

## Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "C" Company 28 September to 5 December 1885

### ***Week commencing 28 September.***

THEATRE ROYAL, PRESTON. Monday to Wednesday, *Patience*. [*Preston Chronicle*, Saturday 26 September 1885, p.1.]

Playgoers can hardly grumble at the dramatic fare provided for them at the Royal. It is varied, interesting, and excellent in quality. No pains are spared by the lessees and managers to serve up the best pieces in the most approved style. Thus, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, we had Sullivan's opera *Patience* represented by a capable company, which gave general satisfaction. The characters of Bunthorne and Grosvenor were well impersonated by Messrs. W. Shine and Albert Christian. The *Patience* of Miss E. McAlpine was likewise a meritorious performance. The choruses of officers, dragoon guards, and lastly, but not least, that of the rapturous maidens, as they are called, were very efficient and tuneful. Well as the piece has been played, one cannot help thinking it is about time such foolery was done with. [*Preston Chronicle*, Saturday 3 October 1885, p.5.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company has been here this week for three nights with *Patience*, and the performance was all that could be desired. Mr. Wilfred Shine is eminently successful as Bunthorne, and Mr. Albert Christian is excellent as Archibald Grosvenor. Miss Ethel McAlpine takes the part of *Patience* in admirable style, and Miss Bessie Armytage is a capital Lady Jane. [*The Era*, Saturday 3 October 1885, p.18.]

THEATRE ROYAL, DEWSBURY. Thursday to Saturday, *Patience*.

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's opera company has been reappearing in *Patience*, which seems to have lost none of its popularity. [*The Era*, Saturday 26 September 1885, p.6 & Saturday 3 October 1885, p.16.]

### ***Week commencing 5 October.***

THE WINTER GARDENS, SOUTHPORT. Monday to Wednesday, *Patience*. Thursday to Saturday, *Trial by Jury* & *The Sorcerer*.

Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte's repertoire company are this week in possession of the Pavilion Theatre, and were greeted on Monday evening by a numerous and fashionable audience. The attraction for the opening night was *Patience*. Miss Ethel McAlpine appeared in the title rôle, and her excellent singing and acting were rewarded with frequent expressions of approval. As Lady Jane Miss Alice Aynsley Cook sustained her previous reputation as a first-class artist. Mr. Wilfred E. Shine was highly diverting as Bunthorne, having a well-defined grasp of the character, and Mr. Albert Christian identified himself thoroughly with the character of Archibald Grosvenor, and was deservedly applauded. The remainder of the cast were efficient, and the performance was a decided success. The same programme was repeated on Tuesday and Wednesday. For the remainder of the week *The Sorcerer* and *Trial by Jury* were substituted. [*The Era*, Saturday 3 October 1885, p.7 & Saturday 10 October 1885, p.18.]

### ***Week commencing 12 October.***

ROYAL COURT THEATRE, LIVERPOOL. Monday & Tuesday, *Patience*. Wednesday & Thursday, *Trial by Jury* & *The Sorcerer*. Friday & Saturday, *Trial by Jury* & *The Pirates of Penzance*. [*The Era*, Saturday 10 October 1885, p.6 & *Liverpool Mercury*, Tuesday 13 October 1885, p.6.]

Another of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies, formed for the representation of the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, appeared at the Royal Court Theatre last night, when for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time "Patience." whose satire helped to laugh so-called

æstheticism out of existence, was performed. This evening, "Patience" is to be repeated, and the programme for the remainder of the week is as appended:—Tomorrow and Thursday, "The Sorcerer"—which is probably the best work of the Gilbert-Sullivan group, in a musical sense, and better than several others when regarded from a dramatic point of view—and on Friday and Saturday, "The Pirates of Penzance." "Trial by Jury," the successful precursor of the famous series, is also announced for performance tomorrow, and on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Miss Ethel McAlpine, Miss Alice Aynsley Cook, Mr. Wilfrid Shine, Mr. Albert Christian, Mr. H. D'Egville, and Mr. L. Cadwaladr are of the company, and Mr. Ralph Horner is the conductor. Both chorus and orchestra are good. The scenic accessories given to "Patience" by the management of this well-organised theatre are excellent alike in design and colour. [*Liverpool Mercury*, Tuesday 13 October 1885, p.6.]

