his colleagues may be able to judge of their qualifications for the post if they peruse the terms of the advertisement which appears in the *Church Times* :

“ ‘The Vicar of Bray, near Maidenhead, requires an experienced and active

curate. Preacher, visitor, musical, sound Churchman ; graduate preferred. Schools. E.P. Stipend £160. References. Address Rev. C. A. Raymond.'

"Now there's no doubt as to the musical acquirements of the brethren in question ; nor as to their being active and well able to perform the duties of visitor ; to say nothing of their familiarity with the Eastward or any other position after the drilling they have had at the hands of Mr. Shelford Walsh. One or two might have qualms of conscience as to the soundness of their Churchmanship ; the schools to which they have been accustomed are not, perhaps, those of the Maidenhead type ; and if they are not experienced enough at present they could graduate in that line. But who among them will claim to be a preacher ? Ah ! there's the rub ! Maidenhead is a delightful spot, and £160 a year not so bad in times as they are just now ; so that the Vicar of Bray ought not to be long without a suitable man."

* * *

But hurry up and see them,
 All you local connoisseurs,
 Go and try these people's "Patience"—
 They will not, I think, try yours.

TO THE LADIES OF THE AMATEUR OPERA
COMPANY.

Sweet fairy voices of our northern town,
Whose every note now lingers in our ear ;
Entrancing grace, as of the fairies' sphere,
That did each motion with its fellow crown,
Now swift, now slow, now gently up and down,
Thou Iolanthe, Philomel's fair Peer,
Most regal Queen and Peri-chorus clear,
Whose charms in ecstasy each sense would drown
While you such rare enchantments did display,
With melody of soft and subtle dream
In measured phantasy of fairy-land ;
How all, as Chancellor and Phyllis gay,
And Lords themselves did long and happiest deem,
To be enthralled within your lovely band !

* * *

A LOST LETTER : WHO WILL CLAIM IT ?

The following letter was apparently by some strange mischance enclosed in the wrong envelope and dropped into the *Echo* letter-box instead of being despatched through the post to some lady friend. As, however, they were unable to ascertain who was the writer, or for whom it was intended, the Editor decided to publish it in the hope that it might thereby come under the notice of the

rightful owner, to whom it would be restored immediately her identity was disclosed :

“ MY DEAR SOPHIE,—At last it is over, and I can again breathe freely. Such an anxious time as I have had lately you can never conceive. What with rehearsals of the music, of the walking, of the grouping, the posing, and the—ahem!—embracing, I have had so much to study and remember that, as the evening for the first performance approached, I became almost as nervous as a kitten lest I should forget my words, or do something wrong, and be blamed for spoiling the general effect; and then, of course, I should have collapsed entirely under the frown of our stage-manager, who is an exceedingly nice gentleman, though very strict. But I am happy to tell you, dearest, that all passed off beautifully, and this, as you may suppose, was some reward for the trouble we had all taken in our respective parts. Indeed, I feel quite proud of my success, and so do Ma and Pa; and dear Tom says I looked the best on the stage. So good of the dear boy, is it not? considering that every night it was “*my duty*” as Patience says, to recline gracefully on the arm of one of the dragoons and gaze fondly at him—poor Tom looking on meanwhile

from the stalls. (Mind you, I think, in strict confidence, that this has done more than anything else to bring him up to the scratch—he actually proposed this afternoon, after two long years of hesitancy and flirtation!)

“Of course, dearest, you will expect me to tell you something about the whole thing. Well, as we were all most anxious to be well for the eventful week, and not have to throw up our parts through illness, I think the request made that we should not go to dances or sit up late was pretty generally observed, although it involved, I must say, rather more self-denial than some of us bargained for when we joined the Society. Still, of course, the rehearsals to some extent made up for it. They were at times such fun, as, though we were not allowed to talk, we couldn't resist criticising each other's little mistakes and occasional accidents during the interval. First, we had to learn the music, and in this Mr. —— was most particular, making us go through it over and over again until I could not have forgotten a word or a note of it if I had tried. But each week there was a perceptible improvement, and when we had become fairly efficient we commenced our stage duties. As the love-sick maidens, we had to keep step in walking

slowly and gracefully two and two, look dreadfully doleful, and keep time in striking our imitation harps or cymbals; then we had to gaze adoringly at Mr. Bunthorne, and cling passionately to one another while he read his mystic poem. I had not had much practice at this previously, dear Tom, as I once told you, being always rather stiff and formal in his salutes. But I soon managed to satisfy our stage-manager's requirements in this respect; and when, a little later on in the opera, it became necessary—absolutely necessary, I assure you!—for each one to gaze fondly at her 'scarlet runner' (as some one christened her dragoon), clasp hands, and recline gracefully upon his shoulder, or embrace him with abandon, we all, I thought, managed it very well indeed.

