

## **Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "B" Company 1881 ("C" from 7th March)**

### **1st – 15th January: Glasgow**

ROYALTY. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. E. L. Knapp. – *The Pirates of Penzance* continues to ensure good business. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 8, 1881; Issue 2207.]

ROYALTY. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. E. L. Knapp. – The present is the fourth and last week of *The Pirates of Penzance*, which has, indeed, proved a trump card. Nothing better could have been secured to fill the place of Pantomime during the festive season, and Mr. Knapp may fairly be congratulated on having "scored" one of the biggest financial successes of the season. While the representation of the satirical work by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is worthy of all praise, we ought to state that much of the success is undoubtedly due to the completeness and elegance of the mounting, which, in these respects could hardly be surpassed. The scenery, from the brush of Mr. R. S. Smythe, is charming; anything finer, in fact, we have rarely seen here. The Ruined Abbey is in particular a gem in the way of scenic art. Altogether, we have not had a more enjoyable production here for many a day. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 15, 1881; Issue 2208.]

### **17th January – 12th February: Edinburgh**

PRINCESS'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. A. D. McNeill; Acting-Manager, Mr. W. A. McNeill. – On Monday evening this favourite house was packed in every corner by a brilliant and demonstrative audience, the attraction being the appearance of Mr D'Oyly Carte's company in Gilbert and Sullivan's eminently successful comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance*, an event that had been long in pleasant anticipation, and was anxiously waited by a legion of admirers of both author and composer. The performance was an admirable one, and in every way worthy this charming work; while the mounting and scenery, in which Mr. Evans's artistic skill is again recognisable, were alike of a very tasteful and effective character. The cast did not present many names familiar here, but those of the company who had already appeared in Edinburgh had a hearty reception. Very warm and friendly was the welcome accorded to Mr. David Fisher jun., who made quite a hit as Major-General Stanley. The droll humour of his acting and the excellence of his singing were frequent sources of pleasure and amusement to the audience, and his rendering of the now well-known patter song was one of the features of the evening. Mr. George Marler was eminently successful as the Sergeant of Police, and much of the comic effect of the second act was due to his quaint acting and humorous singing. Mr. G. Coventry made a capital appearance as Frederic, and, although evidently suffering from cold, sang remarkably well. Mr. Marnock was fairly effective as the Pirate King, and Mr. Hemsley made an amusing Lieutenant. The Mabel of Miss Laura Clement was a most delightful performance, full of poetic charm and delicate grace; while her singing of the beautiful music assigned to her was brilliant in the extreme. Miss Augusta Roche played Ruth with characteristic spirit and effect, and sang throughout with great ability. The other parts were efficiently filled, and the choruses were given with remarkable precision, several of the more elaborately-constructed numbers being encored. A large and well-balanced orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Stanislaus, played the overture and accompaniments splendidly, and there is no doubt but that *The Pirates of Penzance* will

draw immense audiences here for many weeks yet to come. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 22, 1881; Issue 2209]

PRINCESS'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. A. D. McNeill; Acting-Manager, Mr. W. A. McNeill. – As we anticipated, *The Pirates of Penzance* has proved an enormous success, and the theatre is crowded to overflowing nightly, hundreds being unable to obtain admission. At the morning performance on Saturday, also, every available inch of space was occupied. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 29, 1881; Issue 2210.]

PRINCESS'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. A. D. McNeill; Acting-Manager, Mr. W. A. McNeill. – This charming theatre continues to be crowded nightly to overflowing with brilliant audiences, the attractions of *The Pirates of Penzance*, with its sparkling libretto and delightful music, seeming to increase with every fresh performance. The morning entertainment, which it has been found necessary to give every Saturday, in point of attendance and enthusiasm fairly rival the evening representation of the opera. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 5, 1881; Issue 2211.]

PRINCESS'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. A. D. McNeill; Acting-Manager, Mr. W. A. McNeill. – *The Pirates of Penzance*, represented at this theatre nightly during the past four weeks, might, judging by the demand for seats, which could not by any means be met, have well run another month, had arrangements permitted. As it is, the opera must be withdrawn in the heyday of its popularity, but we have no doubt arrangements will be made for a return visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's very clever company. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 12, 1881; Issue 2212.]

#### **14th – 19th February: York**

##### **YORK THEATRE ROYAL. "THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"**

The joint compositions of Mr. W. S. Gilbert and Mr. Arthur Sullivan invariably furnish something which theatre-goers can relish, and patrons of the York Theatre are indebted in the past to Mr. Waddington for his having provided them with the opportunity of seeing the successful "Sorcerer" and "H.M.S. Pinafore," both from the pens of the talented gentlemen named. This week we have for the first time here one of their latest and greatest successes, the "Pirates of Penzance." The piece first saw the light about a year ago at a little theatre at Paignton, this being a preliminary performance in order to secure the copyright, and "The Pirates" then proceeded to New York, where the novelty met with an enormous success. It was produced in London, for the first time, in April last at the Opera Comique Theatre in the Strand, and the success which had attended it in America was equalled in the country of its birth. The provinces are now being favoured with its presence, and there is not the slightest doubt that all theatre-goers will not miss an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with it. Mr. Gilbert's rich vein of satirical humour, and Mr. Sullivan's genial and tuneful music are fully realised in the "Pirates of Penzance." The libretto involves some amusing caricatures of old-fashioned, stilted melodrama, and of the conventionalisms of opera-book-writing; and, as might be expected, abounds in sparkling word-play and jocularities which never exceeds the bounds of good taste. The piece is in two acts and two set scenes. The plot may be thus briefly summarised:— Frederick, the hero, a pirate apprentice; has been left by his deceased father to the care of his nurse, Ruth, with injunctions to have him bound apprentice to a pilot; but she, mistaking her instructions, apprentices her charge to a pirate. The young man has

such a strong sense of duty that, although detesting his enforced occupation, he serves his master faithfully. At the beginning of the first act Frederick's time is about to expire, and he tells his chief that his future life will be devoted to the destruction of the band. Ruth (now become a pirate maid-of-all-work), hearing of this decision, discloses her love for Frederick, but the disparity of their ages – twenty-one and forty-seven – is too much for the young hero, and he rejects the proposal. The pirates depart on an expedition, and while they are absent a troop of beautiful girls, daughters of Major-General Stanley, appear, and the eldest, Mabel, and Frederick fall mutually in love. At this juncture the pirates return and individually offer marriage to all the young ladies. Their sire appears on the scene and endeavours to save his daughters from their threatened fate, stating that he is an orphan, it being a rule with these pirates never to molest orphans. The plea is admitted, and he and his daughters are set at liberty. The second act takes place in a ruined chapel, on the estate of the Major-General, to which he repairs nightly in repentance for the falsehood he has told as to his orphanage. His daughters endeavour to assuage his grief, and Frederick assures him that he is taking measures for the immediate destruction of the pirate horde. Frederick being left alone, the Pirate Chief and Ruth appear from behind the ruins, the latter stating, in revenge for the rejection of her hand, she has disclosed to the pirates the fact that the young man was born on the 29th February in leap year, and consequently is little more than five instead of twenty-one years old, and that his pirate apprenticeship would not expire for many years. Frederick's strained sense of duty again comes into play, and he conscientiously discloses the fact that the Major-General is not an orphan, whereon the pirate vows vengeance and is about to take it when encountered by a body of police, who are at once defeated. The sergeant then calls on the pirates to surrender in the name of Queen Victoria, and is answered by their immediate submission. Explanations ensue, and the pirates prove to be "nearly all" noblemen "who have gone wrong." As they are "thoroughly reformed" there is no objection to their alliance with the Major-General's numerous daughters; and all pair off accordingly. Such is a mere outline of the farcical incidents so cleverly filled in by Mr. Gilbert, each absurd situation eliciting roars of laughter. The music of "The Pirates of Penzance" is even more successful than Mr. Sullivan's "Pinafore" or "Sorcerer," and abounds with genuine comic humour, untinged with coarseness or undue flippancy, and some of the passages are full of charming poetical sentiment. The choruses were perhaps as admirable a part of the performance as anything, and the orchestra was augmented and satisfactorily filled. As to the cast, Miss Laura Clement had the character of Mabel, the Major-General's daughter, assigned to her, and with a pleasing presence and tasteful get-up, together with a charming soprano voice, she gained for herself a deservedly hearty reception. Miss Augusta Roche, as Ruth, the Pirate maid-of-all-work, acted remarkably well, and gave her declamatory music very effectively. Mr. Gerard Coventry sustained the *rôle* of the Pirate apprentice in a creditable manner, and his light tenor was well suited to the music allotted him. The Pirate King was represented by Mr. G. W. Marnock, and he gave his music with considerable spirit. Mr. David Fisher, jun., was an excellent Major-General Stanley, and his mixture of dry humour and caricatured military sternness were happily combined. Mr. George Marler undertook the character of the Sergeant of Police, and was very well received. The attendant police assumed a good combination of humour and solid official gravity. All the police music is exceedingly comic. The remainder of the characters were as follow and were well filled:– Samuel, pirate lieutenant, Mr. W. T. Hemsley; Edith, Miss Clara Merivale; Kate, Miss Lucy Millais, and Isabel, Miss Ethel Maribel. The dresses are rich and well contrasted, and in some of the groupings have a very picturesque appearance.

The two scenes are very beautiful – a rocky seashore on the coast of Cornwall and the chapel ruins. These have been painted by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, the well-known scenic artist. It is somewhat singular that in the cast for the "Pirates" is a gentleman of the same name as the artist, but they are strangers to each other. The opera was preceded by the pleasant vaudeville, "In the Sulks," written by Mr Frank Desprez, with lively music by Mr. A. Cellier; the characters sustained by Miss Clara Merivale, Mr. Louis Herbert, and Mr. W. T. Hemsley. There was a very good house on Monday evening, despite the continuous downpour of rain and the wretched state of the streets. The audience were enthusiastic in their tokens of approval, and encores were frequent. Altogether the performance was a great success, and we opine that there will be a rush for seats during the remainder of the week. We observe that in addition to the evening performance there will be a "morning performance" on Saturday next at half-past two. Last night the pit was crowded, and the other parts of the house were well occupied. [*The York Herald* (York, England), Wednesday, February 16, 1881; pg. 7; Issue 7487.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. W. A. Waddington. – On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company commenced an engagement extending over six nights; a period so short that the York playgoers will, we think, speedily "ask for more." On the opening night the continuous downpour of rain and sleet doubtless deterred many from visiting the theatre, but those who braved the weather were amply repaid. The opera was mounted and dressed with all the care and completeness that its association with Mr. Carte's name led us to expect; the two "sets," specially painted by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, being excellent specimens of that gentleman's skill. Miss Laura Clement, by her skilful and artistic vocalisation, added to a graceful and refined acting, scored an undoubted success as Mabel. Mr. G. W. Marnock looked the Pirate King to perfection, and sang in good style. Mr. Geo. Marler was the Sergeant of Police, and the unctuous humour which he introduced into the part made it very telling. Among the gentlemen, however, the greatest hit was made by Mr. David Fisher, jun., who was an excellent Major-General Stanley; his difficult patter song we may instance as being particularly well rendered. Frederic, Samuel, Ruth, Kate, Edith, and Isabel had full justice rendered to them by Messrs G. Coventry, W.T. Hemsley, Misses Augusta Roche, Clara Merivale, Lucy Millais, and Ethel Maribel. The daughters of the Major-General were represented by a bevy of pretty and attractive young ladies, who, with the rest of the chorus, worked well together under the baton of Mr. F. Stanislaus. The opera was preceded by *In the Sulks*, the bulk of the work falling to the lot of Miss Clara Merivale, a vivacious young lady with a very pleasing voice. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 19, 1881; Issue 2213.]