On Monday evening Mr. D'Oyly Carte's repertoire company commenced a week's engagement, selecting *Patience* for the initial performance. Mr. W. E. Shinewas an admirable representative of the "fleshly poet" school, Mr. Albert Christian made a decided hit as Grosvenor, and Mr. H. D'Egville sang and acted most effectively as Colonel Calverley. Miss Ethel McAlpine, Miss Aynsley Cook, Miss F. Lambeth, Miss B. Symonds, Miss K. Cohen, Mr. R. Seabrook, Mr. H. Halley, and Mr. L. Cadwaladr, were also prominent in their efforts to make the performance a successful one. *The Sorcerer* was Wednesday's opera, and *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Trial by Jury* were underlined for Friday's programme. [*The Era*, Saturday 17 October 1885, p.18.]

#### **Week commencing 19 October.**

MANCHESTER. 6 nights. [*The Era*, Saturday 17 October 1885, p.6.]

Often as *The Sorcerer* and *Trial by Jury* have been seen here, the announcement that these popular operas would be revived by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Repertory company attracted a very large audience to this theatre on Monday evening last, and crowded houses have since been the nightly rule. Though Mr. D'Oyly Carte's present company is by no means the strongest which has been sent out in his name it is competent to give a very satisfactory representation of its repertory. Mr. Wilfred E. Shine displays a good deal of humour as John Wellington Wells and the learned judge; Mr. Hervet D'Egville is an admirable exponent of Sir Marmaduke Dexter's [sic] part; Miss Alice Aynsley Cook is a delightful Lady Sangazure; Miss Ethel McAlpine[']s fine voice presents the music of Aline's part to the best advantage; and Mdlles. Bessy Armytage and Florence Lambeth give thoroughly satisfactory representations to the parts of Mrs. Partlet and her daughter. Mr. A. Christian as Dr. Daly and Mr. Chas. Conyors as Alexis are moderately effective in their parts. A special word of praise is furthermore due to Mr José Smith for his stolidly humorous and exceedingly amusing performance of the Usher's part in *Trial by Jury*. [*The Era*, Saturday 24 October 1885, p.18.]

#### **Week commencing 26 October.**

MANCHESTER. 6 nights, *the Sorcerer* and *Trial by Jury*. [*The Era*, Saturday 24 October 1885, p.6.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies are always welcome visitors in Manchester. They are selected with admirable judgment and trained to perfection, and, whatever they present, the entertainment is sure to be enjoyable, On Monday night they appeared in that most tuneful and sparkling of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's operas, "The Sorcerer." It has been performed many times in Manchester, but it was none the less enjoyed on Monday than on previous occasions. The cast was a very good one, and the chorus and band were worthy of the principals. Miss Ethel McAlpine sang the music allotted to the part of Aline with care and finish. Miss Alice Aynsley Cook gave life and vigour to the stately Lady Sangazure. Mr. Wilfred Shine gave a sprightly and amusing representation of the part of John Wellington

Wells, and his singing of the well-known patter song was warmly appreciated. Mr. C. Conyers as Alexis sang and acted with spirit and intelligence, and Mr. Herbert d'Egville as Sir Marmaduke, Mr. Christian as the Vicar, and Mr. Jesse Smith as the Notary were fully equal to their parts. In "Trial by Jury," which followed, the company was again conspicuously successful. Miss Florence Lambeth as the plaintiff, Mr. Shine as the judge. Mr. C. Conyers as the defendant, Mr. J. Smith as the usher, and Mr. Christian as the counsel were all exuberantly active and pointed the fun with nice precision. [*Manchester Times*, Saturday 24 October 1885, p.6.]

The performance of the *Pirates of Penzance* at the Theatre Royal last night was excellent, and such that we generally get from one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's companies. The much-repeated opera was listened to with evident pleasure, and the frequent laughter testified to its popularity. In all Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's works there is healthy vein of humour which has never failed to make their operas popular. The principals were in every way satisfactory, and the chorus, as usual, was thoroughly up in its work. To-night *Patience* will be given and *Trial by Jury*, and with them the visit of the company ends. [*Manchester Courier*, Saturday 31 October 1885, p.5.]