“But the most difficult thing to do, I found, was what is called '*the flop*.' This was in the second act, where the maidens are supposed to be all in love with Mr. Grosvenor, and fall at his feet when he offers to tell them the fable of 'The Magnet and the Churn.' I do not, as you know, dearest, wear my dresses unduly long, or unfashionably tight; yet it was some time before I got thoroughly into the one, two, three of it; and as, of course,

the great thing desired was for the ladies to all go down together this required '*a deal of training.*' One, you sink on your knees; two, fall on your hands; three, raise yourself on your elbows, and look expectantly at Mr. Grosvenor. It was fun, I assure you. It took some practising to do it all at the same moment; but dear Tom says we succeeded admirably, and I noticed that '*the flop*' was applauded every night.

"Naturally we were on the tip-toe of expectation, until the costumes arrived, as to what we were to wear. They were hired for the occasion. As the love-sick maidens, we were all measured for the æsthetic, tinted robes, and I prayed inwardly for a blue. As it happened, my number proved to be the very colour I wanted, and dear Tom says I looked perfectly charming. Between you and me, I think it suited me A1, and you may be sure I had a good look at myself in the glass before taking mine to the theatre. You will have seen by the paper I sent you each evening how enthusiastic the audience was. We all had to be made up a little, and in my case it was a decided improvement, for, as you know, dearest, '*I'm not as bilious as I look.*' '*Patience*' was so jolly that I shall

hope to take part in the next opera, whatever is selected. Meanwhile, dearest Sophie, I accept your congratulations in advance,

“And, with my best love, remain as ever,

“Yours most sincerely,

“C———N.”

* * *

“Mr. Walsh is theatrical to the finger tips without looking it in the least. They say he has loved the stage from his cradle. He must be like the boy I have heard of who used to go out four or five miles to meet the circus people, and felt that he had attained the acme of bliss when he entered the city riding on the shafts of one of the circus carriages, or—glory piled upon glory—was permitted to figure in the procession. Perhaps he was that boy.”

PART III.



WITTICISMS ATTRIBUTED TO MR. W. S. GILBERT.

*Here's a man of jollity,
Jibe, joke, jollify!*

* * *

*I ply my craft
And know no fear,
I aim my shaft
At prince or peer.*

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD, Act I.

A GENTLEMAN of the chorus at the Savoy, being selected for a minor part in a new production, made an entrance at rehearsal in a most exaggerated manner, but was instantly checked by Mr. Gilbert, who said, "Please don't enter like that; we don't want any 'comic-man' business here." "I beg your pardon," the chorus gentleman replied, "I thought you meant the part to be funny." "Yes, so I do, but I don't want you to tell the audience

you're the funny man; they'll find it out, if you are, quickly enough." The actor entered again with a hurricane-try-to-beat-record style of walk, when Gilbert said, "No, no, this is not a walking gentleman's part, and as it is only a short one too there is no necessity to hurry through it like that."

* * *

After a dinner at a swell hotel in London at which Mr. Gilbert had been present, a gentleman standing in the hall, mistaking Gilbert for one of the waiters, said, "Waiter, call me a four-wheeler." Gilbert, looking him squarely in the face, replied, "You're a four-wheeler, no one would ever call you hansom (handsome)."

* * *

A gentleman met Mr. Gilbert outside the stage-door of the Lyric Theatre at 3.30 p.m., the hour fixed for the rehearsal of a benefit performance of "Trial by Jury," and congratulated him on his punctuality. "Don't," he replied, "I have lost more time through being punctual than through anything else!"

* * *

At a West End "at home" a well-known pianist was playing Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" when a lady seated next to

Mr. Gilbert asked him who was the composer of the piece being played. On his replying "Mendelssohn," she enquired whether he was composing still. "No," said the clever humorist, "he is decomposing now!"

* * *

A near neighbour of Mr. Gilbert is Mr. Blackwell, of Crosse and Blackwell fame. Mr. Blackwell preserves pheasants, and recently some of Gilbert's men made an incursion upon Mr. Blackwell's property, with dire results to the game. Mr. Blackwell made a vigorous protest, and received the following letter from Gilbert in reply:

"DEAR MR. BLACKWELL,

"I am exceedingly sorry that my men should have damaged your preserves. With apologies for using the word 'preserves.'

"Believe me,

"Most sincerely yours,

"W. S. GILBERT."

Mr. Blackwell will no doubt "*preserve*" that letter.

* * *

At a dress rehearsal during the revival of "The Mikado" at the Savoy Theatre, Mr. Gilbert, standing in the centre of the theatre,

suddenly called out, "There is a gentleman in the left group not holding his fan correctly." The stage-manager came forward, carefully scanned the group, and then addressing Gilbert said, "There is one gentleman absent through illness to-day, sir." "Ah!" said the author, gravely, "that is not the gentleman I am referring to."