### **21st – 26th February: Hull**

THEATRE ROYAL. – "The Pirates of Penzance" has attracted crowded houses during the week, and the quality of the performance has been such as to excite the warmest admiration. Miss Laura Clement sings the music of Mabel's part with great effect. Mr. Gerard Coventry, as Frederic, lends great aid to the talented lady. The cast is an excellent one all round, Mr. Marnock, the Pirate King, Miss Augusta Roche as Ruth, Mr. D. Fisher, jun., as the Major-General, and the other principals being alike worthy of all praise. Next week the "Caste" Company occupies the theatre. [*The Hull Packet and East Riding Times* (Hull, England), Friday, February 25, 1881; Issue 5027.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett; General Manager, Mr. Alfred Cuthbert. – The engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's tuneful *The Pirates of Penzance*, with which to open the season, is one of those strokes of luck for which Mr. Barrett is becoming famous. First-rate houses have been the result of their visit. The building has been literally crammed each night. The opera is splendidly mounted, the dresses being rich and picturesque, and the two "sets" excellent specimens of the scene painter's art. The vocalisation, with one or two exceptions, is artistic throughout. As Mabel, Miss Laura Clement scored an emphatic success; and Miss Augusta Roche displayed excellent qualities both as an actress and vocalist in the part of the maid-of-all-work, Ruth. Mr. D. Fisher, jun., made a decided hit as Major-General Stanley. Mr. Gerard Coventry, in the role of Frederic, sang and acted with great judgement; and Mr. G. Marnock did well as the Pirate King. Mr. Geo. Marler, as the Sergeant of Police, was very humorous, his two songs being given in first-rate style. The attractive and powerful chorus and band work well together under the direction of Mr. Stanislaus. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 26, 1881; Issue 2214.]

### 28th February – 12th March: Liverpool

#### ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE.

The Gilbert-Sullivan opera "The Pirates of Penzance," with its bright, sparkling music and witty dialogue, continues its hold on public favour, as was shown by the reception it met on Monday night from the large and fashionable audience that assembled at the Alexandra Theatre. The opera was charmingly rendered by D'Oyly Carte's well-selected and numerous company, and it was placed on the stage with completeness as to scenic arrangements and details that left nothing to be desired. The fine air "I am a Pirate King" was capitally given by Mr. G. W. Marnock. Miss Strachane was encored in "Poor Wandering Boy:" the same compliment was paid to Mr. Fisher, "The Model Major-General." Indeed, the whole of the music, solos and chorus, was given in a manner that obtained the unqualified approbation of the audience. The "Pirates" was preceded by the pleasing vaudeville "In the Sulks." [*Liverpool Mercury etc* (Liverpool, England), Wednesday, March 2, 1881; Issue 10340.]

ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. E. Saker. – The six weeks' comic opera season promised by Mr. Saker at the "Alexandra" opened most auspiciously and hopefully on Monday evening, when *The Pirates of Penzance* was performed in the hearing and presence of an audience which nearly filled the Theatre to its utmost capacity. Little or no change has taken place since last visit in the constitution of D'Oyly Carte's comic opera company, and, therefore any extended criticism of the performance is not now required. The ensemble on this occasion was even more satisfactory than ever, and the result was a cordial and appreciative welcome of the whole work by the fashionable audience. Miss Laura Clement, a young artist of great vocal and histrionic ability, played Mabel with much *verve* and grace, and Miss Augusta Roche represented the piratical maid-of-all-work, Ruth, with rare spirit and inimitable mock heroism. The Major-General was most admirably delineated by Mr. David Fisher, jun., and Mr. Marnock sang and acted in the character of the Pirate King in a manner which left little to be desired. The Lieutenant was most effectively played by Mr. Hemsley; the apprentice Frederic was again capitally impersonated by Mr. Coventry; and Mr George Marler's Sergeant of Police received the cordial approval which it so much merited. Encores were almost as plentiful as the leaves in June, and the entire performance went without a single hitch. The dressing

and illustration of the opera were quite up to the "Alexandra" standard, and every one present seemed to consider the representation one of the brightest and merriest which has ever yet been given in the young city. The chief work was preceded by the vaudeville *In the Sulks*, a clever production, the joint work of Mr. Cellier and Mr. Desprez. Much of the general success of the performance was due to the steady and musicianly conductorate of Mr. Stanislaus. *Olivette* is pronounced as one of the works of the six weeks' season. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 5, 1881; Issue 2215.]

ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Edward Saker; Treasurer, Mr. F. Wilkinson. – *The Pirates of Penzance* have continued "a-pirating" during the past week at this theatre with undoubted success, as large audiences have greatly enjoyed the musical excellences and laughable situations of the Gilbert-Sullivan work. The run of the opera for the present, however, must cease this (Saturday) evening, as Mr. Saker has promised the production of the celebrated *Olivette* on Monday night, and considerable interest is manifested by the public here in connection with the first performance of the Farnie-Audran opera. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 12, 1881; Issue 2216.]

#### **14th – 26th March: Manchester**

##### PRINCE'S THEATRE.

Manchester playgoers have not been so fortunate in regard to the "Pirates of Penzance" as they usually are in matters theatrical. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera was first produced so long ago as December 30, 1879; but not until Monday had it been presented in Manchester. In the meantime the piece has had two seasons in Liverpool, and it has been performed in most of the other large towns in the kingdom. Why there should have been this unusual delay in bringing so popular a work to this city we are unable to say, but the reason is probably accident and not design. Many of our readers have elsewhere become familiarised with the opera and its simple plot, but it may be useful to briefly sketch the groundwork of the piece. The hero is an innocent pirate, Frederick, who has an exaggerated notion of his duty under extraordinary circumstances. Frederick in his childhood is left to the care of a nurse, who has instructions to bind her charge as an apprentice to a pilot. Being hard of hearing, she misunderstands her instructions and apprentices the lad to a pirate. Frederick heartily abhors his calling, but his high sense of duty impels him to serve out his apprenticeship faithfully. On the last day of his bondage he tells the Pirate King that he will not only leave him the moment he is free, but henceforth will devote himself to the extirpation of the band. This resolve is communicated to the nurse Ruth, who thereupon makes amorous advances to her former charge, who, however, will have none of her. Presently the pirates leave their cave for one of their unlawful expeditions, only Frederick being left behind. Whilst they are away the cave is visited by several daughters of a major-general, and the eldest, Mabel, falls in love with the hero, who returns her affection. Whilst they are making love, the other pirates return, and all Mabel's sisters are provided with lovers and would-be husbands. Before the wholesale marriage can be performed, the Major-General returns and saves his daughters by declaring himself to be an orphan, knowing that the pirates have an inflexible rule never to hurt orphans. The old man's story moves the hardy pirates to tears, and he is allowed to depart with his daughters. He takes with him also an uneasy conscience, because he has deceived the pirates, and is only soothed when Frederick declares his resolve to hunt down the band. Frederick, however, soon finds himself in a difficulty. The secret of his birth is betrayed to the Pirate King by the rejected nurse. This secret is that he

was born on the 29th February, so that he only has a birthday every leap year. Thus he finds that, instead of having attained his majority, he is only a little over five, and that he will only be out of his apprenticeship in the year 1940. So severe a sense of duty has he that he parts from Mabel and returns to his lawless life with the pirates. Then his duty compels him to disclose to his chief the fact that the Major-General is not an orphan, and the King declares he will have the blood of the deceiver. The pirates discover the Major, and are about to seize him, when they are confronted with a body of police. The constables are defeated, but the police sergeant calls for the surrender of the band in the name of the Queen. This demand is complied with, the pirates bowing to Queen Victoria's name. "They yield at once with humbled mien, because with all their faults they love their Queen." After this touching display of loyalty certain explanations are made, the pirates turn out to be "all noblemen who have gone wrong," the General freely gives his daughter[s] to the ex-pirates, and everybody is made exuberantly happy. The music of the piece is bright and lively, and is here and there – in the policemen's chorus, for instance – comic in itself, without the aid of the libretto. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is now well at home in the piece, which goes briskly from beginning to end. Miss Laura Clement is a charming Mabel, and has the advantage – which few other ladies of the company possess – of a fine, well-trained voice. Miss Augusta Roche acquits herself excellently in the ungracious part of Ruth. Mr. David Fisher, junior, is thoroughly successful as the amusing Major-General. The part of Frederick finds a good exponent in Mr. G. Coventry, and Mr. G. W. Marnock as the Pirate King and Mr. G. Marler as the Sergeant of Police play very acceptably. On Monday night the opera was preceded by Mr. F. Desprez's and Mr. A. Cellier's vaudeville, "In the Sulks." [*Manchester Times* (Manchester, England), Saturday, March 19, 1881; Issue 1213.]

PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee and Director, Mr. C. Bernard. – At last Manchester has been favoured with a representation of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Why we have had to wait twelve months for this when our rival sister of Liverpool has had two visits from Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is best known to the powers that be. It is characteristic of Manchester that the public fought shy of the piece the first night, came half approvingly the second, and crowded the theatre on the third evening. The piece is here for a fortnight, and will, we venture to predict, draw immense business next week. *The Pirates* is a capital thing, but it is not so captivating as *Pinafore*. It is built on the same lines, and of course suffers by comparison. It is perhaps hardly fair to Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan to seek to detect points of resemblance between it and its predecessor, but people will do these things, and, as men of the world, those gentlemen will be prepared for it. *The Pirates* cannot fail to do well for a season or two; its merits are too obvious, but it will not enjoy the perennial popularity of *Pinafore*. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company is not strong in principals. The tenor, Mr. Gerard Coventry, is only mediocre, and his acting lacks chivalry and dash. The Pirate King (Mr. G. W. Marnock) is colossal physically, but not otherwise. Mabel (Miss Laura Clement) is artificial as an actress, and somewhat hard as a vocalist, though one song of hers in the second act is charmingly rendered, and makes us wonder why she should not be equally successful in other places. Edith (Miss Agnes Mitchell) is hardly required to be a superior vocalist, and Miss Mitchell atones for any musical deficiency by looking exceedingly pretty. Mr. David Fisher, jun., is very good as Major-General Stanley. He is decidedly funny, and sings the patter song capitally. Mr. George Marler is hardly less successful as the Sergeant of Police; but in both these cases the artists are actors rather than vocalists. The chorus is particularly good, and the

orchestra equally so. An old Manchester favourite, Mr. F. Stanislaus, is the conductor, and to his rigid discipline, so well understood here, the efficiency of the representation may be largely attributed. We may add that Mr. Sullivan's music does not strike us as being altogether so novel as that of *The Sorcerer* or *Pinafore*. For example, he has contrived, however unconsciously, to introduce a portion of Cellier's "We'll sail away with Peter," from *The Sultan of Mocha*, in the finale to the first act. The afterpiece has been the vaudeville *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 19, 1881; Issue 2217.]

PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee and Director, Mr. Charles Bernard. – *The Pirates of Penzance* must have cleared a lot of plunder since they visited this theatre. Each performance has attracted a large audience. The opera will be withdrawn tonight (Saturday). [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, March 26, 1881; Issue 2218.]

#### **28th March – 2nd April: Sheffield**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. E. Romaine Callender; Acting Manager, Mr. John Cavanagh. – For the first time in Sheffield Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* has been presented this week by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. We can hardly imagine the introduction of a comic opera to a large town under more auspicious circumstances. The orchestra and the company are alike strong, the scenery, specially painted by Mr. W. Maughan, the resident artist, was really beautiful, and the piece was capitally mounted throughout. On the evening of our visit the house was almost as full as it could be, some parts being crowded to excess. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 2, 1881; Issue 2219.]

#### **4th – 16th April: Leeds**

THE GRAND THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company appeared here on Monday last for a fortnight in the long-expected *Pirates of Penzance*. The organisation appears almost perfect, and the principals exactly suited to the work set out for them. Mr. David Fisher, jun., was quite at home as the Major-General. Mr. G. Coventry's Frederic and Mr. George Marler's Sergeant of Police were alike excellent. Miss Laura Clement acquitted herself well as Mabel, the General's daughter, and Miss Augusta Roche was very pleasing as Ruth. Mr. G. W. Marnock and Mr. W. T. Hemsley as the Pirate King and Samuel, his Lieutenant; and Misses Agnes Mitchell, Millie Vere, and Miss Maribel, as Edith, Kate, and Isabel, were apt and efficient in their respective parts. The opera went off with great *éclat*, and many of the numbers were encored. The chorus is very strong and effective, and the increased band, under the judicious control of Mr. F. Stanislaus, executed their task with marvellous precision and effect. Some new and effective scenery has been expressly painted for the opera. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 9, 1881; Issue 2220.]

