

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "C" (Repertory) Company
April 6th to June 13th and September 28th to December 5th
1885

Week commencing 6 April.

THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER. Monday to Thursday, *H.M.S. Pinafore* followed by *Round and Square*. Friday & Saturday (matinee & evening), *Patience*.

"H.M.S. Pinafore," though one of the earliest, still the most popular, of the Gilbert-Sullivan series of comic operas, proved a very attractive bank holiday entertainment at the Theatre Royal last night. This piece embodies in the most appropriate and expressive form the ideas which mark both the music and the libretto of the subsequent productions of the same authors, and when represented by a company of well trained actors and vocalists, such as that of Mr. D'Oyly Carte now appearing at the Royal, is justly regarded as one of the most pleasing entertainments of the kind ever placed upon the stage. Several of the principals in last night's performance are almost as well known to Manchester audiences as the piece itself. Mr. G. Thorne, a striking example of a man with a poor weak voice becoming by sheer force of ability and study a really successful operatic actor, brought the house almost to the verge of enthusiasm by his clever impersonation of Sir Joseph Porter. Mr. Cadwalladr, who played Ralph Rackstraw, was most efficient, both as an actor and a vocalist, entering thoroughly into the spirit of the part, and Mr. Furneaux Cook made an excellent Dick Deadeye. Mr. G. B. Browne was not unsuccessful as Captain Corcoran, though he was severely handicapped by an irritating cold. Miss Esme Lee, as Josephine, made good use of her sweet voice, but she seemed to be under the mistaken impression that the part required no acting. Buttercup and Hebe had fairly good representatives in Miss J. [*sic*] Cameron and Miss H. Crofton. The choruses and orchestral accompaniments were a very strong feature in the performance. As an afterpiece a new farcical composition by Messrs. F. Desprez and E. Solomon, entitled "Round and Square," was given, and was the means of detaining the audience for a good half-hour's laughter. [*Manchester Evening News*, 7 Apr. 1885, p.2.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's repertory company has commenced its spring tour here this week with performances of *Pinafore* and *Patience*, the former being rendered on the first four evenings of the week, whilst the latter was announced for Friday and Saturday evenings, and also for a matinee this (Saturday) afternoon. In the performance of the earlier opera of the Gilbert-Sullivan combination, Miss Esme Lee as Josephine, Miss Crofton as Hebe, and Miss Jessie [*sic*] Cameron as Little Buttercup, have all proved very competent. Mr. Geo. Thorne's dry humour is very effective in the part of Sir Joseph Porter, Mr. Byron Browne acquits himself very creditably—notwithstanding a severe cold—as Captain Corcoran, and Mr. Cadwaladr as Ralph Rackstraw, Mr. Furneaux Cook as Dick Deadeye, and Mr. Hemsley as Bill Bobstay, all render the music satisfactorily. Desprez and Solomon's vaudeville *Round and Square* has also been played nightly, and served a useful purpose in giving Mr. Hemsley a chance of displaying an original vein of humour in the part of Mr. Square. [*The Era*, 11 Apr. 1885, p.17.]

Week commencing 13 April.

TYNE THEATRE, NEWCASTLE. Monday & Tuesday, *Patience*. Wednesday & Thursday, *The Pirates of Penzance*. Friday & Saturday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. All

performances preceded by *Round and Square*. [*Shields Daily Gazette*, 13 Apr. 1885, p.1, et seq.]

This week, a round of Gilbert and Sullivan operas are to be placed upon the boards. Tonight "Patience" is the selected work; tomorrow and Thursday will be devoted to the "Pirates of Penzance," and on Friday and Saturday the ever popular "H.M.S. Pinafore" will be performed. The operas are preceded each evening by an amusing vaudeville, entitled "Round and Square." "Patience" drew a large audience last night, and if any proof of its undiminished popularity was needed, it would be found in the fact that, as on former occasions, almost every number in the opera was *encored*. Mr. George Thorne repeats his singularly clever portrayal of "Reginald Bunthorne," the fleshy [*sic*] poet, and Mr. C. Conyers is highly successful as his idyllic rival. Miss Laura Clement has the requisite personal charms for the part of "Patience," and is possessed of a clear voice, which she uses effectively. The cast throughout was good, and the chorus was satisfactory. The comparatively large band at this theatre enabled the instrumental parts to be given with an approach to completeness, which revealed many new beauties in the score. [*Shields Daily Gazette*, 14 Apr. 1885, p. 3.]

