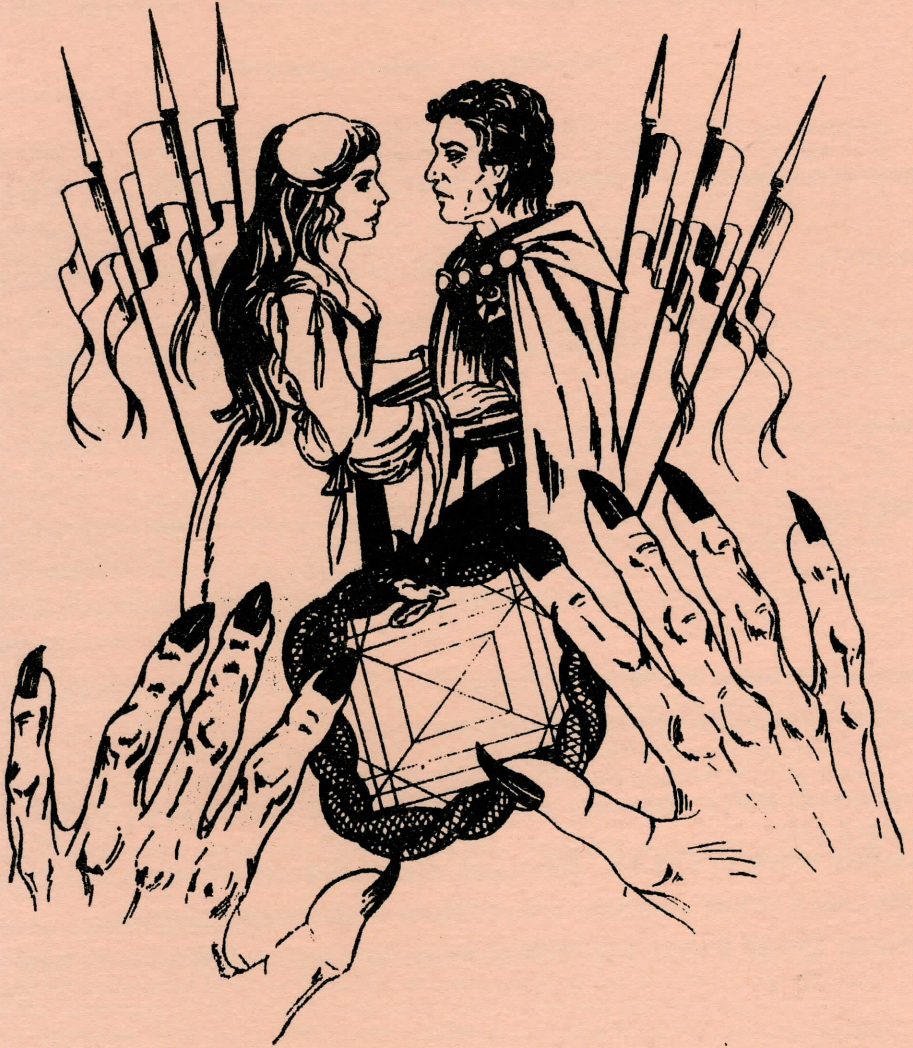


# SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN SOCIETY

Graphics Anne Stanyon



Magazine No 43

Autumn 1996

# SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN SOCIETY

## Magazine No 43 - Autumn 1996

Dear Member,

Space does not permit a full account of the Society's Autumn Festival at the West Retford Hotel from 18th - 19th October 1996. Suffice it to say that we attended two performances of Martin Yates' production of *The Beauty Stone* at King Edward VI School, Retford. If proof were needed of the theatrical vitality of this score, the performance of Generally G&S provided it. They also sang beautifully at a morning service held at Grove Street Methodist Church, Retford, which we attended.

