

## No. 2 *Iolanthe* Company 1883

26 Dec. – 13 Jan. Bath

THEATRE.—"Iolanthe" is having successful run at our Theatre, and thoroughly well deserves success for the excellent manner in which it is put upon the stage, and for the ease and spirit and finish of the performance. As to the merits, musical and dramatic, of the piece itself, we have already delivered ourselves, and in effect we can only repeat what we have said. It might have been thought that the vein of humour which Mr. Gilbert has worked so successfully "Trial by Jury," and "Pinafore," and "The Pirates of Penzance," and "Patience," had been thoroughly exhausted, but he has shown in this new piece that there is still something left in it; and in one or two of the amusing conceits which he has given us in "Iolanthe," he has almost surpassed himself. Thus there is strong family likeness in it to its popular predecessors, yet we cannot reproach an artist for working in the style which he has found by experience to be acceptable, and which he has turned, even in his latest employment of it, to such good account. The music is as characteristic of Mr. Sullivan as the libretto is of Mr. Gilbert. It is as tuneful, as captivating, as ingenious as anything he has ever written; and it leaves on us the impression that as a composer he could attain a higher rank than he has yet reached in the estimation even of the public, if he would devote himself to more serious work, and to work, we will venture to add, more worthy of his genius. Yet perhaps we ought less to find fault with than to be grateful to him for using his talents so happily and so constantly for our amusement. What worth doing at all is worth doing well, and we are persuaded that the kind of work on which Mr. Sullivan has so long employed himself has never been done so well as by him. It is certain it has not been done so successfully, at least by any English composer. The public taste is so capricious that it would be rash to predict as long and successful a career for "Iolanthe" as was achieved by "Pinafore" and "Patience," but it deserves prosperity every whit as much. It has made a good start in town, and it has made a good start for the provinces here; and, while other provincial audiences are diverting or trying to divert themselves with the inane splendours and devices of pantomime, the Bath people have what we deem the better fortune of attending a really good performance of a work of humour and musical genius. Morning performances are announced for Saturday next, and Saturday the 13th inst. [*Bath Chronicle*, 4 Jan. 1883]

### BATH THEATRE ROYAL GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S "IOLANTHE."

Our readers have already been made aware of the fact that Mr. Neebe, the spirited lessee of this theatre, has made a departure from the beaten track of pantomime, and has produced for the delectation of his holiday patrons Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest production, "Iolanthe." Those who have witnessed "The Sorcerer," "Pinafore," "The Pirates of Penzance," or "Patience" – and who has not? – will yield, we expect, a ready assent to us when we say that if the old lines of holiday burlesque are to be abandoned, there is no source from which a manager may so surely rely upon drawing a winning card as the repertoire of those amusing writers. The stories – if stories they may be called – of their pieces are so whimsical, the characters and situations so provocative of fun, the dialogue so smart and pungent, and the music so tuneful and bright, that anyone who cannot spend an enjoyable hour or two in witnessing one of their comic operas must be well-nigh in the morose state which is said to be incapable of being amused at all. Mr. Neebe has shown, we think, commendable enterprise in so promptly securing permission to perform this work upon his stage. It was only presented to the public at the Savoy Theatre towards the end of November,

and within "a month, a little month," the play-goers of Bath have opportunities of witnessing it and enjoying the "mirth and music" which are so happily blended in it. It must not, however, be inferred from the rapidity with which the opera has made its way from the Savoy to the "Queen city of the West" that it has been produced by Mr. Neebe in an incomplete form. The Bath manager is too experienced a caterer, and Bath audiences are professedly too fastidious, for anything of that kind to be the case, On the contrary, it has been brought out in a very complete manner. The scenery upon which our talented fellow citizen, Mr. M. H. Barraud, has been for some time engaged, leaves nothing to be desired, and the costumes and appointments throughout have been prepared upon the metropolitan lines. When the opera was first produced we gave an account of the plot, so that we are to an extent relieved from any present detail. Twenty five years before the action commences, Iolanthe, the fairy from whom the opera derives its title, has sinned against the laws of Fairyland by marrying a mortal. The punishment for this is death, but the Queen has commuted her sentence to one which condemns her to stand on her head at the bottom of a stream, and when the curtain rises it discloses a scene replete with fairylike beauties, in which the fairies are found bewailing Iolanthe's doom – a doom, however, from which she is spared, as the Fairy Queen recalls and pardons her upon condition that she will never see her husband again. Upon her recall she introduces to the fairy sisterhood her son Strephon, who is in the very prime of early manhood. Strephon has been smitten by the charms of Phyllis, a shepherdess, who happens also to be a ward in Chancery, and whose powers of fascination may be judged of by the fact that she ranks amongst her admirers not only a brace of peers, Lord Mountarat and Lord Tolloller, but in fact the entire House of Lords. Iolanthe, being of fairy mould, is impervious to the effects of time, and ever retaining her youthful beauties. Strephon's conduct in bolding affectionate converse with her is misinterpreted by Phyllis, who casts him off. The youth, in despair, summonses to his aid the fairy band, and they resolve that he shall go to Parliament, eclipse the labours of the House of Peers, carry by fairy aid all which he proposes, and throw the peerage open to competitive examination. The first act, which is brought to a termination at this point of the story, closes with a really spirited and tuneful finale. The second act, in which the scene of action is transferred to Palace-yard, Westminster, discloses another effective work from Mr. Barraud's brush. The two lords, finding that they cannot adjust their rival claims to Phyllis's hand, urge the Lord Chancellor to overcome his scruples in the matter and marry the girl himself, and this he is about to do when Iolanthe, who has vainly endeavoured to win his consent for Strephon, breaks her fairy vow and declares herself to be his long-lost wife. The Fairies are at once summoned, and the Queen is about to doom the offending Iolanthe to death, when they all declare that they must suffer too, as they are duchesses, marchionesses, viscountesses, and baronesses. It should be stated, in further illustration of the whimsical nature of the story, that Strephon is half fairy and half mortal, being immortal in the upper half of his body and mortal in his legs. This state he much complains of, remarking that although the fairy part of his person can get through a key-hole, the mortality of his nether limbs bars his progress. There is also introduced the obvious absurdity of the Queen of the Fairies falling in love with one of the sentries in Palace-yard. Such, very briefly told, is the plot – if plot it may be called – of the comic opera now performing at Bath, and which Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's reputations have invested with such a glamour of popularity that it is even by anticipation stirring musical society to its depths in both hemispheres. We ourselves do not consider "Iolanthe" fully up to the mark of either "Patience" or "The Pirates," but it is nevertheless intensely humorous, and there are good natured satires in it upon the

Houses of Parliament and the shortcomings of the law courts which will ensure for it popularity. Mr. Gilbert has also so shaped his story as to admit of a good deal of display. The dresses of the fairies are exceedingly picturesque and pretty, whilst those of the peers, who appear in their Court robes, wearing all their collars, orders, and badges, and with their golden and jewelled coronets on their heads, make a really brilliant display. The music, as we have already said, is bright and tuneful. Some of the airs are, if possible, too sweet and melodious, transcending the trifling nature of the libretto; and here and there we recognise passages of which we have heard exceedingly close resemblances in some of Mr. Sullivan's other operas. We do not know, however, that a man is to be deemed unlawful for stealing his own, whilst a great deal more than this would be redeemed by the great beauty and richness of the instrumentation. In the character of the Fairy Queen a very important one, we recognise Miss Fanny Harrison, who was heard to such advantage in Bristol as Ruth in "The Pirates of Penzance," and Lady Jane in "Patience." We are sure that we need hardly say that she acts the part admirably, and does all justice to the music, and those who remember her commanding presence will feel no surprise to learn that her promise to curl herself up in a buttercup evokes much laughter. Miss Jessie Louise is a charming Iolanthe. Her rendering of a very sweet ballad, "He loves," is amongst the musical successes of the opera. Miss Josephine Findlay presents a befittingly arch and vivacious portrait of the coquettish shepherdess, Phyllis, and her vocalisation is bright and effective. There are three fairy characters which are less strikingly drawn, which are all agreeably personated by Miss Deveine, Miss Kavannah, and Miss Webb. The part of the Lord Chancellor of course forms a central figure of the opera. It is shaped very much upon the lines of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C. B., in "Pinafore." In Mr. John Wilkinson's hands it is a cleverly conceived and well executed caricature of the starchy dignity of a pedantic judge. It has its patter songs, as have all Mr. Gilbert's characters of the class, and they are amusingly sung, and win encores, as also a grotesque dance which he introduces. Mr. Walter Greyling, who has a nice light baritone voice, which he manages with skill, was the Strephon, and acts the part admirably. Mr. C. Pounds, the principal tenor, fills the *rôle* of Earl Tolloller, and won last night a warm encore for his principal song. Mr. C. J. Stanley did justice to the part of Lord Mountararat, and there is a character which seems almost to have been pitched in, but which, nevertheless, adds to the absurdity of the opera, and gives scope for some very good acting by Mr. G. W. Marler, so favourably remembered as the Sergeant of Police in the "Pirates of Penzance." It is a private of the Grenadier Guards who is a sentry in Palace-yard, and with whom the Fairy Queen falls in love. At the close of the action the Lord Chancellor and all the peers resolve to become fairies. His lordship's wings actually grow out, and as the curtain descends all the *dramatis personae* are supposed to be flying off to Fairyland. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Thursday, January 4, 1883; Issue 10808.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new opera *Iolanthe*, as presented by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, is now in capital working order, and providing a great attraction. Much care has been taken in the selection of artistes to fill the various characters, and the result is a complete success. Mr. John Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor is inimitable. The part of Strephon by Mr. Walter Greyling is excellent. Mr. C. C. Pounds takes the character of Lord Tolloller in a most pleasing manner, his voice being rich and acting full of promise, this being his first appearance upon the stage. Mr. C. J. Stanley is good as Lord Mountararat, and Mr. G. W. Marler is most satisfactory in the small part of Private Willis. Miss Fanny Harrison is eminently successful as the Queen of the Fairies, her figure being most imposing. Miss Jessie Louise as the pathetic Iolanthe is charming, and

renders her music most intelligently; while Miss Josephine Findlay is a lively and sparkling Phyllis. The choruses are good, and the dresses superb but appropriate. On Wednesday last Mr. Frank Thornton, from the Savoy was presented by Mr. Herbert Brook, on behalf of the company, with a handsome gold ring as a mark of esteem for his general affability and kindness to the members during his management of the production of the opera in Bath. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 6, 1883; Issue 2311.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – *Iolanthe* is still drawing good houses. The bright and sparkling music is nightly received with great favour, and the artists are greeted with much pleasure. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 13, 1883; Issue 2312.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe. – On Saturday last Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company completed a three weeks' engagement in a brilliant manner, playing to an enthusiastic and packed audience. The success of the opera in Bath has been undeniable. On Monday Mr. R. Barker's comic opera company opened in *Manteaux Noirs*. The piece is well set, and the dresses very good. The parts are well filled all round, and the acting gives much satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 20, 1883; Issue 2313.]

GRAND PUMP ROOM CONCERTS. – Conductor, Mr. W. E. Salmon. – On Saturday last the conductor took his annual benefit. The programme was a good one. By the permission of Mr. D'Oyly Carte, Miss Josephine Findlay and Mr. Courtice Pounds (who respectively take the parts of Phyllis and Lord Tolloller in the *Iolanthe* company) appeared and sang some excellent songs, being encored in each. Mr. W. Robinson (conductor of the *Iolanthe* company) played some pianoforte solos in good taste. Miss Maud Salmon, daughter of the conductor, gave some violin solos with great skill and judgement, and was received with much favour. The band, as usual, was excellent, and the conductor may be congratulated upon the success of the concert. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, January 20, 1883; Issue 2313.]

THEATRE ROYAL, EXETER.  
Lessee and Manager, Mr. FREDERICK NEEBE.  
Important Engagement for  
FOUR NIGHTS & ONE MORNING PERFORMANCE  
of Mr. D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY, in  
Gilbert and Sullivan's new and successful Fairy Opera,  
**I O L A N T H E .**  
MORNING PERFORMANCE on FRIDAY, FEB. 2nd.  
Doors open at 2 : to commence at 2.30 p.m.  
TO-NIGHT, at 8, and Every Evening, Messrs. Gilbert and  
Sullivan's Fairy Opera,  
**I O L A N T H E ;**  
Or, the Petr and the Peri.  
Preceded, at 7.30, by the Popular Farce  
**Q U I T E A N A D V E N T U R E .**  
Box Office Open from Ten till Four.  
Tickets and places may be secured by letter or telegram,  
addressed Mr. M. RUSSELL ROSSER, Business Manager.

[*Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser* (Exeter, England), Wednesday, January 31, 1883; Issue 6013.]

15 – 20 Jan. ???

22 – 27 Jan. Devonport

*Iolanthe* has been very successful at Devonport. [*The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* (Bristol, England), Tuesday, January 23, 1883; Issue 10824.]

NEW THEATRE AND PUBLIC HALL. – Lessee, Mr. F. Neebe. – Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new comic opera *Iolanthe* is being played here with great success, and is nightly drawing crowded houses. The company is Mr. D'Oyly Carte's No. 1, and is the best that has ever visited the West of England. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 3, 1883; Issue 2315.]

29 Jan. – 3 Feb. Exeter

THEATRE ROYAL.

"Iolanthe," the latest joint-work Mr. W. S. Gilbert and Mr. Arthur Sullivan, was produced last night at the Theatre Royal with great success. The fairy opera has aroused a large amount of criticism, for the most part complimentary. The idea of grave peers falling in love with fairies, and the curious blending, incidental to the plot, of Westminster Palace notions with those supposed prevail in even a more exalted sphere, affords abundant for humour. Mr. Sullivan's share of the work is important in a special degree, the musical pieces being not only numerous, but some of them—the first *finale*, for example—of large dimensions. The composer has risen to his opportunity, and good judges are disposed to account "Iolanthe" his best effort in all the Gilbertian series. In "Iolanthe" the cultured musician predominates, investing graceful and refined ideas with all the charm of art. It need hardly be said that Mr. Sullivan again displays the acute sense of humour which makes him fit Mr. Gilbert as a glove fits the hand. Schubert in his sweetest mood might have written the fairies' invocation of their banished sister, *Iolanthe*; and there is laughter-moving humour in the pompous ensemble, with military band, that ushers in the House of Peers, as well as in the short fugal passage which then and after introduces the Lord Chancellor. The first *finale*, long though it be, is sustained without flagging, and evinces a power of combination and development unusual works of the class. Among the best pieces in the opera for artistic interest is a dialogue with the refrain, "Tarradiddle, tol lol lay." In the second act song sung the sentry deserves praise; and that of *Lord Mountararat*, "When Britain really ruled the waves," has a character of its own subtly mingled with the least possible flavour of "Rule Britannia." It is, however, in a patter song for the *Lord Chancellor*, descriptive of a weird dream, that Mr. Sullivan's art touches its highest point. He might have been content with mere chords of accompaniment, since the audience in such cases listen only to the words, but the orchestral part is one of singular elaboration, beauty, and effect. It has all the delicacy of touch and felicitous fancy of Mendelssohn when dealing with kindred themes. On the other hand, *Society*, one of the few journals that took exception to the piece on its production at the Savoy, made among other remarks these:—"If carried to its logical sequence, the latest whimsicality of Mr. William Schwenck Gilbert will introduce us in the next generation to race of hybrid beings: creatures who are half mortal and half fairies. Seeing that the shepherd Strephon is 'a fairy down to the waist, while his legs are mortal,' because his mother, who is a fairy, married a mortal, what, we may naturally ask, will be the result of the wholesale marriages which Mr. Gilbert has brought about between his *Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, and Barons?* Mr. Gilbert leaves all this to our imagination. He has only broached the idea, and has not deemed it worth while to anticipate in the slightest degree the disquieting thoughts he has so tantalisingly mooted. We are therefore forced to ask why he has introduced the subject at all; with what malevolent and sinister object has he thought fit to introduce *Strephon* to us such a form? And why, oh why! in spite of *Strephon's* lamentable plight through the union of his fairy mother and mortal father, has he diabolically contrived so many ill-fated and ill-assorted matches? Now if Mr. Gilbert had deduced the proper lesson from the disadvantages attending unions between fairies and mortals such as that described by *Strephon*:

*Leila*: Your fairyhood doesn't seem to have done you much good.

