

'D' Company 1880

1st – 6th March: Portsmouth

"H.M.S. PINAFORE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL. – Notwithstanding the protracted run which Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera has achieved in London and the provinces, it appears to still retain a strong hold upon the play-going public, or rather that increasingly large section of the play going public which delights in really good music in combination with the usual dramatic presentations. Thanks to Mr. Hughes, we have again to welcome Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Pinafore" Company, and while the success cannot be said to approach that which greeted the efforts of the first company, which appeared here several months ago, it must be admitted that the production is creditable. There have been a few changes since the present group of artistes last appeared amongst us. Mr. Richard Mansfield, as Sir Joseph Porter, throws sufficient mock dignity into a part which it is by no means easy to sustain, and renders the "Song of the First Lord" with a dry humour which fairly brings down the house. Mr. Lithgow James makes a presentable Captain Corcoran, though we must say that there is room for decided improvement. His deportment was a trifle stagey, and in one or two instances (in the first act) amateurish. His voice, however, is a good one, and as a vocalist he acquitted himself with marked ability. Mr. James Sydney, as Ralph Rackstraw, becomes a great favourite with the audience soon after his first appearance, and a trifling lisp, which would under ordinary circumstances have seriously interfered with his success, is quite outbalanced by his skilful manipulation of a really good tenor voice and his natural and perfect acting. Dick Deadeye finds a good representative in Mr. Arthur Rousbey, who previously sustained the part. As Josephine, Miss Ethel McAlpine reveals a capital voice, and is remarkably successful in several of the items set down for her, particularly in the concluding scene of the first act. Miss M. Stavart throws the requisite force into the part of Little Buttercup, and the same may be said of Miss M. Duggan as Hebe. The concerted and more popular numbers of the opera are received with much applause, the band and chorus being unusually strong and well balanced. There will be a special morning performance today. [*Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc.* (Portsmouth, England), Saturday, March 6, 1880; Issue 4966.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. H. C. Hughes; Manager, Mr. J. W. Boughton. – On Monday (1st inst.) *H.M.S. Pinafore* commenced another visit for six nights. This time we have Mr. Richard Mansfield, the First Lord; Mr. L. James, the Captain; and Miss Ethel McAlpine, Josephine. As a matter of course the houses have been packed. The new vaudeville entitled *In the Sulks* has preceded. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, March 7, 1880; Issue 2163.]

8th – 20th March: Bristol

"H.M.S. PINAFORE" AT THE NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Last night, an opera company formed by Mr. D'Oyly Carte commenced at this house a twelve nights' engagement, with Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's nautical comic opera, "H.M.S. Pinafore." The visit, the reader need hardly be informed, is a return one, being an outcome of the great success which the work met with when first performed on our boards, towards the close of last year's season. Since the former engagement great changes have been introduced in the cast; indeed, if we except Mr. Richard Mansfield, who impersonates the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., First Lord of the Admiralty, every character is filled by a new *artiste*. Mr. J. H. Rogers is succeeded in

the *rôle* of Captain Corcoran by Mr. Lithgow James; Mr. Henry Walsham, in that of Ralph Rackstraw by Mr. James Sydney; Mr. Clive Hersee, in that of Dick Deadeye, by Mr. Arthur Rousbey; Mr. Richard Cummings, in Bill Bobstay, by Mr. F. Billington; Miss Fanny Harrison, as Little Buttercup, by Miss M. Stavart; Miss Douglas Gordon, as Josephine (Captain Corcoran's daughter), by Miss Ethel McAlpine; whilst that of Hebe (Sir Joseph Porter's cousin) is filled by Miss M. Duggan. There is, however, not a character which is not well up to the former standard, while some are even more strongly filled. On no night that we remember during the former engagement did the work go as perfectly and with as much spirit as it did last night. The principals were good, the chorus and orchestra good, and the *mise en scene* perfect. The piece, which was preceded by an amusing, very agreeable, and well acted operetta, by Cellier, "In the Sulks," was enthusiastically received. Space compels us to defer the more detailed notice of the performance which we had prepared. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Tuesday, March 9, 1880; Issue 9926.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL.

Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's opera "H.M.S. Pinafore" was repeated last night by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, and there seemed to be a general concurrence of opinion as to the charming character of the music, and the efficient manner in which the piece is acted. Miss Ethel McAlpine's Josephine left nothing to desire. Her personal attractions are considerable, added to which she sings charmingly and acts admirably. Her effective rendering of the scena, "The hours creep on apace," won her a most enthusiastic encore, a compliment also accorded to her in the trio with Captain Corcoran and Sir Joseph Porter, "Never mind the why and wherefore." The part of Buttercup, the bumboat woman, had a very agreeable exponent in Miss Stavart. She sings the leading melody, "For I'm called little Buttercup," charmingly, and in the recitatives and concerted music, and very especially in the descriptive aria, "A many years ago," showed herself an *artiste*. Mr. James Sydney did the fullest justice to the part of Ralph Rackstraw. His voice is more of the *robusto* school than was that of his predecessor in the character, but it is of excellent quality and well cultivated, and enables him to do great justice to the music. The beautiful madrigal, "The Nightingale," was given by him with much tenderness and sweetness of expression; the succeeding descriptive ballad won him an encore, and the reception accorded to the plaintive aria, "Farewell my own, light of my life, farewell," and indeed to the music generally, showed how thoroughly he had gained the approval of the audience. Mr. Lithgow James's fine voice and good musicianship served him well in the music of Captain Corcoran, which character he looked and acted admirably. He gave (which his predecessor did not) the serenade in the second act, "Fair moon, to thee I sing" – probably the most difficult solo in the opera – and his rendering of the music generally won him quite a harvest of applause. The malignant Dick Deadeye could hardly be more successfully impersonated than it was by Mr. Arthur Rousbey. The part is a very unthankful one, but it is graphically drawn and as graphically acted. In the duet, "Kind captain," in which he makes Captain Corcoran acquainted with the secret of his daughter's intended elopement, he was very effective; in short, he did justice to all the singing which pertains to his character. Mr. F. Billington's was a characteristic and effective performance of the true-hearted tar, Bill Bobstay, and he gave a robust rendering of the song, "He is an Englishman." The excellence of Mr. Richard Mansfield's Sir Joseph Porter must be well remembered from his former engagement in Bristol. The affected, self-satisfied, and finicking manner which he preserves throughout the performance constitute a delicately-drawn but very telling

bit of satire. His famous descriptive song, "When I was a boy I served my turn," [*sic*] was encored, and the manner in which he skipped about the deck of the "Pinafore," pirouetting like a French dancing-master and vaulting like a rope-dancer, was hailed with shouts of laughter. There yet remains to be noticed the midshipman, Tom Tucker, who is complimented by the First Lord of the Admiralty as a splendid example of the British seaman. The part is filled by the same gentleman who before held it, and is again marked by the humorous absurdities then noticed. The concerted music and choruses went admirably, and there were frequent encores. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Wednesday, March 10, 1880; Issue 9927.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Managers, Messrs. George and James Macready Chute. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* company commenced a re-engagement at this house on Monday, when the *artistes* were received with the utmost cordiality. There have been many fresh artists in the cast since the last appearance of the company here, but we are free to admit that Mr. Carte's combination has lost nothing by the changes which have been made. Miss Ethel McAlpine has proved a truly artistic Josephine, and Miss Stavart has greatly pleased by her impersonation of Buttercup. Mr. Richard Mansfield was again the Sir Joseph Porter, and was very warmly greeted. As Captain Corcoran, Mr. Lithgow James played and sang capitally. Mr. James Sydney proves a most fitting Rackstraw, the music being sung with great effect, and the same remark may apply to Mr. Arthur Rousbey as Dick Deadeye. Mr. F. Billington was an acceptable Bobstay, and generally the opera was admirably given. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, March 14, 1880; Issue 2164.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's comic opera company will tonight enter upon the second and concluding week of their return-visit engagement. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's "H.M.S. Pinafore" appears to grow in favour with each night's representation, and it is such a pleasant satire, is allied to such pretty music, and is so capitally acted that we do not wonder at it. It will be seen that for the accommodation of residents in the country, and those who do not like to venture out at night, there will be an afternoon performance on Saturday next; and on the evening of that day the opera will be acted for the last time. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Monday, March 15, 1880; Issue 9931.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's tuneful and amusing "Pinafore" opera has fairly held its own against the always damaging excitement of an election contest. Its charming music seemed as fresh as ever last night, and its comic incidents provoked quite as much laughter. An afternoon performance today will enable persons who cannot venture out at night and any "country cousins" who may happen to be in town an opportunity of witnessing what has proved to be one of the most popular productions the stage has seen. The final performance will take place this evening. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Saturday, March 20, 1880; Issue 9936.]