* * *

Mr. Gilbert objects to his business being altered or anything interpolated without his consent.* He happened to look in at the Savoy one evening during the run of "The Mikado," and saw Miss Jessie Bond push Grossmith whilst they were kneeling side by side with their heads on the floor, which caused Grossmith to roll completely over. On meeting the comedian behind the scenes

* Mr. George Edwardes, of the Gaiety, in an interview in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, said: "Mr. Gilbert used to polish his work to the minutest degree, and then he would absolutely refuse to have it altered in any way. . . . I think that sometimes Mr. Gilbert would have found it better to alter and experiment. This might have saved a fine work like 'Ruddigore.'"

On this, the famous writer characteristically remarks in a letter to a contemporary: "Mr. Edwardes is quite right in supposing that (after having polished up my work to the minutest degree) I have not been in the

after the performance, Gilbert "*most politely*" asked him if he would mind omitting that piece of business. "Certainly, if you wish it," said Grossmith, "but I always get an enormous laugh by it." "So you would if you sat down on a pork pie!" replied Gilbert.

* * *

Mr. Gilbert sometimes makes an artiste feel very small. At a rehearsal of "H.M.S. Pinafore" an actor, after having vainly endeavoured many times to carry out Gilbert's instructions, was requested by the author to try again. The actor, who was exceedingly conceited, lost his temper and said, "No, sir, I object—I have been on the stage quite long enough." "Quite" was Gilbert's pithy reply, and discharged him on the spot.

habit of handing it over to a stage-manager to embellish with alterations and additions at his good pleasure. If I had done so the Savoy pieces would, no doubt, have borne a stronger resemblance to the productions with which Mr. Edwardes' name is associated, but that was not the object I had in view."

But Mr. Gilbert denies that he absolutely refused to allow alterations to be made after production. He did not infrequently receive and act upon suggestions from members of the company, but no alterations were permitted without his sanction.

A young actor, who had been working so hard at rehearsal that he perspired very freely, spoke to Mr. Gilbert at the conclusion, expecting to be complimented on the way he had exerted himself, but was sadly disappointed when Gilbert simply looked at him and remarked, "Dear me, how remarkably well your skin does act!"

* * *

At a recent gathering of literary men a discussion was raised on the well-worn subject of the incomes of bishops, the money those who have gone over to the majority have left behind them, and their benevolent works while living; in the course of which Mr. Gilbert observed that "it is easy enough for bishops to be good on £5,000 a year, but," added the witty author, looking round upon his friends, "we have to be good for nothing, and"—a pause—"some of us are." Very reminiscent of Gilbert's own lines between Jack Point and the Lieutenant in "The Yeomen of the Guard." *

* Jack Point says: "My Lord was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it was considered that one of my jokes was unsuited to His Grace's family circle. In truth, I ventured to ask a poor riddle, sir, Wherein lay the difference between His Grace and poor Jack

In a performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" a certain *prima donna* objected to stand anywhere but in the centre of the stage whilst singing one of Josephine's solos, assuring Mr. Gilbert that she had played in Italian opera, and was accustomed to occupy that position. Gilbert simply said, "Oh! but this is not Italian opera, but only a low burlesque of the worst possible kind."

* * *

The second act of "The Pirates of Penzance" represents the interior of a ruined chapel by moonlight. Towards the end of the opera the daughters of Major-General Stanley rush on the stage in their white *peignoirs* and nightcaps, carrying lighted candles, which is the cue for turning up the lights.

Mr. Gilbert (from the front of the house):
Mr. Seymour! Mr. Seymour!

Seymour (the stage-manager): Yes, sir.

Mr. Gilbert: Don't let them turn the lights on the backcloth.

Point? His Grace was pleased to give it up, sir. And, thereupon, I told him that whereas His Grace was paid £10,000 a year for being good, poor Jack Point was good—for nothing."

Seymour : We have turned up all the lights, sir.

Mr. Gilbert : Then don't do so. As much light in the front as you like. Candles on the stage have a wonderful effect, I know. They would light up the chapel, no doubt ; but even stage candles wouldn't light up the heavens beyond.

* * *

Mr. Gilbert was once invited to a performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" given by a company of titled amateurs who could "*trace their ancestry back to a protoplasmal primordial atomic globule.*" After being presented to the principals of the company by a gilded lordling who played Sir Joseph Porter, the ladies of the chorus (whose summers were of an uncertain number) were introduced to him *en bloc* as "his sisters and his cousins and his aunts." "Oh, I am glad you told me so," said the eminent wit in an aside, "for I should really have taken them all for aunts!"