*Streph*: Much good! It's the curse of existence! What's the use of being half a fairy? My body can creep through a keyhole, but what's the good of that when my legs are left kicking behind? I can make myself invisible down to the waist, but that's of no use when my legs remain exposed to view? My brain is a fairy brain, but from the waist

downwards I'm a gibbering idiot. My upper half is immortal, but my lower half grows older every day, and some day or other must die of old age. What's to become upper half when I've buried my lower half I really don't know.

—it might have acted as a salutary deterrent. Instead of that, we are threatened, by the time the electric-light comes thoroughly into practical use, with a race of beings whose legs in time will perish, leaving only their bodies. We have, therefore, a strong grievance against Mr. Gilbert, who should either have pursued the legless fairy idea to its *legitimate* end, or left it alone altogether. As it now stands, it is shrouded in so much mystery as to be positively appalling." Refined objections of this sort might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but the fact remains that "Iolanthe" is one of the most assured successes ever placed upon the boards, and the manner in which it was received last night abundantly proved that its brief career in Exeter will be a decidedly prosperous one. The gorgeous costumes, picturesque groupings, and delightful dances are features that contribute to the attractiveness of the production, to the higher merits of which allusion has already been made. Repeated *encores* indicated the genuine enjoyment of a numerous and discriminating audience, and these gratifying demonstrations were not alone due to the charm of melody, the piquancy of rhythm, and the bright and tuneful qualities of the choruses. Artistes of high order, some of whom have on previous occasion won the favour of Exeter playgoers, have been entrusted with the presentation of the opera. The *Lord Chancellor* (Mr. John Wilkinson) has a rich sense of humour. His mock stateliness is something to think over, and his singing and dancing are at times excruciatingly funny. Mr. C. T. Stanley as the *Earl of Mountararat*, and Mr. C. C. Pounds as the *Earl of Tolloller*, add to their merits as vocalists the appreciative instincts of judicious actors, while Private Willis (of the Grenadier Guards)—a somewhat peculiar character—is admirably sustained by Mr. G. W. Marler. Mr. Walter Greyling's cultured voice and finished mannerism enable him to make an attractive Strephon. It is from no want of courtesy that the ladies are last referred to, but simply because the cast is being followed as it appears on the programme. Miss Fanny Harrison portrays the *Queen of the Fairies* excellently, apart altogether from her singing, which is liked exceedingly. As *Iolanthe* (a fairy—*Strephon's* mother), Miss Jessie Louise looks, sings, and plays charmingly, managing her sweet voice with admirable taste and effect. Miss Josephine Findlay appears as *Phyllis* (an Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward in Chancery)—a singularly fascinating part to which she does full justice. The three sister fairies, Leila, Celia, and Fleta, are impersonated by Miss Clara Deveine, Miss Kavanah, and Miss Mary Webb in a very praiseworthy manner, and, indeed, the entire company contrive most skilfully to give, as far may be, a semblance of realism to the playfully-illusory romance of the love of "Iolanthe, or the Peer and the Peri." [*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 30 Jan 1883]

"IOLANTHE" AT THE THEATRE.—The fairy opera with the above title was presented for the first time in Exeter on Monday evening, and proved a decided success. It is the joint work of Messrs. W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, and was rendered in Exeter by a company of *artistes* of a very high order. The audience was delighted with the production, and frequently encored the most striking pieces. "Iolanthe" is to be repeated each evening this week, and there is to be a morning performance on Friday. [*Exeter Flying Post*, 31 Jan. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL. — Lessee and Manager, Mr. Neebe; Business Manager, Mr. M. Russell Rosse. — *Iolanthe; or, the Peer and the Peri* was produced for the first time in this city on Monday last. The dress circle and the pit were tolerably well filled; but generally speaking, the audience was not so large as might have been expected from the

high rank Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan have attained for their musical satires. This, the latest of their joint efforts, was rendered in a most entrancing manner by a clever company, and the audience very judiciously bestowed their applause with the result that several of the pieces had to be repeated. The chief characters were sustained as follows:— Lord Chancellor, Mr. J. Wilkinson; Earl Mountararat, Mr. Stanley; Earl Tolloller, Mr. Pounds; Private Willis, Mr. Marler; Strephon, Mr. W. Greyling; Queen of the Fairies, Miss J. Harrison; Iolanthe, Miss Jessie Louise; Phyllis, Miss J. Findlay. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 3, 1883; Issue 2315.]

**5 – 6 Feb. Newton Abbot**

NEWTON ABBOT.

Much pleasure is anticipated from the announcement that Mr. James Chapple, music seller, has secured Mr. D'Oyly Carte's celebrated Opera Company to give three grand performances of that new and most successful fairy opera "Iolanthe," the last production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. Mr. Chapple's enterprise has secured to Newton Abbot the honour of the fourth representation in the provinces. The opera will be produced completely and effectively with new and special scenery, new and gorgeous wardrobes, &c. There will be a fashionable *matinee* on the Tuesday. [*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 5 Jan 1883]

MR. D'OYLY CARTE'S company gave three performances of *Iolanthe* in this town on Monday and Tuesday last, under the auspices of Mr. James Chapple, the local caterer. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 10, 1883; Issue 2316.]

Entertainment.		
LONDON	GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S	
HOTEL	GRAND FAIRY	Tickets
ASSEMBLY	OPERA	at
ROOMS,		SMITH'S
TAUNTON.	I O L A N T H E ,	Music
	by	Warehouse.
Feb. 7 & 8,	D'OYLY CARTE'S	
1883.	celebrated	Plan of room
	COMPANY.	ready.
GRAND		
SCENERY		
and		
EFFECTS.		

**7 – 8 Feb. Taunton**

IOLANTHE.—Mr. Fox has secured a visit to Taunton by D'Oyly Carte's company, which will produce Gilbert and Sullivan's grand fairy opera, "Iolanthe," at the London hotel Assembly-rooms, on February 7th and 8th. Tickets should be obtained from Mr. Clement Smith, at his music warehouse, at an early date. A plan of the room may also be seen at Mr. Smith's. [*Taunton Courier*, 24 Jan 1883]

**9 – 10 Feb. ???**

**12 – 17 Feb. Cardiff**

"IOLANTHE."

Pantomime has run its course at the Cardiff Theatre, and last evening its place was taken by "Iolanthe," the latest novelty from the pens of those accepted entertainers of the public, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. It will be remembered that the new opera made its first appearance in London, at the Savoy Theatre, only so recently as last November, and it says much for the energy and enterprise of our local manager that he should be able to give his patrons such an early opportunity of judging the merits of the new piece. That there would be a large and critical assembly on the first night was a foregone conclusion, for the people of Cardiff are always eager to be to the front when anything fresh in the way of dramatic and musical fare is put in front of them. When, therefore, shortly after eight o'clock, at the conclusion of a bright little *lever de Rideau*, the conductor took his place at the desk he could feel assured that his labours would not

be thrown away upon a dull and apathetic auditory, but would be appreciated to the full by a large, quick, and sympathetic gathering; not so noisy as some, perhaps, with disturbing signs of ill-timed acclamation, but lavish of genuine applause when the fitting moment arrives. In none of Mr. Gilbert's libretti does he attempt to win admiration by an interesting, cleverly constructed plot. There is little of drama in these his lighter efforts, little even of dramatic situation; indeed, he would himself be the first to pour out upon his own head the vials of cynical wrath if he caused for an instant the pulses of his audience to beat the quicker through genuine emotion. We must perforce put on the cap and bells with our author, and grin with him through the mask of satire at the more trivial follies and foibles of the world. Its deeper meanings, more serious passions, must be left to other heads and hearts to consider and expound. Reliance for success is based upon dialogue of the smartest, wit of the sharpest, rhyme of the readiest, the whole made pungent with a certain not ill-natured satire, and served up with business that must compel laughter and applause by its absurdity and adroitness. The first thing that strikes one with regard to "Iolanthe" is its resemblance to the works that have immediately preceded it. The whole greets you as a familiar friend, perhaps none the less welcome on that account. In particular the music, again and again, suggests reminiscences, not only of the composer's own scores, but also, it must be confessed, sometimes of other people's. But Mr. Sullivan is a learned musician, skilled in the treatment of his themes, and his ideas never lose anything, but rather become invested with an added merit by the assistance of his varied, piquant, and frequently suggestive orchestration. Scene 1 is an Arcadian landscape, which last night formed a worthy background to the brilliant *coup d'œil*, often presented on the stage. Hither come tripping a most fascinating tribe of fairies, headed by the *Fairy Queen* (Miss Fanny Harrison). They are sad at heart, for one of their number, *Iolanthe* (Miss Jessie Louise), has disobeyed the laws of fairy-land by marrying a mortal, and has been sentenced to perpetual banishment. The *Fairy Queen*, yielding to the solicitations of her court, pardons *Iolanthe*, who rises from a stream, at the bottom of which she has been working out her sentence on her head. The erring fairy has a son, *Strephon* (Mr. Walter Greyling), who is a fairy down to the waist, but whose nether half is mortal. He is engaged to be married to *Phyllis*, a Ward in Chancery (Miss Josephine Findlay), and enters playing a flageolet and singing with joy at the thought of his approaching wedding day. *Phyllis* next appears upon the scene and the two, left to themselves, sing a love duet full of graceful melody and fancy. On their departure a pompous and bombastic march is played by the orchestra, and at the same time a number of peers of the realm, headed by a detachment of the band of the Grenadier Guards, come out in solemn procession. Both author and composer have here poked a good deal of quiet fun at the hereditary Legislative Chamber, and the climax is reached when the *Lord Chancellor* (Mr. John Wilkinson) appears in full robes, and followed by his train bearers. The *Lord Chancellor* laments his hard fate that in his position as guardian he has nothing to do but give "agreeable girls away," when he would willingly marry one of his own wards were it not for the difficulties in which such conduct would place him. *Phyllis* is summoned to appear at the Bar of the House of Peers, by the members of which she is generally beloved, more especially by *Lord Tolloller* (Mr. C. C. Pounds) and the *Earl of Mountararat* (Mr. C. J. Stanley). But *Phyllis* spurns them, and avows her love for *Strephon*, who forthwith gets soundly rated by the *Lord Chancellor* for having disobeyed an order of the Courts of Chancery, and is told he must give up his bride. While he is inconsolable at her loss his mother comes to comfort him. *Phyllis* surprises them, and not knowing the facts of the case, and seeing her lover embracing a young and very pretty woman, becomes justly incensed. In vain *Strephon* and *Iolanthe*



explain their relationship. Neither *Phyllis* nor the Peers can be induced to believe that this girl of seventeen can be the mother of a man of five-and-twenty. In the midst of the dispute the fairies arrive, and in revenge for the insult offered them the *Fairy Queen* threatens to send *Strephon* into Parliament, where he will trample upon the Lords' most cherished rights. The second act shows us the Palace Yard, Westminster, with the Houses of Parliament and the Clock Tower. Here again the scene painter's art was displayed to great advantage, and the set was much applauded. *Strephon* has been returned to Parliament, and carries all before him owing to fairy influence, but the fairies themselves are no longer their own mistresses. They have succumbed to the fascinations of the Lords, and their Queen herself is not able to help admiring the sentry, *Private Willis* (Mr. C. W. Marler). As for the *Lord Chancellor*, he is perfectly heartsick about *Phyllis*, and can get no rest, as he cannot bring himself to consent to his own marriage. *Lord Tolloller* and *Lord Mountarat* however, anxious to be quit of their *liaison*, persuade his lordship to go in and win. But, in the nick of time, *Iolanthe* declares herself to be his long lost wife, when *Phyllis* and *Strephon* become reconciled, and a general pairing off between the Peers and the Peris finishes the opera. Of the interpretation it may be said, broadly, to have been one of the most finished that has ever been witnessed in Cardiff. Where all were good we may mention that Mr. Wilkinson made the hit of the evening in the character of the *Lord Chancellor*. Voice, make-up, and business were alike excellent; the result being enthusiastic encores for each of his songs. Miss Findlay makes a most charming *Phyllis*, and is sure to be a favourite here; while Miss Fanny Harrison, Miss Jessie Louise, Mr. Marler, and Mr. Pounds are amongst the others whose names stand out conspicuous for excellence. The chorus was in thoroughly trim, and the band, on the whole, satisfactory; though the "March of the Peers" might have gone with greater smoothness. Encores were the rule rather than the exception, and the curtain fell at half-past ten amidst the prolonged plaudits of a thoroughly well pleased house. [*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Tuesday, February 13, 1883; Issue 4293.]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manager, Mr. Edward Fletcher; Acting Manager, Mr. John Sheridan. – The curtain dropped for the last time on the pantomime at this theatre on Friday, the 8th. On Monday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company visited us with *Iolanthe*, and, as had been anticipated, very large business has been done. The staging of the opera is most elaborate, two new sets being specially painted by Mr. Miles Jones, the resident artist. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 17, 1883; Issue 2317.]

### 19 – 24 Feb. Gloucester

#### "IOLANTHE" IN GLOUCESTER.

We doubt whether there is any class of theatrical entertainment more genuinely attractive and popular than that which comes under the designation of "comic opera," and amongst the creators of this the author and composer of "Iolanthe" unquestionably bear off the palm. People go to the theatre to be amused, and to have their thoughts diverted for a time from the worries of everyday life, and in the works of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan they have just what they want. Mr. Gilbert is a prince amongst humorists, and, even in its wildest flights, his fun is redeemed from the appellation of nonsense by the keen vein of cleverness which runs through it, while the music to which the comedy is wedded is almost invariably as near perfection as can be. Whether "Iolanthe" is to be considered equal to its predecessors "Patience," "Pinafore," or the "Pirates of Penzance," will be a matter of opinion. The plot, as might be expected, is indisputably clever, though not, perhaps, without some minor shortcomings. There are

two acts, the scene of the first being an Arcadian landscape, through which runs a river crossed by a rustic bridge. The piece opens with a chorus of fairies who are lamenting the loss of their sister-fairy Iolanthe. The defunct one has 25 years ago committed the indiscretion of marrying with a mortal, and has thereby incurred the penalty of death, which penalty, however, has been graciously commuted by the fairy Queen to "penal servitude for life." Yielding to the entreaties of the fairies, the Queen at length consents to release the offender, who is thereupon summoned by a fairy invocation from the stream at the bottom of which she has been working out her sentence "on her head." No sooner are welcomes given, and mutual congratulations exchanged, than Strephon, Iolanthe's son, now twenty-four years old, makes his appearance in true Arcadian style—dancing to the strains of his flageolet. Strephon is a curious personage, inheriting his mother's immortality in the upper half of his body, and his father's humanity in the lower half. This combination occasions him no little inconvenience, for, as he complains, his body can "creep through a keyhole, but what's the good of that when his legs are left kicking behind." His upper half is immortal, but his lower half grows older every day, and some day or other must die of old age; and what is to become of his upper half when he had buried his lower half he does not know. The Queen promises that he shall go into Parliament, but he points out that down to the waist he is a Tory of the most determined description, but his legs are a couple of "confounded Radicals," and on a division, being in a "strong working majority of two to one," they would be sure to take him into the wrong lobby. The Queen, however, promises to return him as a Liberal-Conservative. The fairies having taken their leaves, Phyllis, Strephon's beloved, and a ward in Chancery, appears. Phyllis is also beloved by "half the House of Lords," and her advent is quickly followed by a most imposing procession of robed Peers, with the Lord Chancellor, who is also secretly smitten with Phyllis himself. The shepherdess, however, repels all the advances of the noblemen, which gives occasion for one of those pieces of "topsy-turvy" humour which are one of Mr. Gilbert's peculiar characteristics. Lord "Tolloller" pathetically pleads that

"Hearts just as pure and fair,  
May beat in Belgrave-square,  
As in the lowly air  
Of Seven Dials."