THE GRAND THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company are still at this theatre, and they have been supported during the week by large audiences. The opera is beautifully mounted, the two sets eliciting nightly warm expressions of admiration. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 16, 1881; Issue 2221.]

**18th – 30th April: Dublin**

**"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"**

Last evening the Gaiety Theatre was re-opened after a short recess. The interval has been availed of to do what was very much needed – namely, to clean up the house, removed the soiled lace coverings, and improve the stage fittings. This latter department has been for a long time past in sad want of some attention, for the utter badness of a great deal of the scenery, the negligence and disregard of many of the commonest stage requirements, had become the subject of universal comment amongst playgoers. Let us hope that a new era has opened in this regard, and that the attention which we have so often directed to these shortcomings has produced a lasting effect. The new decorations, hangings, and scenery generally last evening were in extremely good taste, and the theatre crowded to excess in every part looked particularly well. In the vestibule a beautifully executed bust of the late Mr. John Gunn, the founder of the theatre, stands in a circular niche, and, with the addition of a couple of lamps, give a most brilliant and elegant appearance to the entrance.

A better selection could hardly have been made for the performance of the opening night than the "Pirates of Penzance." No doubt, it has passed out of its very youthful days, and can no longer be properly called a new comic opera. We must not, however, forget that theatrically we are regarded as a mere provincial town, and that if we are favoured with the "new opera" any time within two years of their first performance, we are expected, no doubt, to consider ourselves very lucky, indeed, and, like good children, be very thankful for the attention, even at the last moment, bestowed upon us. The "Pirates of Penzance" having done a tour of the world, having "exhausted" America, having been played and sung all over England, and having, thanks to the music books and musical boxes, become familiar even to us Irish, is at length presented to a Dublin audience. "Better late than never," and so, treating the opera and the performances as perfectly new to us, we shall give a few words as to the plot and the character of the music. It is needless here to speak of the peculiar gifts that have made the names of Gilbert and Sullivan so inseparable in the matter of comic opera. There probably never was, and never will be, such a combination. The secret of the extraordinary success of their works lies in the one fact that the strange, whimsical, indefinable, but most original humour of the literary man has found a perfect and identical musical counterpart in Mr. Sullivan. In a sense it may be said that all the peculiarities of the one are reproduced in the other through a different medium of expression, and hence the irresistible fascination of everything they have jointly produced. The peculiar genius of the author's is in some respects better illustrated in "The Pirates" than in "Trial by Jury," "The Sorcerer," or even "Pinafore," though it may be questioned with reason whether the popularity of the latter will ever be completely surpassed, or even equalled, by its successor. Anything more intensely comical than the plot and general plan of "The Pirates" could not possibly be imagined. It is one of those stories that must lose by the telling, but the general idea is something like this. The hero Frederic (Mr. G. Coventry) has been left by his dying father to the care of Ruth (Miss Roche), a nurse who received specific injunctions to have the interesting youth apprenticed to a pilot. The nurse very cleverly mistakes her instructions in a rather essential particular and apprentices Frederic to a pirate. Now Frederic is a lad who of all people in the world hates pirates most. Yet, as he is, so to speak, a perfect slave to a sense of duty, he takes kindly to his enforced occupation, and obeys his piratical master faithfully. At the opening of the piece, or early in the first act, Fred's apprenticeship is

about to expire, and prompted by his unfailing sense of duty he tells the chief of the band (Mr. Marnock) that his future life will be devoted to the destruction of the piratical crew. Ruth, be it observed, who is now "a pirate maid-of-all-work," tells Fred she loves him, but as she is close on fifty, and he only 21, he prudently declines to further the alliance. The Pirate starting on an expedition, and while among a group of beautiful or beautifully dressed girls, the daughter of Major-General Stanley appears, and the eldest, Mabel, Miss Laura Clement, falls in love with Fred. The pirates appear at this juncture and all propose marriage to the young ladies, whose father (Mr. D. Fisher, jun.), however turns up and saves his daughters from their fate by stating that he is an orphan. The reason of this is that the pirates have made it a rule never to molest orphans. They accordingly free the Major-General's daughters. In act the second we are introduced to a ruined chapel on the estate of the Major-General, to which he goes to repent of the falsehood he told to the pirates as to his being an orphan. Fred informs him that he is taking measures for the destruction of the pirate band. Fred being alone with Mabel, the Pirate King and Ruth appear, and the latter, in revenge for the rejection of her hand, informs the chief that Fred was born on the 29th of February, in leap year, and that he is therefore, only about five years old instead of twenty one, so that his apprenticeship has yet a long time to run. Fred, still acting from a deep sense of duty, sees matters in this light, and also dutifully informs the pirates that the Major-General is not an orphan at all. The pirate vows vengeance and is about to have it when a body of police appear, contrary to tradition, just when they are wanted, and the chief and his men yield, as they delicately put it, "Because we love our Queen." Explanations take place, and it turns out that the pirates are all, or "nearly all" distinguished noblemen in disguise. The libretto is full of fun. There run through it some of the most amusing caricatures of the old fashioned style of melodrama, and there is an indefinable and irresistible absurdity in the situations that compel one to laugh. The words of the songs are as droll as those of "Pinafore" or "Trial by Jury," and when it is said that they are wedded to music as clever, as quaint, and as humorous, it will be seen that they are attractive to a degree far surpassing any of the productions in the shape of opera bouffe, or the great mass of works that do duty as modern comic opera. The overture is not by any means so good as the introduction to "Pinafore," but throughout the work there are passages of a higher order of merit. Some of the numbers are really beautiful, and the concerted parts are marked by a skill superior to anything that Sullivan has heretofore written. In the second act is centred all the strength of the opera. The duet between Fred and Mabel, the music of the policemen, and the choruses of the pirates are all fine examples of the composer's peculiar powers, and the finale to the first act may also be mentioned as a very fine musician-like piece of work. The opera presents in many respects, as only to be expected, a very strong family likeness to its predecessors. Some of the best butts are strongly suggestive of the "Sorcerer" music. Anything funnier than the song of the sergeant of police and the choral refrain of constables, repeating the last syllables of each couplet, could not be imagined, and it was sung last night capitally. Miss Augusta Roche deserves a word of special praise for her good singing and acting as Ruth. Her opening song "When Frederic was a little lad," she sang particularly well, and in the duet with Fred in the first act, "You told me you were fair as gold" (a most humorous conceit), she was also extremely good. Miss Laura Clement as Mabel looked very well, and acted gracefully. Her vocalism, however, was not strikingly good, and her enunciation is somewhat indistinct. The part of the Major-General finds satisfactory representation in the hands of Mr. David Fisher, jun. A little more dignity of deportment would add something to its effect. He gave his patter song with extraordinary volubility and with a

distinctness of utterance quite marvellous, Mr. Coventry sang very nicely as Frederic, and acted well. The same observation applies to Mr. Marnock as the Pirate King, and Miss Millie Vere, who appears as Kate (one of the Major-General's daughters), and Mr. Marler, who made a first rate Sergeant of Police, are entitled to commendation for their painstaking and clever performances. The dresses, the scenery, especially the scene of the ruined church in the second act, and appointments generally were good, and the entire opera thoroughly deserving of the great applause with which it was received.

It should be mentioned that the upholstery and redecorations of the theatre were executed by M. Dobson and Co., of Stephen's-green. [*Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Tuesday, April 19, 1881; Issue N/A.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. M. Gunn. – On Monday evening last this theatre reopened with Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company in the new (to Dublin) comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance*. There was a very large attendance, and the Sullivan-Gilbert presentation was very favourably received. The interpretation was in every respect excellent, Miss Laura Clement (who appeared as Mabel) and Miss Augusta Roche (Ruth) being specially commendable. Mr. Marnock was exceedingly good as the Pirate King, Mr. David Fisher was a praiseworthy Major-General Stanley, and Mr. Coventry acquitted himself creditably as the lover Frederic. The minor parts were all well filled. Mr. F. Stanislaus conducted the opera, which was preceded by *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 23, 1881; Issue 2222.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. M. Gunn – Throughout the week large audiences have been attracted to this Theatre to witness Messrs Sullivan and Gilbert's comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance*, which, admirably acted and splendidly "staged" as it is here, has proved a decided success. The opera has been placed upon the stage with the most elaborate attention to detail, and the company engaged in its exposition will bear favourable comparison with any similar combination that has recently visited this city. Miss Augusta Roche, who appears as Ruth, is both vocally and histrionically a "fine woman." Miss Agnes Mitchell (who achieved such a success in the late Pantomime here) makes a charming Edith; and Miss Laura Clement is a fascinating Mabel. Among the gentlemen Mr. Marler is entitled to first place as the Sergeant of Police; efficient assistance being lent by Messrs David Fisher (Major-General Stanley), Marnock (the Pirate King), and Coventry (Frederic). *In the Sulks* has been the supplementary item. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, April 30, 1881; Issue 2223.]

### **2nd – 14th May: Birmingham**

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE.

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."

The return visit here on Monday night of this popular lyric troupe, whose presentation of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's penultimate production gave so much delight to the local public in the early part of last December, brought together an excellent audience, whose numbers may be expected to increase rather than diminish with each successive performance. For like most good things, the "Pirates of Penzance" decidedly improves upon acquaintance, and now that the performers have become thoroughly habituated to their work, and the public have had time to master the somewhat cynical humour and subtle musical charms of the opera, its effect is wonderfully enhanced. Much of the drollery of "The Pirates" is of a verbal kind, which demands for its proper appreciation a closer knowledge of the text, than could be gathered from a first

representation of the piece, even by such a careful and generally articulate company as that of Mr. D'Oyly Carte. Ruth's blunder, for instance, which is the *fons et origo* of the plot, arises out of the similarity of sound between the words "pirate" and "pilot;" and the sudden reversal of the hero's position in the second act, when he is transformed from the arch antagonist into a member of the pirate crew by the discovery explained in the "Paradox" trio, that his piratical apprenticeship was to last until his twenty-first birthday, and that as he was born on the 29th February in leap year he will not be free until he attains the age of 84, turns in like manner upon verbal details, which cannot easily be mastered without book, at a first hearing of the piece, These are but samples of complexities which familiarity is needed to resolve, and they will help to explain, in conjunction with many kindred requirements in the musical score, why this bright, picturesque, and diverting opera should be more enjoyable on a second or third than on a first performance, and why its popularity, therefore, is still growing.

As the company upon whom its performance now devolves is substantially the same as that which introduced the work here some five months ago, there is no need for lengthened criticism. Regarding the opera itself we could only repeat our original judgment – that it is, alike in music, humorous motive, and the perfect union of text and music, the most artistic and successful of the several burlesque operas we owe to the partnership of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. There are no dull scenes in it – the interest never flags; and though fantastic humour and sprightliness are its prevailing characteristics, they are pleasantly relieved, more especially in the musical treatment, by many pleasant little sentimental episodes and suggestions which supply the needful elements of shade and repose. It cannot be denied that many both of the airs and the dramatic situations present certain affinities of form to those which are to be found in earlier productions by the same art partnership; but the resemblances are superficial only, and the themes, like the characters, invariably possess essential qualities of a sufficiently distinct order to entitle them to the merit of originality. There is not a trite or commonplace number in Mr. Sullivan's score, the simplest themes being redeemed by the grace or subtlety of their harmonic treatment or the daintiness of their orchestral colouring. The choral and concerted numbers are especially charming, and it is satisfactory to find that the public are alive to their merits, the majority of the numbers encored on Monday being of this character. We may instance among these successes the first maidens' chorus; "Climbing over rocky mountain," the unaccompanied choral prayer in the finale of the first act, in which the pianissimo singing was especially praiseworthy; the double chorus of policemen and maidens; in which the former sustain the theme "Tarantara," to a melodious cantabile theme by the maidens; and the already famous sergeant's song with chorus, "The policeman's lot is not a happy one." Besides these numbers, the audience insisted on a repetition of the Pirate King's song, with chorus; Mabel's beautifully plaintive *aria d'intrata*. "Poor wandering one;" the incomparable patter song of the Major-General; the final chorus and dance of the first act; and the duet between Mabel and Frederic, "Oh leave me not to pine." Of most of the performers it may be truthfully said that their performance is improved since their last appearance here, and the observation is still more true of the ensemble. Miss Laura Clement as the heroine, Mabel, is vivacious without pertness, and humorous without any sacrifice of feminine grace, whilst her singing of the beautiful and often trying music devolving upon her leaves little or nothing to be desired on the score either of voice or execution. Miss Augusta Roche is at least equally at home in the part of the pirate maid-of-all-work, Ruth, her rich contralto voice being heard to great advantage in the first ballad, "A many years ago."