APPENDIX.



SUGGESTED RULES FOR AN OPERATIC SOCIETY.

1. That the Society be called "the —— Amateur Operatic Society."

2. The object of the Society shall be the production by amateurs of operatic works.

3. The officers of the Society shall consist of a president, honorary secretary, honorary treasurer, honorary musical conductor, honorary stage-manager, and honorary acting or business manager.

4. The affairs of the Society shall be managed by a committee consisting of twelve members (eight gentlemen and four ladies) in addition to the officers of the Society, who are *ex-officio* members of the committee. Five to form a quorum.

5. The officers of the Society and the committee shall be elected at the annual general meeting of the Society to be held in the month of —— in every year. Seven days' notice of such meeting shall be given to each member of the Society. The season shall end on December 31 in each year.

6. The Society shall consist of active and honorary members. Ladies and gentlemen desirous of joining

the Society must be proposed at a rehearsal by one member and seconded by another, and their election shall rest with the committee.

7. Ladies and gentlemen desirous of joining the Society as active members shall be musically examined by the musical conductor before their names are proposed.

8. The subscription shall be an annual one of —— for gentlemen, and —— for ladies, whether honorary or active members, and shall become due on the —— day of —— in every year. Each member shall provide his or her own vocal score and libretto of any opera taken up by the Society.

9. Upon payment of the subscription each member shall be furnished with a card of membership and a copy of the rules of the Society. This card will alone admit to all practices and rehearsals.

10. All subscriptions must be paid in advance to the honorary treasurer. Members who have not paid their subscriptions will not be allowed to take part in a performance or receive tickets for the same.

11. Members who have paid their subscriptions will have the privilege of purchasing reserved seats one week previous to their being offered to the general public.

12. Any member not taking part in a performance will be provided with two reserved seats for each opera produced.

13. No free admission to performances will be given to friends of members. Members only will be allowed to be present at rehearsals.

14. All members desirous of taking part in the performances must express their wish to the honorary secretary within seven days after due notice has been given.

15. Any member who has consented to take part in a performance, but who, having reason subsequently to believe that he or she may not be able to fulfil the engagement, must give the earliest possible notice to the honorary secretary.

16. Members taking part must, in all cases, conform to the regulations of the committee with respect to dress, position, or part, and comply with any instructions given by the stage-manager or conductor.

17. Each work for performance shall be selected by the committee, subject to approval and confirmation by a general meeting of the members.

18. The selection of members of the chorus for each opera, and of the members to take the principal characters and understudies, shall be made by the committee. In the event of any member of the committee being selected to take a principal part, such member shall retire from the meeting during the discussion relating to that part.

19. If the stage-manager or musical conductor report to the committee the inability of any member to take his or her part in any opera, the committee shall have power to suspend such member from taking his or her part in such opera.

20. The practices shall be held at the time and place decided upon by the committee. The honorary

secretary shall keep a register of attendances at rehearsals.

21. Absence from more than four of the practices may disqualify a member from taking part in the work then under preparation, but the committee shall have power to vary this rule in special cases.

22. The cash accounts of the Society shall be properly kept by the treasurer, and shall be audited by two auditors, to be elected annually by the committee at the close of the annual performance. The treasurer shall present his balance sheet, duly audited, to the annual general meeting.

23. Members are not at liberty to order any article in the name of the Society or enter into any engagement on its behalf without the written authority of the committee.

24. The committee shall have power to add to their number the professional stage-manager or "coach" for the time being, for such time as they shall think desirable.

25. Special general meetings may be called at the discretion of the committee or on the requisition, in writing, of any ten members of the Society, stating the object of such meeting. Seven days' notice of all such meetings shall be given to each member of the Society.

26. The committee shall have power to decide on any contingencies or matters not provided for or dealt with by the foregoing rules, its decision in all cases being final. No alteration or amendment of any rule shall take place except at a special general meeting of the Society and after seven days' notice be duly given.

LIST OF OPERAS FOR AMATEURS.



TRIAL BY JURY.

A Cantata written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by
Sir Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

The Learned Judge.
The Plaintiff.
The Defendant.
Counsel for the Plaintiff.
Usher.
Foreman of the Jury.
Associate.
First Bridesmaid.

Chorus of jurymen, bridesmaids, etc.

Scene: A Court of Justice.

*Application for the right of performing the above cantata
must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre,
London.*

H.M.S. PINAFORE;
OR,
THE LASS THAT LOVED A SAILOR.