Strephon is, however, called to account by the Chancellor for disobeying an order of the Court of Chancery, whose ward Phyllis is. He eloquently pleads that nature bade him love, but the Chancellor tells him that there is no evidence before the court that "chorused nature" had interested herself in the matter, and he must not say what nature told him to do because it's not evidence. Strephon's mother comes to console him under his bereavement, whereupon a new complication arises, for Phyllis, and the Peers discover the two engaged in conversation, and utterly ridicule the idea that the youthful-looking "Iolanthe," who is declared to be not more than seventeen, can be Strephon's mother. Phyllis denounces him for his supposed treachery, and he thereupon appeals to the Fairy Queen, who appears with her fairies, and, to punish the lords, decrees that Strephon shall go into Parliament, and carry every measure he pleases; and that

"Peers shall teem in Christendom,  
And a Duke's exalted station  
Be attainable by com-  
Petitive examination."

Amid the horror excited by these prophecies the first scene closes. The scene of the second act is an effective representation of Westminster Hall, including the clock tower. Here the Fairy Queen's prophecies are being realised, to the intense discomfiture of the

Peers, to either of two of whom Phyllis has declared herself ready to become engaged. The Lord Chancellor's love has grown upon him, and the discomfort it causes him finds expression in a bewildering "patter-song," given with the greatest volubility. He is greatly perplexed at the relation in which he stands to himself as a lover of his own ward, but, at length, encouraged by the two more favoured peers, who have decided to give up their suit, he takes courage enough to make the necessary application to himself, and "most reluctantly," as he says, consents to it. He is prevented, however, by the intercession of Iolanthe, who discovers herself to him as his true wife, whom he had supposed dead, he himself having been the mortal for marrying with whom Iolanthe was condemned. She again incurs the same penalty as before by revealing herself, but the fairy Queen finds she cannot exert her authority, for the whole company of fairies have fallen in love with the peers. The Queen thereupon herself follows the general example by offering herself to a stout private, whom she offers to make a "fairy Guardsman," and who gallantly replies that he "don't think much of the British soldier who wouldn't ill-convenience himself to save a female in distress." To prevent future complications of the Strephon kind the fairies immediately transform their lovers into fairies, and the whole company at once resolve to forsake the earth and to exchange the "House of Peers for a House of Peris."

There are other features of the piece which we should like to describe, but have not space in which to do so. The company is a good one, as all Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies are, but there is some lack of power in the orchestra which we have noticed in former performances here of a similar kind. There is no such fault to be found, however, with the company itself, among which we notice one or two old faces, and which is thoroughly competent to present Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest work with good effect. We shall have another opportunity of commenting on the details of the acting, and therefore forbear further comment at present. [*Gloucester Citizen*, 20 Feb 1883]

#### "IOLANTHE."

Tonight the lessee of the Theatre, Mr. Dutton, takes his annual benefit, and a crowded house may be confidently expected, the bookings being so numerous that it has been necessary to devote a portion of the upper boxes to the reserved seats in addition to the whole of the dress circle. It is not likely that Mr. Dutton's patrons will be disappointed with the quality of the entertainment they will witness. We have already given a brief outline of the plot, and it only remains now for us to commend the acting of the company. It would be possible, no doubt, to pick out some faults here and there, but on an occasion like the present it would be invidious to be hypercritical, and we prefer rather to note a few of the many good points. The company at the outset sustained one rather regrettable loss in the absence of Mr. Walter Greyling, who, if we mistake not, made a very favourable impression in Gloucester as Grosvenor during the first visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Patience" company. His place as the half-fairy, half-mortal Strephon is, however, well filled by Mr. Herbert d'Egville. The exquisitely funny part of the Lord Chancellor is admirably played by Mr. John Wilkinson, who is as successful at compelling laughter in this character as he has been on former occasions as Major General in the "Pirates of Penzance" and Sir Joseph Porter in "Pinafore." He has several songs, the most amusing of them being the patter song in which he expresses the discomfort caused to him by his unrequited love which, "Nightmare like, lies heavy on his chest." This song always produces an encore. Miss Fanny Harrison, also an old favourite with Gloucester audiences, makes an imposing Fairy Queen, her sweet singing of the pathetic strains of "Oh! foolish fay," winning much applause. Miss Josephine Findlay acts and sings with great vivacity as Phyllis, and Miss Jessie Louise is also

successful as Iolanthe. Mr. C. J. Stanley and Mr. C. C. Pounds are well suited to the parts of the two young peers, the Earl of Mountararat and the Earl of Tolloller, who are the two most favoured of the noble suitors to Phyllis. Mr. Pounds sings the ballad, "Blue Blood" in excellent style, and Mr. Stanley is scarcely less successful in the song "When Britain really ruled the waves." The quartet "In Friendship's Name," in which they take part with Miss Findlay, as Phyllis, and Mr. G. W. Marler, as Private Willis; and the trio, "Faint heart never won fair lady," in which the two peers encourage the faint-hearted Lord Chancellor, also deserve special mention. Mr. G. W. Marler, as Private Willis, displays a good bass voice in the amusing song with which he opens the second act, and in which he expresses his wonder at the way in which

"Nature doth contrive  
That every little boy and gal  
That's born into the world alive  
Is either a little Liberal  
Or else a little Conservative."

Miss Clara Deveine, Miss Kavanagh, and Miss Mary Webb represent the three principal fairies, Leila, Celia, and Fleta, and are well supported by their sister fairies, who,

"As they flit upon the greensward fresh,"

Are not

"Too lightly knit or all too spare of flesh"

to add charm to the mundane scene, but on the contrary enhance the pleasing character of the performance with the graces of nature's favourites. [*Gloucester Citizen*, 22 Feb 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lessee and Manger, Mr. Thomas Dutton. – On Monday last Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company opened here for six nights with Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new opera *Iolanthe*, and the charming music has been much appreciated by large audiences. Miss Josephine Findlay is a very pleasing Phyllis. Iolanthe is rendered with care by Miss Jessie Louise, and in the part of Queen of the Fairies the rich contralto voice of Miss Fanny Harrison is heard to advantage. Mr. John Wilkinson is great as the Lord Chancellor, and receives a double encore for his patter song. Most valuable service is rendered by Mr. C. J. Stanley as the Earl of Mountararat, and Mr. C. C. Pounds as the Earl of Tolloller, the latter gentleman's sweet tenor voice being particularly effective in the concerted portions of the opera. Mr. Hervet d'Egville sings with taste as Strephon, and Mr. G. W. Marler scores a success as Private Willis, of the Grenadier Guards. The remaining characters are ably filled, and the choruses are given with effect and precision. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 24, 1883; Issue 2318.]

### 26 Feb. – 3 Mar. Cheltenham

MR. D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY take possession of the Old Wells Theatre, next week, for the production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new Fairy Opera of *Iolanthe*, which, from all accounts, seems likely to become as popular as *Patience* or the *Pirates of Penzance*, and is sure to be successfully represented by the actors and vocalists announced to undertake its typical characters, throughout the ensuing week in Cheltenham. The Opera to be preceded each evening with the farce of *Quite an Adventure*, and there will be an afternoon performance of *Iolanthe* on Wednesday and Saturday. [*Cheltenham Looker-On*, 24 Feb. 1883]

It is only upon rare occasions that, small as it is, the little Theatre in the Old Wells is ever crowded. One of these occasions was certainly last evening, when, thanks

to Mr. D'Oyly Carte Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera "Iolanthe" was produced for the first time before a Cheltenham audience. The opera from variety of circumstances may be classed as sensational, and so well must it be known to our readers, that we may dispense with any elaborate description, nor attempt any critique upon the wonderful production of the gifted authors who have already given to the public such works as "Pinafore," "The Pirates of Penzance," and "Patience," one and all of which have enjoyed a marvellous run of patronage. It will suffice our purpose if we state that Mr. D'Oyly Carte, last evening, gave us "Iolanthe" with a degree of perfection that was commendable in the highest sense. Of course, in a small country theatre, operas such as Gilbert and Sullivan's, cannot be produced with such display and effect as at the "Savoy" in London, a theatre actually built for the performance of these very operas, and aided by all the brilliant effects of the electric light; but well-knowing this, Mr. D'Oyly Carte does the next best thing, and that is, he engages a company so talented as to bear comparison with the one now performing at the "Savoy," and that in no unfavourable light. Miss Jessie Louise, who sustains the chief character of "Iolanthe," is not only able actress, but a charming vocalist, and in the first scene where she sings kneeling before the Queen, by whom she has been summoned from the bottom of the stream, she fairly carries the house with her, and throughout the opera she is equally effective—reaping the lion's share of the applause freely showered upon this admirable and unique company by a gratified audience. Miss Josephine Findlay as "Phyllis" was also another of the successes of a remarkable evening. Possessing a sweet, and not too powerful voice, she is admirably suited to the character she plays, and in all her songs was deservedly applauded, particularly that of "Good morrow, good lover," and "For riches and rank I do not long." In Miss Oscar Byrne the "Fairy Queen" loses nothing of her importance, the part being throughout admirably rendered. Space will not allow us to particularise more of the ladies, and we pass on to notice briefly one or two of the gentlemen. The accession of Mr. Clemence Pounds [*sic*] to the company is a decided acquisition, and a more excellent performance of the amusing character of "Lord Tolloller" could not have been witnessed. His singing is admirable, particularly in the now famous songs of "Spurn not the nobly born," and the quartette "Oh, many man in friendship's name." The famous "Lord Chancellor" was splendidly played by Mr. John Wilkinson, who, indeed, was the life and soul of the opera, and he well deserved the hearty applause he received, roars of laughter greeting most of his amusing songs, not the least of which is the clever "patter" song, "When you're lying awake with a dismal headache." Another clever impersonation is that of "Strephon," by Mr. H. D'Egville, and with this we must conclude our notice of this splendid performance, which was immensely enjoyed by crowded house. The Opera will be repeated throughout the week, and on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. [*Cheltenham Chronicle*, 27 Feb. 1883]

THE PERFORMANCE OF "IOLANTHE," Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new satirical Fairy Opera, by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company, during the past week, has attracted overflowing houses to the Old Wells Theatre, which has rarely of late been more fashionably or fully attended. This, indeed, was to be expected, recollecting, as most play-goers must do, the extraordinary runs of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *Patience*, the music of which fastened at once upon the public ear. Not that *Iolanthe* will ever obtain the popularity of either of the pieces alluded to; the vein, in fact, appears to have been pretty well worked out. *Iolanthe* is, however, a very skilful and amusing vehicle for the moral its author evidently intended to convey, and the music of a more studied character; but the absence of any such catching melodies as took with the public in *Pinafore* and the others will most likely fail to secure it the prolonged popularity enjoyed by its precursors, notwithstanding the cleverest acting that can be

imported into its representation; and cleverer acting than that which *Iolanthe* has received at the Old Wells Theatre during the past week could hardly be desired—Mr. Wilkinson as the "Lord Chancellor," Mr. Pounds as "Lord Tolloller," Miss Jessie Louise as the "Fairy Iolanthe," and Miss Findlay as "Phyllis," performing their respective parts to perfection; while all the others acquitted themselves in their subordinate characters also very cleverly; the music throughout being admirably rendered. The last performances of the Opera by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company take place this afternoon and evening. [*Cheltenham Looker-On*, 3 Mar. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessees, Messrs Maisey and Shenton.—*Iolanthe* has been played during the week and has proved a genuine success. It has been capitally put on the stage, and the costumes are superb. Miss Josephine Findlay is a charming Phyllis, and sings delightfully. Miss Jessie Louise is an effective Iolanthe and Miss Oscar Byrne an efficient Fairy Queen. Mr. John Wilkinson has made a great hit by his dry humour as the Lord Chancellor, and his two songs have been received with immense applause. Mr. C. J. Stanley and Mr. C. C. Pounds have both rendered the most able assistance as the two Earls; whilst Mr. H. D'Egville as Strephon and Mr. E. L. Gordon as the Sentinel deserve warm congratulation upon their successful impersonations. The chorus is very good and the orchestra, conducted by Mr. W. Robinson, all that could be desired. The acting management is in the hands of Mr. Herbert Brook, a guarantee that it is both courteously and efficiently carried out. [*The Era*, 3 Mar 1883]

Nothing could have exceeded the enthusiasm with which "Iolanthe" has been received in Cheltenham. On the opening night, Monday in last week, while there was a capital "pit and gallery," the "stalls" had more vacancies than we expected to see. But this was amply made up for each succeeding night, the gentry of Cheltenham vying with each other as to who should be first to secure the best seats, culminating on Thursday and Friday in such a "cram" as is rarely indeed witnessed at a Theatre in Cheltenham. It would seem as if the effort in some quarters to "damn with faint praise," has been the making of this charming opera, for notwithstanding all the success of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's three former operas—"Pinafore," "Pirates," and "Patience"—none of them have so carried the public by storm as the fairy "Iolanthe." Of course much of the success achieved in Cheltenham is due to the marked ability of the principal members of one of the best companies we have ever had in our town, while the music was beautifully given by a really first-class band. In securing the services of three such ladies as Miss Findlay (Phyllis), Miss Jessie Louise (Iolanthe), and Miss O'Byrne (The Fairy Queen); and three such gentlemen as Mr. J. Wilkinson (Lord Chancellor), Mr. C. Pounds (Lord Tolloller), and Mr. D'Egville (Strephon), Mr. D'Oyly Carte must be congratulated, and it must have been a poor opera indeed, thus supported, that had not been a success. [*Cheltenham Chronicle*, 6 Mar 1883]

### 5 – 10 Mar. Worcester

COMIC OPERA AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.—A very cordial reception has been extended to "Iolanthe, or the Peer and the Peri," the fourth of the exceptionally successful series of comic operas which has been the issue of the singularly happy partnership existing between Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. Nobody looks for a probable story in a comic opera, but rather for a story approximating so closely upon the purely ridiculous that it will be acceptable from its very extravagance and improbability. Such a story is unfolded in "Iolanthe." There is not, it must be admitted, much plot in the piece. What little there is, however, is as humorous and whimsically absurd, and is elaborated with as much care as the plots of "Patience" and the "Pirates." Undoubtedly

"Iolanthe" fully attains, if it does not transcend, the high standard of excellence which characterises the earlier productions of its authors, and the spectator must be very morbidly disposed, or lamentably deficient in the faculty of appreciation, if he cannot derive enjoyment from the scene that is charming and the stage that is gay, the refined, topsy-turvy humour of Mr. Gilbert—which shows itself in almost every line of the dialogue—and the pretty, soothing music supplied by his collaborator. Mr. D'Oyly Carte has so rigidly adhered to the principle of excluding incompetency from the opera companies which he sends into the provinces, and has secured the public confidence to such an extent, that when it is observed that one of his numerous companies are appearing in "Iolanthe," it is almost superfluous to add that the piece was produced with every attention to detail, that the scenic accessories were excellent, the dresses gorgeous, the chorus powerful, and the principal artists thoroughly competent to efficiently impersonate their respective characters. The second scene, showing the Palace-yard at Westminster and the Houses of Parliament as illuminated at night, is a very effective set. Throughout the music is sparkling and pleasant, and is a distinct advance upon that of "Patience." [*Worcester Journal*, 10 Mar 1883]

#### "IOLANTHE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

Mr. Gomersal is to be congratulated not only upon the promptness with which he has secured a representation, of this popular opera at his Theatre, but also upon the excellence of the company which performs it. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's name is synonymous with efficiency, and although the chorus is not large and the wind instruments develop some alarming eccentricities at one or two points of the piece, the opera upon the whole is adequately and impressively represented. Many contradictory opinions have been expressed as to the position which *Iolanthe* holds in the list of successes scored by Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert. There can be no question that its, general structure closely resembles the now familiar conceptions in the *Sorcerer*, the *Pinafore*, the *Pirates of Penzance*, and *Patience*. But Mr. Gilbert's quaint humour is always fresh, and Mr. Sullivan's music never tires. We should say that *Iolanthe* almost rivals *Patience* and the *Sorcerer*, and excels the *Pinafore* and the *Pirates of Penzance*. There is nothing in it perhaps quite so winsome as the "Willow, waly," duet, or the splendid sestet in *Patience*. But the theme of the opening fairy chorus, "Tripping, tripping," the love duet for Phyllis and Strephon, "None shall part us;" the ballad "For riches and rank," which Phyllis also sings; the duet, "In vain to us," for Leilla [*sic*] and Celia; the Fairy Queen's song, "O foolish fay;" the expressive sentimental ballad, "He loves" for Iolanthe; the two capital songs for the Lord Chancellor, and Strephon's "Fold your flapping wings," are all splendid specimens of the quaint beauty and delicate humour of Mr. Sullivan's music. Mr. Gilbert's satire is never happier than when it- is directed against pompous imbecility and conventional absurdities. The consternation of the coroneted peers when the Fairy Queen declares that "Peers shall teem in Christendom, and a Duke's exalted station be attainable by competitive examination" is a richly humorous incident. The Lord Chancellor's last song is in Mr. Gilbert's best style:

The law is the true embodiment  
Of everything that's excellent.  
It has no kind of fault or flaw,  
And I, my lords, embody the law.  
The constitutional guardian I  
Of pretty young wards in Chancery.  
All very agreeable girls—and none  
Are over the age of twenty-one.  
A pleasant occupation for

A rather susceptible Chancellor.