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Managers, Messrs. George and James Macready Chute. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* company have continued their engagement during the past week, and have drawn together large and very fashionable audiences. The opera now goes extremely well, and we can only repeat that the artists, one and all, are seen to much advantage. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, March 21, 1880; Issue 2165.]

22nd – 27th March: Cardiff

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. W. H. Daw; Manager, Mr. E. Bulwer. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company has been located at this theatre since Monday, and has been delighting the musical portion of the public with Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pinafore*. Notwithstanding that we are full of the excitement of a general election business is of a most paying character. *In the Sulks* is the title of a very pleasing comedietta which precedes the opera each evening. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, March 28, 1880; Issue 2166.]

29th March – 17 April: Liverpool

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

The charming transformation made in this theatre during the past week elicited the heartiest admiration and approbation of a crowded audience last evening, and the general verdict was that Mr. Emery's "little house" now shows one of the most artistic interiors in the kingdom. The conception of the alterations, which have already been noticed in the *Mercury*, are to be credited to Mr. Doyley; the work has been admirably executed by Messrs. Jelly and Hughes; and Mr. A. Bucknall, of Liverpool, not only deserves high praise for the interior gas arrangements (the Louise Quartorze style having been adopted in connection with the brackets with admirable effect) but the lighting of the portico likewise shows the perfection of artistic effectiveness. The Gilbert-Sullivan "original nautical comic opera," entitled "H.M.S. Pinafore" was the chief re-opening attraction last evening, and the now well-worn music, if it did not excite the freshness and enthusiasm of its early days, was sufficient to delight the crowded holiday audience. The cast of characters was almost entirely new, but, with few exceptions, it can hardly be recognised as an improvement upon those which have preceded. The *ensemble*, however, was good as ever, and, of course, this "hardly ever" fails to carry the bright but not particularly original opera, Miss Ethel McAlpine sang with considerable success in the character of Josephine; Mr. Lithgow James was a capital Captain Corcoran; Mr. J. Sydney displayed good vocal ability as Ralph Rackstraw; Mr. F. Billington looked and acted the "boatswain's mate" to the life; and Mr. A. Rousbey secured his former success as Dick Deadeye. Miss M. Duggan, Miss M. Stavart, and Mr. R. Mansfield were also included in the cast. A vaudeville named "In the Sulks," preceded the opera. "The Sorcerer" is promised during the engagement of the company. [*Liverpool Mercury etc* (Liverpool, England), Tuesday, March 30, 1880; Issue 10051.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery; Acting Manager, Mr. G. Redmond. – After being thoroughly renovated, improved, and beautified (as detailed in another column), this theatre was re-opened on Monday night with the first of a series of performances of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, which attracted an overflowing audience. Since the last visit of the Gilbert-Sullivan opera, several changes have been made in the cast. Miss Ethel McAlpine, well known in Liverpool through her appearance in the Alexandra Pantomime, now plays Josephine with much vocal and histrionic ability. Miss M. Stavart is a wonderfully effective Little Buttercup; and Miss M. Duggan proves a most charming Hebe. Mr. James Sydney is now the Ralph Rackstraw; Captain Corcoran is played by Mr. Lithgow James with much spirit; and Mr. F. Billington proves an excellent Bill Bobstay. Mr. Richard Mansfield (the Admiral), and Mr. Arthur Rousbey (Dick Deadeye) secured their previous successes. The band was well conducted by Mr. P. W. Halton, and the choruses were given with much animation and crispness. The attractive vaudeville *In the Sulks*, written by Frank

Desprez, and composed by Alfred Cellier, proved an amusing introduction to the evening's amusements. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, April 4, 1880; Issue 2167.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has continued on her prosperous voyage here during the past week, but *The Sorcerer* is announced as the special source of attraction for Monday. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, April 11, 1880; Issue 2168.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

In music and comedy, "The Sorcerer" is superior to "H.M.S. Pinafore," and its merits in these respects were readily recognised by the audience that assembled at the Prince of Wales Theatre last night, when one of the happiest results of the Gilbert-Sullivan collaboration was presented. Since it was given here last, numerous changes have occurred in the cast of "The Sorcerer"; but, fortunately, Mr. Arthur Rousbey retains his place in it. Last night he received a greeting not more cordial than he deserved, for his voice and his manner of using it are excellent, while his illustration of the exaggerated grace of the ancient gallant, Sir Marmaduke, is imbued with a spirit thoroughly appreciative of the lively and sarcastic humour of the inventor of the character. Mr. James Sydney is the Alexis, Miss Ethel McAlpine is most attractive as Aline, Miss Armytage is Mrs. Partlet, Miss M. Duggan Constance, Mr. F. Billington the Counsel, Mr. Lithgow James is the impersonator of the Vicar, Miss Stavart that of Lady Sangazure, and Mr. Mansfield obtains a distinct success as John Wellington Wells. The members of the chorus sung vigorously and in tune, the orchestra is competent, and Mr. P. W. Halton, who is the conductor, has his executive forces admirably under control. New scenery has been provided by Mr. J. Hall for the present production of "The Sorcerer," and the exterior of Sir Marmaduke's mansion is particularly effective. [*Liverpool Mercury etc* (Liverpool, England), Tuesday, April 13, 1880; Issue 10063.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery; Acting Manager, Mr. G. Redmond. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* gave place to *The Sorcerer* at the "Prince" on Monday, and though the change was not necessitated by any lack of public patronage, it proved very welcome to those who "hardly ever" have heard the second named Gilbert-Sullivan opera. There was a very large and enthusiastic audience, to whom the delicious music and amusing satire of the libretto proved a source of continuous pleasure throughout the performance. The cast of principals was a fairly competent one, and frequent applause greeted the efforts of the leading artists. Miss Ethel McAlpine still further increased her popularity by the grace and charm with which she represented Aline; Miss Madge Stavart was most successful as Lady Sangazure; Miss M. Duggan proved most acceptable in the character of Constance; and Miss B. Armytage performed the part of Mrs. Partlet in an eminently satisfactory manner. One was glad to find Mr. Arthur Rousbey again at home in his old role of Sir Marmaduke, in connection with which he sang splendidly and acted with all his former *élan*. Mr. Lithgow James secured universal applause as a recognition of his admirable representation of Dr. Daly; and Mr. Mansfield's John Wellington Wells was an excellent bit of legitimate character acting, an enthusiastic encore being given to his rendering of the celebrated patter song. The other parts were capitally cast; Mr. Emery's mounting and dressing of the opera were again specially bright and attractive; and the band and chorus were both steady and thoroughly artistic in colouring throughout the whole of the performance. A morning representation of the opera will be given today (Saturday); and on Monday Carl Rosa's company return for

a short visit, the opening opera being *Carmen*, with an exceedingly strong cast. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, April 18, 1880; Issue 2169.]

19th – 24th April: Leeds

THE GRAND THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett; Acting Manager, Mr. Lee Anderson. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pinafore* company have fulfilled a return engagement here during the past week, and to the artists we can truly give unqualified praise for the manner in which they have acquitted themselves. For instance, Mr. Richard Mansfield's Sir Joseph Porter, thoroughly humorous, was a rich embodiment of comic dignity. Mr. Lithgow James, as Captain Corcoran, looked the part and acted and sang effectively; and we think Mr. James Sydney's Ralph Rackstraw was amongst the best we have seen. Mr. Arthur Rousbey's Dick Deadeye was a fine piece of acting, and his splendid baritone voice was heard to great advantage. Mr. Billington, as the mate, was "all there," and sang the "Englishman" song with much spirit. Miss Ethel McAlpine is a charming Josephine, and the music receives full justice from her. Of Miss Madge Stavart, as Little Buttercup, we cannot speak too highly. Miss M. Duggan is a very animated Cousin Hebe. The chorus is admirable and well selected, and we must not forget to add that all Sir Joseph's "sisters, cousins, and aunts" looked as they should do, bright and pretty. In the nearly new to us company we note that the services of the clever little midshipmite Master Fitzaltamont are still retained. The main deck of the "man-of-war" was perfectly set and the picture complete. Mr. P. W. Halton conducted with tact the fine band of the theatre. *Pinafore* was preceded by the amusing vaudeville *In the Sulks*, in which Miss Duggan, as the coaxing wife, acted with great vivacity and sang prettily. The other two parts were well sustained by Messrs Clowes and Bolini. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, April 25, 1880; Issue 2170.]