[sic] Edith, Kate, and Isabel, three of the most conspicuous of the numerous daughters of the Major-General, find apt and worthy representatives in Miss Agnes Mitchell, Miss Millie Vere, and Miss Maribel. Among the gentlemen, the first place must be assigned to Mr. David Fisher, jun., whose concentration of manner and volubility of utterance as the Major-General are inexpressibly droll. The Pirate King of Mr. Marnock is not wanting in spirit or picturesqueness, though in a musical sense his intonation is not always perfect. Mr. G. Coventry, who personates Frederic, "the slave of duty," in like manner is more to be commended in his histrionic than in his musical presentment of the character. Mr. W. T. Hemsley, as the pirates' lieutenant, Samuel, makes a good deal out of slight opportunities; and Mr. George Marler, as the Police Sergeant, is exceedingly diverting. The band and chorus, under the direction of Mr. Stanislaus, are entitled to no small share of the credit of the success, which is greatly promoted also by the richness and brilliancy of the dresses and *mise en scène*. There will be morning performances of this work on Thursday of each of the two weeks over which the engagement extends. [*Birmingham Daily Post* (Birmingham, England), Wednesday, May 4, 1881; Issue 7123.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – The return visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company in their representation of *The Pirates of Penzance* has proved very successful. There have been very good houses during the week, and the popularity of Sullivan's melodious opera is testified by the manner in which it has been received. It is only necessary to say of a piece which is so well known and deservedly appreciated that it has been excellently staged, that the music has been sweetly and well rendered, and that the principal parts have been well sustained. The opera has been followed each evening by *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 7, 1881; Issue 2224.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – *The Pirates of Penzance* has proved, with Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, sufficiently attractive during the week. There have been very good houses, and the opera, during the second week of its representation, has been very well received. [*The Era*, (London, England), Saturday, May 14, 1881; Issue 2225.]

### 16th – 21st May: Bristol

#### NEW THEATRE ROYAL

Last evening, Mr. D'Oyly Carte's selected company which in October last first introduced Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's humorous and tuneful comic opera to the provinces in our own ancient city, paid us a return visit with "The Pirates of Penzance," and received from a large audience a very hearty recognition. We had such ample opportunities of describing the piece when first it was performed here and since, that its leading melodies and harmonies have been so familiarized to persons in many ways that any detailed notice of the opera, either with regard to its story or its music, cannot be necessary. As most of our readers must be aware, it is not a dramatic representation of some piratical villainies, but one of those absurdities which Mr. Gilbert is so fond of producing. The Pirates of Penzance are discovered to be all noblemen in disguise, and they are, moreover, so imbued with the spirit of loyalty that on being charged to surrender themselves to the "Bobbies", who are engaged to arrest them "in Queen Victoria's name", they at once lay down their arms. The story of the work turns, it will be remembered, on the fact that one of the pirates has been apprenticed to this body by mistake, owing to the similarity of sound between "pirates" and "pilots," and the thing is altogether so replete

with absurdities that to resist laughing at it is impossible. The music, too, is so full of beautiful melodies and cleverly constructed and effective harmonies that it is quite as impossible to listen to it without the mind and ear being greatly gratified. The only feeling of disappointment to which it gives rise, if indeed it does to any, is that so much that is really fine in music and composition should not have been allied to some more reasonable libretto. As we had anticipated, the seven or eight months' constant practice which the company has had since it was last with us, has had a very marked influence on both the acting and the singing. A thorough acquaintance with the words and meanings of the different songs and duets has enabled the singers to impart the fullest expression to them, whilst the concerted and choral music, some of which is exacting enough for grand opera, goes with faultless nicety and precision. The orchestration, too – always a feature in Mr. Sullivan's music – does justice both to the composer and the thoroughly efficient conductor, Mr. Stanislaus. Indeed, the opera, as a whole, went last night in a manner that left little or nothing to desire. The audience, to do them justice, seemed to be of this opinion, for they re-demanded almost everything. Some of the encores were, of course, declined, but others were too persistent to be resisted; and, in point of fact, fully a third of the opera had to be repeated. There was no change in the cast from that when the company first appeared here. Miss Laura Clement again warbled the music of Mabel, winning encores by her rendering of the delicious waltz-song "Poor wand'ring one," and the tender pathos she infused into the exquisitely beautiful madrigal in the second act, "Oh, leave me not to pine". Miss Augusta Roche, whose fine contralto voice has gained in fulness, repeated her part of Ruth, gaining an encore for her opening scene, "When Frederick was a little lad," and singing and acting throughout in a manner that was thoroughly satisfying. Mr. G. Coventry once more filled the role of Frederick, and was encored with Miss Clement in the duet in the Abbey scene. Mr. Marnock repeated his robust portraiture of the pirate king, and was encored in his song of "The Pirate King." Mr. George Marler (whose reception showed how favourably he was remembered) gave a graphic and humorous portraiture of the sergeant of police, winning for the famous song "When constabulary duty's to be done" one of those tumultuous encores which can never be mistaken for mere common-place approval. Of course, the Major-General of Mr. David Fisher, jun., proved most welcome to the audience, who laughed heartily at his patter song, and warmly applauded him throughout. The concerted music and choruses were rendered, we repeat, in a most effective manner, the opera was splendidly dressed, and Mr. Barraud's scenery was all that could have been desired, the "sets" in both acts being such as would have done credit to any theatre.

NEW THEATRE ROYAL. – Managers, Messrs George and James Macready Chute. – On Monday last Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company commenced their second visit to this city and attracted a brilliant audience. The artists are identical with those who appeared upon the occasion of the first production here of the opera, and we can only say they have vastly improved, and the piece goes with immense spirit. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 21, 1881; Issue 2226.]

### **23rd – 28th May: Nottingham**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Manager, Mr. Thomas W. Charles. – A most delightful renewal of acquaintance was made with *The Pirates of Penzance* on Monday last. On the occasion of its former production we entered fully into the merits of the performance. We have little or nothing to add on the present occasion, the company being the same as then,

and the individual and united efforts of each member still being of as high a character. Suffice it to say that the principals appeared to thoroughly enjoy their work, the chorus was no whit behind in all they had to do, the new scenery by Mr. Harry Potts was beautifully painted, the stage setting was highly picturesque, the audience was both numerous and enthusiastically appreciative; in short, everything was as near perfection as could possibly be expected, even by the most exacting. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, May 28, 1881; Issue 2227.]

### 30th May – 4th June: Hanley

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. J. H. Elphinstone; Manager, Mr. Chas. G. Elphinstone. – The management deserves the heartiest thanks of the play going public for the enterprise shown, more particularly for the opportunity afforded of hearing so admirable a work as *The Pirates of Penzance*, as represented by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, on Monday and during the week. The representation was admirable. Miss L. Clement as Mabel acted and sang with much success. The Ruth of Miss Augusta Roche was very good. Mr. D. Fisher, jun., scored a great success by his droll representation of Major-General Stanley. Mr. G. Coventry was successful as Frederic. The Pirate King was safely intrusted to Mr. G. W. Marnock. Of the chorus we may candidly say we have never heard a better on the Hanley stage. Their rendering of "Hail to the Pirate Chief" [*sic*] was beyond criticism. The Chorus of Police, with Mr. Geo. Marler as Sergeant, was vociferously encored. The orchestra was ably conducted by Mr. F. Stanislaus. *In the Sulks* was the *lever de rideau*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 4, 1881; Issue 2228.]

### 6th – 11th June: Leicester

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE. – Mr Galer's attraction for the Whitsun holidays was the popular "Pirates of Penzance," and in the hands of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's composition was presented with a perfectness and completeness, both musically and artistically, that could scarcely be equalled. Mr. Galer certainly deserves commendation for affording the public so genuine a treat. The universal excellence of Mr. Carte's troupe is well known and it is almost needless to say that at this house they fully upheld their reputation, acting and singing with that verve which is necessary to a successful performance of a work of this character. Mr. G. W. Marnock was bold and dashing as the Pirate King, and he was well seconded by his lieutenant, Mr. T. Hemsley. Mr. G. Coventry was the pirate apprentice, and his voice, which is of fair quality and well under control, was heard to advantage in the part. Mr. David Fisher, jun., was the "model" Major-General, and his make-up was exceedingly effective and characteristic. His bearing was in admirable consonance with the part, and he ran off his amusing patter greatly to the diversion of the audience, who insisted upon its repetition. Mr. George Marler was fully equal to all demanded of him as the Sergeant of Police, and of course the vocal efforts of himself and comrades were redemanded. Miss Laura Clement sang and acted charmingly as Mabel, and she secured deserved recognition. Perhaps she was heard to best advantage in the duet with Mr. Coventry – which is one of those choice morceau in which Dr. Sullivan excels – and which was enthusiastically encored. The other numerous offspring of the Major-General were personated by several quaintly attired but interesting young ladies, prominent amongst whom were Misses May Lennox, Millie Vere, and Maribel, whilst Miss Augusta Roche showed conspicuous ability in the part of Ruth, the piratical maid of all work. The choruses were sung in a

manner that can only be acquired by constant practice, and the augmented band, which Mr. F. Stanislaus ably led, rendered the accompaniments perfectly. An amusing vaudeville, entitled "In the Sulks," by Frank Desprez and Alfred Cellier, followed, in which the characters were taken by Mr. Hemsley, Miss Vere, and Mr. A. James. [*Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury* (Leicester, England), Saturday, June 11, 1881; pg. 2; Issue 3665.]

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee, Mr. Eliot Galer; Acting Manager, Mr. Frank Burgess. – D'Oyly Carte's very clever *Pirates of Penzance* company are drawing great houses here. The various parts are filled by the same representatives as on their former visit. Mr. David Fisher creates much laughter as the Major-General; and Miss Laura Clement both looks and sings charmingly as Mabel. The Police, of which Mr. Marler is so good a Sergeant, take greatly with their choruses. It is splendidly staged. *In the Sulks* concludes the evening. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 11, 1881; Issue 2229.]

### 13th – 18th June: Bradford

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mrs. C. Rice. – Perhaps the most successful production of the present season is *The Pirates of Penzance*, which was presented to a magnificent house on Monday evening last. As to the scenic effects produced by Mr. Hall, the artist to the theatre, they are simply charming. The chorus is excellent, and there is little fault to find with the augmented orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Stanislaus. Miss Clement, who plays Mabel, has an exquisite voice of great power, and her style is thoroughly artistic. In Miss Millie Vere we have a charming Edith, whose songs are beautifully rendered. As Ruth Miss A. Roche plays capitally, Miss Kate Husk as Kate and Miss Maribel as Isabel claiming mention. Mr. G. Coventry is admirable as Frederic. Nothing could be funnier than Mr. D. Fisher's Major. Mr. G. W. Marnock's Pirate King is picturesque and full of character. The Police Sergeant is an amusing conception of Mr. G. Marler's, and Mr. W. T. Hemsley is good as Samuel. The company enter thoroughly into their work, and the applause which greets their praiseworthy efforts is most hearty and enthusiastic. Preceding the opera is a little vaudeville *In the Sulks*, capitally played by Miss Millie Vere, Mr. Hemsley, and Mr. James. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 18, 1881; Issue 2230.]