The comic vein of introspection in which he indulges when he falls in love with his ward, is also a really humorous passage. The noble and learned lord makes an application to himself in his judicial capacity for his own consent to marry Phyllis. "I am here in two capacities, and they clash; my lord, they clash! I deeply grieve to say that in declining to entertain my last application, I presumed to address myself in terms which render it impossible for me ever to apply myself again. It was a most painful scene, my lord; most painful." The part of the Lord Chancellor is admirably undertaken by Mr. John Wilkinson, whose face and tone are capitally adapted to represent the senility, pomposity, and slyness of the old Judge. Mr. C. C. Pounds, as the "Earl of Tolloller," also makes a distinct mark both in regard to the excellence of his voice and his discreet acting; and Mr. Herbert D'Egville as Strephon, could not be improved upon. Of the ladies, Miss Jessie Louise as Iolanthe, and Miss Oscar Byrne as Queen of the Fairies, made the most favourable impression. Miss Josephine Findlay was certainly not an Arcadian Phyllis, and her conception of the part is decidedly lacking in simplicity and coyness. The scenery is excellent, and it is to be hoped that the houses for the rest of the week will be sufficiently large to reward Mr. Gomersal's enterprise. There is to be a morning performance of the opera on Saturday. [*Worcestershire Chronicle*, 10 Mar 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. W. Gomersal.—During the week Mr. D'Oyly Carte's comic opera company has been appearing here in *Iolanthe*. The opera has been staged in admirable style, and has been most enthusiastically received by crowded audiences. [*The Era*, 10 Mar 1883]

### 12 – 17 Mar. Southampton

NEW THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE.—Lessee, Mr. J. W. Gordon—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company appeared here in *Iolanthe* on Monday and five following nights. The mounting of the pieces is splendid. The music, which is really beautiful, was received with considerable enthusiasm by the crowded and fashionable audience. [*The Era*, 17 Mar. 1883]

### 19 – 31 Mar. Portsmouth

IOLANTHE AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.—A capital house assembled at the theatre last night to greet Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company, who appear each night in Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera "Iolanthe," preceded by the popular farce "Quite Adventure." The plot of the opera is follows:—Iolanthe, a fairy, had, 25 years previously, married a mortal, and thus incurred the sentence of death by fairy law. This sentence the fairy queen commuted to banishment for life on condition that she left her husband and never communicated with him again. Iolanthe, soon after leaving her husband, gave birth to a son Strephon, who was a fairy down waist, with mortal legs. He became an Arcadian Shepherd, and fell in love with Phyllis, a ward in Chancery. Iolanthe is then pardoned by the Fairy Queen, who also promises assistance to Strephon, and sends him into Parliament The Earls of

**NEW THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE,**  
FRENCH-STREET, SOUTHAMPTON.  
Sole Lessee and Manager ... Mr. J. W. GORDON.  
**IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENT FOR SIX NIGHTS ONLY**  
and ONE MORNING PERFORMANCE of  
**MR. D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY,**  
In Gilbert and Sullivan's new and successful Fairy Opera,  
**I O L A N T H E.**  
**MORNING PERFORMANCE, SATURDAY, March 17th.**  
Doors open at 1.30, commence at 2 o'clock.  
**MONDAY, March 12, and every Evening during the Week,**  
at 8.15, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's Fairy Opera,  
**I O L A N T H E,**  
**OR, THE PEER AND THE PERI.**  
Preceded by the popular Farce,  
**QUITE AN ADVENTURE.**  
**MONDAY, March 19, Special Return Visit and for SIX**  
**NIGHTS ONLY of**  
**M D L L E. S O L D E N E'S**  
**CELEBRATED OPERA-BUFFE COMPANY.**  
Prices of Admission:—  
Private Boxes, 2l 1s; Orchestra Stalls, 3s; Pit Stalls, 2s;  
Boxes, 1s 6d; Pit, 1s; Gallery, 6d.  
Children under 10 years of age—Orchestra Stalls, 2s; Pit  
Stalls or Boxes, 1s.  
No Second Price.  
Doors open at 7, commence at 7.30, carriages at 10.30.  
N.B.—Letters or Telegrams from the Country, to secure  
Seats, addressed to J. W. Gordon, Theatre Royal, Southamp-  
ton, will meet with prompt attention.  
The Box Plan at the Theatre Royal Box Office, 3, St.  
Michael-street, where it may be seen, and places and tickets  
secured, from 10 to 6 daily.

[*Hampshire Advertiser*, 7 Mar. 1883]



Mountararat and Tolloller are both candidates for Phyllis' hand, and the Lord Chancellor also thinks he would like to marry her himself. Phyllis is frequently made jealous by Strephon's interviews with his very young looking mother and his aunts, the fairies, and on these occasions she flirts with the noble Earls, but ultimately Strephon explains to her that he is half a fairy, and they make up their differences, Phyllis telling him that she would rather have half a mortal that she loved, than half a dozen that she did not. Iolanthe then intercedes for the young couple with the Lord Chancellor, and, as a last resource, finding all other means of overcoming his opposition of no avail, she, regardless of the warnings of the fairies, discovers herself to him, his long lost wife, and tells him that Strephon is his son, thus a second time incurring the sentence of death from the Fairy Queen. The fairies then confess that if Iolanthe has sinned so have they, and that they have become duchesses, marchionesses, &c. Then, as the Queen could not well slaughter them all, the Lord Chancellor suggests that fairy law should be altered, so as to make it necessary for every fairy to marry a mortal. The Queen fell in with his views, and accepted Private Willis, the stalwart guardsman, as her husband, and all went off to fairy land. The scenery has been specially painted for this occasion, and the opera is put on the stage remarkably well. Mr. John Wilkinson makes a capital Lord Chancellor, his happy mixture of dignity and comic by-play making him a great favourite with the audience, while Miss Josephine Findlay makes an attractive Phyllis, her reconciliation with Strephon, concluding with the duet "You and I," being very pretty. Miss Jessie Louise also entered well into the part of Iolanthe, and Miss Isabelle Muncey makes a dignified Queen of the Fairies, while Mr. Cooper Cliffe makes a most correct sentry, as Private Willis, of the Grenadiers. The other parts are all well sustained, the chorus of noblemen and fairies being particularly effective and well-dressed. "Iolanthe " will, no doubt, be very popular during its stay at Portsmouth. [*Portsmouth Evening News*, 20 Mar. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. J. W. Boughton.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, with Gilbert and Sullivan's latest success, *Iolanthe; or, the Peer and the Peri*, was produced here on the 19th inst., for the first time at this theatre. Everything had been carefully prepared, and expectation was on tiptoe for the event. A big house was the result. The artists engaged are quite equal to their work, and perform in a most able manner. The part of the Lord Chancellor is intrusted to Mr. John Wilkinson, whose humour is irresistible. Miss Josephine Findlay is the Phyllis, and a very pretty character she makes of it. Miss Isabella Muncey plays the Fairy Queen with marked attention to the business. Miss Jessie Louise is the heroine, and Mr. Cooper Cliffe, as Private Willis, is deserving of hearty commendation. The chorus and band have been specially augmented. The dressing of the piece was most effective, and the mounting altogether in Mr. Boughton's best style. *Iolanthe* has been repeated every evening during the week except Friday to very large audiences. [*The Era*, 24 Mar 1883]

"IOLANTHE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.—The more the Portsmouth public sees of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new opera the more popular does it become. Indeed the theatre is crowded nightly to such an extent that the obtaining of seats proves a very difficult matter, excepting in the case of those who are prudent enough to have engaged them beforehand. The result is the more satisfactory in that it proves for the thousandth time that the people of this community are not only willing, but anxious to support dramatic enterprise of a worthy kind, and such, undoubtedly, is the manner in which "Iolanthe" is produced by Messrs. Carte and Boughton. [*Portsmouth Evening News*, 30 Mar. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. J. W. Boughton.—There has been no alteration since our last. *Iolanthe* is still playing to very large audiences. [*The Era*, 31 Mar. 1883]

### 5 – 7 Apr. Reading

THE THEATRE ROYAL.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's well known Opera Company will perform at Reading on April 5, 6, and 7, Gilbert and Sullivan's Fairy Opera "*Iolanthe*, or the Peer and the Peri." [*Reading Mercury*, 31 Mar. 1883]

ROYAL ALBERT HALL.—Proprietor, Mr. Elliot Galer; Business Managers, Messrs. Frank Burgess and Fred Conneaux.—The fairy opera *Iolanthe* is billed for three nights this week, commencing on Thursday. Big houses are expected. [*The Era*, 7 Apr. 1883]

### 9 – 11 Apr. Bournemouth

THEATRE ROYAL.—Manager, Mr. Harry Nash.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company played a three nights' engagement here, and with the greatest possible success, the house being crowded to its utmost capacity at each performance. The opera was admirably played and mounted with a completeness seldom seen in the provinces, the Westminster "set" receiving a well-merited round of applause. A matinee was given on the Wednesday. [*The Era*, 14 Apr. 1883]

### 12 – 14 Apr. Salisbury

This week Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company visits this town with the comic opera *Iolanthe*. [*The Era*, 14 Apr. 1883]

### 20 – 21 Apr. Northampton

CORN EXCHANGE, NORTHAMPTON.  
FOR TWO NIGHTS ONLY.  
FRIDAY and SATURDAY, APRIL 20TH and 21ST, 1883,  
M R . D ' O Y L Y C A R T E ' S  
O P E R A C O M P A N Y .  
In Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's,  
FAIRY OPERA,  
' ' I O L A N T H E . ' '  
Tickets and Places can be secured at Mr. W. Mark's,  
Drapery.  
Front Seats (numbered), 3s. ; Second Seats, 2s. ;  
Third Seats, 1s.  
Doors open at 7.30. Commence at 8 p m.

[*Northampton Mercury*, 14 Apr 1883]

CORN EXCHANGE.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company were here on Friday and Saturday last week. [*The Era*, 28 Apr. 1883]

### 23 – 28 Apr. Hanley

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. Jas. H. Elphinstone; Acting Manager, Mr. Chas. G. Elphinstone.—*Iolanthe* was produced here on Monday last to a crowded and delighted audience. The artistes are fully up to their work, the dresses splendid, and the scenery and stage appointments perfection [*The Era*, 28 Apr. 1883]

### 30 Apr. – 5 May. Wolverhampton

Theatre Royal.—Lessees, Messrs Lindo and Charles Courtenay.— ... This week large houses have assembled to witness *Iolanthe*, which has been capitally played by one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies. The principals acquit themselves very satisfactorily, and the choruses are nicely rendered. The dresses are unusually good, and

**MILITARY BAND.**  
**ST. JAMES'S HALL, LICHFIELD.**  
**SPECIAL NOTICE.**  
**DAY PERFORMANCE**  
 OF  
**IOLANTHE.**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 8TH, 1883.**  
 In consequence of the  
**ENORMOUS AND UNPRECEDENTED**  
**SUCCESS OF THE ABOVE FAIRY**  
**OPERA.**  
**ON TUESDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 8TH, 1883,**  
**AT 2-30.**  
 At the request of several of the leading influential  
 families in Lichfield and neighbourhood,  
**MR. FREDERIC BROWN**  
 HAS ARRANGED TO GIVE  
**A DAY PERFORMANCE**  
 OF  
**IOLANTHE**  
 So that those living at a distance or unable to Book  
 Seats for the Evening Performances of this  
 wonderfully successful Opera, may have  
 an opportunity of witnessing it.  
 Doors open at 2. Commence at 2.30.  
 Box Plan now open at the *Mercury* Office, Bird Street,  
 Lichfield.  
 The Hall will be carefully darkened for the Day Per-  
 formance, and the performance will be in every  
 respect equal to night.  
**ENGAGEMENT FOR TWO NIGHTS ONLY,**  
**MONDAY & TUESDAY MAY 7TH & 8TH**  
**MR. D'OYLY CARTE'S CELEBRATED**  
**OPERA COMPANY,**  
 Specially organised for the production of Messrs.  
 Gilbert and Sullivan's enormously successful  
 Fairy Opera  
**IOLANTHE!**  
 OR  
**THE PEER AND THE PERI.**  
 Now being performed at the  
 Savoy Theatre with unprecedented success.  
 The Lord Chancellor . . . . . **MR. JOHN WILKINSON**  
 The Earl of Mountararat . . . . . **MR. C. J. STANLEY**  
 The Earl of Tolloller . . . . . **MR. C. C. POUNDS**  
 Private Willis (of the Grenadier Guards)  
 Mr. H. COOPER CLIFFE  
 Strephon (an Arcadian Shepherd) **MR. HERVET D'EGVILLE**  
 Queen of the Fairies . . . . . **MR. ISABELLE MUNCY**  
 Iolantie (a Fairy—Strephon's Mother) **MISS JESSIE LOUISE**  
 Le-la . . . . . **MISS CLARA MILLER VINE**  
 Celia | Fairies | **MISS KAVANAGH**  
 Fieta | | **MISS MARY WEBB**  
 Phyllis (an Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward in Chancery) **MISS JOSEPHINE FINDLAY**  
 Chorus of Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Barons,  
 and Fairies.  
 Act 1.—An Arcadian Landscape!  
 Act 2.—Palace Yard, Westminster!  
 Date between 1700 and 1882.  
 The Dances are arranged by Mr. J. D'Aubran.  
 NOTICE.—The Company has been carefully selected  
 for the adequate representation of this enor-  
 mously successful Opera, and rehearsed under  
 the personal superintendance of the Authors  
 Messrs. W. S. Gilbert, and A. Sullivan, and  
 R. D'Oyly Carte, Lessee of the Savoy Theatre  
 London, and in order that it shall not lose any  
 interest in the Provinces, Mr. D'Oyly Carte  
 sends with his company  
**ENTIRELY NEW SCENERY.**  
**ELEGANT AND APPROPRIATE COSTUMES**  
 By Miss Fisher, Messrs. Ede and Sons, Messrs.  
 Frank Smith and Co., Mons. Alias, M. Bartle, Messrs.  
 Moses and Son, and M. M. Auguste and Cie.

the scenery is very pretty. In Mr. Herbert Brook, Mr. D'Oyly Carte has a courteous acting-manager. [*The Era*, 5 May 1883]

**7 – 8 May. Lichfield**

ST. JAMES'S HALL.—Mr. Frederic Brown introduced to the Lichfield public on Monday and Tuesday Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company in *Iolanthe*. The visit has been anticipated with great interest, and the performances attracted large audiences. Mr. John Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor constituted himself a great favourite, and Miss Findlay as Phyllis, and Miss Louise as Iolanthe, were much appreciated. Mr. Cliffe as Private Willis also met with favour. [*The Era*, 12 May 1883]

[Adjacent advertisement from *Lichfield Mercury*, 4 May 1883]

**9 – 10 May. ???**

**11 – 12 May. Derby**

**"IOLANTHE" AT THE CORN EXCHANGE.**

The youngest of the operatic offspring of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan made her bow to the Derby public last (Friday) evening, and was very cordially received. "Iolanthe," let us say at once, is as beautiful and as whimsical a production as any of the other members of her prosperous family. The story of her adventures, as presented for stage representation, is an elaboration of one of the well known "Bab Ballads"—which, by the way, have furnished the motives of most of Mr. Gilbert's libretti. Briefly told, this is how it runs:—Iolanthe, a charming and accomplished fairy, has loved and married a mortal, who is, by the way, a member of the legal profession. For this awful crime, which, as we are told, "strikes at the root of the whole fairy system," she has been condemned to die—an extreme punishment, however, subsequently commuted to banishment from fairyland, on condition that she left her husband. At the outset of the story, we witness her unrestricted pardon and restoration to full fairy rights and privileges, as concession to the tearful petitions of her sister fairies. The result of the ill-assorted union has been the birth of a son, who is "half a fairy." This young gentleman, Strephon by name, is the hero of the play, and he is introduced to us as the betrothed of Phyllis, described as "an

Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward in Chancery." Strephon, too, is Arcadian in his tendencies, and appeals the Lord Chancellor for consent to his marriage in language of "exalted poetry." But on this point the occupant of the Woolsack, though confessedly "a highly susceptible Chancellor," adamant; for, truth to tell, his lordship, in common with the great majority of the hereditary legislators around him, is deeply in love with the lady himself. But the venerable law-lord, though "sensitive," conscientious. He tells us—

"For I'm not too old and not so plain,  
And I'm quite prepared to marry again;  
But there'd be the deuce pay in the Lords  
If fell in love with one of my wards."