26th April – 1st May: Sheffield

"H.M.S. PINAFORE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

The droll compositions which have made the names of Gilbert and Sullivan famous possess a mirth-provoking power which even the most aesthetic must acknowledge, and those who care for comic opera will be delighted with the return of D'Oyly Carte's Company to Sheffield, especially as they intend to produce both "Pinafore" and "The Sorcerer" at the Theatre. Perhaps it is rather disappointing that lovers of Gilbert's libretto and Sullivan's music in the provinces, should have to wait so long before they can enjoy the new opera "The Pirates of Penzance; or Love and Duty" which is creating such a sensation both in New York, and at the Opera Comique in London; but in "Pinafore" and "The Sorcerer" they have two admirable antidotes for their impatience. Not since the autumn of 1878 has "The Sorcerer" been presented here, but it is still fresh in the minds of many people. In fact, after once making the acquaintance of the grotesque "John Wellington Wells," it is neither easy to forget him, nor "the charms and spells" in which he so freely deals. That a city firm should send out a traveller in sorcery to force blessings and curses and love philtres upon unsuspecting villagers is a novel idea even in the days of 19th century commercial enterprise, but this is the foundation on which the "Sorcerer" is based, and the characters and incidents that spring out of it are full of humour, whilst the music is alternately weird and sparkling. Of "Pinafore" it is not necessary to say much. The comic opera, given with such success by D'Oyly Carte's company last night at the Theatre, was here in October last, and must be well remembered, for it is a simple and amusing story – a clever burlesque of naval manners and discipline, with a

merry charm difficult to efface from one's mind. No matter how often "Pinafore is repeated, "time does not wither nor custom stale its excellent variety." It is always new, always pleasing, full of bright, joyous life and action, with its remarkable crew, its extraordinary officers, its grotesque tars, its wonderful ruler of the Queen's "navee," *Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.*, and his amusing sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts. In the United States its popularity was even greater than at home, probably because the Americans rejoiced in the clever burlesque upon our Admiralty; anyhow the enthusiasm in New York was so boundless that nothing would satisfy them but a real ship "Pinafore" upon the stage, with the shores of a lake for scenery. It is indeed hard to believe that they did not wall in and roof the Atlantic, so as to have a little ocean of their own. The favour with which the opera has been received in England, although not so frenzied, has been almost as great, and one remarkable evidence of its popularity was the production of the "Children's Pinafore" at the Opera Comique, last Christmas. London has never – well, hardly ever – seen anything better than this baby "Pinafore," and parents who had hitherto looked with horror upon the theatre, took their children gladly to see the juvenile *First Lord* and sweet *Little Buttercup*, and to laugh at the fresh and spontaneous humour of the youngsters commanded by *Captain Corcoran*. The opera was first produced in London in May, 1878. It is based upon the romantic passion of *Ralph Rackstraw*, a common sailor, who "loves a lass above his station," and is never tired of distributing the intelligence:–

A suitor, lowly born,
With hopeless passion torn,
 And poor beyond concealing;
Has dared for her to pine
At whose exalted shrine
 A world of wealth is kneeling.

The lady for whom he has dared to pine is *Josephine*, the captain's daughter, but her father is anxious that she should wed *Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.*, who is probably the kneeling world of wealth spoken of in the ballad. Both suitors woo the maiden, but she favours the common sailor, "so peerless in his manly beauty," and *Jack* [*sic*] *Rackstraw* finally becomes, not only Josephine's husband, but the captain of the Pinafore, and a right good captain too. The opera was presented to a large house last night by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company, and created quite as much amusement as heretofore. Mr. Richard Mansfield's severely dignified manner as *Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.*, the talented First Lord, "who has stuck to his desk and never gone to sea," was ridiculously comic, and his extraordinary advice to the sailors was enough to make "laughter hold both his sides." *Ralph Rackstraw*, the sailor in love with the captain's daughter, had a manly and accomplished exponent in Mr. James Sydney, who has a very pleasing voice, and sang admirably, especially in the charming ballad, "A maiden fair to see." Mr. Lithgow James made a stately and impressive commander of the Pinafore; and Mr. Arthur Rousbey as Dick Deadeye, the ugly, croaking seaman, had a peculiar talent for making himself dramatically repulsive; whilst Mr. Fitzaltamont, Junior, who took the character – the very little character – of *Tom Tucker*, the midshipmite, was wonderfully amusing. To Miss Ethel McAlpine great praise must be given, for as *Josephine*, the captain's daughter, she sang with intelligence, and acted with modesty and grace. Miss Madge Stavart was a very "sweet *Little Buttercup*." A vivacious, merry girl, she threw her whole heart into the character, and seemed to enjoy the romp on the deck of the "Pinafore" even more than the little middy. The aria, "For I'm called Little Buttercup," she gave very sweetly, and her singing throughout was characterised by clearness of enunciation. As Sir

Joseph's First Cousin, *Hebe*, Miss Duggan took her part gracefully, and very cleverly led the remarkable refrain, "And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts." The humour for which "Pinafore" is distinguished was well interpreted, and the music and scenery were bright and attractive. The opera was preceded by an entertaining vaudeville in one act, written by Mr. Frank Desprez, and composed by Mr. Alfred Cellier, entitled "In the Sulks." Miss M. Duggan sustained the principal character, *Mrs. Liverby*, and manoeuvred her husband into a good temper by means of that wit which is supposed to be the special attribute of woman. "Pinafore" will be repeated to-night and to-morrow, and the "Sorcerer" on Thursday. [*The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* (Sheffield, England), Tuesday, April 27, 1880; pg. 2; Issue 7988.]

"THE SORCERER" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

Last night Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company, which is having a most successful run here, produced "The Sorcerer" at the theatre. The libretto, one of Mr. Gilbert's best efforts, is strikingly humorous; and the music, composed by Mr. Sullivan, is both graceful and attractive. The plot is a most remarkable one, and never loses its novelty, even to those who have frequently seen "The Sorcerer." The opening scene is laid in the garden of Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre's Elizabethan mansion, where a group of peasantry indicate that it is the day for the betrothal of Alexis, the son of Sir Marmaduke, to Aline, the daughter of Lady Sangazure. Alexis is a firm believer in matrimony as the panacea for every ill, and to the end that the whole village may share in its blessings, he has engaged John Wellington Wells, of the firm J. W. Wells and Co., sorcerers, of St. Mary Axe, to dispense a love potion to the villagers. The love philtre is administered, and the most surprising results follow. Each person who tastes the potion falls in love with the first person of the opposite sex whom he meets. The courtly Sir Marmaduke, a polished gentleman of the last generation, although attached to Lady Sangazure, pairs off with a pew-opener. Constance, a pupil teacher, who is in love with Dr. Daly, the rector, gives her affections to a deaf old barrister. Lady Sangazure throws herself at the feet of the Sorcerer. The villagers fall in love with each other in a most incongruous fashion, and Dr. Daly is left to lament that there is no one to marry him. Alexis, anxious to secure the lasting love of Aline, insists that she shall drink the potion too. She obeys, and immediately her love is transferred to Dr. Daly. The Sorcerer, a highly respectable tradesman, is horrified at the results of the love potion, and gives his life to break the charm, disappearing beneath the stage, amid sulphurous fires. The opera was most successfully produced, and the audience, which filled the theatre in almost every part, were prodigal in their applause. The characters, without a single exception, were well sustained, and the singing almost all that could be desired. It is, therefore, unnecessary to particularise. The opera will be again produced tonight. [*The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* (Sheffield, England), Friday, April 30, 1880; Issue 7973.]

Theatre Royal. – Lessee, Mr. W. R. Younge. – It may seem strange, but it is perfectly true, that this week for the first time *H.M. S. Pinafore* has been placed without a "hitch" before a Sheffield audience. Last year the unfortunate absence, through indisposition, &c., of at least one of the most important artists of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, marred the effect, but this year the company has been so much strengthened, and the details have had so much more attention, that a more perfect performance it would be difficult to imagine. The part of Sir Joseph Porter is in the able hands of Mr. Richard Mansfield, who has a keen sense of the humour of the author, and who, if he can claim no great distinction as a vocalist, by careful

articulation makes every word of his songs audible throughout the house, a compliment that cannot be paid to many operatic or comic operatic vocalists. Mr. James Sydney is the Ralph Rackstraw of this company, and possesses a beautiful tenor voice under great cultivation. A dashing, handsome Captain Corcoran is found in Mr. Lithgow James, who becomes a favourite even before he has concluded his salutations to his crew. The little Buttercup of Miss Madge Stavart was a capital performance in every sense; and Miss Ethel McAlpine, as Josephine, gained well-deserved applause. With an enlarged orchestra and with a well-trained and able chorus, the presentation of *Pinafore* this week has been a complete success. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, May 2, 1880; Issue 2171.]