### 20th – 25th June: Huddersfield.

#### THE THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE." When Mr. Gilbert Beck, of "Golden Butterfly" renown, found that the nasty stuff which was oozing out of his location was "ile sir," he struck a source of revenue which was scarcely more valuable – scarcely from even the fictitious point of view – than Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan hit upon when they commenced writing comic operas. That they themselves have appreciated this fact is apparent we think in the higher class of workmanship which they have put into their later compositions, and this is fully apparent in the opera under notice – the last but one which they have introduced to the notice of a discriminating, but partial public. And, indeed, the rage for popular composers never followed a more worthy bent, for the Gilbert-Sullivan productions have never contained an element upon which a dubious interpretation might be placed. Pure audacious fun – discernable on the part of composer as well as author – have always marked their efforts in the matter of comic opera, and it is a worthy sign of

the times that their operas have been much more successful than have those which from time to time have been transplanted from the other side of the English Channel. At all events it will be admitted that either for rattling music, scenic effects, or laughter provoking situations, "La Fille du Tambour Major" – the last French production with which Huddersfield has been favoured – will hardly bear looking at alongside of "The Pirates." A first-class house – particularly in the circle – witnessed its production last evening, and it is safe to predict that before the week is out the new Opera House will afford lively entertainment for a very large number of people. The story is too long a one to reproduce here, and probably such of our readers who care anything at all about such things know it pretty well. The conscientious Frederick, who after serving his apprenticeship at piracy would have exterminated his comrades – from a sense of duty – but for the fact that he finds his term expires on his 21st birthday, in the year 1940, since he has been born on the 29th of February; the piratical maid of all work, Ruth, in whose charge he has been left, and who, being instructed to make the boy a pilot, mistook her instructions and bound him to a pirate; the moral and gentlemanly pilot-king (*sic*); the orphaned major-general, and his charming and numerous daughters; and the moralising, police-sergeant with his eight officers, are the materials with which the plot is woven together, and the serious, matter-of-fact way in which the story – and the music – is set forth, elicits, rather than suggests, the continued merriment of the audience. The songs, whether of the sentimental or humorous class, are capital, and will provide quite as many objects for amateur study as those in "That infernal nonsense Pinafore." One of the best of this kind is that of the Pirate King "Oh better far to live and die," and another number which someday we expect to hear at a national school concert is the girls' chorus "Climbing over rocky mountain." To admirers of the "Let me dream again" style of Sullivan music. Mabel's song "Poor wandering one" will be found a great attraction; but those who fancy a patter song, and who have mastered the rapidity of utterances necessary to sing "My name is John Wellington Wells," or "I am the ruler of the Queen's navy," will find the following selection from a song of the "Major-General" rather difficult to master:–

I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Sir Caradoc's,  
 I answered hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox;  
     I quote in elegiacs, all the crimes of Heliogabalus,  
     In conics I can floor peculiarities parabolus.  
 I can tell undoubted Raphaels from Gerald Dows and Zoffanias,  
 I know the croaking chorus from "The Frogs" of Aristophanes.  
     Then I can hum a fugue of which I have heard the music din afore,  
     And whistle all the airs in that infernal nonsense "Pinafore."  
 I can write you out a washing bill in Bablylonic Cuneiform,  
 And tell you all the details of Caractacus's uniform.  
     In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,  
     I am the very model of a modern Major-General.

One of the most whimsical settings in the opera is the following song and chorus, for a portion sung by the Sergeant of "Bobbies" under him:–

SERGEANT. When the enterprising burglar's not a-burgling –  
 ALL. Not a burgling;  
 SERGEANT. When the cutthroat isn't occupied in crime –  
 ALL. Pied in crime;  
 SERGEANT. He loves to hear the little brook a gurgling –  
 ALL. Brook a gurgling

SERGEANT. And listen to the merry village chime.  
 ALL. Village chime.  
 SERGEANT. When the coster's finished jumping on his mother –  
 ALL. On his mother;  
 SERGEANT. He loves to lie a basking in the sun –  
 ALL. In the sun;  
 SERGEANT. Ah, take one consideration with another –  
 ALL. With another,  
 SERGEANT. The policeman's lot is not a happy one –  
 ALL. Happy one!

Another part which immensely amused the audience last night was the monotoned responses of the policemen to Mabel's defence of her lover Frederick, who, instead of leading them to "death and glory" (in the capture of the pirates), held it to be his duty to fulfil the terms of his indentures and rejoin them, and the pulpit-style of the sergeant when exclaiming, in sonorous tones, "No matter; our course is clear. We must do our best to capture these pirates alone. It is most distressing to us to be the agents whereby our erring fellow-creatures are deprived of that liberty which is so dear to all – but we should have thought of that before we joined the force." For piquancy the discovery by Frederick of the girls just as they have taken off a shoe preparatory to "paddling" in the water is immense, for they all try to stand on one foot – the one with the shoe on; and a situation which is very little less outrageously funny is that with which the opera concludes, when the pirates, having overcome the police, suddenly yield on being charged to do so in Queen Victoria's name. The confession by Ruth, that the pirates are all noblemen who have gone wrong, brings down the curtain. As regards Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company, it should be said that it is a large one, and very nearly perfection. Some improvement might be made in the part of Frederick (Mr. Coventry), whose voice is very uneven. Mr. G. W. Marnock can sing as well as enact the part of the Pirate King, his good baritone voice and striking appearance going far to make his performance a finished one. The Major-General of Mr. David Fisher, jun., was a carefully studied part, and Mr. Hemsley creditably undertook the character of Samuel, the pirate lieutenant. Nor should Mr. Marler's clever study of the Sergeant of Police be forgotten. Amongst the ladies voices are several of first-class quality. Miss Laura Clement was a charming Mabel, her pure, light, and well-trained voice suiting the music admirably. Miss Millie Vere – a familiar and favourite name in Mr. Carte's companies, – Miss May Lennox, and Miss Maribel, sang the music of the sisters Edith, Kate, and Isabel, most creditably. Lastly must be acknowledged the sterling contralto of Miss Augusta Roche in the part of Ruth, and along with it accomplished vocalisation and good dramatic appearance. The theatre band, who have for some time been rehearsing the music, gave an exceedingly creditable interpretation of it. The two scenes required by the opera – a rocky shore on the coast of Cornwall, in the distance the calm sea on which a schooner is lying at anchor; and a ruined chapel, by moonlight – were very striking and hearty rounds of applause were the compliments paid to their authors, the Messrs. Tweddle. [*The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* (West Yorkshire, England), Tuesday, June 21, 1881; pg. 4; Issue 4330.]

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Lessee, Mr. J. W. White, – Crowded houses this week have received *The Pirates of Penzance* with marked favour. But, "taking one consideration with another – the comicality of Mr. Gilbert's libretto, the strains of Mr. Sullivan, and the excellent company engaged by Mr. D'Oyly Carte to represent the piece –

such a thing can scarcely be wondered at. Mr. David Fisher, jun., represents the Major-General, and gives his amazing list of qualifications for his post most glibly. Mr. G. W. Marnock is enabled, by his fine figure and good voice, to give prominence to the part of the Pirate King; and his lieutenant Samuel is cleverly impersonated by Mr. W. T. Hemsley. Mr. G. Coventry was fairly successful as Frederic, and the Sergeant of Police was adequately enacted by Mr. George Marler. Miss Laura Clement as Mabel played with grace and refinement, and sang capitally. Miss Augusta Roche possesses a good contralto voice, and as Ruth fully merited the recognition her performance received. Miss Millie Vere, Miss May Lennox, and Miss Maribel undertook the parts of Kate, Edith and Isabel, and the remainder of the Misses Stanley, the Pirates, and the Police were represented by a satisfactory chorus. The band, under the direction of Mr. F. Stanislaus, lent effective assistance. The scenery, particularly the ruined chapel in the second act, was very good, and Messrs. G. and O. Tweddle, the artists, should be complimented on the good work they are doing here. *In the Sulks* was included in the programme. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, June 25, 1881; Issue 2231.]

#### **27th June – 29th June: Wakefield**

CORN EXCHANGE. – Lessees, Messrs. Mellor and Carr. – In a style to which Wakefield is a stranger Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company gave three performances of *The Pirates of Penzance*, commencing on Monday night. The company is so generally excellent it would be invidious to particularise. The scenery was first-class, the chorus wonderfully effective, and an orchestra numbering a "baker's dozen," under the baton of Mr. F. Stanislaus, completed the best performance of the kind ever given in the town. Crowded houses resulted each night, the elite showing up in goodly numbers. The enterprising lessees are to be congratulated on their success, and we trust it will not be long before they repeat the experiment of giving the inhabitants of this district the opportunity of witnessing a first class entertainment without entailing on them the necessity of a journey of eighteen miles as hitherto. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 2, 1881; Issue 2232.]

#### **30th June – 2nd July: Dewsbury**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietors, Messrs. Shaw and Field. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's celebrated *Pirates of Penzance* combination appeared here on the 30th ult., when the popular comic opera was presented here for the first time. Mr. David Fisher, jun., scored an immense success as Major-General Stanley, while Messrs. Marnock and Marler as the Pirate King and the Sergeant were splendid representatives of their respective roles. The opera was preceded each evening by the bright little vaudeville *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 9, 1881; Issue 2233.]

#### **4th – 9th July: Hull**

##### THEATRE ROYAL.

The laughter and applause which greeted the performance of *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Royal some months ago have been repeated this week by crowded audiences. Indeed, many of the beauties both literary and musical of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's operas are only to be discovered and thoroughly appreciated by a second study. The company is materially the same as that which had the piece in hand on the last visit, and the recognition of old favourites has been very hearty. The airs in *The Pirates* will soon compete in point of popularity with those of "that infernal nonsense *Pinafore*," and

rendered as they are by this company, amateur vocalists have an exceptional opportunity of acquiring the catching melodies. [*The Hull Packet and East Riding Times* (Hull, England), Friday, July 8, 1881; Issue 5047.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett; General Manager, Mr. Alfred Cuthbert. – Audiences both large and appreciative have this week assembled to welcome the renowned *Pirates of Penzance*, on this, their return visit. Mr. Gilbert's wit loses none of its pungency by repetition, and the brightness and tuneful character of Mr. Sullivan's music still proves irresistible. The cast is the same as on the previous visit, Mr. David Fisher, jun., remaining to please with the quaintness of his humour, Mr. G. W. Marnock to display his majestic figure and clever acting as the Pirate King, Mr. G. Coventry to delight every one with the excellence of his vocalisation, and Mr. Geo. Marler to amuse with burlesque whimsicality as the Sergeant of Police. Of the ladies, it need only be mentioned that Miss Laura Clement continues to portray Mabel and to give an excellent performance; Miss Roche likewise, continuing to give able assistance as the maid-of-all-work Ruth. The chorus and band are still under the efficient direction of Mr. Stanislaus, and the dressing and staging of the piece are all that could be desired. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 9, 1881; Issue 2233.]

#### **11th – 12th July: York**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. W. A. Waddington. – This theatre has been closed during the past fortnight with the exception of two nights, which were devoted to the production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, by D'Oyly Carte's excellent company. The cast has undergone no alteration since the last visit of the company, and nothing can now be added to the almost unqualified praise which has so deservedly been bestowed alike upon principals, conductor, and chorus, and the best proof of the appreciation by the public has been the immense [business] done during the visit, not a seat being vacant on either night. The principals were Mr. David Fisher, Major-General Stanley; Mr. George Marler, Sergeant of Police; Mr. G. W. Marnock, Pirate King; Mr. W. T. Hemsley, Samuel; Mr. G. Coventry, Frederic; Miss Augusta Roche, Ruth; Miss Laura Clement, Mabel; Miss Millie Vere, Edith; Miss Ethel Maribel, Isabel; and Miss Kate Husk, Kate. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 23, 1881; Issue 2235.]

#### **13th – 16th July: Scarborough**

LONDESBOROUGH THEATRE. – Mr. W. A. Waddington, Proprietor. – *The Pirates of Penzance* has had possession of these boards during the week, and has met with much success. Mr. David Fisher, jun., as the Major General was highly applauded, and recalled in his introductory song. Mr. G. W. Marnock as the Pirate King, Mr. Hemsley as the Lieutenant, and Mr. G. Coventry as Frederic, met with due applause. Mr. Geo. Marler and his staff of "bobbies" created much amusement, and were recalled. Miss Laura Clement's Mabel is an interesting performance, and was much admired. Miss Kate Husk, Miss Maribel, and Miss Augusta Roche each contributed to the general success. The chorus was strong, and the orchestral accompaniments all that could be desired. A musical sketch, entitled *In the Sulks*, by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, Miss Millie Vere, and Mr. A. James, preceded the opera each evening. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 16, 1881; Issue 2234.]