Besides, legal considerations of a more subtle character present themselves. His Lordship, upon "a review of the whole case," is driven to argue thus:—"Can a Chancellor marry his own ward without his own consent? And if he marries her without his own consent can he commit himself for contempt of court? And if he commit himself for contempt of his own court, can he appear by counsel before himself to move for arrest of his own judgment?" These painful reflections, it is clear, are undermining his Lordship's health, when startling discovery is made. Strephon being discovered taking counsel with his fairy mother—who, of course, is gifted with perennial youth and beauty—arouses the demon of jealousy, and Phyllis announces her intention of marrying one of two sprightly young peers, Lord Tolloller and Lord Mountarat—"which, she does not care." Strephon, in revenge, summons fairy aid, and thus fortified he gets into Parliament, where "he plays the deuce," even to the very bringing in of a bill for throwing the Peerage "open to competitive examination." In short, as we are gravely informed, "He's a Parliamentary Pickford, for he carries everything." "Still, he is not happy," and he is only consoled by a reconciliation with Phyllis. The Chancellor once more interferes, but is confronted by his fairy-wife, of whose existence he had long been ignorant. To serve her son she discloses her identity, although by doing so, she again breaks her fairy vows and incurs the penalty of death. Her indignant queen is about to strike the fatal blow, when the Chancellor "as an old equity draughtsman ventures to make a suggestion." The Fairy Constitution lays it down that "every fairy must die who marries a mortal," but the keeper of the Queen's conscience suggests, as an amendment, that the clause should read "Every fairy shall die who *don't* marry a mortal." This proposal is greeted with enthusiasm by the main body of the fairies (who have, as they confess, already become "fairy duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, viscountesses, and baronesses), whilst the Queen herself pairs off with the gigantic life-guardian on duty outside the Palace yard at Westminster. Indeed, wings are made to spring from the shoulders of all the mortals and a general move is made for fairyland, for as one of the Lords significantly says: "Now that the Peers are to be recruited entirely from persons of intelligence, I really don't see what use *we* are down here." The music with which Sir Arthur Sullivan has adorned the brilliant and satirical lines of his collaborator is characteristically sound and tuneful. Not merely are the vocal solos as melodious as of yore—several of them, notably the wildly satirical air set for the tenor, "Spurn not the Nobly Born," the Queen's song, "Oh, foolish fay," and Iolanthe's appeal, "If the by-gone years," are gems of their class—but the concerted numbers in several instances are singularly impressive. The finale of the first act is a model of graceful and effective scoring. Of the merits of the orchestration, we are unable to form an opinion, for, as on previous occasions, the duty of providing the accompaniments devolved upon a solitary pianist—a niggardly arrangement which was nothing short of an affront to the numerous and intelligent audience which filled the large hall.

The interpretation of the work given by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company was exceedingly good. The part of the hero was most admirably sustained by Mr. Hervet D'Egville, whose intelligent acting was supplemented by meritorious singing; indeed, it is evident that his fine baritone voice is capable of meeting much more exacting demands than were made upon it last evening. As "the highly susceptible Chancellor," Mr. John Wilkinson created intense merriment. His dry unobtrusive humour, and quaint movements stamped him as a natural impersonator of "Grossmithian" parts; whilst his singing of the ingenious "patter" songs is probably better than can be heard just now at the Savoy Theatre itself. Nearly all his efforts (notably his grotesque dance), were encored with enthusiasm. He was admirably supported by Messrs. C. C. Pounds and C. J. Stanley, the Earls of Tolloller and Mountarat. The former gentleman has a very agreeable tenor voice, which he can use with discretion. The small part of Private Willis was brought into prominence by Mr. Cooper Cliffe, whose acceptable singing and assumption of stolid dignity were much relished. Miss Josephine Findlay made a fascinating Phyllis, singing creditably and acting with charming piquancy, whilst the hapless Iolanthe had a capable impersonator in Miss Jessie Louise. The part of the Fairy Queen—a lady of the "massive" type already familiarised by Mr. Gilbert—was excellently sustained by Miss Isabella Munsey, and the three attendant fays found agreeable exponents in the Misses Millie Vere, Kavanagh and Mary Webb. The chorus of "Peers and fairies" was an uniformly strong and efficient one. Let us add that the dresses and appointments were unusually good, the scene of the Palace yard, with a representation of a well-known national institution in the background, being cordially greeted.

"Iolanthe" is to be repeated to-night. [*Derby Daily Telegraph*, 14 May 1883]

#### "IOLANTHE" IN DERBY.

Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest opera, which has been running at the London Savoy Theatre since the 25th of last November, was performed in Derby for the first time on Friday and Saturday last, on both of which occasions the audience, as might have been expected, was a large one. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan have created a public for themselves, and, moreover, "Iolanthe" is well worthy of the popularity that is likely to be accorded to it. Much of the music is graceful or humorous, and much of the libretto is ingenious or amusing. Nevertheless, we are bound to express our conviction that "Iolanthe" is, on the whole, and in comparison with its predecessors, the least satisfactory of the authors' co-works. With the details of the plot, of course, no one would think of cavilling. Mr. Gilbert in this respect is a law unto himself. *Iolanthe* is a fairy who has a son called *Strephon*, a shepherd. *Strephon* is in love with *Phyllis*, a shepherdess, but his lady love's jealousy is aroused by the appearance of *Iolanthe*, who, being immortal, is ever young, and whom *Phyllis* will not believe to be *Strephon*'s mother. Moreover, *Phyllis* is beloved, not only by fifty members of the House of Peers, but by the *Lord Chancellor* himself, who is about to marry her, when it is divulged that *Iolanthe* is his wife, whom he has thought dead for many years. It is destruction for a fairy to avow her marriage to a mortal, and *Iolanthe* would perish but for the intercession of the *Lord Chancellor*, who suggests a useful modification of the law. The *Queen of the Fairies* accepts the modification, and marries *Private Willis*, a Grenadier, whilst the fairies pair off with the Peers who have been so unsuccessful in their pursuit of *Phyllis*. Of course, all this is nonsense, but, as they say in "Patience," it is "precious nonsense," and is full of agreeable whimsicality. The "book," however, is not, as a whole, up to the mark of "Patience" or the "Pirates." Some of the songs are, to be sure, very neatly turned, as, for instance, in the ease of the ditty sung in the first act by the *Lord Chancellor*:—

The law is the true embodiment

Of everything that's excellent.  
It has no kind of fault or flaw,  
And I, my Lords, embody the law.  
The constitutional guardian I  
Of pretty young Wards in Chancery,  
All very agreeable girls—and none  
Are over the age of twenty-one.  
A pleasant occupation for  
A rather susceptible Chancellor!

But though the compliment implied  
Inflates me with legitimate pride,  
It nevertheless can't be denied  
That it has its inconvenient side.  
For I'm not so old and not so plain,  
And I'm quite prepared to marry again.  
But there'd be the deuce to pay in the Lords  
If I fell in love with one of my wards!  
Which rather tries my temper, for  
I'm *such* a susceptible Chancellor!

And everyone who'd marry a ward  
Must come to me for my accord,  
And in my Court I sit all day,  
Giving agreeable girls away,  
With one for him—and one for he—  
And one for you—and one for ye—  
And one for thou—and one for thee  
But never, oh never a one for me  
Which is. exasperating for  
A highly susceptible Chancellor!

Truly Gilbertian, again, is the ballad in which *Earl Tolloller* protests against the supposition that members of the aristocracy are not as virtuous and affectionate as less highly-born mortals:—

Spurn not the nobly born  
With love affected,  
Nor treat with virtuous scorn  
The well connected.  
High rank involves no shame—  
We boast an equal claim  
With him of humble name  
To be respected!  
Blue blood! Blue blood!  
When virtuous love is sought  
Thy power is naught,  
Though dating from the flood,  
Blue blood!

Spare us the bitter pain  
Of stern denials,  
Nor with low born disdain  
Augment our trials.  
Hearts just as pure and fair  
May beat in Belgrave Square,  
As in the lowly air  
Of Seven Dials!  
Blue blood! Blue blood!  
Of what avail art thou  
To servo its now?  
Though dating from the flood,  
Blue blood!

*Private Willis* has to sing a song about the House of Commons, which is admirable in its polished mockery:—

When in the House M.P's divide,

If they've a brain and cerebellum, too,  
 They've got to leave that brain outside,  
 And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to.  
 But then the prospect of a lot  
 Of dull M.P.'s in close proximity,  
 All thinking for themselves, is what  
 No man can face with equanimity.  
 Then let's rejoice with loud Fal la!—Fal la! la!  
 That Nature wisely does contrive—Fal la! la!  
 That every boy and every gal  
 That's born into the world alive,  
 Is either a little Liberal,  
 Or else a little Conservative!  
 Fall al la!

We need hardly say that the dialogue contains not a few isolated gems in Mr. Gilbert's very best manner. Excellent, for example, is the passage in which *Lord Mountararat* asks—"With a House of Peers composed exclusively of people of intellect, what's to become of the House of Commons?" Funny, too, is the colloquy between the *Queen* and *Celia*—"Oh, this is weakness! Subdue it!" "We know it's weakness, but the weakness is so strong!" We do not deny that the "book" of "*Iolanthe*" is, on the whole, diverting, but we do say that sometimes the writing in it is very strained and that rarely is it so spontaneous as in the other operas. *Strephon* is represented as a fairy to the waist, and a mortal from thence downwards; but no real fun is developed from that fact, though much cleverness is bestowed upon its illustration. There is a scene between *Tolloller* and *Mountararat* in the second act, which inevitably suggests a very similar scene between *Bunthorne* and *Grosvenor* in "*Patience*," and the *Queen* and the *Lord Chancellor* have to say things which would be meaningless if the former was not played by a large woman and the latter by a little man. The music, too, lacks, as a whole, the freshness and *entrain* of the other works in the series. There are, of course, delightful things in it. We may note, especially, the opening chorus of fairies, with its agreeably tripping melody; the clever ditty in the pastoral style by which the hero and the heroine introduce themselves; the truly charming love duet between *Strephon* and *Phyllis*; the finely-scored march and effective chorus accorded to the Peers; the delicate humour of the *Lord Chancellor's* first two songs; the amusing contrast between the words and air of the ballad by *Tolloller* above-quoted; and the irresistible joviality of the "taradiddle" chorus. All these are in the first act, and in the second there are such attractive *morceaux* as Private Willis's song, so well adapted to the words; *Lord Mountararat's* solo, equally well conceived for the purpose; the humorous duet and chorus, "Don't go;" the *Queen's* graceful melody, with its genuinely funny refrain; the skilfully written quartette, "In friendship's name;" the *Lord Chancellor's* ingenious patter-song; the lively trio, "Faint heart never won fair lady;" and *Iolanthe's* sentimental ballad. Mr. Sullivan once more shows how perfectly he can illustrate Mr. Gilbert's meaning, whilst the orchestration is perhaps more delicate and intricate than in any of the operas by this writer. On the whole, however, neither the music nor the libretto of "*Iolanthe*" can be said to be quite so attractive as those of its popular predecessors. And unfortunately, on Friday and Saturday last, the opera cannot be said to have had full justice done to it. The absence of instrumentalists deprived the work of the assistance of Mr. Sullivan's admirable orchestration, and this, together with the like absence of a military band on the stage and the exceeding tenuity of the male chorus (five in all), rendered the performance of the Peer's March and Chorus simply ludicrous to those who had seen the thing properly

done at the Savoy. And the lack of instrumentalists and sufficient male choristers is to be regretted all the more because the company that appeared in Derby last week is, so far as principals and female choristers are concerned, an excellent one. The artists are nearly all young in the profession, but some of them are of considerable promise, and some—such as Mr. D'Egville (late of the Carl Rosa Company) and Miss Millie Vere (of the "Olivette" and "Pirates of Penzance" troupes)—are performers of experience as well as of skill. It may be said of the *Phyllis* of the occasion—Miss Josephine Findlay—that she is somewhat too restless in her acting, and that there is too much of the vibrato in her vocalization; and Mr. C. J. Stanley, the *Lord Mountararat*, though well-favoured vocally, has much to learn yet as an actor. Taking, however, one consideration with another, it may be said that the principals in this "No. 2" company are decidedly above the average even of the provincial troupes sent out by Mr. D'Oyly Carte. Mr. D'Egville has a baritone organ of exceptional purity and sonority, and his acting (as *Strephon*) is full of care and judgment. Mr. Pounds, the *Lord Tolloller*, has a tenor voice of equally unusual sweetness and clearness, and his acting, also, is marked by much intelligence and neatness. Mr. Cooper Cliffe, as *Private Willis*, sings his one song with admirable distinctness and point and well deserves the encore which, we should say, he invariably receives. Mr. Wilkinson, the *Lord Chancellor*, has not quite the figure for the part, and is not always well heard, but he sings and acts with a keen appreciation of the humour of the words and situations, and it is notable that on Friday last all his three solos were vociferously encored—a fact which shows that his performance meets with hearty popular approval. Of Miss Findlay it may be added that she has an attractive appearance, that her voice has much freshness, and that she has an intelligent conception of the part. Miss Jessie Louise is a fairly acceptable *Iolanthe*; Miss Isabella Muncey is a pleasing, though perhaps not sufficiently weighty, *Queen of the Fairies*; and Miss Millie Vere gives distinction to the small—the too small—part of *Leila*. The female chorus are clever and capable, and by their excellent singing and acting secured on Friday an *encore* for "Don't go." Mr. W. Robinson presides ably at the piano which does duty for the orchestra; the stage management (including the setting of an effective scene for Act 1) is in the competent hands of Mr. Welby Wallace; and the whole arrangements are under the experienced control of Mr. Carte's *aide-de-camp*, Mr. Herbert Brook. "Iolanthe" will be welcomed in Derby again, but it is to be hoped that Mr. Carte will then send round a few instrumentalists and a more adequate quota of Peers. [*Derby Mercury*, 16 May 1883]

CORN EXCHANGE THEATRE.—Lessee, Mr. James Harwood.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company appeared here on Friday and Saturday of last week to immense audiences. The interpretation was excellent, and the audiences enthusiastic. [*The Era*, 19 May 1883]