Kevin Chappell gave a stimulating talk on why G&S production has gone wrong. The talk was intended as controversial, but his comments were so obviously right that they took on the status of official utterances and became unanswerable. The thrust of his argument was that too many years of conservatism and devotion to tradition have caused the D'Oyly Carte management to miss their opportunities to bring the opera company into the late twentieth century; as a result there may conceivably be no professional performances of G&S in 1997. Your editor talked on the background to *The Beauty Stone*, and discussed the problems in the libretto of this work as against those in *Haddon Hall* and *The Chieftain*. The weekend closed with a lecture recital by Stephen Turnbull including some of the many Sullivan items now available on CD. As always, Stephen organised everything impeccably on our behalf. **D.E.**

### **THE BEAUTY STONE VIDEO U.K & U.S.**

A video of the magnificent Generally G&S performance of *The Beauty Stone* is available at £15.00 + £1.17 p&p. The performance is also available on audio cassette at £8.00 + 70p post & packing. **ALSO AVAILABLE:** *Haddon Hall* and *The Chieftain* on video and audio cassette; *The Foresters* on audio cassette only: 6.00 + 50p post and packing. **ALL VIDEOS** are available in **U.S. Format**. For details see the inside back cover of *this Magazine*.

Write to: Mr P. Pimperton, 15 Spitalfields Blyth, Worksop, Notts S81 8EB. Please make all cheques payable to GENERALLY G&S.

### **SALES ARRANGEMENTS**

Stephen Turnbull writes: With immediate effect all postal sales should once again be addressed to Peter Gibbons at Savoyard Halt, 71 Hockley Lane, Eastern Green, Coventry, CV5 7FS. An obituary notice of John Holt appears on p.00 of this Magazine. Will anyone who was awaiting an order from him please contact me (S.H.T.) without delay specifying the orders and when. I will then arrange despatch as soon as possible.



## JOHN HOLT

John Holt died suddenly of a brain haemorrhage on 12th October. He was in his early fifties. John was an inspector of taxes by profession, but his heart was in the theatre, and he was an amateur producer of great experience. He had been Producer for the City of Durham (New College) Light Opera Group for more than a decade, creating intelligent productions with a traditional ethos. I first met him sixteen months ago, backstage after a double bill of *Trial by Jury* and *The Zoo*, and his enthusiasm knew no bounds - particularly for his centenary *Grand Duke*, which judiciously pruned the libretto whilst retaining almost all the music. Not only was the production a great success, with a gala on centenary day itself attended by G&S celebrities from all over the country, but when the Northern Sinfonia featured *The Grand Duke* in their 1996 New Year G&S concert, John and a few others were invited to augment the chorus. He was thrilled to be invited to take *The Grand Duke* to the G&S festival at Buxton in August, and somehow found time to organise a party to come down from Durham and see us perform the opera in Oxford. On top of all this he volunteered his services as Acting Sales Officer this summer, a post he discharged with great efficiency and success. He was working on establishing a Durham branch of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and was discussing ideas for Durham's forthcoming *Iolanthe* with me only a few weeks ago. The funeral service was held at St Giles, Durham, and conducted by the Rev Tom Thubron, Vicar of St Giles, who was also a member of the Opera Group. Music included the overtures to *The Yeomen of the Guard* and *The Grand Duke*, 'Hall Poetry', and 'Henceforth Strephon cast away'. His talent and enthusiasm will be greatly missed; our condolences go to his widow Christine, and his family.

S.H.T.

## A NOTE ON SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN'S BURIAL

Although Sullivan's will included a wish to be buried in the family grave in Brompton Cemetery, burial took place in St Paul's Cathedral "by command of the Queen", according to *The Sketch* of 27th November 1899. Gilbert and Sullivan literature contains several accounts of the funeral, but I recently chanced upon a detail which does not appear to have been mentioned. A scrapbook newspaper cutting from *The Northern Figaro* of 8th December 1900 records that "The Dean of St Paul's insisted upon receiving a testimonial signed by five musical authorities, as to the late Sir Arthur Sullivan's musical ability, before he would recognise the great composer as one worthy to occupy a grave in St Paul's."

My enquiry to the Dean regarding this matter was most helpfully handled by the Librarian, Joseph Wisdom M.A., A.L.A., who could find no mention of it in Chapter minutes or in Dean Gregory's autobiography. It seems that expert opinion was routinely sought to confirm that, despite contemporary fame, a candidate would remain great for all time. The Chapter minute book, which is not detailed, records that Sullivan's burial on 27th November 1900 took place in the crypt at 1.30 pm. Mr Wisdom referred me to the book *Memorials of St Paul's Cathedral* (1909) by MacDonalld Sinclair D.D., Archdeacon of London, Canon of St Paul's and Hon. Chaplain to the King, in which Sullivan is described as "the greatest English composer since Purcell." The funeral of Sir Joseph Barnby, who had been runner-up to Sullivan in the first Mendelssohn Scholarship in 1856, took place in St Paul's on 4th February 1895, with burial in Norwood Cemetery, and the list of prominent musicians to be honoured by burial in St Paul's includes Sullivan's mentor Sir John Stainer - bas-relief 1901 - and Sir Hubert Parry, who represented the Prince of Wales at Sullivan's funeral - burial monument 1918.