### 18th – 23rd July: Newcastle

"The Pirates of Penzance," the combined production of Messrs. W. S. Gilbert, and Arthur Sullivan, is being played at the Theatre Royal this week by a complete and powerful company organised by Mr. D'Oyly Carte. The first representation of this interesting burlesque was at the Opera Comique about fifteen months ago. It is an odd combination of the ridiculous and the sublime, the plot and the libretto being very funny and the music simply beautiful. The writing both of the prose and the verse is in Mr. Gilbert's happiest style. The piece is full of pleasantries and drolleries, and has much wit and humour; and it may be said of the libretto that it is remarkable for its freshness and sprightliness.

The opening scene is a rocky shore on the Cornwall coast, and here the Penzance pirates celebrate the majority of Frederic, a prominent member of the band. Frederic is unable to join in the mirth of his companions, and the cause of his evident sadness is that Ruth, a nurse to whose care he had been committed by his father, apprenticed him by mistake to a Pirate King instead of to a pilot! The pirates to whom he has been bound are compelled by their own laws not to molest an orphan, and they never assail a party which is less formidable than themselves; but notwithstanding these mitigating features of their criminal pursuits, Frederic is displeased with his association with his piratical companions. As a "slave of duty," however, he felt incumbent on him while an apprentice to aid the interest of the pirates; but when he was "out of his indentures" he resolved to devote himself to their extermination. Frederic, having never seen any other woman, is prepared to marry Ruth on her assurance that she is really a fine woman; but he becomes convinced of the falsehood on the appearance of the fifteen ladies who are the daughters of Major-General Stanley. He is repulsed by several of the maidens to whom he proposes, but he and Mabel fall in love with each other. The pirates return stealthily to the scene, and, surrounding the maidens, propose that they be "conjurally matrimonified by a doctor of divinity who is located in this vicinity." The Major-General, who now enters, prevents the execution of the matrimonial designs of the pirates by announcing that he is an orphan boy, and appealed to the law of the band, which declared that no orphan should be molested; and he is allowed to depart with his daughters and Frederic. With the view of exterminating his former associates, Frederic obtains the services of a body of policemen' but his efforts are frustrated by the sophistry of the Pirate King, who argues that, as Frederic was born in leap year on the 29th of February, he is "only five and a little bit over, and that, going by birthdays, you are as yet only five and quarter" – a mixing up not unlike that in "Pinafore." He is thus compelled to become a pirate again, and he makes known the falsehood by which the Major-General secured the lenity of the pirates. The rovers determine to revenge themselves in a rigorous manner on the Major-General; and having conquered the Sergeant of Police and his force who had been sent to capture them, they are in the act of dooming to death the warrior, when they are brought to a sense of duty by a charge, delivered by the Sergeant, to yield in Queen Victoria's name. Then follows an agreeable and satisfactory finish.

There are not a few admirable choruses, and the best and most beautifully rendered of these is that beginning, "Hail Poetry, thou heaven born maid." The Tarantara song by the Sergeant and his force will be the song of the street boys, we may be sure, before long. There are some charming songs, two or three of those assigned to Mabel being especially attractive. The opera was admirably performed by a talented and efficient company. Miss Laura Clement is a good soprano. Notable songs by her are "Poor

wandering one" – the rendering of which was loudly applauded – and "Oh leave me not to pine;" which is followed by an excellent duet by Mabel and Frederic, whose effective rendering caused a hearty encore. Mr. George Marler displays a happy humorous faculty in his representation of the Sergeant. Mr. David Fisher, jun., gives impersonation of the Major-General, and some of his songs are highly amusing. For Frederic Mr. G. Coventry is a fair tenor, and the Pirate King has a capital exponent in Mr. G. W. Marnock. The augmented orchestra is ably conducted by Mr. F. Stanislaus. [*The Newcastle Courant etc* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England), Friday, July 22, 1881; Issue 10777.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. Charles Bernard. – This theatre was reopened on Monday evening for the production, for the first time in Newcastle, of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, supported by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. *In the Sulks* was the opening piece, in which the parts were sustained by Messrs. Hemsley and James and Miss Millie Vere. The opera followed, Miss Laura Clement appearing to much advantage as the heroine, and, by her artistic rendering of the songs that are allotted to her, provoked the enthusiastic applause of the large audience present. More especially was this the case as regards the tuneful melodies "Poor Wandering One" and "Oh, leave me not to pine." The eccentricities of Major-General Stanley were very cleverly "hit off" by Mr. David Fisher, jun., who was heartily applauded for his effective singing and acting. Miss Augusta Roche as Ruth was also well deserving of commendation for her tasteful singing. Mr. G. W. Marnock as the Pirate King, Mr. G. Coventry as Frederic, Mr. G. Marler as the Sergeant, and Miss Millie Vere as Edith were also worthy of commendation. The opera was throughout received with favour. The choruses were finely rendered, and in conjunction with an augmented band under the conductorship of Mr. F. Stanislaus, left nothing to be desired. The opera has been performed throughout the week. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 23, 1881; Issue 2235.]

### **25th July – 6th August: Edinburgh**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs Howard and Logan; Acting-Manager, Mr. F. Sephton. – This elegant and spacious establishment was filled in every part on Monday evening by a delighted and demonstrative audience, the occasion being the reproduction here of the popular Gilbert and Sullivan opera *The Pirates of Penzance*, which had a run of unprecedented brilliancy and success when played at the Princess's Theatre some months ago. In all the principal parts the cast is identically the same as before, and the performance, then so enjoyable, has been improved by further repetition, and is certainly one of the cleverest and most attractive characters possible. Miss Laura Clement is charming and interesting as ever as Mabel, and Mr. Fisher again proves himself a very admirable representative of the Major-General. Mr. Coventry, who has greatly improved, makes a capital Frederic; and Mr. Marler continues his excellent and amusing impersonation of the Policeman with undiminished effect. The performance of the chorus was one of the strong features of the evening, and we are glad to see that this important part of the entertainment has been received with the favour it so well deserves. The mounting was remarkably good, the dresses bright and pretty, and the band in every way efficient, Mr. Stanislaus conducting with his well-known skill throughout. Mr Cellier's operetta *In the Sulks* has been the preliminary piece each evening. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 30, 1881; Issue 2236.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessees, Messrs Howard and Logan; Acting-Manager, Mr. F. Sephton. – *The Pirates of Penzance* continues to be represented here by Mr. D'Oyly

Carte's company with the greatest possible success, the crowded appearance of the theatre each evening being a convincing proof of the interest manifested by the musical and general public in this charming and attractive work. A further visit confirms our already expressed good opinion of the performance, which is as enjoyable as it is satisfactory. Mr. Cellier's pleasant little vaudeville *In the Sulks* still precedes the opera, and is capitally played by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, Mr. A. James, and Miss Millie Vere, who act their parts with spirit, and sing capitally. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 6, 1881; Issue 2237.]

### 8th – 20th August: Glasgow

#### GAIETY. – "THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."

We had in the Gaiety last evening the novelty at this season of a crowded theatre. It might be possible, if one were so minded, to ascribe this to the weather – to argue that wind and rain have done their worst at the coast, and that returning fathers of families, and the whole tribe of sisters, cousins, and aunts, now seek our theatre, without scanning the playbill too critically, those amusements that were denied them when from home. That might be a possible line of argument, but it would hardly be fair to "The Pirates of Penzance," who were really the attraction that brought about a house crowded from stalls to gallery. The company is one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's, and if we remember aright it is the same combination, for the most part, that brought the opera to Glasgow for the first time, the Royalty stage then being selected for the representation. Be that as it may, the company is a very efficient one, and the opera seemed to go better last night than on any former occasion. The leading artists are obviously familiar with their work, and they sing and act admirably together, little bits of fresh colour being introduced here and there which serve to lend greater spirit to the action. Miss Laura Clement as Mabel is the principal soprano. Her voice is sweet and fresh, and her style good, while grace and delicacy mark her acting. Quite as much in the way of compliment may be said of Miss Augusta Roche's Ruth. Miss Roche sings her music with care and feeling, and acts in the very earnest manner required for a part which is not without difficulty. The Pirate King was again Mr. G. W. Marnock, who was very cordially received by his friends in the audience. Mr. Marnock looks every inch a marauder of the seas, and his fine voice was heard to advantage in the opening song, "I am a Pirate King," and in the later numbers allotted to him. Mr. G. Coventry is the conscientious youth Frederic, and Mr. David Fisher, jun., again made a hit as the Major-General. The audience was doubtless an inspiring one, for the whole performance was carried through with unusual heartiness, and the various songs, almost without exception, were vociferously encored. The lovely chorus at the close of the first act was repeated. It was a deserved compliment, although all through the night the chorus, consisting of good and well balanced voices, sang in capital style. "The Pirates" will hold the stage during the week. [*Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), Tuesday, August 9, 1881; Issue 189.]

GAIETY. – Proprietor, Mr. Charles Bernard; Manager, Mr. Sam H. S. Austin. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened at this house on Monday evening in *The Pirates of Penzance*. As might have been expected from the great success which attended the production of the clever work at our Royalty Theatre last Christmas a large audience assembled to give the company welcome. The cast being materially the same as when the opera was last performed in Glasgow it is unnecessary to notice the performance in detail. It will suffice to say that the work was carried through with great animation, the artists

one and all doing their utmost to achieve success. That they did so the frequent loud applause which was bestowed on them amply attested. The chorus and orchestra rendered praiseworthy service. The most catching numbers were heartily encored, and altogether the reception accorded to the opera and company could scarcely have been warmer. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 13, 1881; Issue 2238.]

GAIETY. – Proprietor, Mr. Charles Bernard; Manager, Mr. Sam H. S. Austin. – The Gilbert-Sullivan comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance* still attracts good audiences, and the reception accorded it is as enthusiastic as ever. The manner in which the work is performed by Mr. Carte's company cannot be too warmly extolled. We regret to say that, owing to indisposition, Mr. David Fisher, jun., was unable to appear on Monday evening. His role, that of the Major-General, was taken by Mr. Hemsley. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 20, 1881; Issue 2239.]

### **22nd – 27th August: Belfast**

#### **"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE" IN THE ULSTER HALL.**

AFTER an interval of three weeks the theatrical season in the Ulster Hall was resumed last evening, when Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Pirates of Penzance" Company, under the able conductorship of Mr. F. Stanislaus, produced for the first time in this town the comic opera "The Pirates of Penzance." A more adequate representation of such a piece has never been seen in Belfast. The general efficiency of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's numerous opera companies is well known, but we do not recollect any of the previous performances given under his direction worthy of being placed, in point of general completeness, before that of last evening. The principal artists were highly efficient, and the numerous members of the chorus gave evidence of the training to which they had been subjected. Nor was the excellence confined to the vocalism, for the same element was apparent in the acting of the entire cast, and also in the instrumentalism. The piece having been originally brought out in America, under the direction of Mr. F. Stanislaus, it doubtless owes much to the supervision of so accomplished and appreciative a musician. "The Pirates of Penzance" is certainly the most characteristic of the joint works of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. All the comic-operas of these clever collaborators are of course burlesques, but burlesques composed in so delicate a vein of satire that it is not always perceptible at first sight. In "The Pirates of Penzance" the humour is astonishing in its variety; Mr. Gilbert does not merely begin to write in a certain humorous mood and sustain his plot — or what does duty for a plot — in this peculiar vein; but he introduces in the course of his libretto almost every form of humour with which we are acquainted. Not only is the piece, viewed as a whole, one of the cleverest of parodies upon the Lara-Corsair-Giaour form of fiction once so highly esteemed in this country, but in its details it parodies and burlesques innumerable usages of society, and even the harmless little shams of everyday life. Mr. Gilbert's perception of the ludicrous is simply unlimited; at the same time we cannot help thinking that it is in many cases far too fine to produce the desired effect upon a general audience. His libretto contains touches of infinite delicacy in satire which are as often as not passed over by a casual listener. It is a fact that while many persons maybe convulsed with laughter at some of the scenes in the opera, others will be unable to see the reason for remaining otherwise than serious, if not solemn. Last night, for instance, while some of the audience were shaking with laughter, seeing the pirate band kneeling among the ruins of the chapel, and hearing them sing an imitation of one of the old glees, there were undoubtedly dozens of people who only thought the glee a most charming piece of music