3rd – 8th May: Nottingham

THEATRE ROYAL – Manager, Mr. Thos. W. Charles. – *The Sorcerer* was reintroduced on Monday last, and, on the whole, its reception was highly favourable. Since its previous performance here the company is almost entirely changed, with the result of a few weak places being apparent. There is, however, so much excellence, that a large measure of praise is undoubtedly due to all concerned. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, May 9, 1880; Issue 2172.]

10th – 22nd May: Manchester

PRINCE'S THEATRE

"H.M.S. Pinafore" was presented at the Prince's Theatre on Monday, and though it has been produced in Manchester more frequently than we can well remember, the reception it met with would seem to show that time does not wither nor custom stale its infinite variety. In truth it is hard to say that it can be repeated too often, if only reasonable intervals are allowed to intervene. True, passages of the score are heard at many dances and in many drawing rooms, and there is scarcely an evening party at which some dexterous imitator does not call for "Three cheers and one cheer more for the famous captain of the Pinafore," or else set forth, in Mr. Gilbert's words, how it was that Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., became "The ruler of the Queen's Navee." But the whimsical ideas, the irresistible fun, the grotesque situations which the dramatist has constructed, and the sympathetic melodies, no less whimsical, irresistibly funny and grotesque, Mr. Sullivan has wedded to Mr. Gilbert's words – when the combination of speech and song at all approaches average perfection – always carry the sympathies of the audience. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is carefully selected for the parts they have to play, and on the whole give a satisfactory performance of the droll composition. The singing is good; the choruses are well rendered; the orchestra, conducted by Mr. P. W. Halton, does its work admirably; and the picture, if we may so call it, of the ship does credit to the management of the theatre. Mr. Richard Mansfield, as Sir Joseph Porter, reminds us a little of other actors who have made a greater success in the part, but he delivers his lines with humour, sings the Admiral's song with effect, and makes a capital caricature of the fussy First Lord in whose creation Mr. Gilbert has freely expended his satire. Mr. Lithgow James has not got into the "quarter-deck walk" of his prototypes, but his Captain Corcoran is a capital piece of acting. Mr. James Sydney's Ralph Rackstraw is one of the best performances, not only from a vocal point of view, but for his excellent interpretation of the mock-heroic or extravagantly-romantic passages which fall to his lot. As Josephine, the Captain's daughter, Miss Ethel McAlpine made her first appearance in Manchester, we believe, and made a most favourable impression. Miss Madge Stavart, as Little Buttercup, was most amusing, and Miss M. Duggan, as Hebe, made

the most of her part. [*Manchester Times* (Manchester, England), Saturday, May 15, 1880; Issue 1169.]

AMUSEMENTS IN MANCHESTER

At the Prince's Theatre *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been played to good houses during the week. An amusing trifle entitled *In the Sulks*, music by Mr. Alfred Cellier, has also been played. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, May 16, 1880; Issue 2173.]

PRINCE'S THEATRE

The "Sorcerer" has succeeded "H.M.S. Pinafore" at the Prince's Theatre, and is presented in the same admirable manner. The ingenious drolleries in language, incidents, and music which author and composer have devised will always maintain for "The Sorcerer" a place on the stage so long as honest fun and pleasant melodies in combination are appreciated. Satire, no doubt, it is on certain phrases of sentiment and philanthropy, but the satire is honest; and if it were Mr. Gilbert's object to show that happiness had better be left to "come by nature," and that people are likely to be better suited when they are allowed to suit themselves, it may be claimed for his work that it teaches a sound lesson. At all events, whatever his motive, he has supplied plentiful material for hearty laughter in the notion of administering a love-philtre to a whole village, and tracing its awful consequences to the community. Mr. Mansfield, as Mr. John Wellington Wells, the "dealer in magic and spells," has a part which suits him very much better than did the Admiral last week. It is full of a curious humour which he thoroughly appreciates, and in the incantation scene, as again when he avoids the pressing attentions of Lady Sangazure while under the influence of the potion, he is irresistibly funny. Mr. Arthur Rousbey's Sir Marmaduke is an admirable piece of light comedy, while the Vicar of Mr. Lithgow James is, in make up and in every other respect, a perfect impersonation. Miss Ethel McAlpine as Aline, Miss Duggan as the school teacher, Miss Armytage as the pew-opener, and Miss Stavart as Lady Sangazure are deserving of all praise. All, in fact, is so good that it would be invidious to make exceptions in our words of praise. [*Manchester Times* (Manchester, England), Saturday, May 22, 1880; Issue 1170.]

PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee and Director, Mr. C. Bernard. – The second week of the engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company has been devoted to the production of *The Sorcerer*, a piece in which Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan scored their first great success as collaborators. We have an agreeable recollection of the first representation of this piece in Manchester. Unfortunately we cannot speak so highly of the present performance of the piece. To speak plainly, the company is unequal to the work. The artists are all hard working and conscientious, but they are unable to comply with some of the first requisites of success in such a production. We may instance, for special commendation, the Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre of Mr. Arthur Rousbey, by far the most artistic impersonation in the presentation; the Dr. Daly of Mr. Lithgow James, which was vocally excellent; and the Lady Sangazure of Miss Madge Stavart, a really creditable performance. The other characters were sustained by Mr. R. Mansfield as John Wellington Wells, Miss Ethel McAlpine as Aline, Mr. J. Sydney as Alexis, Miss B. Armytage as Mrs. Partlet, Miss M. Duggan as Constance, and Mr. Fred. Billington as the Counsel. The afterpiece throughout the engagement has been the operetta, by Mr. Alfred Cellier, of *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, May 23, 1880; Issue 2174.]

24th May – 5th June: Birmingham

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

It is difficult for people who have never witnessed a really good performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" to form a true idea of the musical and dramatic opportunities of the piece, or to estimate at its proper worth the subtle, sardonic humour that pervades it, and to this circumstance may probably be attributed the very different opinions expressed of the work by different individuals, whose judgement has not been formed under like conditions. In London, long experience, ample means, and constant and intelligent supervision contribute to ensure nearly always an adequate presentation of "Pinafore;" but in the provinces it is scarcely possible for a touring company, however well organised, to do justice at once to the musical and the dramatic requirements of an opera depending for its effect so much upon the efficiency of subordinate assumptions and the perfection of the *ensemble*. On the last occasion of its performance here the defects of the company, it may be remembered, were so obvious as to interfere very much with the success of the production; but ample amends for past shortcomings are made by the excellent reorganised company of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, which is now performing at this house. Indeed, we have no hesitation in saying that the piece has never been performed here to more advantage than by its present exponents, who are for the most part skilled vocalists, as well as competent comedians, and capable therefore of doing justice to the music as well as to the humour of their respective parts. Miss Ethel McAlpine is by far the most satisfactory representative of the love-sick heroine we have had here, and in her hands the character of Josephine becomes what it so rarely is, an intelligible, consistent, and interesting, as well as amusing, creation. Steering skilfully between the mistaken coquettish pertness assumed by some performers and the lack-a-daisical insipidity which other appear to think proper to the part, Miss McAlpine contrives to be at once charmingly naïve and unaffectedly sprightly, whilst singing the often difficult and trying music in a manner much above the level of the average singing actress to whom it is usually entrusted. Miss McAlpine's voice, though not very extensive in range, is of agreeable quality and adequate power, and she displayed it on Monday with such effect as to extort the frequent and enthusiastic applause of her audience. Of her most ambitious and successful efforts was the scena at the beginning of the second act, "The sea, the sea," [*sic*] which was encored; and in the succeeding trio with Sir Joseph Porter and Captain Corcoran, "Never mind the why or wherefore," also encored, as well as in the duet with Rackstraw and the concerted finale of the first act, which likewise had to be repeated, her singing and acting contributed in no small degree to the success of the performance. As the bumboat woman, Little Buttercup, Miss Madge Stavart was very successful, both musically and dramatically. Her singing of the popular ballad, "I'm called Little Buttercup," produced of course an immense effect, and her acting throughout was distinguished by great spirit and appropriate humour. The Sir Joseph Porter of Mr. Richard Mansfield is a remarkably clever and caustic assumption, bringing out the ineffable self-complacency and official loftiness and red-tapeism of the unlucky First Lord, who is so admirably "hoist with his own petard," with mirth provoking effect. Mr. Mansfield's vocal powers are limited, but he uses them with skill and discretion, and his singing of the First Lord's autobiographical song with choral burden, and his address to the crew with its laughable refrain for "his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts," was as artistic and humorous in its way as anything in the opera. Mr. James Sydney as the aspiring lover, Ralph Rackstraw, has, at all events, one qualification for the part which is not too common – namely, a capital tenor voice, adequate to all the