JOHN CANNON

# SULLIVAN AND THE MENDELSSOHN SCHOLARSHIP

By

Darren Wood

With the death in Leipzig of Mendelssohn on 4 November 1847, the English musical scene lost one of the most influential figures of the period. Revered long after his death by musicians and the public alike, Mendelssohn had become a central figure in the musical life of this country, his stature eclipsing that of most others. In London in particular, "home-grown" talent was largely subservient to that from abroad. Julius Benedict (1804-85), a native of Stuttgart, was at the forefront of the cultural life of the capital where he remained until his death. Costa, too, was a European "import" who, together with Augustus Manns, came to play a key role in the London concert scene. It is fair to add that Sterndale Bennett was making a strong impression during the first half of the 19th century and had, indeed, endeared himself to Mendelssohn, eventually becoming his pupil. Macfarren, in turn, was enjoying mixed fortunes in the operatic world. One cannot escape from the fact, however, that it was the towering figure of Mendelssohn who was the idol of the British public and it is not surprising that when the 1st January 1848 edition of *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* appeared, its front page was devoted to an appreciation of the late composer. It stated:

"No musician of the present century has equalled Mendelssohn in the variety and perfection of his *personal* endowments as an artist."

(1)

Subsequent editions carried tributes at every turn and the inclusion of his music within their pages was almost *de rigueur*.

A special memorial concert in the Exeter Hall (in The Strand) conducted by Hullah took place on 12 January 1848 and its review in *The Athenaeum* was equally fervent in its praise of the composer. Given this prevailing mood, the conditions were ripe for the foundation of a scholarship fund designed to enable the finest of this country's young talent to study music. By the April of that year, subscriptions to this fund had already exceeded £370.

Before too long, plans were being made for a gala fund-raising performance of *Elijah* also to be held at Exeter Hall. Opened on 29 March 1831, the hall had been originally designed with charitable and religious meetings in mind yet, by



1834, the smaller of its two halls was being used regularly by The Sacred Harmonic Society. The Exeter Hall was also frequently home to large-scale oratorios together with regular Wednesday concerts and so, in many ways, it was the ideal venue for *Elijah*. Eventually on 2 December 1848 an advertisement appeared in *The Athenaeum* with a similar announcement appearing exactly one week later in *The Musical World*. Neither left any doubt that the concert planned for the 15 December was conceived on only the grandest scale. The cost of admission was to be either half a guinea or one guinea and with ticket prices fixed at that level, not only would the fund benefit enormously, but the organisers were guaranteed an audience comprised of London's social elite.

By all accounts the evening was an unprecedented success. With Henry Smart as organist and Julius Benedict conducting, the audience was treated to a concert during of which "more zeal in the cause, or greater respect for the memory of Mendelssohn, could not possibly have been demonstrated." (2) The forces involved included students of The Royal Academy of Music, 100 professional singers, the boys of 3 Metropolitan cathedrals, 200 voices of The Sacred Harmonic Society, 150 voices of Mr. Hullah's Upper Schools and even some members of a German *liedertafel* society. Given the added presence of Jenny Lind for whom Mendelssohn had composed parts of *Elijah*, we begin to appreciate an event which was a highlight in the musical calendar. Praise for Jenny Lind was unrelenting yet, given his relative obscurity today, it is worth noting the degree of respect held for Benedict that evening. The review in *The Musical World* concluded that:

"...no praise can be too warm for the unremitting attention and distinguished talent which Benedict has displayed throughout this grand affair...about which he has every reason to feel conceited." (3)

The final figure amassed that evening proved to be £1,050 which was invested in 3% bank annuities which subsequently formed the bulk of the original scholarship fund. By 1873, £1,350 was tied up in 5% bonds of India Stock, this figure having grown six years later to £2,000 providing, at that time, an annual stipend to the recipient of £90.