Often as *Patience* has been played here, its popularity is evidently by no means exhausted, for on its reproduction this week by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Repertoire company capital houses have been attracted to the theatre, and the warmest reception has been accorded to the opera. Mr. Wilfred E. Shine, though still descending somewhat too much to the farcical in his performance, gives a very clever and amusing representation of Reginald Bunthorne, and Mr. Albert Christian, whilst rather inexperienced histrionically, gives a capital rendering of Archibald Grosvenor's music. Mr. H. D'Egville as Colonel Calverley leaves nothing to be desired, and Mr. Conyers competently renders the tenor music. Miss Ethel McAlpine is again an admirable *Patience*, and Miss Alice Aynsley Cook gives an exceptionally fine performance of Lady Jane's part. Miss Katie Cohen and Miss Blanche Symonds as the chief of the rapturous maidens render their parts excellently. The choruses are well given, and the whole representation has proved most satisfactory. [*The Era*, Saturday 31 October 1885, p.18.]

#### ***Week commencing 2 November.***

GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN. Monday & Thursday, *Patience*. Tuesday & Friday, *The Pirates of Penzance & Trial by Jury*. Wednesday & Saturday, *The Sorcerer & Trial by Jury*. [*Freeman's Journal*, Monday 2 November 1885, p.4; Thursday 5 November 1885, p.4.]

#### ***Week commencing 9 November.***

THEATRE ROYAL, CORK. Monday & Thursday, *Patience*. Tuesday, Friday & Saturday, *The Sorcerer & Trial by Jury*. Wednesday and Saturday matinee, *The Pirates of Penzance & Trial by Jury*. [*Cork Constitution*, Thursday 5 November 1885, p.1; Wednesday 11 November 1885, p.1.]

Last night Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company appeared in the favourite opera "Patience" before a good house. Miss Blanche Symonds, who perfectly delineated the part of Lady Saphir, and Miss Aynsley Cook as Lady Jane were the truest in the opera. Towards the end of the entertainment the artistes evidently did not try their best, Tonight the "Sorcerer" will be given, to be followed by "Trial by Jury." [*Cork Constitution*, Tuesday 10 November 1885, p.2.]

#### ***Week commencing 16 November.***

THEATRE ROYAL, BELFAST. Monday & Wednesday, *The Sorcerer & Trial by Jury*. Tuesday & Friday, *Patience*. Thursday & Saturday, *The Pirates of Penzance & Trial by Jury*.

[*Belfast News Letter*, Monday 16 November 1885, p.1.]