requirements of the music. In a histrionic sense his performance is more than respectable, though it falls short of a perfect realisation of the part. The Captain Corcoran of Mr. Lithgow James is, for the most part, a spirited and effective assumption, but the requirements of the music severely tax the performer's powers, and some of his most painstaking efforts last night – notably the scena at the beginning of the second act – were marred by imperfect intonation. Mr. Arthur Rousbey, the original Dick Deadeye, makes of the character a wonderfully grotesque and amusing creation, without any of the morbid painfulness and repulsiveness with which the character is sometimes invested. In short, he never makes the mistake of playing a comic opera part as if it were a real villain of melodrama. The concerted pieces last night were among the most effective features of the performance. The glee for the three sailors, in the old English style, was capitally given, and deservedly encored. The duet and chorus, "He's an Englishman;" the trio with bell effects, already alluded to, for Josephine, the First Lord, and Captain Corcoran; the ensemble to the first act, and the several choruses of sailors and ladies, have seldom been rendered here so successfully. In the early part of the evening the playing of the band was somewhat unsteady, but the latter part of the opera went capitally – both as to the instrumental and vocal part. It is unnecessary to add that the piece is tastefully put on the stage. [*Birmingham Daily Post* (Birmingham, England), Wednesday, May 26, 1880; Issue 6829.]

PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *H.M.S. Pinafore* company has visited this town for the fourth time, and the large audiences that have assembled to witness Gilbert and Sullivan's sparkling opera clearly prove that its popularity remains undiminished. The company has been greatly improved since its last visit. Miss McAlpine, as Josephine, is charming. Miss Duggan, as Sir Joseph Porter's irrepressible relative, does not have much to do, but that little is done well. The Sir Joseph Porter of Mr. Mansfield is a very successful impersonation, and he is frequently applauded. Mr. Lithgow James's delineation of Captain Corcoran is all that could be desired. Mr. Arthur Rousbey's representation of Dick Deadeye has long been acknowledged to be perfect. The Bos'un and the other characters are all well played, the part of Little Buttercup being splendidly taken by Miss Madge Stavart. The chorus has been carefully selected, and the concerted music went remarkably well. *In the Sulks* was the afterpiece, the characters being capitally sustained by Miss Duggan, Mr. Bolini, and Mr. Clowes. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, May 30, 1880; Issue 2175.]

PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. G. Rogers. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been drawing crowded houses during the week. The charming opera is as popular as ever. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 6, 1880; Issue 2176.]

7th – 12th June: Leicester

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Galer. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has made another call at Leicester, this time at the Opera House. Miss Madge Stavart, some time since a favourite at the Theatre Royal, makes a splendid Buttercup; Miss Ethel McAlpine sings charmingly as Josephine; Mr. F. Billington deserves praise for Bobstay; Rackstraw is represented by Mr. J. Sydney; Corcoran loses nothing in the hands of Mr. L. James; and as Hebe Miss M. Duggan plays well her part. The others are highly commendable, and the chorus is one of the most even and effective we have heard. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 13, 1880; Issue 2177.]

14th – 26th June: Edinburgh

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs. Howard and Logan; Acting-Manager, Mr. John Gray – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Sorcerer* company commenced a fortnight's engagement here on Monday evening, and gave a most effective and successful representation of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's quaint and popular opera. The company is a very strong one, the majority of the artists introduced being new to Edinburgh, and the clever acting and capital singing of all concerned in the cast, as well as the careful rendering of the choruses, were keenly relished. Mr. Richard Mansfield appeared as John Wellington Wells, and made an excellent impression, creating great amusement in the incantation scene, and gaining a well-merited encore for his nimble rendering of the famous patter song. Mr. Lithgow James looked Dr. Daly to the life. Mr. James Sydney was fairly effective as Alexis, while Mr. Arthur Rousbey's finished portrait of Sir Marmaduke remains, as before, one of the most interesting features of the performance. We were particularly pleased with Miss Ethel McAlpine's Aline, which was played to admiration, the charming grace of her acting and the brilliant effect with which she gave all her music being warmly recognised during the evening. Miss B. Armytage made a capital Mrs. Partlet, and Miss M. Duggan a pretty and agreeable Constance; Miss Madge Stewart completing the cast as Lady Sangazure. The opera was preceded by Alfred Cellier's vaudeville *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 20, 1880; Issue 2178.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs. Howard and Logan; Acting-Manager, Mr. John Gray. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company entered upon the second week of their engagement here on Monday, the representation of *The Sorcerer* being continued with increasing success to large and appreciative audiences. On Thursday, however, the programme will be changed, and *H.M.S. Pinafore* played with a capital cast during the three remaining nights of the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, June 27, 1880; Issue 2179.]

28th June – 3rd July: South Shields

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Cooke. – On Monday evening another attraction was provided for the patrons of this theatre, the lessee having engaged Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, and on the occasion Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *The Sorcerer* was produced. The opera was mounted in a capital manner, and was most spiritedly played. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 4, 1880; Issue 2180.]

5th – 10th July: —————

12th – 17th July: West Hartlepool

19th – 24th July: York

"SORCERER" AT THE THEATRE. – Yesterday evening the theatre was well filled by an audience who assembled to witness for the first time in York, the production by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company of the comic opera "Sorcerer," which was written and composed by Messrs. W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan. In many respects this work differs greatly in its character from "Pinafore" and "The Pirates of Penzance," which has not yet found its way to this city, but its capital dialogue and excellent music have secured for it a great amount of success. The story upon which the opera is founded is rather a strange one. The curtain rises in the garden of Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre's Elizabethan mansion, assembled in which are the peasantry of Ploverleigh, who, in the opening chorus call for the bells to ring with clarion sound, as on that day young

Alexis, Sir Marmaduke's son, is betrothed to Aline Sangazure. Immediately following this chorus is a recitative by Mrs. Partlet, a pew-opener, and her daughter Constance, the latter of whom is in rather a low state of mind, through a feeling of love for the vicar, Dr. Daly, who, however, thinks himself too far advanced in life to allow himself to return any such affection. After some bits of good singing, the contract between Aline and Alexis is signed in the presence of the friends and peasantry, and then Aline is informed by her intended husband, in a spoken dialogue, that he intends steeping the whole village in love, without distinction of age, rank, or fortune, by means of a philtre, which he obtains from Mr. Wells, a family sorcerer. Mr. Mansfield, who takes the part of the sorcerer, delights the audience on his introduction with a piece of acting which elicits their applause and laughter. He administers the love potion to the friends and peasants, Sir Marmaduke and Mrs. Partlet being among the affected; and Lady Sangazure also takes an ardent fancy to Mr. Wells. Aline has also been compelled to drink from the philtre by Alexis, the result being that she falls in love with the vicar, and the peasants again rush in to find Alexis scolding. The spell can only be removed by either Mr. Wells or Alexis yielding up his life to Ahrimanes, and public opinion giving against the Sorcerer, he gives way, and in a chorus comes the finale, in which Mr. Wells sinks through a grave-trap. Such is an outline of the story, which, although somewhat curious is made the basis of a very interesting opera. The cast was as follows:— Aline, Miss Ethel McAlpine; Lady Sangazure (Aline's mother), Miss Madge Stavart; Mrs. Partlet (a pew opener), Miss B. Armytage; Constance (a pupil teacher), Miss M. Duggan; Doctor Daly (vicar of Ploverleigh), Mr F. Billington; Mr. Wells (of the firm of J. W. Wells & Co., St. Mary Axe), Mr. R. Mansfield; Counsel, Mr. Roche; Hercules, Master Albert Pickering; Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre, Mr Arthur Rousbey; Alexis (his son), Mr James Sydney. The music forms one of the principal features, and both the vocal and instrumental portions are rendered in a manner which is highly satisfactory. Miss McAlpine and Miss Stavart sing and act their part charmingly, and the performances of Miss Duggan, Mr. F. Billington, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Rousbey, and Mr. Sydney are also very successful. Interspersed in the opera are some pretty choruses, and these are well rendered by a well-balanced body of vocalists. The stage and scene effects assist to display with advantage the opera, which last evening was received with great favour. The "Sorcerer" will be produced each evening, except Friday and Saturday, when it will be replaced by "Pinafore." [*The York Herald* (York, England), Saturday, July 24, 1880; pg. 7; Issue 7313.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. W. A. Waddington. – A most enjoyable week's engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Sorcerer* company was commenced on Monday, and, as might have been expected, a large audience assembled to witness the first representation of this successful and amusing opera. The characters were sustained by Miss Ethel McAlpine, Miss Madge Stavart, Miss B. Armytage, Miss M. Duggan, Mr. F. Billington, Mr. R. Mansfield, Mr. Arthur Rousbey, and Mr. James Sydney. *Pinafore* was billed for Friday and Saturday. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, July 25, 1880; Issue 2183.]