The original plan for the Mendelssohn Scholarship was to merge the British project with a similar scheme in Leipzig and although this failed to come to fruition, many of its holders were eventually to study there. With the aim of selecting a successful candidate, a committee was formed chaired by Sir George Smart (1776-1867), who had, himself, introduced the oratorio *St Paul* to England in 1836. The Secretary was Carl Klingemann, a German diplomat, Anglophile and personal friend of Mendelssohn's who came to live at 4 Hobart Place, Eaton Square until his death in 1862. Both these figures were to be influential in the early career of Sullivan. The remainder of the original committee consisted of E. Buxton (Treasurer), Julius Benedict, Sterndale Bennett, J. W. Davison, John Hullah, C. E. Horsley and the well-known music critic of *The Athenaeum*, H. F. Chorley. In later years, Ouseley, Goss, Macfarren and Stainer were all to play an active part in the election of a Mendelssohn Scholar.

At its inception, it was decided that the age limit for candidates should be between 14 and 20 and this was quite fortuitous for Sullivan as he was to qualify by a mere 6 weeks. In later years, however, these parameters were to change as follows:

1871 ages 14 - 24

1885 ages 16 - 21

1890 ages 16 - 22

1923 under 30

The competition was restricted to natives of either sex of Great Britain and Ireland.

1842 saw the birth in Lambeth of Arthur Seymour Sullivan, the son of Thomas Sullivan, an army Bandmaster at Kneller Hall. Sullivan was eventually sent to a private school run by Mr. W.G. Plees at 20 Albert Terrace in Bayswater. It was whilst he was a pupil there that he was introduced to Sir George Smart who, in turn, arranged for him to meet the Reverend Thomas Helmore (1811-90). This 1854 meeting was to have major consequences for both Sullivan and the course of British music since it was this encounter which created the right musical conditions for Sullivan to enter for the Mendelssohn Scholarship. Born the son of a Congregationalist minister, Helmore left Oxford University in 1840 and was appointed Curate of St. Mark's, Lichfield. From there he eventually went on to become Precentor and Vice-Principal of St. Mark's College, Chelsea which was at the forefront of the upheaval in the Anglican church which became known as the Oxford Movement or Tractarianism. By 1846 he had become Master of the Children at the Chapels Royal and it was in this capacity that he met Sullivan. As a direct result of this meeting, Sullivan entered the Chapel Royal of St. James's during Holy Week on Tuesday 12 April 1854. Although one of 10 boys, it soon became clear that Sullivan was no ordinary chorister. His "top A or B flat used to ring out with brilliant effect, and apparently without effort." (4) wrote C.V. Bridgman with Helmore adding that "his voice was very sweet and his style of singing far more sympathetic than that of most boys." (5) Moreover, the November of 1855 saw the publication by Novello of his sacred song *O Israel*. It is clear from these early beginnings that Sullivan was an ideal candidate for such a prestigious prize as the Mendelssohn Scholarship.

The year 1856 saw the public announcement that the Mendelssohn Scholarship would be "offered for competition." (6) It is clear that Sullivan was anxious to compete, for in a letter home displaying all of the humility which was to characterise him all of his life, he wrote:

"I should like to try above all things for the Mendelssohn Scholarship, but you had better speak to Mr. Helmore first about it." (7)

Evidently such discussions as may have taken place with Helmore were of a positive nature for, in a letter from Cheyne Walk dated 24 June 1856, Sullivan told his parents that:

"Saturday is the examination day for the Mendelssohn Scholarship. There are 17 candidates (8) for it, all clever fellows, so Mr. Potter says, so that I stand a poor chance. I wish you would come up that day." (9)

As it turned out, the result was a tie between Sullivan and a certain Joseph Barnby (1838-96), the future Precentor of Eton College and Principal of



the Guildhall School of Music. Further strenuous musical exercises were set in order to resolve the deadlock in the judges' minds. The winner was to be informed by post. Duly a letter arrived at the Sullivan family home. It was dated 4 July 1856 and is reproduced here in full:

"I have much gratification in informing you, by order of the Committee of the Mendelssohn Scholarship Fund, that you have been elected a Mendelssohn Scholar. The Scholarship you are to hold for one year, commencing on the 21st September next at the Royal Academy of Music.