capitally sung. It would be utterly impossible, of course, to convince this latter class that the ludicrousness of the situation was immeasurably increased by the seriousness which was imparted to it; and it would be quite as vain to assure the opposite party that the scene was not one of the funniest that was ever brought upon a stage. It is not pleasant to have to show wherein the elements of incongruity exist in any particular situation, but if such a task were forced upon one it would not prove difficult to accomplish. The notion of a boy being bound apprentice to the trade of a pirate is of itself ludicrous enough, yet it is but one of the many intensely funny points to be found in this libretto of Mr. Gilbert. The music of Mr. Arthur Sullivan is so very well known everywhere – that of "The Pirates of Penzance" among the rest – it is unnecessary to refer to the numbers of the opera in detail. It may be said to be by turn serious and humorous. There is perhaps more of cleverness about it than any other element of merit. It is throughout brilliant, graceful and full of refinement. Much of it is undoubtedly the music of burlesque, but of burlesque assuredly of the most delicate type. There are, we feel certain, many persons who, after hearing, such a performance as that of last evening, will be found to think it a pity that such good art should be thrown away upon a libretto composed only to amuse the crowd; but it must be remembered that it was mainly through the efforts of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan that the public were led away from the debasing influence of opera bouffe into something better, if not of itself up to a remarkably high level. The singing and acting of the different members of the company last evening left but little to be desired. Mr. David Fisher as the Major-General showed both humour and discrimination. He proved his possession of an agreeable if very light baritone; more useful than a remarkably brilliant quality; it was quite equal to the requirements of the extremely clever patter song in the first act, which we need hardly say was encored, and it was also heard to advantage in the concerted music of the second act. Mr. G. W. Marnock as the Pirate King acted with all the vehemence necessary to the part. He spoke the mock sentimental lines at all times with capital effect, and sang with a good deal of spirit. Mr. W. T. Hemsley, as the lieutenant, also sang and acted carefully. As the unfortunate Frederic Mr. G. Coventry showed good taste, and more than a little ability, though he was evidently suffering from a cold that prevented him from being invariably correct. He sang the romanza in the first act most tastefully, and in many of the concerted pieces his tenor was heard with effect. Mr. George Marler made a most humorous sergeant of police. Too much praise cannot be given to Miss Laura Clement for her charming representation of Mabel. She acted with spirit and refinement in every scene, and sang in a highly cultured manner the lovely music assigned to the part. The exquisite waltz in the first act well deserved the encore which it received. Miss Madge Stavart as Ruth was admirable, possessing one of the best voices in the company; the songs that fell to her lot were most effectively and even brilliantly sung. The small characters of Edith, Kate, and Isabel were also played in an adequate manner. The choruses could not be surpassed for excellence, and more than a word of praise is due to Mr. Charles Bellair for his excellent scenery. The chapel scene was one of the best we recollect seeing from the brush of this accomplished young artist. We may add that the acoustic properties of the Ulster Hall are so good as to leave no cause for complaint. [*The Belfast News-Letter* (Belfast, Ireland), Tuesday, August 23, 1881; Issue 20661.]

ULSTER HALL. – Sole Responsible Manager, Mr. J. F. Warden. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company in *The Pirates of Penzance* opened here on Monday evening last,

and have since been doing good business. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 27, 1881; Issue 2240.]

### **29th August – 10th September: Dublin**

#### **GAIETY THETRE – "THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."**

The second visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Pirates of Penzance" Company was signalised last night at the Gaiety Theatre by an overflowing house. The fact that it is nearly the same troupe in all respects as that which first introduced the piece to a Dublin audience gave an earnest that the reproduction would be satisfactory; and this anticipation was, on the whole, justified. It is hardly necessary to go over the whole of the absurd story which forms the groundwork of this clever little opera, the work of the Beaumont and Fletcher of the serio-comic English stage – Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. The leading idea is mistaken sense of duty, which is elevated in the character of Frederic into a moral obligation, operating diversely under different circumstances. Having by a ridiculous mistake on the part of his nurse been apprenticed to a pirate instead of a pilot, he considers it a sacred task to put in the whole period of his servitude faithfully, and to serve his master with unswerving fidelity. But he determines that the moment of his deliverance shall begin a new career, and that in the interest of society he will do his best to root out the gang whom he loathes for their profession, though not personally. His nurse, and elderly and unattractive female, knowing his steadfastness to his word, endeavours to trap the singular casuist into a matrimonial engagement previous to his liberation from servitude; but he is saved from the folly in time by the sight of a bevy of pretty young ladies, all the daughters of Major-General Stanley. In revenge for her disappointment, the nurse discloses to the pirate captain the fact that Frederic had been apprenticed on the 29th of February (leap year), and by a process of arithmetical reasoning, which the "slave to duty" would be sure to respect, his day of emancipation (his birthday) would not recur until the end of the century. The pirate chief is delighted with the idea and carries it out. The plot succeeds. Frederic sees the force of his reasoning, but not before he has communicated his designs against the band to the Major General, who brings down a detachment of policemen to capture them. They are overpowered by the pirates, and an amusing impasse created, which is put an end to by the discovery that the pirates are in reality noblemen "gone wrong," and that they dearly love their Queen, to whom they are asked to surrender. A number of amusing minor incidents are worked into this general framework. As in "Pinafore," three ingredients enter into the work – satire, absurdity, and music. It is full of the most ridiculous anti-climatic situations, and contains some bitter little general truths mixed up with its seeming nonsense. Its music is fairly on a level with that of its great predecessor, and it contains some elements of popularity which are likely to prove as lasting. Last night's presentation of the piece was remarkably good. The pretty overture was sympathetically and skilfully gone through, and was listened to by the packed house with decent reverence. So fairly were all the characters filled that it would be almost invidious to single out one as worthy of a special laurel. Mr. David Fisher, as the Major-General, did much towards equalling his prototype, Mr. Grossmith, and that is saying a good deal. Mr. G. Coventry played smoothly and sang sweetly as Frederic; while Mr. Marnock was vocally and physically the beau ideal of the conventional, but ridiculously logical, Pirate King. Mr. George Marler, as the Sergeant of Police, divided with Mr. David Fisher the honour of an encore, and the policemen generally, in their semi-grotesque musical truisms, elicited much warm appreciation. The part of Ruth was taken by Miss Madge Stavart, who, it need hardly be said, did it very justice. She not only

looked it but she sung it sweetly, amply sustaining the reputation which she has already acquired. Miss Laura Clement presented a graceful picture of Mabel, and Miss Millie Vere played the part of Edith nicely. But, as we have already said, so evenly were the merits of each member of the company balanced that it would be almost unfair to single out any for special mention. Collectively they interpreted Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's ideas in a way which shows intelligent study and careful training to such an extent that we can hardly wonder that the "Pirates of Penzance" is such a favourite as it has proved. [*Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Tuesday, August 30, 1881; Issue N/A.]

#### THE GAIETY THEATRE.

The excellent representation of the "Pirates of Penzance" by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company sets off the opera to the best advantage, and its growing popularity is shown by the well filled house which has attended each performance. Tomorrow at two o'clock there will be a day performance for the convenience of those who do not care to brave the night air even for so enjoyable a treat as the opera affords, with its tuneful music and clever acting of most capable artists. [*Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Friday, September 2, 1881; Issue N/A.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. M. Gunn. – The engagement of the popular comedian Mr. J. L. Toole terminated on Saturday evening last, when *The Upper Crust* and an act of *Oliver Twist* were the prominent features in the programme. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company, which has previously attained much success in this city, has been performing here with favourable results during the present week. The cast is nearly identical with that engaged in the original presentation of the opera here, and includes the names of Miss Laura Clement, Miss Madge Stavart, Miss Millie Vere, Mr. Marnock, Mr. David Fisher, Mr. G. Coventry, and Mr. George Marler, all of whom are entitled to the warmest commendation in their respective parts. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 3, 1881; Issue 2241.]

GAIETY THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. M. Gunn. – At this theatre Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's clever work *The Pirates of Penzance* continues to be given with very marked success. The house is nightly filled to inconvenience, and the applause bestowed upon the principal performers is as enthusiastic as it is well deserved. Miss Laura Clements sings and acts charmingly as Mabel; Miss Madge Stavart is excellent as the "pirate maid-of-all-work;" and the other female parts are pleasingly filled by the ladies of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. The character of Major General Stanley finds a humorous representative in Mr. David Fisher. Mr. Marler is exceedingly droll as the Sergeant of Police; and Messrs. Coventry and G. Marnock are highly satisfactory in their respective roles of Frederic and the Pirate King. The opera has been preceded each evening by the operetta *In the Sulks*. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 10, 1881; Issue 2242.]

#### 12th – 17th September: Cork

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Managing Director, Mr. James Scanlan. – After being closed for some weeks past this house reopened on Monday evening last, when an exceedingly brilliant audience assembled to receive and do honour to that now celebrated party of noblemen gone wrong *The Pirates of Penzance*, who appeared here for the first time. Standing room could not be had in any portion of the building, and the members of the company had a right hearty reception, of which they may feel proud; and

we venture to say that a more enjoyable week they will not spend during their entire tour. Mr. David Fisher gave a wonderfully artistic embodiment to the part of Major-General Stanley, and he was loudly and deservedly applauded. Mr. George Marnock played well and looked the Pirate King to the life; and Mr. W. T. Hemsley proved a worthy Lieutenant. Mr. G. Coventry sang and acted in a most artistic manner, and was admired by all present. Miss Laura Clement at once jumped into favour with the audience, and her reappearance here will be looked forward to with pleasure. As Mabel she made a grand impression, and was a decided hit. Miss Madge Stavart was also a great success as Ruth, the maid-of-all-work. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 17, 1881; Issue 2243.]

### **19th – 20th September: Chester**

MUSIC HALL. – This Hall, a two months' dramatic licence for which was obtained some time ago by Messrs Phillipson and Solder, of this city, was opened on Monday evening by Mr. Frank Emery, of the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool, with Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company (No. 1). The successful comic opera had previously been represented here by another of Mr. Carte's companies, and a large and fashionable audience assembled on Monday to renew their acquaintance with the work. The various artists are, one and all, by this time absolutely perfect in their respective parts and an improvement, one would think, could scarcely be made in the whole representation. Mr. David Fisher, jun., as the Major-General has been much praised for a well nigh inimitable rendering of that part that it is sufficient here to say that he was in good form, and did his best from first to last. Mr. G. W. Marnock's Pirate King is also a well known assumption, and we shall content ourselves with saying that he won the inevitable encore for his spirited rendering of "I am a Pirate King," and was otherwise most successful. Mr. Gerard Coventry makes a fairly acceptable Frederic, and Mr. W. T. Hemsley a satisfactory Lieutenant, whilst Mr. Geo. Marler as the Sergeant of Police could scarcely be surpassed. Miss Laura Clement, a most dainty Mabel, won numerous encores for her brilliant vocalisation, and Miss Madge Stavart, of whose Little Buttercup we have very pleasant recollections, was exceedingly good as the piratical maid-of-all-work." The band and chorus, under the direction of Mr. F. Stanislaus, were beyond all praise. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 24, 1881; Issue 2244.]

[NOTE:– An advertisement in the *Cheshire Observer* for Saturday, September 17, 1881 states that this engagement is for Monday and Tuesday nights only.]

### **21st – 24th September: ?**

### **26th September – 1st October: Liverpool**

#### **PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE**

Whatever else may be said about the Gilbert-Sullivan operas, it cannot be fairly contended that they pall upon public taste by repetition. This is particularly so in the case of "The Pirates of Penzance," as was shown last night on its reproduction at the Prince of Wales Theatre. There was a large and fashionable audience, and the tuneful numbers of the popular opera were as welcomely received as they were when it was first performed here. The company – organised by Mr. D'Oyly Carte – is a most efficient one, and Miss Laura Clement (Mabel), Miss Madge Stavart (Ruth) and Mr. G. W. Marnock (the Pirate King) performed their various parts, vocally and histrionically, in a way that left nothing to be desired. Mr. David Fisher's model Major-General is still one of the most attractive

parts of the opera, and his performance of it is marked by rare tact, finish and humour. The chorus and orchestra do their work in a way that leaves nothing to be desired, and the opera is staged with Mr. Emery's judgement and taste.