The ever-welcome *Patience* was again presented at this theatre on Monday evening before a large audience, and received with every mark of approval. Mr. George Thorne's Bunthorne, as usual, was an especially successful piece of characterisation, and provoked the heartiest applause. Miss Laura Clement was a charming and graceful Patience, Miss E. Cameron was deserving of praise for her Lady Jane. Mr. Conyers as Grosvenor, Messrs. B. Brown, E. Clowes, and L. Cadwaladr, and Misses Kate Forster, Haidee Crofton, and L. Augarde were also deserving of praise. *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Pinafore* have also been presented. [*The Era*, 18 Apr. 1885, p. 18.]

Week commencing 20 April.

WINTER GARDENS, SOUTHPORT. Monday to Saturday, *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *H.M.S. Pinafore* preceded by *Round and Square*.

Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's opera company are appearing in a round of well known operas, including *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Pinafore*, &c. There was a bumper house on Monday night to witness *Patience*. The title role was assumed by Miss Laura Clement, who is a graceful actress possessed of a sweet voice. Reginald Bunthorne was in the safe hands of Mr. George Thorne. As Archibald Grosvenor Mr. C. Conyers also played well. The other characters were well sustained by Miss Kate Forster, Lady Angela; Miss Elsie Cameron, the Lady Jane; Miss Haidee Crofton, the Lady Saphir; Mr. Byron Browne, Colonel Calverley, &c. The opera was preceded by *Round and Square*. [*The Era*, 25 Apr. 1885, p.18.]

Week commencing 27 April.

GRAND THEATRE, LEEDS. Monday to Saturday.

Yet another visit of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Comic Opera Company with *Patience* and *Pinafore* as their programme. However, rumour says that this is "positively the last" representation of the Gilbert-Sullivan æsthetic opera in Leeds. If that is really so it would be ungracious to hint at the possibility of it being almost as tired of the satire as of the "craze" satirised. Moreover, the company which reproduced *Patience* before a moderate audience last night is strong, both as to individual members for the principal parts and collectively. For instance, our old acquaintance Mr. George Thorne is here again hitting off with as much fresh vigour as if this were his first tour

the eccentricities of the fleshly school of poets. Miss Laura Clement, too, is a young lady who, not content to rest on her laurels, discovers for us many a hitherto undiscovered source of pleasure in the sparkling humour of Mr. Gilbert and the bright and crisp music of Sir Arthur Sullivan. Mr. C. Conyers, a new comer, if we mistake not, is a taking sort of idyllic poet, and the voice of Mr. Edward Clowes (Major Murgatroyd) singles him out for special praise. To Miss Elsie Cameron's Lady Jane no higher commendation need be given than the assurance that it is as forceful and laughter moving as ever. Mr. G. B. Browne almost surpasses his former self as Colonel Calverley. Miss Kate Forster, Miss Haidee Crofton, and Miss Louise Augarde are a most entertaining trio of "rapturous maidens." The choruses are given with a zest and sweetness which seem to steal away somewhat of the familiarity which by this time they possess for most Leeds theatre goers. Comparatively thin as the house was last night, the frequency of encores and applause put a touch of new life into a work which, as the age of comic operas is reckoned, will soon be growing old. [*Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 28 Apr. 1885, p.4.]

Week commencing 4 May.

THEATRE ROYAL, HULL. Monday to Saturday. *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. *Round and Square* preceded each opera.

After a long absence Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's splendid company are delighting crowded houses at the Hull Theatre Royal this week with their reproduction of the Gilbert-Sullivan three P's operas - *Pinafore*, *Patience* and *Pirates*. Each of these humorous satires, apart from their claims to excellence as musical compositions, has served the purpose of its creation, and been so long before the public that the task devolving upon us at the present moment is an easy and agreeable one. Of plot and object therefore, we may divest ourselves, and allude only briefly to the manner of execution. Preceding each bouffe, we may remark, a really amusing vaudeville entitled "Round and Square" is given, and as it is more than a mere fill-up to the entertainment we would urge visitors to the theatre to be early in their places. *H.M.S. Pinafore* was the opening piece on Monday night, was repeated on Wednesday, and will be again to-night. In the light of recent events this nautical opera may still have its significance, and by the hearty manner in which it was received the public testified to their sense of the general blunderings that are still being enacted at the Admiralty. The *mis-en-scène* was most appropriate, the music, orchestral and vocal, executed in a most commendable style, and the make-ups were perfect. Mr. George Thorne is undoubtedly a dryly humorous actor of great ability, and his clear enunciation add considerably to his merit. Whether as the First Lord of the Admiralty in "*Pinafore*," or the "fleshy [*sic*] poet" in "*Patience*," a better exponent could hardly be conceived, and it is difficult to distinguish in which character he appears to the greatest advantage. The manly bearing and fine bass voice of Mr. G. Byron-Browne carry him well through the parts of Captain Corcoran and Colonel Calverley respectively. Mr. L. Cadwalader has a good tenor voice, and though his mannerisms on the stage are still faulty, yet he acts with a will, and evidently does his best to draw the requisite pathos and humour into his parts as they are required. Mr. Furneaux Cook's interpretation of the unenviable character of Dick Deadeye is excellent, and Messrs. W. T. Hemsley and Mr Sebastian King put plenty of "go" into their subordinate parts. As to Josephine, the captain's young daughter, Miss Esme Lee by her very timidity gained the ear of her audience, and her singing was commendable. Of Miss Haidee Crofton, and more especially of Miss Elsie Cameron, we could hardly speak in terms too eulogistic. Both are adepts on the stage, and both possess good voices. Still more