I am etc -

"Carl Klingemann"

*Hon. Sec. Mendelssohn Committee*" (10)

The youngest of all the candidates had beaten the eldest, something well worth remembering especially in view of the success which Barnby was later to enjoy. There also appeared the official announcement in *The Illustrated London News* which read:

"MENDELSSOHN SCHOLARSHIP - The successful candidate for the above scholarship, instituted this year at the Royal Academy of Music, Hanover Square, London, in memory of the late much lamented composer, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, is Arthur Seymour Sullivan, chorister in Her Majesty's Chapels Royal; he is 14 years of age, and was the junior candidate. Master Sullivan is the youngest son of Mr. Thomas Sullivan, master of the band at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst." (11)

In order to capture the intense excitement generated by the decision of the committee, one can do no better than quote from Sullivan's own words written over 40 years later:

"I spent the day in a fever of excitement. Everytime I heard a knock at the door, my heart was in my mouth. The day wore on, but still no letter. Two o'clock came - three - four, I was beginning to lose hope. At last, rat-tat! The postman's knock! It was unmistakable - I crept into the hall. The maidservant passed me by and went to the letter box. 'A letter for you, Master Sullivan,' she said. I took it from her, tore it open and then - I had won it. I don't think I ever felt such joy in my life." (12)

The joy of Sullivan's father was expressed in the most lyrical of terms both to his wife and to Helmore. Writing on 6 July from Sandhurst, Thomas Sullivan found it "difficult to describe" his feelings on hearing the news of his son's success. His faith in the future was unshakeable. He went on:

"Should the Almighty spare him I think he will at no distant day achieve much greater things." (13)

A perfect evocation of Sullivan's own joy and long-lasting indebtedness on winning the scholarship may be gleaned from the fact that, from 1882 until his death, both Klingemann's letter and *The Illustrated London News* announcement were framed and hung on the wall of his home at 1 Queen's Mansions. A competition which may today be a forgotten entity in international music circles was then the richest and most important scholarship in the country and one which undoubtedly launched a great career.

Sullivan had entered The Royal Academy of Music on 21 September 1856 whilst still officially a member of the Chapels Royal and was taught piano by Sterndale Bennett and Arthur O'Leary with John Goss, Organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, tutoring him in Harmony and Counterpoint. Sullivan's absolute dedication to music is transparent:

"I have chosen music, and I shall go on because nothing in the world would ever interest me so much. I may not make a lot of money, but I shall have music and that will make up if I don't." (14)

Such was his success, however, that he was re-elected to the scholarship on the recommendation of Sir George Smart with Sullivan leaving London for the Conservatorium in Leipzig in the autumn of 1858. By quoting a letter from Smart to J.W. Davison, music critic of *The Times*, we can begin to appreciate the high level of support for Sullivan which was being lent behind the scenes:

103 Great Portland Street

4 February 1857

Dear Sir,

As you so kindly offered to support the proposal of Sullivan's being sent to Leipzig, I think you ought to be informed of his proceedings there. His letter (enclosed) will give his own account, which I will communicate to the committee, at our next meeting. This ought not to be too long delayed, as future proceedings relative to the Mendelssohn Scholarship should be determined upon. I wish to have your opinion thereon, therefore shall be obliged by your favouring me with a visit any day and at any hour after 12 you will appoint; it will give me much pleasure to receive you. Sullivan's letter can then be returned. I would have called upon you but have been confined to the house for these last ten days by severe bronchitis.

I am yours very faithfully, etc. (15)

It was at Leipzig that Sullivan was to be taught by Moscheles, Plaidy, Hauptmann, David and Julius Rietz who, incidentally, went on to edit a critical edition of Mendelssohn's works entitled, *F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: Werke: kritisch durchgesehene Ausgabe*, published in Leipzig between 1874 and 1877.

Such was the progress made by Sullivan that he was able to write to his father on 28 October 1860 to inform him that the Conservatorium had waived 6



months' fees; the scholarship itself had also been renewed. Ultimately Sullivan was to hold the scholarship for the maximum 4 years until the completion of *The Tempest*, which in 1861 heralded his appearance on the musical scene as a composer of international renown.