### 14 May. Grantham

"IOLANTHE."—At the Exchange Hall, on the evening of Bank holiday, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's new fairy opera "Iolanthe" was produced for the first time in Grantham, by an excellent company sent by Mr. D'Oyly Carte. There was a capital house, and the repeated plaudits testified to the sustained interest of the audience, and to their hearty appreciation of what was undoubtedly a most effective and artistic performance. The music the opera is exceedingly attractive, and some of the airs are likely to become as widely popular as any in "Patience" or "Pinafore." To describe the plot in brief, it is sufficient to state that deals with a gentleman, Strephon (an Arcadian shepherd), who has the inestimable advantage of being the son of a fairy by a mortal father, and who is consequently able at pleasure to summon his mother Iolanthe, and the



whole force of the fairies, with the queen at their head, to his assistance. Strephon is the lover Phyllis (an Arcadian shepherdess), who has the misfortune to be not only a ward in Chancery, but a damsel so charming that a goodly number of peers are sighing in vain at her feet, the leader of this band of amorous nobles being the Lord Chancellor himself. There is no need to say what good use is made by Mr. Gilbert of such materials as we have here. The contrast between the fairies and the magnificent members of the House of Lords, who appear upon the scene clad in the gorgeous robes of their order; and the tribulations of a Lord Chancellor, who finds it to be his hard lot to dispense on all sides the beautiful wards, with whom he is much inclined to fall in love on his own account, are made the most of by a writer who revels in impossible materials of this description, and innocent laughter is excited by the piece from the rising of the curtain to its fall. The speeches of two of the noble band of lovers, Lord Mountararat and Lord Tolloller, furnish an admirable specimen of Mr. Gilbert's style at his best. The solemnity with which they confess their respect for "brains," and deplore their own lack of that commodity; the overwhelming courtesy with which each insists upon killing the other—a duel being apparently inevitable—in order that his friend may be spared the pangs of remorse; and the pathos of their declaration that "hearts as pure and fair may beat Belgrave-square, as in the lowly air of Seven Dials," are all inimitable. The Lord Chancellor occupies in "Iolanthe" the position assigned to the First Lord of the Admiralty in "Pinafore," and to Bunthorne in "Patience." His duty is to burlesque, in the neatest and brightest fashion, the character he is supposed to represent; and in doing this, he has to deliver himself a number of drily humorous comments upon his functions and attributes. The part played by the ladies need not be told. Their chief business is to look picturesque, and to sing a number of very charming ballads and songs. In performing this duty, Phyllis, the Queen of the Fairies, and Iolanthe were conspicuous. A word, too, must be said for Private Willis, who sings a remarkable song, descriptive of his opinions and sentiments as "an intellectual chap." The character of the Lord Chancellor (Mr. John Wilkinson) was wonderfully well sustained, and its best points were loudly applauded. The dresses were particularly good, and the scenery most effective, especially in the second act—"Palace-yard, Westminster." The opera was so thoroughly enjoyed that its repetition in Grantham will be certain to ensure crowded attendance. [*Grantham Journal*, 19 May 1883]

#### 15 – 16 May. Gainsborough

D'OYLY CARTE'S opera company visited here for two nights last week and played *Iolanthe*. The company is a good one, and we may specially mention Mr. J. Wilkinson, who, as the Lord Chancellor, was very humorous. Messrs Stanley and C. C. Pounds, as the Earl Mountararat and Lord Tolloller respectively, sing well; and the same remark applies to Mr. H. D'Egville as Strephon. Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe, as Private Willis, was excellent. The Phyllis of Miss J. Findlay was good. Miss Isabella Muncey, as the Fairy Queen, sang well. The title-rôle was excellently taken by Miss Jessie Louise, whose part was on the second night well played by Miss Kavanagh, she being indisposed. *The Member for Slocum* is here this week. [*The Era*, 26 May 1883]

#### 17 – 19 May. Lincoln

THEATRE ROYAL.— Lessees and Managers, Messrs. Roberts, Archer, and Bartlett.—The engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company on Thursday, May 17th, and two following nights proved a great success, the house being packed in every corner by a brilliant and demonstrative audience, to witness Gilbert and Sullivan's successful opera *Iolanthe; or, the Peer and the Peri*. The performance was in every way

worthy of the charming work, the dresses tasteful and pretty, and the scenery admirable. [*The Era*, 26 May 1883]

### 21 – 22 May.???

### 24 – 26 May. Grimsby

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. G. G. Whyatt.—This week Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's company is appearing in *Iolanthe*. The opera is well mounted; but the audiences are very poor indeed. The libretto is very quaint, the music beautiful, and the dresses magnificent, and the whole company appear admirably suited for their respective parts. [*The Era*, 26 May 1883]

### 28 – 29 May. Doncaster

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. T. Brooke.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company produced *Iolanthe* to crowded houses on Monday and Tuesday only, much to the disappointment of the visitors to the spring meeting. The opera was a great success. [*The Era*, 2 Jun. 1883]

### 30 May – 2 Jun. Darlington

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. John Cavanah.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company opened here on Wednesday, for four nights only, to good business. [*The Era*, 2 Jun. 1883]

### 4 – 9 Jun. Stockton-on-Tees

**THEATRE ROYAL, STOCKTON.—**  
Lessee and Manager, Mr. FRED. COOKE.—  
Important Engagement for Six Nights Only of Mr  
D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY, specially  
organised for the representation of Messrs Gilbert  
and Sullivan's enormously successful Fairy Opera,  
IOLANTHE, or the Peer and the Peri. MONDAY,  
June 4th, 1883, and every evening during the week,  
Gilbert and Sullivan's highly successful Fairy  
Opera, IOLANTHE; OR, THE PEER AND THE PERI!  
THE DANCES ARRANGED BY MR J. D'AUBARN.  
Preceded each evening by QUITE AN ADVENTURE.  
Monday next, FAITHFUL HEART Company. Plan of the dress circle at Heavisides and  
Son's, where seats and tickets may be obtained.  
Now Booking.

*Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 9 Jun 1883

that of some of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's previous operas; the costumes are pretty; and the singing good. As the engagement of the company only extends over the present week, those who wish to see the celebrated opera should avail themselves of the earliest opportunity. [*Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 5 Jun 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. Fred Cook.—*Iolanthe* was performed for the first time here on Monday evening to a crowded and most enthusiastic audience. The chorus is one of the best that has visited the town, while the costly and beautiful dresses and the general appliances elicited the hearties applause. We have seldom heard any of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's opera go better, the quick action and pointed and witty dialogue being keenly relished, while the sweet music received ample justice at the hands of the company. Mr. John Wilkinson was dryly humorous as the Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Herbert [*sic*] D'Egville, vocally and otherwise, was excellent as Strephon. Mr. C. J. Stanley and Mr. Courtice Pounds were capital as Earls Mountararat and Tolloller. Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe was the Private Willis, and sang his music effectively. Miss Josephine Findlay as Phyllis sings artistically, and her acting is easy and natural. Miss

STOCKTON THEATRE ROYAL.—

Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan's charming opera of "Iolanthe" was performed for the first time at Stockton on Monday night by Mr D'Oyly Carte's celebrated company. There was a crowded audience, and the frequent rounds of applause during the performance showed very plainly that the piece was highly enjoyed. "Iolanthe" has many points of special beauty—the music is "taking" if not, perhaps, so sparkling as

Isabella Muncey is undoubtedly great as the Queen of the Fairies, and the little Miss Jessie Louise has to do as Iolanthe is well done. Misses Millie Vere, Kavanagh, and Mary Webb, all excellent vocalists, as Leila, Celia and Fleeta complete the cast. The house has been crowded nightly. [*The Era*, 9 Jun. 1883]

### 11 – 16 Jun. Middlesbrough

#### MIDDLESBROUGH THEATRE ROYAL.—"IOLANTHE."

Until the House of Lords is abolished or reformed, until at least "a Duke's exalted station be attainable by competitive examination," the satirical libretto of "Iolanthe" will not only be welcome to democratic ears, but afford a fund of lively and intelligent entertainment to those who have watched with interest the rapid growth and cultivation of opera native of the soil, and the marked reception accorded to it. The remarkable success which "Trial by Jury" attained in London cemented that happy partnership existing between Mr. W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan, and has led to the most gratifying results. Mr. Gilbert is always intensely original; his writings all bear the unmistakable Gilbertian stamp; he has an extraordinary faculty for seeing things upside down, and pens his librettos and plays accordingly. Once or twice he ventured outside the magic circle in which he holds the wand. "Sweethearts," a tender contrast, and "Dan'l Druce," the central figure of which has taken a foremost place in the gallery of dramatic creations, heightened his reputation. "Charity," however, at the Haymarket was a *succes d'estime*, nothing more; and the magician accepting the teachings of experience retired to his more congenial quarters. The "book" of "Iolanthe" supplied to Sir Arthur is in Mr. Gilbert's best topsy-turvy style; and it has been treated by the composer with the musicianly skill, care, and excellence of a master. Briefly, Iolanthe, an inhabitant of Fairyland, has, before the opening of the opera, been banished by her Queen for having married a mortal. She was the life and soul of Arcadia. The fairies, her sisters, pray for her return; and the Queen, relenting, conjures Iolanthe from her dark exile "among the frogs." The sinful fairy had married a Lord Chancellor, to whom she bore a son, Strephon. Strephon—half fairy and half mortal—is enamoured of Phyllis (an Arcadian shepherdess, and ward in Chancery). The home of the fairies is besieged by Peers, two of whom are in love with Phyllis. By innuendo they suggest that Strephon is not a faithful swain. She believes them. The fairies, displeased with the conduct of the Peers, resolve that Strephon shall go to Parliament.

Every Bill and every measure  
That may gratify his pleasure,  
Though your fury it arouses,  
Shall be passed by both your Houses.

Strephon goes to Parliament,

"And carries every Bill he chooses,  
Showing that fairies have their uses."

**T**HEATRE ROYAL, MIDDLESBRO'.  
Proprietor, Mr J IMESON. | Manager. Mr G. IMESON.  
NOTICE.—The Management respectfully announce  
that during this important engagement the doors  
will be opened at 7.30. Performance to commence  
at 8.  
\* \* Last Six Nights of the Season.  
Important Engagement, for Six Nights only, of Mr  
D'OYLEY CARTE'S celebrated OPERA COM-  
PANY, specially organized for the representation  
of Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan's enormously suc-  
cessful Fairy Opera, IOLANTHE; OR, THE PEER  
AND THE PERI.  
On MONDAY, June 11th, 1883, and every evening  
during the week, at eight o'clock, Gilbert and Sulli-  
van's highly successful Fairy Opera,  
IOLANTHE; OR, THE PEER AND THE  
PERI.  
Act 1.—An Arcadian Landscape.  
Act 2.—Palace Yard, Westminster. Date between  
1700 and 1882.  
The dances arranged by Mr J. D'Aubarn.

*Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 11 Jun 1883

The two love-making Peers—Tolloller and Mountarat—are displaced by the successful legislator, between whom and Phyllis a reconciliation is effected. The Lord Chancellor takes Iolanthe once again to his heart; and the Fairy Queen, altering the law of her kingdom to suit the emergency of the hour, pairs off with a private soldier—her followers graduating into duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, viscountesses, and baronesses. The musical numbers, whilst suggesting reminiscences of other works from the same eminent hand, are more pretentious than, if not so rich in melody as, their predecessors. Miss Josephine Findlay gives us a charming impersonation of Phyllis, and, possessed of a sweet and powerful soprano voice sings her music admirably. Miss Isabella Muncey, as Queen of the Fairies, acts and sings well, her rendering of the song "Oh, Foolish Fay" (a sweet and tuneful air) being particularly effective. Iolanthe, though making no great call upon the abilities of an artist is praiseworthy acted by Miss Jessie Louise. Mountarat (Mr. C. J. Stanley) and Tolloller (Mr. C. Courtice Pounds) are creditably assumed. The Lord Chancellor of Mr. John Wilkinson is a capital piece of character acting, and last night the actor won an encore for the song "When I went to the Bar," a number that at once recalled the famous Judge's song. The audience also showed a disposition to pay a similar compliment to him for his amusing delivery of the song "When You're Lying Awake," which bears a near relationship to the ditty made so popular by John Wellington Wells in "The Sorcerer." Mr. Herbert D'Egville, a really able actor, creates a very favourable impression as Strephon. The minor part of Private Willis (of the Grenadier Guards) is raised to a role of importance by the clever acting of Mr. Cooper Cliffe. The ladies and gentlemen of the chorus have, evidently, been carefully rehearsed; but they are heard at a disadvantage. One piece sung by five Peers is drowned by the *forte* music which was written to suit the larger volume of sound heard at the Savoy Theatre. The scenes in which the two acts of the opera take place will rank among the best scenic efforts of Mr. Thos. Evans. [*Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 12 Jun. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Proprietor, Mr. John Imeson; Manager Mr. George Imeson.—This week the successful season closes with the excellent performances of the *Iolanthe* company. The piece is well mounted, two new scenes having been painted by the able artist Mr. Thomas Evans, who has added to so many of his brush triumphs to the scene dock of the Royal. The acting and singing of the company have been greatly appreciated nightly. [*The Era*, 16 Jun. 1883]

## 25 – 30 Jun. South Shields

### "IOLANTHE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

**THEATRE ROYAL, SO. SHIELDS.**  
Lessee and Manager.....Mr FRED. COOKE.

#### IOLANTHE IN SHIELDS.

Mr Cooke has much pleasure in announcing that the first production of *Iolanthe* in the North of England will take place at the above Theatre, on

MONDAY, JUNE 25TH, 1883,

Supported by  
MR D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY.

At 7.30 o'clock, the Operetta, entitled  
**QUITE AN ADVENTURE.**

At 8 o'clock will be presented, for the first time in Shields,

**GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S**  
Latest Success, now being played at the Savoy Theatre, London,

#### I O L A N T H E .

The *Times*, of Nov. 27th, says:—*Iolanthe* is fully equal to its predecessors, and even superior to them as regards raciness of humour and extravagance of invention and language.

The *Daily Telegraph* says:—The composer has risen to his opportunity, and we are disposed to account *Iolanthe* his best effort in all the Gilbertian Series.

No second price. Now booking at Mr Farmer's Confectioner, Fowler Street.

N.B.—The Opera terminates in time for the late trains to Sunderland and Newcastle, and the intermediate Stations.

*Shields Daily Gazette*, 26 Jun. 1883

is no whit inferior to the operas previously produced. A light and amusing story, replete with strokes of satire and flashes of epigram, has been wedded to music as charming as Mr. Sullivan has ever written. The company now visiting South Shields is an excellent one, and the important task of introducing a new work of great repute could not have been entrusted to better hands. As to "*Iolanthe*," it is not excelled any of the previous works of Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan—in point of fact, for extravagance of invention and language, and intense humour, it is unequalled. [*Shields Daily Gazette*, 26 Jun 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. Fred. Cooke.—The frequenters of this theatre have this week had a great treat in the engagement and appearance of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* comp[any, and there have been crowded houses. The company is a most excellent one, and their efforts were loudly applauded, encores being very frequent. The opera was splendidly mounted, and the scenery and dresses were very attractive. [*The Era*, 30 Jun. 1883]

## 2 – 7 Jul. Sunderland

### "IOLANTHE" AT THEATRE ROYAL.

Last night, the Theatre Royal, Sunderland, was re-opened for the summer season, by the production of Gilbert and Sullivan's charming opera "*Iolanthe* ; or, the Peer and the Peri." "*Iolanthe*", the latest, though scarcely the most popular the distinguished collaborators, may be summarised in a sentence—the difficulties that an amiable judge and house peers find in dealing with a ward in Chancery. Phyllis, and her "lover of twenty-four." The opera, like all its forerunners, is sharp satire on existing institutions, and in "*Iolanthe*" the Court of Chancery and the House of Lords come in for

some sly hits. The music abounds in the peculiarities of Sullivan's compositions, and is never wanting in vigour and perfect harmony. "Strephon" (Mr. Herbert D'Egville), whose share in the singing was not heavy, acted with spirit, and his fairy mother, "Iolanthe" (Miss Jessie Louise) both sang and acted capital style. The chief character, that is, the one that most engages the attention of the audience, is the Lord Chancellor. Mr. John Wilkinson's interpretation of this character, which has its parallels in the sister operas, was in all ways excellent, and well deserved the encores which were liberally given. The Earl of Tolloller (Mr. C. Courtice Pounds) sang the already well-known parody, "Spurn not the nobly born," with seeming consciousness of the nobility of the sentiments he was uttering that brought down the house. Private Willis found capital representative in Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe, whose single effort commanded unanimous *encore*. Miss Isabella Muncey, who is possessed of pleasing voice, was good all round. With regard to the choruses, we have only one fault find, they were rather weak, and sometimes found hindrance instead of help in the band at the back of the stage. The scenery, especially the view of the Palace Yard, Westminster, was generally admired. [*Sunderland Daily Echo*, 3 Jul. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. E. D. Davis; Manageress, Mrs. Hunter.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company commenced a six nights' engagement here on Monday, and notwithstanding the warmth of the weather a large audience assembled to witness the opening performance. The company is in every respect a most capable one, and the audience soon showed their appreciation of the efforts of the various members. Miss Josephine Findlay made a most piquant and pleasing Phyllis, Arcadian shepherdess and ward in Chancery, and Mr. Herbert D'Egville was also successful as Strephon. Mr. J. Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor is entitled to high praise for his dry, humorous rendering of the part; and Mr. C. Courtice Pounds is to be complemented for his pleasing and sympathetic singing of the music allotted to the Earl of Tolloller. The remaining characters in the opera were all in the hands of capable representatives. [*The Era*, 7 Jul. 1883]

#### **9 – 10 Jul. Hexham**

#### **11 – 14 Jul. Carlisle**

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE. – Mr E. Edmondson, Secretary. – Last week we had Mr. Geo. Weldon's *London Pride* company, who did very good business. This week we have had Mr D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company for two nights. They had a large attendance each evening and gave every satisfaction. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, July 14, 1883; Issue 2338.]