crowded was the house on Tuesday night, when "Patience," which hits off the Oscar Wilde æsthetic craze to such perfection, was produced with signal success. As we have already alluded to the principal performers, little need be said as to their merits in the production of "Patience." Mr Charles Conyers as the idyllic poet fully sustains his reputation both as an actor and a tenor vocalist; and Miss Laura Clement as the pert Patience, and Miss Kate Forster as the Lady Angela, deserve special mention. Miss Cameron, who formerly took the part of Lady Angela, was a great success as Lady Jane. Several of the various soles, duets and choruses were vociferously re-demanded and given with good will. As an instance of the favourable impression the piece made we need only state that the duet, "Pooh, pooh, to you," was repeated no less than four times. The various catching airs and melodies which are characteristic of the work were all faultlessly rendered. The opera will be repeated to-morrow night. Last night the "Pirates of Penzance" was given with equal ability and success; and next week, we would remind our readers, the Olympic success, "Twins," will be enacted. It is a play of considerable interest, and ought to attract large houses. [*Hull Packet*, Friday, 8 May 1885, p.8.]

The Gilbert Sullivan combinations are a sure success in Hull, and this week the fact is still further exemplified by the crowded audiences assembled to witness *Pinafore*, *Patience*, and *The Pirates*. The company includes two favourite sopranos, Misses Esme Lee and Laura Clement, whose acting and singing as Josephine and Patience respectively merit the highest commendation. Messrs. G. B. Brown, Geo. Thorne, L. Cadwaladr, Furneaux Cook, W. T. Helmsley, and Misses Elsie Cameron, and Haidee Crofton again make a favourable impression, the first named lady being especially good as the gigantic little Buttercup and Lady Jane. Mr. Geo. Thorne also does well as the First Lord and Bunthorne, and a capital piece of character acting is Mr. Cook's Dick Deadeye. Mr. Conyers' Grosvenor is a good performance. The chorus is an excellent one, and the mounting of the operas is up to the usual high standard. An amusing vaudeville *Round and Square*, by F. Desprez and E. Solomon, supported by Mr. Hemsley, Miss H. Crofton, and other members of the company, precedes the opera each night. [*The Era*, 9 May 1885, p.17.]

Week commencing 11 May.

THEATRE ROYAL, BRADFORD. Monday & Tuesday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Wednesday & Thursday, *Patience*, Friday & Saturday, *The Pirates of Penzance*. [*Leeds Times*, 9 May 1885, p.4.]

Week commencing 18 May.

ROYAL COURT THEATRE, LIVERPOOL. Monday & Tuesday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Wednesday & Thursday, *Patience*, Friday & Saturday, *Iolanthe*. Each preceded by *Round and Square*. [*Liverpool Mercury*, 19 May 1885, p.1.]

Last evening, the Gilbert-Sullivan æsthetic opera "Patience" was performed at the Royal Court Theatre, in the presence of a large and appreciative audience, by Mr. R D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company. Mr. George Thorne appeared as *Reginald Bunthorne*, and *Patience* was supported by Miss Laura Clement. The other principal characters were interpreted by Miss Elsie Cameron, Messrs. Charles Conyers, G. Byron-Browne, and L. Cadwaladr. On Friday night, "Iolanthe" is to be performed. [*Liverpool Mercury*, 21 May 1885, p.6.]

Week commencing 25 May.

THEATRE ROYAL, SHEFFIELD. Monday & Friday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Tuesday & Thursday, *Patience*. Wednesday, *Iolanthe*. Saturday, *the Pirates of Penance*. [*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 25 May 1885, p.1.]