26th – 31st July: Halifax

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Rawlings. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, with full band, chorus, and ballet [*sic*], opened here for the week on Monday evening with the comic opera entitled *The Sorcerer* and *In the Sulks*. The visit has been a deserved success. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 1, 1880; Issue 2184.]

2nd – 7th August: Scarborough

LONDESBOROUGH THEATRE. – Proprietor and Manager, Mr. W. A. Waddington. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been anchored here for four nights during the week, and there have been crowded houses to cheer the jolly tars and encore their songs and choruses. On the two remaining nights *The Sorcerer* was produced for the first time here. A laughable vaudeville, in one act, has also been given each evening with great success. It is entitled *In the Sulks*; characters by Messrs. Bolini, Clowes, and Miss M. Duggan. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 8, 1880; Issue 2185.]

9th – 14th August: Hull

"The Sorcerer" – a Gilbert-Sullivan musical piece, splendidly executed – has held the boards of the Theatre Royal this past week. The harmonies are catching – the orchestral arrangements of the burlesque opera are as able as they are amusing – and altogether Mr. Wilson Barrett and Mr. Cuthbert are responsible for having accorded us no common amusement. That dreadful sorcerer himself only requires to be seen in order to be laughed at. [*The Hull Packet and East Riding Times* (Hull, England), Friday, August 13, 1880; Issue 5000.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company again appeared at this theatre on Monday in *The Sorcerer*, to an audience both enthusiastic and appreciative. A charming little operetta entitled *Six and Six When Suited* was produced for the first time. It is well written, several of the airs being very pretty. The trials of the manager of a matrimonial agency are well shown, some of the situations being very droll. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 15, 1880; Issue 2186.]

N.B. *Pinafore* was played on the Saturday evening.

16th – 21st August: Buxton

THE PAVILION, WINTER GARDENS. – Lessee, Mr. Edward Saker; Acting-Manager, Mr. F. W. Walden. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company appeared on Monday in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and on Tuesday in *The Sorcerer*, drawing capital houses. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 22, 1880; Issue 2187.]

23rd – 28th August: Douglas

GAIETY THEATRE. – Mr. Elphinstone has had the reward of spirited enterprise during the week that elapses today. Crowded houses have attested the genuine artistic singing and acting characterizing the fine performance of the world renowned comic opera of "H.M.S. Pinafore," by D'Oyly Carte's effective principal company. The premier parts of Josephine and Ralph Rackstraw were admirably sustained by Miss Ethel McAlpine and Mr. James Sydney respectively. The lady has a splendid voice of high range, her upper C fairly at times electrifying the audience. Mr. Sydney's singing was superior to his acting, but he gave notwithstanding a most sympathetic and natural rendering to the part of Ralph Rackstraw; such, in fact, as one could see many times without tiring of it. Mr. Arthur Rousbey's Captain Corcoran was well done throughout – voice and action in a very trying part were admirably sustained, and the solo, "Fair moon to thee I sing," was one of the artistic successes of the performance. The Sir Joseph Porter of Mr. Richard Mansfield was a representation as near to artistic perfection as we could imagine. A finer piece of character acting we have not seen on our insular boards for many a year. In his person alone the keen irony and

sarcasm of the words and music of the opera find ample justification. Miss Stavart's Buttercup was also a most popular and pleasing representation, and no one received a more hearty recall on the fall of the curtain, when the principals, night after night, received quite an ovation. The chorus was in excellent rim, and elicited repeated and hearty encores, especially in "The British Tar is a soaring soul," and "He is an Englishman." The enthusiasm excited by these admirable choruses was simply irresistible, and repetitions were demanded in a tone of applause not to be denied. We are, in a manner, sorry that "The Pinafore Company" is leaving the Island. They have given us an intellectual and musical treat of a high order of merit. We see that the "Majiltons" are announced for next week at the Gaiety. They have, up to today, been performing at the Amphitheatre, Liverpool, and they are reported to us as being most clever and amusing, and sure to draw. We trust these assurances will be fully realized. [*The Isle of Man Times and General Advertiser* (Douglas, England), Saturday, August 28, 1880; pg. 4; Issue 1008.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – During the week Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company have been playing *Pinafore* to enormous houses. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, August 29, 1880; Issue 2188.]

30th August – 11th September: Liverpool

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

One of the most popular of the Gilbert-Sullivan productions – "The Sorcerer" – was given at the Prince of Wales Theatre last night, along with an operetta called "Six and Six," for the existence of which Mr. B. T. Hughes and Mr. P. W. Halton are responsible. Mr. Hughes book contains an idea which might have been more skilfully expanded, and Mr. Halton's music, if of the most ordinary type, betrays a discretion that keeps it from offending the ear. It is but right to say that they who took part in the performance vocally had very little notion of time, and still less of tune, otherwise the operetta might have obtained more cordial recognition. [*Liverpool Mercury etc* (Liverpool, England), Tuesday, August 31, 1880; Issue 10183.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery; Acting Manager, Mr G. Redmond. – Carl Rosa's opera company closed here on Saturday as they had begun on Monday, most brilliantly and successfully and last Monday evening the stage of the Little House was taken possession of by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's operatic combination. There was a large audience, and increased interest was given to the programme by the first performance here of a new operetta entitled *Six and Six*, the libretto being the work of Mr. B. T. Hughes (a young local author), and the music by Mr. P. W. Halton, the conductor of the company. The scene of the little musical work is laid in a matrimonial registry office, kept by a lively and interesting gentleman named Mr. Sysiphus Twister. Here there are a succession of ludicrous situations, consequent upon the rapid arrival of clients on matrimony bent, and the difficulty which the chief of the establishment has in keeping their presence unknown to each other. After a good many laughable incidents, the various applicants are mated, and the curtain descends on a chorus of general jubilation. The libretto is sparkling and catching, and there are some parts of Mr Halton's music which are worth remembering. *The Sorcerer*, which never loses its hold on the public, was played as the chief item of attraction during the week, and special favours were bestowed on Mr. Richard Mansfield, who elicited roars of laughter by his eccentric representation of Wellington Wells; Mr. Billington, a capital Dr. Daly; Mr. Arthur Rousbey, a thoroughly artistic Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre; Miss M. Duggan, a charming Constance; Miss M.

Stavart, a characteristic Lady Sangazure; Miss Ethel McAlpine, whose Aline was thoroughly appreciated; Miss Armytage, the Mrs. Partlet; and Mr. Sydney, who was a capital Alexis. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 5, 1880; Issue 2189.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

"H.M.S. Pinafore," frequent repetition of which does not injure its popularity, was again produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre last night, when it was received with every mark of favour by a large audience. The cast was similar to that of former occasions except in this respect, that Mr. F. Billington played Dick Deadeye, and Mr. Arthur Rousbey, Captain Corcoran. This exchange of characters was very acceptable. Mr. Rousbey's fine voice and excellent style have more effective results in the delivery of the captain's music than they obtained in the arduous yet ungrateful part of Deadeye. Mr. Halton conducted. [*Liverpool Mercury etc* (Liverpool, England), Tuesday, September 7, 1880; Issue 10189.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* was brought out here on Monday as the chief attraction for the week, and a large audience thoroughly enjoyed the revival of the old favourite. The members of the D'Oyly Carte corps, who have previously given the opera, at this theatre, were again engaged to do the work, and the result of their labours was, on the whole, satisfactory. There was little change in the complexion of the cast, with the exception that Mr. Arthur Rousbey now took upon himself the representation of Captain Corcoran, who was admirably portrayed, both vocally and dramatically; and Mr. F. Billington was cast for the role of Dick Deadeye, a veritable "grampus." Miss Ethel McAlpine was a most charming Josephine; Miss Madge Stavart an excellent Little Buttercup; and Miss Duggan an attractive Hebe; while the Admiral and Ralph Rackstraw were well impersonated by Messrs. Mansfield and Sydney. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 12, 1880; Issue 2190.]