“THE SORCERER” AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

It is somewhat remarkable that so few opportunities should have been afforded theatre-goers in this town of becoming better acquainted with the two first of the series of operas which have made the names of Mr. W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan famous in every part of the world. It seems to us that the extraordinary success of “Pinafore,” “Patience,” and “The Pirates of Penzance” so demoralised the distinguished collaborators that they came to regard the comparative success of “The Sorcerer” and “Trial by Jury” as a comparative failure. Though these pieces were frequently performed in the provinces they never appeared on the bills with the same frequency as either “Patience” or “The Pinafore”; and it was not, indeed, until the experiment was made of reviving them at the London Savoy Theatre that the fact was made plain that they were quite as popular as any of the series. The people came in crowds to witness the charming parodies upon romantic opera to be found in some of the scenes of “The Sorcerer,” and the graceful little satirical touches in “Trial by Jury.” Certainly the people of this town have every reason to be grateful to Mr. D’Oyly Carte for the opportunity of renewing our acquaintance with two works which abound in merit, artistic and entertaining—the two elements are not always bound in combination. The applause bestowed upon the performance last night was quite as hearty as we ever remember being given to the most familiar works of the same author and composer. It must, we think, be universally admitted that the music of “The Sorcerer” is of a higher class than may be found in any other of Sir Arthur Sullivan’s operas. Taken number by number, it will be found much more free from blemish than either “Pinafore” or “The Pirates.” We would not like to maintain that it is of equal charm to either of these pieces, but it seems to us to show less inclination to give way to the incorrect taste of the public for music containing that subtle element known as “go.” Sir Arthur Sullivan has been accused—and not without some reason—of having made his music popular at the sacrifice of some elements of true art; some of his melodies have undoubtedly now and again a music hall flavour, which is far from pleasing, except to a certain section of the public. In the various numbers of “The Sorcerer,” however, there is an equality of merit that must cause the work to be highly esteemed by every one of culture, even though there may be an absence of “go” in some of the most prominent of its airs. One never forgets for a moment that a genuine opera is being performed and not a burlesque; and the impression that it produces upon the mind is quite distinct from that which is the result of listening to the spirited airs that are usually associated with a pantomime. The airs abound in character and originality, and the concerted music is particularly clever and very ingenious. For genuine humour we have rarely heard anything more delicately finished than the music in the incantation scene. It parodies in a playful manner both Wagner and Locke in turn. The libretto, too, is written in Mr. Gilbert’s quaintest and most whimsical style. Only the author of the “Bab” ballads could fancy the existence of a regular commercial firm of necromancers doing a highly respectable family business, stocktaking once a month, advertising a horoscope at three-and-six, which can be guaranteed, and a patent hag, who comes out and prophecies disaster, and is strongly recommended. Altogether, the piece is extremely amusing in its design, and it is capitally performed by the company at present at the theatre. Miss Ethel McAipine as Aline sang with the greatest sweetness the charming airs assigned to this character. Her acting was also clever and by no means wanting in vivacity of a refined type. Miss Alice Aynsley Cook made a capital representative of Lady Sangazure, singing in the duet in the first act with good effect. The acting of Miss Bessy Armytage as Mrs. Partlet was full of humour, and her cultured contralto was heard to advantage in all the concerted music. Miss F. Lambeth was fresh and natural as Constance. Mr. Albert Christian made as perfect a Vicar as could be imagined. His baritone is of remarkable power, and it is at all times trustworthy. Mr. Charles Conyers sang and acted well as Alexis. Mr. H. D’Egville

showed much spirit and intelligence as Sir Marmaduke; and Mr. W. E. Shine cannot be too highly commended for his clever assumption of the part of the necromancer, John Wellington Wells. In "Trial by Jury," the humorous points were effectively brought out by Mr. W. E. Shine as the Judge, Mr. Conyers as the Defendant, Miss F. Lambeth as the Plaintiff, and Mr. Albert Christian as the Counsel. To-night the ever-favourite "Patience" will be performed. [*Belfast News Letter*, Tuesday 17 November 1885, p.5.]

#### "PATIENCE" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

It is unnecessary to discuss the question of the comparative merits of "Patience" with those of the other operas of the series that commenced with "Trial by Jury;" however opinion may be divided on the subject, the fact remains the same that the "æsthetic" opera has taken the surest hold upon the taste of the public. More than four years have now passed since "Patience" was first performed in this town, and yet it shows no sign of waning in attractiveness. The soundness of the popularity of the art upon which the work is constructed is proved by this fact; for everyone knows that the so-called æsthetic craze" has long since faded away—it would be more correct to say that taste in England has become so universally correct—that the desire to have mighty green carpets overspread with fearful bouquets of roses has become so obliterated that the striving after something better has ceased to be observable. In spite of the fact, however, that the sham reformers are now no more than a memory, the popularity of the work that satirized them remains undiminished. The new generation are in the habit of sneering at the satirical prints of John Leech on the subject of crinoline, just as the last generation sneered at Gilroy's caricatures of the Georges, but no one sneers nowadays at "The School for Scandal," and we do not think that the next generation will regard "Patience" as unworthy of serious attention. In common with Sheridan's masterpiece, it possesses sufficient artistic attraction in itself to make it interesting without respect to its satirical bearing. At any rate, if "Patience" ever becomes wearyful to an audience it will be when Mr. D'Oyly Carte has ceased to provide the provinces with companies for its representation. We can go to the theatre without any misgivings when we know that one of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas is to be performed by a company under the control of the manager of the Savoy. There is no falling away on the part of any member of the "Patience" company, though a few changes have taken place. The principals are as clever as ever, and the subordinates move and act in such a way as to claim being looked upon as an element considerably in advance of the usual operatic chorus. Nothing could have been better than the Bunthorne of Mr. Shine. His picture of the imaginary "haggard and lank young man" was admirable. Mr. Christian sang the songs assigned to Grosvenor with a good deal of spirit and intelligence, and the patter song of the "Heavy Dragoon" was very cleverly given by Mr. D'Egville. The parts of the Major and the Duke were also adequately filled last evening. Miss McAlpine makes a charming Patience, and Miss A. Aynsley Cook a robust and highly humorous Lady Jane. The other ladies also sang and acted with good taste, and grouped themselves with their accustomed effect. Altogether the representation was a brilliant one. To-night "The Sorcerer" and "Trial by Jury" will be repeated. [*Belfast News Letter*, Wednesday 18 November 1885, p.5.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company this week produced a series of the ever popular Gilbert-Sullivan operas, including *Trial by Jury*, *The Sorcerer*, *Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *Patience*. The company is an excellent one all round, and the performances have been well patronised. [*The Era*, Saturday 21 November 1885, p.16.]