An entirely original Nautical Comic Opera in two acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.		First Lord of the Admiralty.	
Captain Corcoran	..	Commanding	H. M. S. <i>Pinafore.</i>
Ralph Rackstraw	..	Able seaman.	
Dick Deadeye	.. ..	Able seaman.	
Bill Bobstay	.. ..	Boatswain's mate.	
Bob Becket	.. ..	Carpenter's mate.	
Midshipmite.			
Josephine	.. ..	The Captain's daughter.	
Hebe	.. ..	Sir Joseph's first cousin.	
Little Buttercup	..	A Portsmouth bumboat woman.	

Chorus of First Lord's sisters, his cousins, his aunts, sailors, marines, etc.

Scene: Quarterdeck of H.M.S. *Pinafore*, off
Portsmouth.

Act I. Noon. Act II. Night.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre, London.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE;
OR,
THE SLAVE OF DUTY.

An entirely original Comic Opera in two acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

Major-General Stanley.

The Pirate King.

Samuel His lieutenant.

Frederic The pirate apprentice.

Sergeant of Police.

Mabel

Edith

Kate

Isabel

Ruth

} General Stanley's daughters.

.. .. A pirate maid of all work.

Chorus of pirates, police, and General Stanley's daughters.

Act I. A rocky sea-shore on the coast of Cornwall.

Act II. A ruined chapel by moonlight.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre, London.

PATIENCE ;
OR,
BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE.

An entirely original Æsthetic Opera in two acts.
Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur
Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

Colonel Calverley	}	Officers of Dragoon
Major Murgatroyd		Guards.
Lieut. the Duke of Dunstable		
Reginald Bunthorne	..	A fleshly poet.
Archibald Grosvenor	..	An idyllic poet.
Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor.		
The Lady Angela	}	.. .. Rapturous maidens.
The Lady Saphir		
The Lady Ella		
The Lady Jane		
Patience.. ..	.. ..	A dairy maid.

Chorus of officers of Dragoon Guards and rapturous
maidens.

Act I. Exterior of Castle Bunthorne.

Act II. A glade.

*Application for the right of performing the above opera
must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre,
London.*

IOLANTHE ;
OR,
THE PEER AND THE PERI.

An entirely original Fairy Opera in two acts.
Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur
Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

The Lord Chancellor.

Earl of Mountararat.

Earl Tolloller.

Private Willis Of the Grenadier Guards.

Strephon.. .. An Arcadian shepherd.

Queen of the Fairies.

Iolanthe.. .. A fairy, Strephon's mother.

Celia	}	Fairies.
Leila					
Fleta					

Phyllis An Arcadian shepherdess
and Ward in Chancery.

Chorus of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts,
barons, and fairies.

Act I. An Arcadian landscape.

Act II. Palace Yard, Westminster.

Date, between 1700 and 1882.

*Application for the right of performing the above opera
must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre,
London.*

THE MIKADO ;
OR,
THE TOWN OF TITIPU.

An entirely original Japanese Opera in two acts.
Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur
Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

The Mikado of Japan.

Nanki-Poo	..	..	His son, disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in love with Yum-Yum.
Ko-Ko	..	..	Lord High Executioner of Titipu.
Pooh-Bah	..	..	Lord High Everything Else.
Pish-Tush	..	..	A noble Lord.
Yum-Yum	}	..	Three sisters, wards of Ko-Ko.
Pitti-Sing			
Peep-Bo			
Katisha	..	..	An elderly lady, in love with Nanki-Poo.

Chorus of school girls, nobles, guards and coolies.

Act I. Court-yard of Ko-Ko's official residence.

Act II. Ko-Ko's garden.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre, London.

THE GONDOLIERS;
OR,
THE KING OF BARATARIA.

An entirely original Comic Opera in two acts.
Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir
Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

The Duke of Plaza-Toro	A grandee of Spain.
Luiz	His attendant.
Don Alhambra del Bolero	The Grand Inquisitor.
Marco Palmieri	} .. Venetian gondoliers.
Giuseppe Palmieri	
Antonio	
Francesco	
Giorgio	
Annibale	
Ottavio	
The Duchess of Plaza-Toro.	
Casilda	Her daughter.
Gianetta	} Contadine.
Tessa	
Fiametta	
Vittoria	
Giulia	
Inez	The King's foster-mother.

Chorus of gondoliers and contadine, men-at-arms,
heralds and pages.

Act I. The Piazzetta, Venice.

Act II. Pavilion in the Palace of Barataria.

An interval of three months is supposed to elapse
between Acts I. and II. Date, 1750.

*Application for the right of performing the above opera
must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre,
London.*

PRINCESS IDA;
OR,
CASTLE ADAMANT.

A respectful operatic per-version of Tennyson's "Princess" in three acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

King Hildebrand.

Hilarion His son.

Cyril } Hilarion's friends.
Florian }

King Gama.

Arac } .. His sons.
Guron }
Scynthus }

Princess Ida .. Gama's daughter.