13th – 25th September: Dublin

THE GAIETY THEATRE,

Last night "The Sorcerer," an original, modern comic opera, the result of the partnership of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, was produced at the; Gaiety, "The Sorcerer" is founded on an amusing story, written by Mr. Gilbert for a Christmas number of the *Graphic* some five years ago; it has only been produced in Dublin once before, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company for a week's engagement about two years ago. It may be heterodox to say so, but even at the risk of advancing an opinion that will meet with much contradiction, we are fain to suggest that "The Sorcerer" is more tuneful and fuller of fun than "H.M.S. Pinafore." The situations are very amusing, the solos are full of good music, the concerted pieces are most artistic productions, and the airs are very catching. Last night the opera was very well done. Mr. Richard Mansfield played J. W. Wells in a thoroughly amusing manner, and of course scored an encore for his patter song. Mr. Arthur Rousbey has appeared before in Dublin in Sir Marmaduke, and quite deserves his reputation for careful and quaint acting. Mr. Billington made a very good Dr. Daly; he gave the Vicar's song in first-rate style, and was also fairly good in "Engaged to So-and-so." Miss Ethel McAlpine plays Aline, sings with a fresh, well-trained voice, and pleased in all her songs. Mr. James Sydney acted and sang the part of Alexis in a satisfactory manner. Miss Stavart, who played Lady Sangazure, has a sweet voice, but it is not sufficiently powerful to fill the theatre. Miss M. Duggan played Constance; she sang well, and won deserved applause, and Miss Armytage was very good as Mrs. Partlet. "The Sorcerer" was

preceded, by an operetta entitled "Six and Six," a light comedy with some very good airs in it. [*Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Tuesday, September 14, 1880; Issue N/A.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. Michael Gunn. – The very successful engagement of Mr. Wm. Duck's company was brought to a termination on Saturday last, when two performances were given with eminently satisfactory results. At the two o'clock *matinée*, Mr. H. J. Byron's *Our Boys* was received with all the old enthusiasm, and in the evening the same author's *Uncle* and Mr. H A. Jones's *Elopement* were given before a well-filled house. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened in *The Sorcerer* on Monday evening, when perhaps the most fashionable audience we have recently witnessed in the theatre assembled. The work was received with the most flattering demonstrations of approval, a result attributable as well to the excellence of the representation as to the indisputable merits of the work. Miss Ethel McAlpine gave a charming interpretation of the heroine, Aline ; Miss B. Armytage was exceedingly efficient as Mrs. Partlet; and Miss Madge Stavart was vocally and histrionically excellent as Lady Sangazure. Miss Mary Duggan (a very young Dublin lady who made her *début* on these boards some two years ago) was received with considerable warmth, and by her clever impersonation of Constance evidenced the rapid strides she has made. Mr. James Sydney achieved a well-deserved success in his impersonation of Alexis. Mr. F. Billington was a very able exponent of the character of the well-meaning Vicar; and Mr. Richard Mansfield created an exceeding[ly] favourable impression as Wellington Wells. The utmost commendation is also due to Mr. Arthur Rousbey for his clever portraiture of that "gentleman of the old school," Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre. The opera was preceded by the new musical sketch *Six and Six*, the work of Mr. Halton (the conductor of the orchestra), which has been received with much favour. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 19, 1880; Issue 2191.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. Michael Gunn. – The popular Sullivan-Gilbert opera *The Sorcerer* continues to attract large audiences. A morning performance given on Saturday last was extremely well attended. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, September 26, 1880; Issue 2192.]

27th September – 2nd October: Manchester

PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee and Director, Mr. C. Bernard. – Once More *H.M.S. Pinafore* is safely docked at the Prince's where it remains until the end of the present week. There is but little change in the cast from the occasion of the last visit of the company to this theatre. The chief alteration is the elevation of Mr. Arthur Rousbey from the position of Able Seaman to that of Captain. By this change we lose a first-class Dick Deadeye, but we gain an excellent Captain Corcoran. Mr. Rousbey's vocal talents are so noteworthy that it is to the advantage of the representation that he should have greater facilities for distinguishing himself. Mr. F. Billington is now the Dick Deadeye, Mr. James Sydney the Ralph Rackstraw, Mr. Richard Mansfield the Sir Joseph Porter, Miss Ethel McAlpine the Josephine, and Miss Madge Stavart the Little Buttercup. *Pinafore* was given on the first three evenings of the week, and *The Sorcerer* on the following evenings, the entertainments concluding nightly with the musical bagatelle *Six and Six*, the words of which are by Mr. B. T. Hughes, and the music by Mr. P. W. Halton. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 3, 1880; Issue 2193.]

4th – 16th October: Glasgow

THE GAIETY.

Once again "H.M.S. Pinafore" has cast anchor in our dramatic port, and yesterday evening a host of folks drew alongside the interesting craft at the Gaiety berth and welcome back the tars, the lasses, and their friends. Often as we have enjoyed the humour, sarcasm and fancy of Gilbert's lines, and familiar – particularly by friendly chanting of favourite snatches – as we have become with the light, graceful, tuneful rhythms of Sullivan, there is always something of a fresh pleasure in listening to them. Our twin-entertainers have the advantage of the majority of their foreign fellow-workers in the regions of comic opera in that they have applied their talents to the production of a musical piece which, as the management put it, is altogether free from any meretricious attraction, or undraped figures, any impropriety of dialogue or coarseness that could offend the most scrupulous. The subject of which "Pinafore" treats, too, is one which has a peculiar charm for dwellers in these realms, and there is a singular mixture of absurdity and sentiment in what of plot there is in the piece which, coupled with the "catching" and pretty airs, only tends the greater to amuse and interest an audience. Of course much of the success of the opera depends on the manner in which it is placed upon the stage and rendered, and there is a satisfaction in speaking of the present representation as being an exceptionally good one. Collectively those engaged in the representation work capitally together, and from beginning to end the piece runs in that cheery, hearty, bustling manner generally supposed to be characteristic of Jack's life aboard ship. Individually, too, the cast, in so far as the principal parts are concerned, is as a rule a competent one. An excellent Josephine is found in Miss Ethel McAlpine, whose tuneful voice was effectively heard in a tasteful rendering of some of the chief numbers. Miss Madge Stavart was the very picture of the "plump and pleasing person" Little Buttercup, and she succeeded both by her musical and histrionic efforts in making the part a favourite one. Many will doubtless have pleasant recollections of Mr. Arthur Rousbey's impersonation of the "fine old English gentleman." Sir Marmaduke in "The Sorcerer." Mr. Rousbey now returns in the guise of Captain Corcoran, and a gallant commander he makes. Vocally he is one of the best of the company, and being in good voice last night, he sang his music very nicely. The Ralph Rackstraw of Mr. James Sydney was decidedly good; there was a heartiness in his acting, and his generally pleasing voice told well in the solos and concerted morceaux he had to take part in. There was nothing, particularly brilliant about Mr. Richard Mansfield's efforts in the part of Sir Joseph. Of the others, Miss M. Duggan was quite a Hebe. Mr. F. Billington sustained the *rôle* of Deadeye, and Mr. Roche that of Bobstay, creditably. There is a numerous chorus, and they did their work in a highly praiseworthy manner; while the orchestra, under Mr. P. W. Halton, gave the required assistance. The audience were evidently much taken with the performance, and bestowed their favours liberally. Although last mentioned, the first portion of the programme consisted of a new operetta entitled "Six and Six." It well enough performs its duty – "playing up" to the principal part of the evening's entertainment. "Pinafore" will be repeated during the week, and on Monday first "The Sorcerer" is to be given. [Glasgow Herald (Glasgow, Scotland), Tuesday, October 5, 1880; Issue 239.]