COMIC OPERA AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

A round of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas is the novel and attractive pabulum provided for the current week at the Theatre Royal, and such an engagement may reasonably be expected to prove a good venture by the management. At all events a capital start was made last night, the theatre being filled with people, and the performance indicating that each composition in the *repertoire* would be presented with a skill and completeness that should ensure "bumper houses." The pieces set down for production are the three p's — "Pinafore," "Patience," and "Pirates" — and "Iolanthe," and it was in the first-named that the present combination company opened their visit. It is, perhaps, only necessary to mention the names of a few of the artistes to show that the company is a fully capable one. There is George Thorne (so well known in the town for his marvellous impersonation of the fleshly poet, Bunthorne), Mr. L. Cadwalader (the Lord Tolloller of the first "Iolanthe" company that came to Sheffield), Miss Esme Lee, Miss Elsie Cameron, and Mr. Furneaux Cook. The representation of "Pinafore" last evening was as perfect and clever as if the performers had been selected solely for it. George Thorne was the Sir Joseph Porter, and a better person in the part could not be desired; his enunciation was as perfect as ever, and his interpretation of the character of this "self-made man," who "never thought of thinking of himself at all," and is altogether a singular burlesque of the First Lord of the Admiralty, was appropriately comical. Most of us know what he is like in "Patience," and his efforts as a Lord Chancellor in the fairy opera will be awaited with some curiosity. Mr. Cadwalader appeared as Ralph Rackstraw; although possessing a Cymbric surname he sings with a slight Hibernian accent, and if he has a fault it is his tendency to the *crescendo* and a biting of the words. He, however, possesses a capital voice, and is undoubtedly a musician. By far the best singer of the lot is Miss Cameron; her vocalisation is both mellow and powerful, and she is sure to excel as Lady Jane in the æsthetic composition. Miss Esme Lee was the Captain's Daughter, and she cleverly acquitted herself of the task set her. Mention should be made of Mr. G. Byron Browne (who adds to a fine presence a strong bass voice), and Mr. Furneaux Cook (the Dick Deadeye). The chorus consists mostly of competent vocalists, and the orchestral work was done the fullest justice to. Altogether it would appear that any evening spent at the Theatre Royal during the week must be a source of pleasure, and it is to be hoped that the company will meet with that large amount of patronage which they deserve. [*Sheffield Independent*, 26 May 1885, p.8.]

COMIC OPERA AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.- There was a large audience at the Theatre last evening, when Gilbert and Sullivan's ever pleasing æsthetic opera, "Patience," was produced by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's efficient company. All the parts were admirably sustained, particularly that of Bunthorne, with which Mr. George Thorne seems to have identified his name. Very commendable, too, was the singing of Miss Kate Forster as Lady Angela, and Miss Laura Clement was sufficiently pert and pleasing in the part of the dairy maid. The performances of the band and chorus were most creditable, and the mounting of the opera was of equal merit. - "H.M.S. Pinafore" is announced for representation tonight. [*Sheffield Independent*, 29 May 1885, p.2.]

“H.M.S. PINAFORE” AT THE THEATRE ROYAL. — Mr. D’Oyly Carte’s company appeared again last evening at the Theatre Royal in Gilbert and Sullivan’s “H.M.S. Pinafore,” and the large audience which assembled, and the successful character of the performance, afforded further proof of the continued popularity of this opera, which seems almost as fresh as when first produced seven years ago. With such a powerful cast as that which includes Mr. George Thorne, Mr. G. Byron Browne, Mr. Cadwaldr, Miss Elsie Cameron, Miss Haidee Crofton, and Miss Esme Lee, a fine rendering of the opera was no matter for speculation, and throughout the piece was received almost as enthusiastically as by the holiday house on Monday night. Many of the principal songs received well-deserved encores, and the chorus, the band, and the scenery were all excellent. Tonight the equally popular opera, “The Pirates,” will be performed, and as this is the last night of Mr. D’Oyly Carte’s company, doubtless there will be again a crowded house. [*Sheffield Independent*, 30 May 1885, p.2.]

Week commencing 1 June.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, LEICESTER. Monday to Saturday. Monday, *The Pirates of Penzance*. Tuesday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Wednesday, *Patience*.

Mr. D’Oyly Carte’s company this week is producing Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan’s operas *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. On Monday evening the first named opera was performed, in which Miss Esme Lee’s singing was exceedingly sweet. Mr. G. B. Browne made a capital Pirate King, and Madame Norman as Ruth was very satisfactory. The choruses were evenly rendered, and the staging was all that could be desired. *H.M.S. Pinafore* was underlined for Tuesday and *Patience* for Wednesday evenings. [*The Era*, 6 Jun. 1885, p.18]

Week commencing 8 June.

PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM. Monday & Saturday, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Tuesday & Thursday, *Patience*. Wednesday and Friday, *Iolanthe*. *Round and Square* concluded each evening performance. Thursday matinee, *The Pirates of Penzance*. [*Birmingham Daily Post*, 8 June 1885, p.1.]

The adverse weather may have thinned the attendance at this house last night, but it could not dim the interest or quench the spirit of the delightful lyric work which furnished the subject matter of the entertainment. “H.M.S. Pinafore,” though neither the best nor the freshest production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan’s famous operatic mint, is unquestionably the most popular of the series, and the enthusiastic applause which greeted every number on this occasion, together with the numerous encores, showed that its charms are still far from palling upon the public taste. The company upon whom the performance devolved is a fairly strong and well organised one, most of its members being already established favourites here. Among these may be named Miss Esme Lee, Mr. George Thorne, Miss Elsie Cameron, Mr. G. Byron Browne, Mr. L. Cadwaladr, and Mr. Funeaux Cook. The chorus is numerous and well disciplined, and the band last night wanted only an extra rehearsal to be fairly adequate to the requirements of the instrumental score. Miss Esme Lee’s *Josephine*, though somewhat wanting, perhaps, in the mock heroic sentiment we are accustomed to associate with the part, is a very pleasing and artistic performance, and the lady’s vocalisation was especially effective in the trying scena, “The sea, the sea,” [*sic*] at the beginning of the second act. In the following sprightly trio, with *Sir Joseph Porter* and *Captain Corcoran*, “Never mind the why or wherefore,” which had, of course, to be repeated, in obedience to a vociferous encore, Miss Esme Lee also contributed largely to that result. The *Little Buttercup* of Miss Elsie Cameron was a more than usual effective

performance, the humour of the assumption being heightened by the plump and solid personality of the performer, whose singing of the introductory pastoral and of the graphic song with chorus describing how *Little Buttercup*, when a baby-farmer "mixed-up" the two infants entrusted to her charge, was marked by good voice and intonation, as well as dramatic feeling. Mr. George Thorne is simply inimitable as the First Lord, *Sir Joseph Porter*, and though his vocal powers are limited, his ear is so true and his utterance so articulate that every word and every phrase produces its effect. The famous autobiographical ditty, and the address to the crew, with choral refrain for "his sisters and his cousins and his aunts," were admirably sung, and the self-sufficiency *hauteur*, and red-tapism of the part were brought out with mirth provoking effect. *Ralph Rackstraw*, the ambitious and conceited seaman, the lover of *Josephine*, found an excellent representative in Mr. Cadwaladr, who entered thoroughly into the burlesque humour of the part. Mr. Furneaux Cooke was grimly grotesque as *Dick Deadeye*. Mr. Byron Browne, though apparently suffering from a cold, showed no want of spirit or dramatic perception in the somewhat thankless part of *Captain Corcoran*. Mr. W. T. Hemsley is very emphatic and effective as *Bill Bobstay*, whose famous song with chorus, "For he himself has said it," immensely tickled the audience; and Master Fitzalmond [*sic*] as the *Midshipmite*, and Miss Haidee Crofton as Sir Joseph's First Cousin *Hebe*, are also entitled to a word of praise. The piece is capitally mounted, and the stage business in some particulars has been improved.

Tonight "Patience" will be played, with Miss Laura Clement in the title role, and Mr. George Thorne as *Bunthorne*; and on Wednesday the selection will be "Iolanthe," with Mr. George Thorne as the susceptible *Chancellor*. [*Birmingham Daily Post*, 9 Jun. 1885, p.8.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company have appeared during the week in several of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas, including *Pinafore*, *Patience*, and *Iolanthe*. On Monday night Miss Esme Lee, in the character of Josephine, renewed her acquaintance with her many admirers in Birmingham, the part being one which this lady personates with much ability, both as an accomplished actress and excellent singer. Miss Elsie Cameron made a charming Little Buttercup, and Miss Crofton was heard and seen to much advantage as Hebe. Mr. H. Brown was suitably cast for the part of Captain Corcoran, and Mr. Rousbey's Dick Deadeye was one of the leading features in the opera. *Patience* was produced on Tuesday night and *Iolanthe* on Wednesday. [*The Era*, 13 Jun 1885, p.17.]