#### **Week commencing 23 November.**

BIRMINGHAM. Six nights. [*The Era*, Saturday 21 November 1885, p.5.]

## PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE.

There are not many branches of enterprise just now in which demand outruns production, but an exception must apparently be made in favour of English operetta of the Gilbert and Sullivan mint, which cannot be produced enough to satisfy the cravings of its votaries, such at least is the conclusion forced upon us by the fact that the purveyors of this popular class of entertainment have found it expedient to hark back to some of the earlier and half-forgotten works of the lyric partnership, of which two admirable examples were presented here last night in "The Sorcerer" and "Trial by Jury," the first going back to the year 1877, and the latter to 1875. Since these operas saw the light a long line of diverting masterpieces has issued from the same prolific mint, but in the opinion of many competent judges the earlier works remain unsurpassed for freshness, originality, and finish, more especially as regards the musical portion.

With the exception of an amateur representation at the Bijou Theatre in the month of May last, "The Sorcerer" has not been heard in Birmingham for many years, and the delightful piece of musical fooling known as "Trial by Jury" is even more of a stranger here. One reason, perhaps, that may help us to understand the long neglect of "The Sorcerer" is the exacting character of the work, which requires no less than eight skilled vocal principals, who must be actors as well as singers, in addition to a good band and chorus. These conditions were well fulfilled last night, though an additional rehearsal would no doubt have enhanced the general effect, besides preserving the band from a few conspicuous faults. The stage company is an excellent one, and every part has evidently been carefully studied. Miss Ethel McAlpine, perhaps, is scarcely so sylph-like as of yore; but she is always graceful and intelligent, and sings the music of Aline like an artist. Miss Alice Aynsley Cook is both in voice and physique a model Lady Sangazure. Miss Florence Lamnseth, in the small part of Constance, charmed the audience by the naive grace of her acting and the perfect intonation and phrasing in the vocal part; and Miss Bessy Armytage, though not equally immaculate in her vocalisation, was demurely amusing as the "clean and tidy widdy," Dame Partlet. Mr. Charles Conyers, upon whom the part of the philanthropic Alexis devolved, possesses a tenor voice of pleasing quality but limited power, and his performance, on the whole, was a very creditable one. The honours of the male section, however, were carried off unmistakably by Mr. Wilfred E. Shine, the representative of the family sorcerer, John Wellington Wells, one of the most original and diverting characters which even Mr. Gilbert has conceived, Mr. Shine's performance is evidently modelled upon that of its original representative, Mr. Grossmith, but it is not everyone who can bring to the task so many special personal qualifications, so much dry humour and articulate volubility, and so correct an ear. Mr. Albert Christian, as the benevolent Vicar of Ploverleigh, Dr. Daly, was becomingly unctuous and paternal. Mr. Jesse Smith was funny as the deaf notary and Mr. Hervet D'Egville was the type of courtliness and aristocratic dignity as Sir Marmaduke Poindextre. The patter song of John Wellington Wells was, as usual, rapturously encored, and a similar compliment was awarded to the admirable mock heroic duet for Wells and Lady Sangazure, ending, with "the family vault" episode. The beautiful unaccompanied quartet, and Dr. Daly's capital song, "The Pale young Curate." The choruses were capitally sung; and if the band had been equally good, the performance would have been an exemplary one.