GAIETY. – Proprietor, Mr. Charles Bernard; Manager, Mr. Sam. H. S. Austin. – On Monday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened an engagement with *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Despite the frequency with which the charming work has been produced here, it seems to have lost but little of its popularity, if we may judge by the

attendance. The company has apparently been reorganised since the last performance of the opera at the Gaiety. The alterations in the cast, however, are not in every case for the better. While Mr. Arthur Rousbey is, perhaps, the best Captain Corcoran we have seen, Mr. Richard Mansfield's Sir Joseph Porter is just the reverse. Mr. F. Billington is a capital Dick Deadeye; but Mr. James Sydney is a disappointing Ralph Rackstraw. A better Little Buttercup than Madge Stavart could not be desired; and Miss Ethel McAlpine is a pleasing Josephine. Band and chorus are fairly efficient, and the opera is mounted, as formerly, with care and attention to detail. A pretty operetta, entitled *Six and Six* preceded. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 10, 1880; Issue 2194.]

GAIETY. – Proprietor, Mr. Charles Bernard; Manager, Mr. Sam. H. S. Austin. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company still occupies the stage here. A morning performance of *Pinafore* was given last Saturday for the convenience of country patrons. The attendance was fairly numerous. It was the intention of the Management to produce *The Sorcerer* this week, but owing to the success of *Pinafore* it has been continued for three nights longer. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 17, 1880; Issue 2195.]

18th – 23rd October: Edinburgh

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs. Howard and Logan, Acting Manager, Mr. Frank Sephton. – *H.M.S. Pinafore* has come our way once more, for a six nights' engagement, and is most welcome, for this city seems one of its strongholds. As we have already on a former occasion noticed the performances of this company in detail, we will now simply refer to one or two changes in the cast made since last visit, and which have been hailed with cordial approbation by the large audiences that have patronised the entertainment all the week. We refer to the advancement of Mr. Arthur Rousbey to the important role of Captain Corcoran, his impersonation of the gallant sailor leaving nothing to be desired. It is admirable in every detail, and shows how brilliantly this clever actor and vocalist can excel in every range of character. Mr. Billington plays Dick Deadeye fairly well, and the other parts are all well filled. The chief entertainment of the evening was preceded by a miserable trifle entitled *Six and Six*. It may be "new and original," but the word "operetta," which labels it, is a misnomer. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 24, 1880; Issue 2196.]

25th – 30th October: Newcastle

From Shakespearian tragedy and high-class comedy to "Pinafore" and "Sorcerer" is a big stride. For three nights this week, the deck of Her Majesty's Ship, which has had a long, and promises to have a longer, and successful cruise, has occupied the stage at the Theatre Royal; and, although the weather has been for the most part of the most wretched description, the performances have nightly been witnessed by large audiences. Last night, "The Sorcerer," another of Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert's comic operas, was performed in Newcastle for the first time. Great expectations had been formed of this work, and it is needless to say more than that those expectations were fully realised. The orchestra, one of the best in the north of England, deserves great praise for the manner in which the vocalists were supported. [*The Newcastle Courant etc* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England), Friday, October 29, 1880; Issue 10739.]

THEATRE ROYAL. Lessee, Mr. Charles Bernard. – There was a capital attendance at this theatre on Monday evening, Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's *Pinafore*

company commencing a six nights' engagement, and meeting with a cordial and enthusiastic greeting. The operetta entitled *Six and Six* commenced the performances, supported by Mr. Truro, Mr. Price, and Mr. Bolini, and Misses Farquharson, Bernard, and Duggan, all of whom were deserving of commendation for their acting and singing. *Pinafore* followed, with a capital cast. Mr. Richard Mansfield's finished acting as Sir Joseph was especially noticeable, Mr. Arthur Rousbey being equally successful as Captain Corcoran, while the acting and singing of Mr. James Sydney as Ralph provoked the warm plaudits of the audience. Miss Madge Stavart was a charming Little Buttercup, and Miss McAlpine's graceful acting and artistic singing were suitably acknowledged by the audience. On Tuesday evening *The Sorcerer* was presented. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, October 31, 1880; Issue 2197.]

1st – 6th November: Leeds

THE GRAND THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company have appeared here during the week in the renowned *Sorcerer* and a very tuneful and pretty operetta called *Six and Six*. Of the first it is needless to say much, except that the interpretation throughout was thoroughly satisfactory and efficient. Miss Ethel McAlpine, as a vocalist and actress, was successful as Aline; and Miss Madge Stavart, stately and charming as Lady Sangazure. Miss M. Duggan made a demure and pretty Constance; and Miss B. Armytage was sufficiently demonstrative as the pew-opener, and used her fine voice to advantage. Vocally and otherwise Mr. Sydney was an agreeable Alexis; Mr. Billington, an admirable Dr. Daly; and Mr. Arthur Rousbey, unexceptionally good and dignified as the polished Sir Marmaduke. It remains to say that the important part of Mr. John Wellington Wells, in the able hands of Mr. R. Mansfield, was a very clever performance. The patter song was a great success. The tow scenes – the outside of Sir Marmaduke's mansion and the village – were very beautiful specimens of the scenic painter's art. The band and chorus, under the direction of Mr. Halton, were highly efficient. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 7, 1880; Issue 2198.]

8th – 13th November: Manchester

PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee and Director, Mr. C. Bernard. – Once again we have the *Pinafore* company, which was here not many weeks ago. Some play-goers may possibly feel aggrieved as so much *Pinafore*, but Mr. D'Oyly Carte's justification is to be found in the attendance, which has been most encouraging. Indeed, the popularity of *Pinafore* may be allowed to rank as one of the phenomena of the age. People insist upon going to see it, and, apparently, it cannot be given too often for them. *The Sorcerer* has also been played during the engagement. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 14, 1880; Issue 2199.]

15th – 27th November: Birmingham

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – The special engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, in their representation of *The Sorcerer* is sure to prove attractive during the twelve nights over which the engagement extends. The opera in every respect has been effectively put upon the stage, and each character has been well sustained. Miss Ethel McAlpine as Aline has rendered the part with surprising freshness and vivacity. Lady Sangazure by Miss Madge Stavart, the Mrs. Partlet of Miss B. Armytage, and the Constance of Miss Duggan were all intelligently rendered. Mr. Fred Billington (as Dr. Daly), Mr. R. Mansfield (as Mr. Wells), Mr. Arthur Rousbey (as Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre), and

Mr. James Sydney (as Alexis), played with care and sang the music allotted to them with considerable effect. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 21, 1880; Issue 2200.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – The visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company has been very successful. *The Sorcerer* was received with the greatest enthusiasm by crowded houses, and *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been as popular as ever. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, November 28, 1880; Issue 2201.]

29th November – 4th December: Nottingham

THEATRE ROYAL. – Manager, Mr. Thomas W. Charles. – In these days it is too late, as it would be too hazardous an experiment, to attempt criticism on *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The public has taken it so deeply into its affections as to permit nothing but looking, listening, laughing, and admiring; and never was such more fully evidenced than on Monday last, when this popular whimsical opera was reproduced on our local boards. Everything and everybody were applauded to the echo, and candour rally compels us to say that never was approbation more thoroughly deserved. Each and all worked well, and we think it would be scarcely possible to have better interpreters of this most quaint of musical pieces than the company brought together by Mr. D'Oyly Carte. Mr. Richard Mansfield is a model Sir Joseph Porter; Mr. Arthur Rousbey is every inch a sailor as Captain Corcoran; Mr. James Sydney's Ralph is the ablest of able seamen; Dick Deadeye is represented with a weird comicality by Mr. Fred Billington; Tom Tucker is the picture of unconscious precocity in the hands of Mr. Fitzaltamont, jun., and the ladies – Mdlles. Ethel McAlpine, M. Duggan, and Madge Stavart – in the respective parts of Josephine, Hebe, and Buttercup, constitute a charming trinity of grace, talent, and beauty. The choruses were executed with excellent precision, and Mr. Gibbons' scene of Portsmouth Harbour was a realistic bit of painting. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, December 5, 1880; Issue 2202.]

6th – 11th December: Leicester

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee, Mr. Elliot Galer. – The Chippendale company concluded here on Saturday night, after a round of old comedies. The D'Oyly Carte opera company, with the everlasting *Pinafore*, are drawing good houses. This time there is nearly a complete change in the company. The Captain Corcoran of Mr. Federici and the Ralph Rackstraw of Mr. James Sydney are the best in the cast, while of the ladies the Little Buttercup is exceedingly good by Miss Bessie Armytage. The concluding operetta, entitled *Six and Six*, is very funny. For the first time on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday we are to have *The Sorcerer*, for the first time in Leicester. [*The Era* (London, England), Sunday, December 12, 1880; Issue 2203.]