Lady Blanche .. Professor of Abstract Science.

Lady Psyche .. Professor of Humanities.

Melissa Lady Blanche's daughter.

Sacharissa } .. Girl graduates.
Chloe }
Ada }

Chorus of soldiers, courtiers, "girl graduates,"
"daughters of the plough," etc.

Act I. Pavilion in King Hildebrand's Palace.

Act II. Gardens of Castle Adamant.

Act III. Courtyard of Castle Adamant.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre, London.

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD;
OR,
THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID.

An original Opera in two acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Richard Cholmondeley Lieutenant of the Tower.
Colonel Fairfax Under sentence of death.
Sergeant Meryll Of the Yeomen of the
Guard.
Leonard Meryll His son.
Jack Point A strolling jester.
Wilfred Shadbolt.. .. Head jailor and assistant
tormentor.

The Headsman.

First Yeoman.

Second Yeoman.

Third Yeoman.

Fourth Yeoman.

First Citizen.

Second Citizen.

Elsie Maynard A strolling singer.

Phœbe Meryll Sergt. Meryll's daughter.

Dame Carruthers Housekeeper of the Tower.

Kate.. .. Her niece.

Chorus of Yeomen of the Guard, gentlemen,
citizens, etc.

Act I. Tower Green.

Act II. The Tower from the Wharf.

Date, sixteenth century.

*Application for the right of performing the above opera
must be made to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre,
London.*

LES CLOCHES DE CORNEVILLE.

(THE BELLS OF CORNEVILLE.)

An Opéra Comique in three acts by MM. Clairville et Ch. Gabet. English version by H. B. Farnie and R. Reece. Composed by Robert Planquette.

CHARACTERS.

Serpolette	..	..	..	A waif.
Germaine				
Manette				
Jeanne	}			
Gertrude				
Susanne		..	..	Peasant girls.
Catherine				
Marguerite				
Nanette				
The Marquis de Corneville.				
Gaspard	..	..	..	A miser.
The Bailie.				
Grenicheux.				
Gobo	..	..	..	The Bailie's shadow.
Christophe	..	..	..	A cadet.

Chorus of peasants, officers of a corvette, sailors, etc.

Act I. Scene 1—Cliff on the seashore near Corneville.

Scene 2—In the village—country road.

Scene 3—The market place in Corneville.

Act II. A chamber in the Château de Corneville.

Act III. The apple orchard. Period about 1700.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Joseph Williams, Ltd., 32 Great Portland Street, London, W.

ERMINIE.

A Comic Opera in three acts. Words by Harry Paulton and Claxon Bellamy. Composed by Edward Jakobowski.

CHARACTERS.

Marquis de Pontvert.		
Eugene Marcel..	..	The Marquis' secretary.
Vicomte de Brissac.		
Delaunay	.. ..	A young officer.
The Sergeant.		
Dufois .. ..	..	Landlord of "Le Lion d'Or."
Simon .. ..	..	Waiter at "Le Lion d'Or."
Chevalier de Brabazon		Marquis' guest.
Henri }	.. ..	Villagers.
Pierre }		
Ravannes }	.. ..	Two thieves.
Cadeau }		
Erminie de Pontvert ..		The Marquis' daughter.
Princess de Grampon- eaux.		Marquis' guest.
Cerise Marcel .. ..	..	Eugene's sister.
Javotte .. ..	..	Erminie's maid.
Marie .. ..	..	The belle of the village.
Clementine .. ..	..	A flower girl.
Monsieur St. Brice	}	Guests at the château.
,, D'Avrig		
,, De Nailles		

Chorus of villagers, flower girls, soldiers, guests,
waiters, etc.

Act I. The village of Pontvert. The arrest.

Act II. Salon of the château. The betrothal.

Act III. Corridor in the château. The elopement.

Application for the right of performing the above opera should be made to Joseph Williams, Ltd., 32 Great Portland Street, London, W.

DOROTHY.

A Comedy Opera in three acts. Written by B. C. Stephenson. Composed by Alfred Cellier.

CHARACTERS.

Squire Bantam.
 Geoffrey Wilder.
 Harry Sherwood.
 John Tuppitt.
 Lurcher.
 Tom Strutt.
 The Parson.
 Footman.
 Dorothy Bantam.
 Lydia Hawthorne.
 Phyllis Tuppitt.
 Mrs. Privett.
 Lady Betty.

Chorus of hop-pickers, peasants, guests,
 bridesmaids, etc.

Act I. The hop gardens
 Act II. Chanticleer Hall.
 Act III. The round coppice.

The action takes place in the county of Kent in
 October, 1740.

*Application for the right of performing the above opera
 must be made to Chappell & Co., Ltd., 50 New Bond
 Street, London, W*

LA MASCOTTE.