The "Trial by Jury," which furnished the after piece proved a trial also for the risible muscles of the audience who were kept in roars of laughter from the rise to the fall of the curtain by the burlesque humours of Judge, Jury, and litigants. The Judge's song, capitally sung by Mr. Wilfrid Shine, was, of course redemanded, and nothing but the lateness of the hour prevented the repetition of other numbers. Mr. Conyers was quite at home in the part of the fickle, light hearted defendant; Miss Florence Lambeth was a becoming plaintive and tender as the blighted plaintive; the usher was suitably pompous and obstreperous; the

bridesmaids were vivacious and pretty and the men amorously responsive to their charms. The piece contains some charming vocal numbers, to which full justice was done last night, and the performance altogether may be pronounced a great success. [*Birmingham Daily Post*, Tuesday 24 November 1885, p.4.]

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company in the representation of a series of Gilbert and Sullivan operas have met with a hearty reception. On Monday night *The Sorcerer* was produced. Miss Ethel McAlpine acted the part of Alleyne [*sic*] with much captivating grace, and her singing was rendered with much refinement. Mr. Wilfrid Shine, who has made a marked advance in his profession since he last appeared in Birmingham, gave a capital personation of the part of John Wellington Wells; and he was ably supported by Mr. D'Egville as Sir Marmaduke, Mr. Albert Christian as the Vicar, Mr. Chas. Conyers as Alexis and Miss Florence Lambeth as Constance; and Miss Aynsley Cook, whose personation of Lady Sangazure was noticeable for its grace and dignity. During the week *Trial by Jury* and *Patience* have been capitally rendered. [*The Era*, Saturday 28 November 1885, p.16.]

**Week commencing 30 November.**

THEATRE ROYAL, NOTTINGHAM. Monday & Wednesday, *The Sorcerer & Trial by Jury*. Tuesday & Friday, *Patience*. Thursday & Saturday, *The Pirates of Penzance & Trial by Jury*.

THEATRE ROYAL.—“THE SORCERER.”

This, the most daringly original and undoubtedly one of the finest the combined works of Mr. Gilbert and Sir A. Sullivan, was reproduced by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company at the Theatre Royal last night. There was large and enthusiastic house, and, as on its former representation—if we remember rightly about four years ago—the grotesque humour and tuneful numbers of the work alike amused and delighted the audience. The introduction of a love philtre from “family sorcerer,” by which the young Guardsman Alexis seeks to convert the villagers of his native place to the doctrine that the mixing of different classes in matrimony is the true secret of social happiness, and the terrible mischief which results, and even threatens to destroy the love his affianced bride Aline for himself, is a foundation which few authors would have cared to build on, and fewer still could have done so with success. The keen glancing irony of the satirist is present in almost every line the libretto, and while Mr. Gilbert compels us to laugh, he rouses now and then the uncomfortable suspicion that we are laughing at our own follies. Be this as it may, no one who is in the smallest degree gifted with the faculty of humour can avoid the spell of the writer's potent magic, especially when wrapped the harmonious and sympathetic music provided by the composer. The very originality of “The Sorcerer” at first militated against its success, but the opera has long since taken its proper rank the wonderful series which the collaborateurs have given to their country, and its popularity will long as caustic wit is appreciated or delicate harmony is listened to with pleasure. The company by whom the piece is now presented is, taken all round, an excellent one. Mr. Wilfred E. Shine makes admirable John Wellington Wells; Mr. Charles Conyers<sup>1</sup> takes the part of Alexis; Mr. A. Christian (though apparently labouring under a cold) is decidedly clever as Dr. Daly, the love oppressed vicar of Ploverleigh; Mr. H. D'Egville impersonates Sir Marmaduke with true appreciation of the character; and a word of praise is due to the Notary of Mr. Jesse Smith. Of the ladies Miss Ethel McAlpine makes a charming Aline; Miss Alice A. Cook is clever as Lady Sangazure; Miss Bessy Armytage makes up well as Mrs. Partlet; and Miss Florence Lambeth is a sufficient Constance. Both as regards acting and singing the piece last night