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. F. Emery. – On Monday evening *The Pirates of Penzance*, performed by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, attracted a very large audience, and the performance was quite as efficient as that which was experienced in connection with a former visit of the talented company. The chiefs in the cast were Miss Laura Clement (Mabel), Miss Madge Stavart (Ruth), Mr. David Fisher (the Major-General), and Mr. G. W. Marnock (Pirate King). The orchestra, chorus, and scenic appointments were of the highest order. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 1, 1881; Issue 2245.]

### 3rd – 8th October: Manchester

#### PRINCE'S THEATRE

The last performance of the Carl Rosa Opera Company on Saturday night attracted an audience which filled every corner of the theatre, and it is difficult to understand why the clever director should limit his visits to Manchester, as he has done recently, to periods of six nights only. "Carmen" was performed.

The "Pirates of Penzance," which has once been produced in Manchester before, is the new attraction at the Prince's Theatre, and was on Monday night presented before a large audience. Although there are several incidents in the plot and many suggestions in the music to remind us that Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan have written together on other themes before, there is much that is irresistibly droll and decidedly original in the work of both playwright and composer; and if we had seen the opera more than once, there would still be a large amount of hearty amusement to be derived by seeing it again. The members of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, by whom it is being played, are almost without exception, familiar, and we might say favourites, in Manchester, and we may spare our readers a lengthy notice by saying that they are capital representatives of their parts; so that the performance runs smoothly and merrily towards its end. Mr. David Fisher, jun., plays Major-General Stanley, Mr. G. W. Marnock the Pirate King, Mr. G. Coventry the Pirate Apprentice, and Mr. Marler the Sergeant of Police; and the Mabel of Miss Laura Clement, and the Ruth of Miss Madge Stavart, are rendered in each case with a genuine feeling for the humours of the part. [*Manchester Times* (Manchester, England), Saturday, October 8, 1881; Issue 1239.]

THE PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Chas. Bernard; Manager, Mr. G. Tate. – *The Pirates of Penzance* has been given nightly at this theatre by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. It is as amusing and attractive as ever. Mr. David Fisher, jun., of course, impersonates the Major-General; Mr. G. W. Marnock is the Pirate Chief; Mr. G. Coventry that wonderful slave to duty the unfortunate apprentice; and Mr. Marler the Sergeant of Police. Miss Laura Clement is a charming Mabel, and Miss Madge Stavart and effective Ruth; and it would only be repeating an oft told tale to say how admirably they acquit themselves in their now familiar parts. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 8, 1881; Issue 2246.]

THE PRINCE'S THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Chas. Bernard; Manager, Mr. G. Tate. – The popular comic opera *The Pirates of Penzance* is being given, for the second week, at this theatre by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's witty dialogue

and sparkling music are as attractive as ever in spite of their rapidly growing familiarity and the company have been playing to large and delighted audiences. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 15, 1881; Issue 2247.]

#### **17th – 22nd October: Bradford.**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manageress, Mrs. C. Rice. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company is in possession here this week, and is receiving substantial support. The company is nearly the same as on the former visit, with the exception of Ruth, the maid-of-all-work, which is now sustained with much success by Miss M. Stavart. Miss Clement is again received with much warmth for her very effective singing as Mabel, and Mr. D. Fisher, jun., is inimitable as the Major-General. The other parts are all efficiently filled. The new vaudeville by Messrs. Desprez and Cellier, *In the Sulks*, precedes the opera, and gives Miss Millie Vere an opportunity to exhibit her very artistic powers. The houses are large and very enthusiastic. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 22, 1881; Issue 2248.]

#### **24th – 29th October: Leeds.**

THE GRAND THEATRE. – Lessee, Mr. Wilson Barrett; Acting Manager, Mr. Lee Anderson. – Good audiences during the past week have greeted *The Pirates of Penzance* company. They afford as much entertainment as ever. The company is exactly the same as before, except Miss Madge Stavart has now succeeded Miss Augusta Roche in the part of Ruth, the pirate maid-of-all-work; and Mr. George Chapman has replaced Mr. Stanislaus as conductor. The pirate's lair, and the beautiful set of the ruined abbey by moonlight, as before, drew forth rounds of applause. The opera was preceded by the pretty little vaudeville *In the Sulks*, in which Miss Millie Vere, Mr. W. T. Hemsley, and Mr. A. James for about forty minutes amused the audience. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, October 29, 1881; Issue 2249.]

#### **31st October – 5th November: Sheffield**

##### **PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.**

"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE" AT THE THEATRE. – The most powerful satires the stage has seen this century are without doubt those which have emanated from the pen of Mr. W. S. Gilbert. Coupled as they have been with music of an original and very high order, considering the class of entertainment to which it is adapted, composed by Dr. Arthur Sullivan, they have gained, as well as the collaborators, a world wide reputation. Of all others Mr. Gilbert best knows how to satirise the follies of the age, and in doing so he amuses, surprises, and never offends; while Mr. Sullivan frequently lets his keen perception of the humorous be seen in his score. "The Pirates," as well as "Pinafore" and "Patience," may almost be termed a household word, therefore the mere announcement that it was to be performed at the Theatre Royal last night drew together a large audience. Since the last visit of the company there have been but few changes in the cast. The favourite of the evening was Mr. George Marler, who repeated his splendid assumption of Mr. Rutland Barrington's original part of the Sergeant of Police. The unctuous manner in which he delivered his lines and led the chorus of policemen, was exceedingly funny, and he and his comrades had to repeat several numbers. Mr. David Fisher, jun., has greatly improved on his former impersonation of Major-General Stanley, in which character Mr. George Conquest [*sic*] is inimitable, while Mr. G. W. Marnock is as grandiloquent as ever as the burly Pirate King. Mr. W. T. Hemsley made up and acted with great care as

Samuel, the Pirate King's Lieutenant. His vocalisation was also a great treat, being especially marked for freshness and accuracy. Mr. G. Coventry's delineation of Frederic, the pirate apprentice, was, from a histrionic point of view, but his singing was a great failure. Miss Laura Clement, as Mabel, and Miss Madge Stavart, as Ruth, the pirate maid-of-all-work, divided honours. Their respective assumptions were very pleasing, regardless of the fact that their vocalisation was very strained. Miss Millie Vere acquitted herself admirably as Edith, singing with much ease and fluency; while the impersonations of Miss Kate Hurst as Kate, and Miss Marshall in the role of Isabel were deserving of praise. The chorus was in every way efficient, and the orchestra performed its duties well. As a *lever de Rideau* "In the Sulks," by Mr. Frank Desprez, with music by Alfred Cellier, was performed. [*The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* (Sheffield, England), Tuesday, November 01, 1881; pg. 7; Issue 8443.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee, Mr. E. Romaine Callender; Acting Manager, Mr. John Cavanagh. – Once more Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Pirates of Penzance* company is experiencing here the favour it so thoroughly deserves. The cast is almost the same as on former visits, Mr. G. W. Marnock, Mr. David Fisher, jun., Mr. G. Coventry, Mr. W. T. Hemsley, and last, but not least, Mr. George Marler, for whom encores seem to be inevitable, taking the male parts. Miss Laura Clement's careful vocalisation in the part of Mabel is very pleasing; Miss Madge Stavart is very successful as Ruth, the "sort of piratical-maid-of-all-work;" but the other female parts are not quite so well filled, in our opinion, as on the last occasion of the presentation of the opera here. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 5, 1881; Issue 2250.]

#### **7th – 12th November: Nottingham**

THEATRE ROYAL. – Manager, Mr. Thos. W. Charles. – On Monday last, another return visit of *The Pirates of Penzance* testified to this popular comic opera's vitality – indeed, to judge from the enthusiasm of its reception, time does not seem to stale the beauty of its music, to blunt the keenness of its wit, not to dull the power of its attractiveness. With the exception of Miss Madge Stavart, who now plays Ruth, all the various parts are portrayed by the artists who have hitherto represented them. Miss Stavart's impersonation of the piratical maid-of-all-work is, both vocally and histrionically, brilliant in the extreme, and forms a worthy item of a performance that is altogether unique in its excellence. The opera was as admirably dressed as of yore, and the scenic arrangements were carried out with all their old picturesque completeness. *In the Sulks* has been the initial trifle on each evening. Business is first rate. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 12, 1881; Issue 2251.]

#### **14th – 26th November: Birmingham**

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – The "Pirates of Penzance," the brilliant musical comedy which the genius of Mr. A. Sullivan and Mr. Gilbert have made so popular all round the world, was produced again last night, with all the very original humour and all the splendid effects. Few pieces – perhaps no piece of modern times – have been more deservedly successful. The striking originality of the plot, the dialogue, the characters, the lively brilliance of the music – songs, duets, choruses – the indescribable oddity of most of the situations, keep the audience in a roar of laughter. The "Pirates" seem to be ever welcome. Their attractions never seem to cease. The play may be seen over and over again, and the fun is as pleasant as ever, and the music more attractive than before. All

who have seen the "Pirates" will gladly go again; and those who have not should take the present opportunity of seeing one of the most deservedly brilliant successes on our modern stage. [*Birmingham Daily Post* (Birmingham, England), Tuesday, November 15, 1881; Issue 7290.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company appeared in *The Pirates of Penzance* during the week. The opera proves as attractive to a Birmingham audience as ever. The company was nearly the same as on the last visit. Miss Laura Clement appeared as Mabel instead of Miss McAlpine. Miss Clement impersonated General Stanley's daughter with much grace and naturalness, and her singing was sweet and perfectly rendered. Miss Madge Stavart played with irresistible humour, and the same remark may, with equal force, be applied to the rendering of General Stanley by Mr. David Fisher. The Pirate King of Mr. G. W. Marnock, the Frederic of Mr. Gerard Coventry, and the Sergeant of Police of Mr. George Marler were all very well represented. The opera was followed by *In the Sulks*, the characters being taken by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, Miss Millie Vere, and Mr. A. James. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 19, 1881; Issue 2252.]

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE. – Proprietor, Mr. J. Rodgers. – *The Pirates of Penzance*, as given by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, conclude a successful engagement this week. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, November 26, 1881; Issue 2253.]

#### **28th November – 3rd December: Bristol**

NEW THEATRE ROYAL, PARK-ROW. — Managers, Messrs. George and James Mcready Chute. — On Monday D'Oyly Carte's capital company, with *The Pirates of Penzance*, commenced a return visit, and attracted a large audience, who judging from the liberal applause bestowed and encores demanded, were highly delighted with Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's witty and tuneful opera. Miss Madge Stavart, who now plays Ruth, *vice* Miss A. Roche, met with a gratifying welcome, and after the song of "The Piratical Maid-of-all-work," was most warmly applauded. Mr. David Fisher, jun., was as quietly funny as ever as Major-General Stanley; and Mr. G. Coventry, though suffering from hoarseness, repeated his very capital performance of Frederick. The Sergeant of Police is still in the capable hands of Mr. George Marler, whose unaffected and musician-like rendering of the quaint music allotted to the man of unhappy lot called forth great applause. Miss Laura Clement sang charmingly as Mabel, and was, of course, encored in the waltz "Poor Wandering One." Miss Millie Vere and Miss Kate Husk were strong in the small parts of Edith and Kate; and Mr. W. T. Hemsley was a good representative of Samuel. Mr. G. W. Marnock was painstaking as the Pirate King. The chorus was in every way excellent. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 3, 1881; Issue 2254.]

#### **5th – 17th December: Brighton**

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – We have another return visit this week, Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, presenting *The pirates of Penzance*. The company is almost identically the same as on a former occasion, and the delightful music seems to have lost none of its popularity, judging from the large audiences that have nightly assembled. Mr. Gerard Coventry is suffering from a severe cold. The singing of Miss Laura Clement as Mabel is much admired. Miss Madge Stavart is an admirable Ruth. Mr. David Fisher as Major-General Stanley is most successful. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 10, 1881; Issue 2255.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietrix, Mrs. Nye-Chart. – *The Pirates of Penzance* continues here and has drawn good houses. Mr. D. Fisher has left for other engagements. Mr. Coventry unfortunately is indisposed. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, December 17, 1881; Issue 2256.]