AN Opéra Comique in three acts by MM. Chivot et Duru. English adaptation by H. B. Farnie and R. Reece. Composed by Audran.

CHARACTERS.

Laurent XVII.	..	..	Duke of Piambino.
Pippo	..	..	A shepherd.
Prince Fritellini	..	..	Crown Prince of Pisa.
Rocco	..	..	A farmer.
Matheó	..	..	An innkeeper.
Parafante	..	..	A sergeant.
Tito	}	..	Bohemians.
Marco			
Giuseppe	..	..	A peasant.
Fiametta	..	..	Laurent's daughter.
Bettina	..	..	A country girl "La Mascotte."
Angelo	}	..	Pages.
Liugi			
Beppo			
Carlo			
Leone	}	..	Peasant girls.
Paola			
Francesca			
Antonia	}	..	Bohemians.
Finella			
Bianca	}	..	

Chorus of peasants, soldiers, courtiers, huntsmen,
Bohemians, pages, valets, etc.

Act I. A farmyard.

Act II. Interior of Laurent's palace.

Act III. Bivouac in the forest.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Miss Kate Santley, Royalty Theatre, London.

THE VICAR OF BRAY.

An original English Comic Opera in two acts. Written by Sydney Grundy. Composed by Edward Solomon.

CHARACTERS.

Rev. William Barlow	..	Vicar of Bray.
Rev. Henry Sandford	..	His curate and pupil.
Thomas Merton, Esq.	..	Of Bray Manor—another pupil.
Mr. Bedford Rowe	..	A confidential family solicitor.
John Dory	}	.. .. Students.
Peter Piper		
Samuel Spicer		
First Huntsman.		
Second Huntsman.		
Mrs. Merton	.. ..	A widow.
Nelly Bly	.. ..	A première danseuse.
Cynthia	}	.. .. Lady teachers.
Agatha		
Blanche		
Rose		
Gertrude		
Winifred	.. ..	The Vicar's daughter.

Chorus of huntsmen, students, lady teachers, and ladies of the ballet.

Act I. Low Church. Scene—The village green.

Act II. High Church. Scene—The vicarage grounds.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Joseph Williams, Ltd., 32 Great Portland Street, London, W., or to Mrs. Helen D'Oyly Carte, Savoy Theatre, London.

LA FILLE DU TAMBOUR-MAJOR.

An Opéra Comique in three acts. English adaptation by H. B. Farnie. Composed by Jacques Offenbach.

CHARACTERS.

Stella Reputed daughter of Duc Della Volta.

La Duchesse Della Volta.

Claudine.

The Abbess.

Theresa.

Bianca.

Lorenza.

Monthabor Tambour-Major.

Captaine Robert.

Grioret A drummer.

Le Duc Della Volta.

Le Marquis Bambini.

Clampas Aubergiste.

Gregorio Gardener.

Sergeant.

Chorus of French soldiers, officers, pupils at convent,
Italian nobles, pages, brigands, peasants, etc.

Act I. The convent garden at Biella.

Act II. The Della Volta Palace at Novara.

Act III. Scene 1. The mountain pass near Milan.

Scene 2. Interior of the inn.

Scene 3. The entry of the French into Milan.

Application for the right of performing the above opera should be made to J. B. Cramer & Co., 201 Regent Street, London, W.

THE MOUNTEBANKS.

An entirely original Comic Opera in two acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Alfred Cellier.

CHARACTERS.

Arrostino Annegato	..	Captain of the Tamorras (a secret society)
Giorgio Ravioli	}	.. Members of his band.
Luigi Spaghetti		
Alfredo	.. ..	.. A young peasant, loved by Ultrice, but in love with Teresa.
Pietro	.. ..	.. Proprietor of a troupe of mountebanks.
Bartolo	.. ..	.. His clown.
Elvino di Pasta	..	.. An innkeeper.
Risotto	.. ..	.. One of the Tamorras, just married to Minestra.
Beppo.		
Teresa	.. ..	.. A village beauty, loved by Alfredo and in love with herself.
Ultrice	.. ..	.. In love with, and detested by, Alfredo.
Nita	.. ..	.. A dancing girl.
Minestra	.. ..	.. Risotto's bride.

Chorus of Tamorras, monks, village girls, etc.

Act I. Exterior of Elvino's inn, on a picturesque Sicilian pass—morning.

Act II. Exterior of a Dominican monastery—moonlight. Date, early in the nineteenth century.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mr. Horace Sedgwick, Lyric Theatre, London.

FALKA.

A Comic Opera in three acts. Written by H. B. Farnie. Composed by F. Chassaigne.

CHARACTERS.