#### **16 – 21 Jul. Oldham**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr. Alexander Boyd; Manager, Mr. Lindo Courtenay.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's comic opera company, with *Iolanthe*, is in possession of the boards this week, and notwithstanding an advance in the prices of admission large audiences are patronising their first appearance in Oldham. [*The Era*, 21 Jul. 1883]

#### **23 – 25 Jul. Bolton**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessees, Messrs. Duval and Elliston.—A rare treat has been afforded by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company, who presented, on the first three nights of the week, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera *Iolanthe*, the theatre on each occasion being full. [*The Era*, 28 Jul. 1883]

### 26 – 28 Jul. Blackburn

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE. – Mrs C.H. Duval has wisely determined to continue the lesseeship held so long and creditably by her late husband, and, by way of inaugurating a new era, has made great alterations and improvements in the theatre. Amongst other things an entirely new stage has been put down, with all the latest "safeties" and conveniences. The orchestra has been rearranged and enlarged, and Tollerton's patent footlights have replaced the older-fashioned ones. The whole of the scenery has been "revised and corrected," and a new act-drop supplied. By the introduction of falling divisional seats in the dress circle, the replacement of all the upholstery, &c., the comfort of the audience has been carefully considered. Everything possible in the way of renovation and redecoration has been done, and the result is particularly satisfactory, and the theatre may be considered almost a new one. The lessee and her able manager and friend, Mr J.F. Elliston, are to be heartily congratulated on the result of their endeavours. The theatre opened on Thursday, the 26th ult., with D'Oyly Carte's No. 1 *Iolanthe* company, which commanded a large audience on the first as well as two subsequent evenings. During the present week Mr Brian M'Culloch has presented his new drama *Self; or, Man's Inhumanity to Man*, the representation of which, by an excellent company, has been fairly satisfactory. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, August 4, 1883; Issue 2341.]

### 30 – 31 Jul. Warrington

Public Hall.—Licensee, Mr. Wm. Johnson.—One of the most important engagements entered into of late by the licensee was certainly that for the production of *Iolanthe* on Monday and Tuesday evenings last, when it was seen for the first time in Warrington. *Iolanthe* is in no sense inferior to the other operas which have been produced by the same author and composer; in many respects it is superior, and will be popular when *Patience* has lost its power to charm, and æstheticism no longer exists. The music is both sparkling and attractive, whilst Mr. Gilbert has again been most successful. The applause and numerous encores proved the pleasure of the audiences derived from the performances. The company is an excellent one. Mr. Hervet D'Egville gave much force and character to Strephon; Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe was indeed good as Private Willis; Messrs C. J. Stanley and C. C. Pounds deserve more than passing commendation, for they were most efficient representatives of the Earl of Mountararat and the Earl of Tolloller; Mr. John Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor lends great aid by his humorous rendition of a character which he keeps well within bounds. The Phyllis of Miss Josephine Findlay was an artistic and easy performance, and her singing excellent; Miss Isabella Muncey as Queen of the Fairies rendered the part with much humour. *Iolanthe* had an able representative in Miss Jessie Louise, and the three "speaking fairies"—Leila, Celia, and Fleta—lost none of their prominence in the hands of Misses Millie Vere, Kavanagh, and Mary Webb. [*The Era*, 4 Aug. 1883]

### 1 – 2 Aug. Rhyl

THE FAIRY OPERA. – The visitors at Rhyl have had another treat this week from Mr D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company. Performances of "Iolanthe" were given at the Town Hall on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, to crowded and appreciative audiences. [*North Wales Chronicle* (Bangor, Wales), Saturday, August 4, 1883; Issue 2909.]

### 7 – 8 Aug. Wrexham

PUBLIC HALL.—Secretary, Mr. Tilston.—On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings *Iolanthe*, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera, delighted well-filled houses at this

place of entertainment. The cast was a good all-round one, and some of the more successful efforts of individual members of the company were rewarded with hearty encores. Mr. John Williamson [*sic*] was the Lord Chancellor; Mr. C. J. Stanley, the Earl of Mountararat; Mr. C. C. Pounds, the Earl of Tolloller; Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe, Private Willis; Mr. Hervet D'Egville, Strephon; Miss Isabella Muncey, the Queen of the Fairies; Miss Jessie Louise, Iolanthe; and Miss Josephine Findlay, Phyllis. The scenery was far superior to that usually seen at Wrexham, and the entire performance gave marked satisfaction. [*The Era*, 11 Aug. 1883]

### 15 – 16 Aug. Swindon

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—Secretary, Mr. J. H. Preece.— ... Last Wednesday evening Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera *Iolanthe* was given by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company to a crowded audience, and it is gratifying to note that, after the extremely dull season of 1882-3 here, this, which may be considered the first performance of the new season, was crowned with such complete success. [*The Era*, 18 Aug. 1883]

### 17 – 18 Aug. Malvern

DRILL HALL.—Two representations of *Iolanthe* have been given here by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company. The cast was an excellent one. Miss Josephine Findlay (Phyllis), Miss Jessie Louise (Iolanthe), and Mr. Hervet D'Egville (Strephon), deserving special mention alike for their admirable acting and good vocalisation. Mr. John Wilkinson was a most diverting Lord Chancellor. [*The Era*, 18 Aug. 1883]

### 20 Aug. Weymouth

### 21 – 22 Aug. Guernsey

#### "IOLANTHE"

Tonight and tomorrow night Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Comic Opera Company appear in this very popular production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, and will doubtless meet with a hearty reception in St. Julian's Hall, under the auspices of Mr. Wybert Rousby. The company arrived from Weymouth, where they performed last night, shortly before six o'clock this morning. At Weymouth they were entertained at dinner at the Crown Hotel by Mr. D'Oyly Carte and his manageress Miss Lenoir in honour of the approaching tercentenary of the production of "Iolanthe." [*The Star*, 21 Aug. 1883]

#### "IOLANTHE."

This amusing Comic Opera was performed by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's talented Company at St. Julian's Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, before large and appreciative audiences. The plot of the Opera with its many social and political hits has been so often described that the details have become pretty familiar. On this occasion the following was cast:—

The Lord Chancellor .....	Mr. John Wilkinson
The Earl of Mountararat .....	Mr. C. J. Stanley
The Earl of Tolloller.....	Mr. C. Courtice Pounds
Private Willis ( <i>of the Grenadier Guards</i> ).....	Mr. H. C. Cliffe.
Strephon ( <i>an Arcadian Shepherd</i> ).....	Mr. H. D'Egville
Queen of the Fairies .....	Miss Isabelle Muncey
Iolanthe ( <i>a Fairy – Strephon's Mother</i> ).....	Miss Jessie Louise.
Celia .....	Miss Millie Vere
Leila.....	Miss Kavanagh
Fleta.....	Miss Mary Webb



Phyllis (*an Arcadian Shepherdess and  
Ward in Chancery*)..... Miss Josephine Findlay

The leading characters were very ably sustained, and the dresses and appointments were admirably appropriate. The Lord Chancellor, Strephon and Phyllis were frequently applauded, and in all respects a most enjoyable entertainment was provided under the auspices of Mr. Wybert Rousby by the clever manager of the company Mr. Herbert Brook. [*The Star*, 23 Aug. 1883]

### 23 – 25 Aug. Jersey

THEATRE ROYAL. – Proprietor, Mr. W. Rousby. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company have given a series of representations, commencing on Thursday, the 23rd ult., and ending on Saturday. The last work of Gilbert and Sullivan has found favour among the dilettanti, and the success was most gratifying. On Wednesday Miss Florence Wade's Haymarket company began a short engagement with *Puck* and *Reputation*. [*Era*, 1 Sep. 1883]

### 28 – 29 Aug. Ryde

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Iolanthe" company paid us a visit during the week, and performed at the Theatre on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, an afternoon performance being given on the latter date. The theatre was crowded on each occasion. [*Isle of Wight Observer*, 1 Sep. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company gave grand representations of Gilbert and Sullivan's enormously successful fairy opera *Iolanthe* on Tuesday and Wednesday 28th and 29th ult., before immense audiences. The acting and singing of Miss Isabel Muncey as Queen of the Fairies and Mr. John Wilkinson as Lord Chancellor were greatly admired. [*Era*, 1 Sep. 1883]

*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, September 29, 1883; Issue 2349.

#### RAMSGATE

GRANVILLE THEATRE. – Miss Sarah Thorne, Lessee. – Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company gave three representations of *Iolanthe* here last Friday and Saturday, The house was well filled on each occasion. On Monday evening Miss Thorne's company appeared in *Arrah-na-Pogue*. Miss Emily Stafford sustained the title rôle with much spirit. Mr. Harry Dundas did justice to Colonel O'Grady; whilst Mr. James Cumberland made a good hit as Shaun the Post.

*Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), Monday, November 19, 1883; Issue 4531.

#### AMUSEMENTS IN CARDIFF

THEATRE ROYAL. – Lovers of light opera are offered an exceptional treat to-night and for the rest of the week in the production at the theatre of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's delightful fairy opera "Iolanthe; or, The Peer and the Peri." The representation will be by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's talented company. On the occasion of their former visit the company's performance gave the utmost satisfaction, and elicited every possible manifestation of appreciation from crowded audiences. We venture to predict for the company a warm welcome from Cardiff audiences on their return visit. Each evening the opera will be preceded by a new comedietta, entitled "Quite an Adventure." Mr. Fletcher has provided a morning or special day performance at two o'clock on Saturday. This will enable visitors from outlying districts to witness the popular opera of "Iolanthe." Mr. Fletcher's thoughtfulness will be appreciated by many who would not

otherwise have had the opportunity of hearing and seeing one of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's great successes.

#### **5 – 6 Feb. Newton Abbot**

MR. D'OYLY CARTE'S company gave three performances of *Iolanthe* in this town on Monday and Tuesday last, under the auspices of Mr. James Chapple, the local caterer. [*The Era* (London, England), Saturday, February 10, 1883; Issue 2316.]

**7 – 10 Feb. ???**

#### **23 – 25 Aug. Jersey**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Proprietor, Mr. W. Rousby.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company have given a series of representations, commencing on Thursday, the 23rd ult., and ending on Saturday. The last work of Gilbert and Sullivan has found favour among the dilettanti, and the success was most gratifying. On Wednesday Miss Florence Wade's Haymarket company began a short engagement with *Puck* and *Reputation*. [*The Era*, 1 Sep 1883]

#### **28 – 29 Aug. Ryde**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company gave grand representations of Gilbert and Sullivan's enormously successful fairy opera *Iolanthe* on Tuesday and Wednesday, 28th and 29th ult., before immense audiences. The acting and singing of Miss Isabelle Muncey as Queen of the Fairies and Mr. John Wilkinson as Lord Chancellor were greatly admired. [*The Era*, 1 Sep 1883]

#### **3 – 8 Sep. Eastbourne**

THEATRE ROYAL AND OPERA HOUSE.—Sole Lessee and Manager, Mr. Waldern Pegg.—*Iolanthe*, under the direction of D'Oyly Carte, is having a most successful run here. Every character is well sustained. [*The Era*, 8 Sep. 1883]

#### **10 – 15 Sep. Hastings**

"IOLANTHE" AT THE GAIETY.—This week our local Theatre, which it seems people are at last beginning to appreciate as they ought, has been taken possession of by a company of immortals, who, however, are so far susceptible as nightly to yield the claims of the less favoured but more substantial beings of this wicked world of ours. *Iolanthe* has been nightly produced since Monday last, on which evening the first appearance of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company was enthusiastically welcomed, and at the close most heartily applauded, a reception which has been confirmed at each succeeding performance. It may well be said that in a comparison the mortals can well hold their own for talented acting and good singing. Mr. John Wilkinson leads the way the Lord Chancellor, which he acted almost to perfection; Mr. C. J. Stanley and Mr. C. Courtice Pounds, as the two enamoured noblemen, were very good, and Mr. Hervet D'Egville, the much-perplexed but eventually all-triumphant Strephon, sustained the part assigned to him in a most creditable style. Of the mortal females, if such apparently rude expression may be used, Miss Josephine Findley as Phyllis is the sole representative, and the ladies may, on the whole, be well satisfied with the young lady to whom this important role has been entrusted. Passing on to the beings of another sphere, the Queen of the Fairies, Miss Isabelle Muncey has the first claim on our attention. This lady appears in every way well suited to her part, and acts with a natural dignity befitting her regal station. The title role gave occasion for well sustained acting and carefully prepared singing at the hands Miss Jessie Louise, both of which it certainly had, and this

important part was capitally played. Of the general appointment of the piece all the visitors seem to speak very highly, and the costumes are equally effective. The engagement terminates this (Saturday) evening. [*Hastings and St. Leonards Observer*, 15 Sep. 1883]

GAIETY THEATRE.—Lessee, Madame Soldene; Manager, Mr. E. Powell.—*Iolanthe* has been performed here for the first time, and has been a very great success. Mr. John Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor, Mr. Hervet d'Egville as Strephon, and Miss Josephine Findlay as Phyllis, acted and sang in a most pleasing manner. [*The Era*, 15 Sep. 1883]

#### 17 – 20 Sep. Margate

THE THEATRE.—Miss Sarah Thorne, Lessee.—There was a large and highly amused audience on Monday evening, when Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company commenced a series of five performances, the opera produced being *Iolanthe*, which was admirably staged. Mr. John Wilkinson was amusing as the Lord Chancellor, and was honoured with a double encore. Much of the interest centred in Strephon and Phyllis, character splendidly represented by Mr. Hervet D'Egville and Miss Josephine Findlay respectively. The Queen of the Fairies and Private Willis were amusingly represented by Miss Isabelle Muncey and Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe, the title-rôle being sustained by Miss Jessie Louise. Messrs C. J. Stanley and C. Courtice Pounds sang well; and the choruses were rendered in a spirited and effective manner. On Friday (last evening) Miss Sarah Thorne appeared as Ruth in *The Wages of Sin*. [*The Era*, 22 Sep. 1883]

#### 21 – 22 Sep. Ramsgate

GRANVILLE THEATRE.—Miss Sarah Thorne, Lessee.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company gave three representations of *Iolanthe* here last Friday and Saturday. The house was well filled on each occasion. On Monday evening Miss Thorne's company appeared in *Arrah-na-Pogue*. Miss Emily Stafford sustained the title-rôle with much spirit. Mr. Harry Dundas did justice to Colonel O'Grady; whilst the Michael Feeney of Mr. Albert Bernard was not without merit. Mr. James Cumberland made a good hit as Shaun the Post. [*The Era*, 29 Sep 1883]

24 – 29 Sep. ???

1 – 6 Oct. ???