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<sup>1</sup> *The Era*, 5 December 1885, reports that Charles Conyers was playing Nanki-Poo with “E” Company that week.

went remarkably well, and the skill of the vocalists was sufficiently proved by the very frequent encores which had to be given. "The Sorcerer" was followed by the "dramatic cantata," or musical farce, as it may be termed, of the same authors, "Trial by Jury," in which Mr. W. E. Shine made capital Judge, and especially distinguished himself in the rendering of the famous gong which occurs in this part. This evening "Patience" will be rendered by the company. To-morrow "The Sorcerer" will be again given. Thursday and Saturday are devoted to the "Pirates of Penzance," and Friday "Patience" will be repeated. Except to-night and on Friday "Trial by Jury" will be repeated each evening, and there can be no doubt that so attractive a programme will be sufficient to provide full houses during the engagement of the present talented company. [*Nottingham Evening Post*, Tuesday 1 December 1885, p.2.]

#### THEATRE ROYAL.—"PATIENCE."

Mr. D'Oyly Carte's Company produced last night at the Theatre Royal before a tolerably large house "Patience." It is some considerable time since this, "æsthetic opera" was performed in Nottingham, and lovers of the school of English opera-bouffe, founded by Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, welcomed its return and showed during the course evening that they regard this as one of the most tuneful and prettiest of the works of these celebrated collaborateurs. There is no necessity describe the plot of "Patience," or to comment on the character of the music, for both are so deservedly popular that almost everybody is acquainted with them. Last evening the acting, singing, and mounting were alike satisfactory, and as a whole the performance was enjoyable. Mr. W. S. Shine's interpretation of the part of Reginald Bunthorne was very clever, while Mr. Albert Christian's happy representation of Archibald Grosvenor was thoroughly admired. Both of them contribute very materially to the pleasure of the evening, Mr. Shine's careful acting and Mr. Christian's singing ensuring the success of the representation. It would be impossible to have a more charming Patience than Miss Ethel McAlpine. As a dairymaid, she throws a bewitching naiveté into the part, while her vocalisation throughout was of the best. Miss Alice Aynsley Cook's conception of the role of Lady Jane was "massive," and her rendering of "Sad is that woman's lot who year by year" displayed the capabilities of a full and rich contralto voice; she was deservedly encored. Altogether the company gave a delightful representation the opera, although there is room for improvement, both among the principals and chorus. This (Wednesday) evening Monday's programme is repeated, and on Thursday evening "The Pirates of Penzance" will be given. [*Nottingham Evening Post*, Wednesday 2 December 1885, p.2.]

For the present week we have had an exceptional treat in the engagement of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's repertoire company, who have presented some of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas, viz., *The Sorcerer*, *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *Trial by Jury*. Marked by all the original excellence of stage-management, tasteful costumes, perfection of ensemble, and fitness of artists, it is hardly necessary to say that success has been the result. The chief soprano Miss Ethel McAlpine has fully sustained the high position already attained by her in Nottingham. That charming vocalist, Miss Alice Aynsley Cook, has undertaken the contralto parts in a manner that has given delight to her many admirers in the town. Mdlles. Florence Lambeth, Bessy Armitage, Kate Cohen, and Blanche Symonds have also made their mark. Messrs. Charles Conyers, tenor; H. D'Egville, bass; A. Christian, baritone; Wilfrid Shine, buffo; Jesse Smith, bass; and H. Halley, baritone, have all likewise given good accounts of themselves in the various characters entrusted to their charge. The scenery provided by Mr. Harry Potts formed picturesque settings to the operas, and the chorus was numerous, fresh voiced, and highly efficient. [*The Era*, Saturday 5 December 1885, p.18.]