Folbach	..	..	Military governor of Montgratz.
Tancred	..	..	His nephew, usher in a village school.
Arthur	..	..	Student, son of a rich Hungarian farmer.
Lay Brother Pelican			Door-keeper of the convent.
Konrad	..	..	Captain of the governor's pages.
Tekeli	..	..	Sergeant of the patrol.
Boleslas	..	..	Chief of the Tzigani.
Falka	..	..	Niece of Folbach at convent school.
Edwige	..	..	Sister of Boleslas.
Alexina de Kelkirsch			A young heiress.
Minna	..	..	Her maid.
Janotha	..	..	Landlady of the inn.
Boboky	..	..	A Tzigani.

Pages of the Governor :

Gustavis, Ladislas, Stephen, Milan, Kasper, Toski.

Maids of honour :

Shapska, Prascovie, Rosina, Brenna, Taska, Ciesta.

Chorus of citizens, Tzigani, bridesmaids, and soldiers of the household, etc.

Act I. Exterior of the "Folbach Arms." In 1750.
The Reveille.

Act II. Hall in Folbach's castle. The Tzigani.

Act III. The ramparts of the castle. The bridal.

The action passes in Hungary.

Application for the right of performing the above opera should be made to Alfred Hays, 4 Royal Exchange Buildings, Cornhill, London, E.C.

HIS EXCELLENCY.

An entirely original Comic Opera in two acts. Written by W. S. Gilbert. Composed by Dr. Osmond Carr.

CHARACTERS.

The Prince Regent	..	Disguised as Nils Egilsson, a strolling player.
George Griffenfeld	..	Governor of Elsinore.
Erling Sykke	..	A young sculptor.
Dr. Tortenssen	..	A young physician.
Mats Munck	..	Syndic of Elsinore.
Corporal Harold	..	Of the King's Hussars.
A Sentry.		
First Officer.		
Second Officer.		
Christina	..	A ballad singer.
Nanna	}	..
Thora			Griffenfeld's daughters.
Dame Hecla Cortlandt		A lady of property.
Blanca	..	A vivandière.
Elsa	..	A peasant girl.

Chorus of townspeople, soldiers, peasants, etc.

Act I. Market place of Elsinore.

Act II. Courtyard of the Castle. Date, 1801.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mr. George Edwardes, Lyric Theatre, London.

CIGARETTE.

A light Romantic Opera in three acts. Plot by Barry Montour. Libretto by Warham St. Leger. Composed by the late J. Haydn Parry.

CHARACTERS.

Marquis de Portale	..	An old nobleman.
Claude .. ..	..	His son.
Sergeant Mouston	..	Of the 195th.
Benzoline .. ..	..	A peasant.
Gaston .. ..	..	A peasant.
Nicotine.. ..	..	A village braggart.
First Soldier.		
Second Soldier.		
Comtesse de Montrouget.		
Violette .. ..	..	The Countess' daughter.
Cigarette .. ..	..	Vivandière of the 195th regiment.
Julie } .. ..	..	Peasant girls.
Clarisse }		
Babette.. ..	..	Violette's companion.
Mother Lou-lou	..	Portress of the convent school.
Lady Superior .. ..	..	Of the convent school.
Madame de Vauricourt	}	Guests of the Marquis.
Mons. Bastien		
Justin .. ..	..	A servant.

Chorus of peasants, soldiers, guests and convent girls.

Act I. Vineyard at the Château de Portale.

Act II. The Convent Green at St. Croix.

Act III. Salon in the Marquis' château. Period 1805.

Application for the right of performing the above opera must be made to Mrs. J. Haydn Parry, Ashleigh, Swansea.

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- Newcastle Chronicle.** "The performance is an exceedingly smooth one, and one that will bear comparison with the work of professionals. Mr. S. W. must have worked very hard to bring the Society to such a state of perfection."
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- Harrogate Times.** "The whole play was produced with such minuteness of detail as to suggest the professional rather than the amateur hand. But then Mr. S. W. was directing operations!"
- Blackpool Gazette.** "Mr. S. W. (about the best known coach in the kingdom) was pressed into service, and only so recently as a fortnight or so ago. He had a hard task but he persevered. A talented man himself, one who knows all the points of the best comic operas, he worked wonders; in fact, too great praise cannot be given him."
- Hull Daily Mail.** "It was an amateur performance without any traces or tokens of amateurism—a rare and creditable achievement. Mr. S. W. is responsible for the picturesqueness and precision with which it is staged."
- Brighouse News.** "Under the able and careful tuition of Mr. S. W. they attacked their work with all the *verve* and abandon of first-class professionals."
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- Worcester Herald.** "With a stage-manager so indefatigable as Mr. S. W. one feels sure that the most unpromising material will develop eventually into unlooked for results."
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