#### 8 – 13 Oct. Southampton

THE PRINCE OF WALES' ROYAL THEATRE.—Monday evening commenced the week's engagement for the representation of the fairy opera, *Iolanthe*, at the above handsome and comfortable theatre, and as we safely ventured to predict in our last impression the performance was eminently successful, and the attendance large, as beyond doubt it will continue to be, for the public of Southampton are fully sensible of, and have hitherto thoroughly appreciated the productions of the talented authors, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. *Iolanthe* having been so universally and favourably criticised here and elsewhere, and this being the second occasion of its production in Southampton, it is quite unnecessary to particularise. Suffice it to say it is presented with fairy-like splendour and the highly important duties of the orchestra are performed in a most praiseworthy manner. The Arcadian landscape in the first act is a charming scene; and as the curtain rose in the second, upon the familiar view of Westminster, there were rounds of applause. The choruses throughout are very pleasing and effective

while the songs of the Fairy Queen, Iolanthe, Phyllis, the Lord Chancellor, the Sentinel, and Strephon are rendered in a manner which evokes the greatest enthusiasm, and in response to the demands of the audience they are all repeated in portion. The performance generally gives the greatest satisfaction, the principal parts being most admirably rendered. The costumes are elegant, the scenes throughout are very effective, while both instrumentally and vocally a musical treat is presented in the opera, which should be visited by all who desire to spend a thoroughly enjoyable evening. [*Hampshire Advertiser*, 10 Oct. 1883]

### 15 – 20 Oct. Bath

**THEATRE ROYAL, BATH.**  
 Lessee and Manager—Mr. FREDERICK NEEBE.  
 Business Manager and Treasurer—Mr. HENRY FERRAND.  
 Musical Director—Mr. W. E. SALMON.  
 THIS (THURSDAY) EVENING,  
 Mr. D'OYLY CARTE'S OPERA COMPANY, in  
**IOLANTHE.**  
 Or, THE PEER AND THE PERI.  
 The Opera will be preceded by  
**QUITE AN ADVENTURE.**  
 Doors open at 7; commence at 7.30.  
 Box Office Open Daily under the direction of Mr. E. Wetten  
**MORNING PERFORMANCE, SATURDAY Next, Oct. 20.**  
 Doors open at 2; commence at 2.30.

*Bath Chronicle*, 18 Oct. 1883

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. Frederick Neebe; Business Manager and Treasurer, Mr. Henry Ferrand.—On Monday a crowded house welcomed Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company in *Iolanthe* upon the return visit. This opera was first played in the provinces in Bath last Christmas, and it has now met with a most cordial reception. Several in the company are old favourites. Mr. J. Wilkinson still plays the Lord Chancellor, and is inimitable in the character. Mr. C. C. Pounds sustains the good opinion formed of him upon his first appearance. Mr. C. J. Stanley

as Lord Mountararat is excellent, and Miss Josephine Findlay is charming as Phyllis. Miss Millie Vere plays Iolanthe. Mr. Billington is Private Willis and sang and played well, as he always does. Miss Isabelle Muncey is the Queen of the Fairies, and makes an excellent impression. Mr. Hervet D'Egville as Strephon is excellent. The opera is beautifully mounted, and the band, led by Mr. W. Robinson, is most efficient. [*The Era*, 20 Oct. 1883]

### 22 – 27 Oct. Devonport

NEW THEATRE AND PUBLIC HALL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. F. Neebe; Business Manager and Treasurer, Mr. F. Holt—On Monday evening D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company played before a crowded house, which greeted each artist with great applause. [*The Era*, 27 Oct. 1883]

### 29 Oct. – 3 Nov. Torquay

THEATRE AND OPERA HOUSE.—Manager, Mr. Chas Daly.—This house was opened on Monday night for the winter season, when was performed, for the first time in Torquay, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*. The theatre was crowded. [*The Era*, 3 Nov 1883]

### 5 Nov. Barnstaple

MUSIC HALL, BARNSTAPLE.  
 (ONE NIGHT ONLY).  
 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH, AT 8 P.M.  
**D**OYLY CARTE'S celebrated OPERA COMPANY  
 in W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan's  
 celebrated Opera  
**I O L A N T H E .**  
 Tickets and Plan of Room at NICKLIN'S Music Ware-  
 house, The Square, Barnstaple.  
 N.B.—NOTICE!—Special Trains leave Barnstaple  
 after the performance at 10.25 for Torrington and inter-  
 mediate Stations.

[*Western Times*, 26 Oct. 1883]

### 6 – 10 Nov. Exeter

"Iolanthe" at the Theatre.—Last evening Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera "Iolanthe" was produced, and its continued popularity was proved by the large audience that assembled to witness it. Many of the leading artistes appeared on a former occasion, and were last night heartily welcomed on their return. The opera will be repeated each evening this week, and at a morning performance on Friday. [*Exeter Flying Post*, 7 Nov. 1883]

### THEATRE ROYAL.

Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's quaint conceit, the fairy opera of "Iolanthe," was produced for the second time this year at the Theatre Royal last evening. The whimsical plot of the piece must by this time be too well known both to the play going and non-play going public to need repetition, but it may be said that despite the carpings of critics "Iolanthe" continues to maintain its hold on the public, and must rank among the greatest successes of its very successful authors. Admirably mounted and played, it was greeted last night by an appreciative audience with enthusiasm. New and wonderfully effective scenery had been prepared for its production by Mr. F. Chapman, the costumes were as gorgeous as when first the piece was produced in the city, the groupings were equally as picturesque, and the music proved still as fanciful and charming. Again and again the audience testified their approval of the manner which the various songs, choruses, and dance, were rendered, and *encores* were numerous. Mr. John Wilkinson, as the Lord Chancellor, was exceedingly humorous, his mock gravity being irresistibly ludicrous. The Earl of Mountarat and the Earl of Tolloller were represented by Messrs. C. J. Sounes and C. C. Pounds, who showed themselves judicious and careful actors, as well as the possessors of pleasing and well-cultivated voices. Mr. Fred Billington, as Private Willis, of the Grenadier Guards, secured a marked success in the little that he had to do, and the encore which greeted his song, "While on sentry go," was well merited. Mr. Hervet D'Egville made a capital Strephon, and sang and acted well. The ladies of the company rendered their respective characters manner which ensured the oft-repeated applause of the house. Miss Isabelle Muncey, as the somewhat substantial Fairy Queen, both sang and acted excellently. Miss Millie Vere was very charming as Iolanthe, and Miss Josephine Findlay as Phyllis rendered full justice to the very fascinating and quaintly-conceived character allotted to her. Altogether the company render "Iolanthe" in manner which cannot fail to ensure the warm appreciation of all lovers comic opera. The performance will be repeated each evening during the week, and will be preceded nightly by a farce. [*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette Daily Telegrams*, 7 Nov. 1883]

### 12 – 17 Nov. Swansea

NEW THEATRE.—Proprietor, Mr. Melville.—Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company with *Iolanthe* commenced a six nights' engagement here on Monday before a large and appreciative audience. The piece was admirably played and staged. [*The Era*, 17 Nov. 1883]

### 19 – 24 Nov. Cardiff

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lovers of light opera are offered an exceptional treat tonight and for the rest of the week in the production at the theatre of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's delightful fairy opera, "Iolanthe, or the Peers and the Peri." The representation will be by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's talented company. On the occasion of their former visit the company's performance gave the utmost satisfaction, and elicited every

possible manifestation of appreciation from crowded audiences. We venture to predict for the company a warm welcome from Cardiff audiences on their return visit. Each evening the opera will be preceded by a new comedietta, entitled "Quite an Adventure." Mr. Fletcher has provided a morning or special day performance at two o'clock on Saturday. This will enable visitors from outlying districts to witness the popular opera of "Iolanthe." Mr. Fletcher's thoughtfulness will be appreciated by many who would not otherwise have had the opportunity of hearing and seeing one of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's great successes. [*Western Mail*, 19 Nov. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. Edward Fletcher; Acting Manager, Mr. John Sheridan.—More than usually brilliant have been the performances at our theatre this week consequent upon a revisit by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company, bringing with it the now popular *Iolanthe*. [*The Era*, 24 Nov. 1883]

#### **26 – 28 Nov. Newport (Monmouthshire)**

ROYAL VICTORIA THEATRE.—Manager, Mr. H. T. Brickwell.—On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last we had Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera of *Iolanthe* produced. The opera was superbly mounted, and dressed in a manner richer than the theatre-going public of the town has ever previously witnessed. [*The Era*, 1 Dec. 1883]

#### **29 Nov. – 4 Dec. Gloucester**

##### **"IOLANTHE"**

"Fun on the Bristol" has departed, and "Iolanthe" reigns in its stead at the Gloucester Theatre. On the former visit of this company to this city, large audiences were delighted by the charming and graceful fairy music of the opera, and derived no inconsiderable amount of fun from the witty libretto, the whole the result of the happy collaboration of Sullivan and Gilbert. With the exception of the "Silver King," in which Wilson Barrett made such a name, "Iolanthe" is the most venerable of pieces running in the metropolis. But strange to say the more times we hear it the more we like it. Some little air unobserved on first acquaintance reveals itself upon a further hearing; and a new "nice point" in the legal "quibbling" is perceived as our acquaintance with the opera is renewed. Public taste is not so stable as it was of yore, and managers always ran a risk in producing new plays. But as regards Gloucester, a burlesque opera by Sullivan and Gilbert will continue to draw large houses, as long as those fortunate individuals continue to work together with such success. It is worth observing that although there is a most undeniable family likeness between all the operas that have come from the pens of these popular writers, there is at the same time an individuality in each, which serves to stamp the piece with a great amount of originality. "The Pirates of Penzance" and "H.M.S. Pinafore" are both nautical operas, and consequently the *modus operandi* employed in each was to a certain degree limited. But no one can truthfully say that the one was like the other. In "Patience," too, quite a new departure was made, and "Iolanthe" quickly following it, and somewhat upon the same lines, is equally novel both as regards the characters and the inimitable satire W. S. Gilbert has at his pen's end. One can always rely upon D'Oyly Carte for a good representation of an opera. The thoroughness and genuineness which characterise all his productions are the means of his success as a manager. With few exceptions the cast of "Iolanthe" last night is the same as on its visit some time since. Familiarity with the players does not in this case "breed contempt." We do not hesitate to say that in every particular there is improvement. The general idea intended to be conveyed by this opera is well-known to all play-goers. The satire upon the many legal difficulties in the Court of Chancery, the thorns that may sometimes be hidden in the stuffing of the Woolsack under the

circumstances in which the Lord Chancellor is placed on this occasion, and the struggle as in "Patience," of the ethereal with the material, and the final triumph of the latter, these are only some of the ideas to be gathered from witnessing this burlesque-opera. The audience, as a rule, appreciated the many satirical allusions, but as was perhaps to be expected, the Fairy Queen's feeling reference to Captain Shaw as the main on which to draw to quench her love, fell upon the majority unheeded. Mr. Wilkinson as the Lord Chancellor was extremely good, and his dry and quiet humour never failed to tell. In most of his songs he was encored, and the Chancellor's dance in the second act fairly brought down the house. His declamation is faultless, his pronunciation being so clear in the wonderful nightmare song that not a single word was missed. "The law's the true embodiment, of everything that's excellent;" so to continue the rhyme Mr Wilkinson, like the law, "has no kind of fault or flaw, and he, my lords, embodies the law." The two gentlemen who take the parts of Earl Mountarat and Earl Tolloller respectively—Messrs. Sounes and Pounds—are even better than before. The former has changed his name since his last visit here, but fortunately his style of acting remains the same. He did not come off to great advantage in the songs as he appeared to be suffering from a bad cold. Tolloller sang his music with great taste and expression, his appeal to Phyllis not to scorn him on account of his "blue blood" being especially good. Mr. Fred Billington makes a good sentry, and his song justly received an encore. Of Mr. D'Egville's Strephon no praise is wanted from us. He has played the part many times now and has always been successful. It is unnecessary to speak in detail of the various ladies' characters, Miss Muncey is powerful as the Queen of the Fairies, Miss Vere excites our sympathy as Strephon's old-young mother by her pathetic rendering of the delightful music allotted the part in the second act, and the Misses Bevan, Webb, and Terriss as the three principal fairies spoke their few words and sang the little music allotted them with precision and distinctness. The Phyllis of Miss Findlay is a vivacious personation, but her actions are a little too spasmodic. Her singing in the duets, and her rendering of the soprano music generally, were all that could be desired. The choruses went well, especially those for female voices, the male choruses being slightly marred by the indecision of the Engineer band disguised as Grenadier Guards. The orchestra, thanks to the energy of the conductor, rendered the music fairly truthfully, and the whole performance was a great success, the continuous applause and frequent encores showing that the large audience was an appreciative one. The farce which precedes "Iolanthe" is feeble, and is scarcely good enough to play the audience in. [*Gloucester Citizen*, 30 Nov. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. Thomas Dutton.—On the evening of Thursday, the 29th ult., Mr. D'Oyly Carte's talented company gave a splendid representation of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's fairy opera *Iolanthe* to a crowded and brilliant audience. The principals—old favourites here—were most cordially welcomed, and the whole performance was enthusiastically applauded throughout. [*The Era*, 8 Dec. 1883]

### 3 – 8 Dec. Cheltenham

THE POPULARITY OF "IOLANTHE" has in no way suffered on its reproduction in Cheltenham by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company, which has undergone but few changes since their former visit in February; the attendance to witness its representation at the Old Wells Theatre each evening of the past week having been numerous and fashionable, and the acting and singing throughout the Opera thoroughly meriting the hearty applause with which they were received. Mr. J. Wilkinson, as the "Lord Chancellor," was as effective as ever. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a better

representative the character, his Patter Song in the second Act being remarkably good. Mr. C. Sounes, as "Lord Mountararat," and Mr. C. Pounds, as "Lord Tolloller," have improved since their former visit: Mr. Pounds' fine tenor was heard to advantage in his song *Blue Blood*, and Mr. Billington as "Private Willis," scored a well-deserved encore for his *On Sentry Go*. The part of "Iolanthe" was very successfully performed by Miss M. Vere; Miss I. Muncey made an admirable "Queen of the Fairies," and the subordinate characters in the play were well represented by other members of the Company. A fair-trained Chorus supported the principal singers, and the Orchestra, strengthened by the Town Band, did justice to the music. The Opera is to be repeated this afternoon and evening; and for next week Messrs. Robertson and Bruce's Company are announced to perform *The Guv'nor*, said to be a highly amusing Comedy, not heretofore produced in Cheltenham. [*Cheltenham Looker-On*, 8 Dec. 1883]

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessees, Messrs. Maisey and Shenton.—...Mr. D'Oyly Carte's *Iolanthe* company, under the direction of Mr. Herbert Brook, is appearing this week with great success. Miss Josephine Findlay as Phyllis, Miss Isabelle Muncey as the Fairy Queen, and Miss Nellie Vere [*sic*] as Iolanthe sing charmingly. Mr. John Wilkinson as the Chancellor, Mr. C. J. Somers [*sic*] as Mountararat, and Mr. H. D'Egville as Strephon are as excellent as ever; and Mr. Billington, who now plays Private Willis, has scored an undeniable success. The town band has been retained to give increased effect to the opera. [*The Era*, 8 Dec. 1883]

#### **10 – 15 Dec. Leamington**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Manager, Mr. A. Turner.—One of the greatest successes since the opening of the new theatre here has been the production of *Iolanthe* during the past week by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's excellent opera company. Nothing could possibly have been more complete than the scenic effects on this occasion, and the mounting of the piece generally reflected high credit upon the management. The whole of the music was admirably rendered, many of the selections being vociferously redemanded. The Lord Chancellor of Mr. John Wilkinson was an exceedingly diverting personage; while as the Earls of Tolloller and Mountararat Messrs C. J. Sounes and C. C. Pounds were alike satisfactory in every respect. As Iolanthe Miss Millie Vere was seen to great advantage, and she shared with Mr. Wilkinson the honours of each evening. The remaining parts were most creditably filled. The dances, arranged by Mr. J. D'Auban, were remarkably pretty. [*The Era*, 15 Dec. 1883]

#### **17 Dec. Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **18 – 22 Dec. Walsall**

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Miss Rebekah Deering; Manager, Mr. Chester Hildon.—On Tuesday one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies commenced a short engagement here. [*The Era*, 22 Dec. 1883]