The Mendelssohn Scholarship itself continued to be awarded. Future recipients of note have, perhaps, been Frederick Corder, George Dyson and Malcolm Arnold, yet one could argue that the only holder to have made a great and lasting impression on not only the musical but cultural life of our country has been Arthur Sullivan. In his book, *Music In The Romantic Era*, Alfred Einstein writes:

"If there was an English national composer in the 19th century before the awakening of a new nationalistic spirit around 1880, that composer was not Mendelssohn's pupil and Schumann's friend William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875), but Arthur Seymour Sullivan." (16)

Indeed, who can question the peculiarly British spirit behind such works as the two *Imperial Odes*, the *Festival Te Deum*, or any of the products of his 25-year collaboration with W. S. Gilbert? What is of doubt, however, is the situation Sullivan may have been faced with had he been unsuccessful in winning the Mendelssohn Scholarship. The answer to this question is, of course, one of pure conjecture. Perhaps, like so many others, Sullivan would have earned a successful living through conducting, organ playing, teaching and general hack work. Although he undoubtedly had the musical determination and strength of character to have pursued such a course, one cannot imagine that this would ever have been the preferred option. Had he not won the scholarship, it is also questionable whether *The Tempest*, a product of the musical melting-pot of Leipzig, would have appeared at the time it did thereby delaying the start of his career. One could argue that a superior talent such as his would have won through in the end regardless of the hand dealt him, yet one should recall the hardships faced years later by Elgar who struggled to gain public recognition without such a filip as the Mendelssohn Scholarship. It would be wrong, however, to dwell too long upon what might have been. What is a fact is that Sullivan was not aristocratic by birth and did not have the financial means of a Sterndale Bennett; winning the scholarship offered much needed financial assistance. Furthermore, the kudos which went hand in hand with the award afforded its holder immediate status as a serious musician becoming, in today's parlance, a "shop window" in which to display one's musical wares. Within six years of being elected, Sullivan had endeared himself to many leading musical and society figures, 1862 seeing an invitation to spend Christmas in the company of Jenny Lind and her husband Otto Goldschmidt. As a further result of moving in more elevated circles there came the eventual introduction to Gilbert with its well-known consequences. In his biography, *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian Musician*, Arthur Jacobs concluded that:

"With influential friends and a favourable press, with a musical style as secure as England's and Germany's best training could provide, with personal determination and no domestic cares, Sullivan was triumphantly launched." (17)

British music has much for which to thank the Mendelssohn Scholarship.

## NOTES

- 1) *The Musical Times*, 1 January 1848, p.159.
- 2) *The Musical World*, 16 December 1848, p.813.
- 3) *The Musical World*, 16 December 1848, p.814.
- 4) Saxe Wyndham, H., *Arthur Sullivan* (London, 1903), p.3.
- 5) *Grove I*, Vol. 3, p.761.
- 6) Findon, B.W., *Sir Arthur Sullivan: His Life and Music* (London, 1904), p.16.
- 7) Lawrence, A., *Sir Arthur Sullivan: Life Story, Letters and Reminiscences* (London, 1899), p.15.
- 8) *The Musical World*, 26 July 1856, p.473 states that there were 20 candidates for the scholarship not 17.
- 9) Lawrence, p.15.
- 10) Sullivan, H. and Newman Flower, *Sir Arthur Sullivan* (London, 1927), p.15.
- 11) Wells, W.J., *Souvenir of Sir Arthur Sullivan, Mus. Doc., M.V.O.: A Brief Sketch of his Life and Works* (London, 1901), p.8.
- 12) Jacobs, A., *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian Musician* (Oxford, 1986), p.12.
- 13) Saxe Wyndham, *Arthur Seymour Sullivan* (London, 1926), p.14.
- 14) Sullivan and Newman Flower, p.15.
- 15) Letter supplied by courtesy of Mr John Gardner.
- 16) Einstein, A., *Music In The Romantic Era* (New York, 1947), p.292.
- 17) Jacobs, p.28.

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*The Athenaeum; The Musical Times; The Musical World.*

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(A list of the winners of the Mendelssohn Scholarship will appear in the next Magazine. Ed.)



# MORE SCOTT OPERAS

## Further Analyses of Operas Based on the

### Works of Sir Walter Scott

By Jerome Mitchell

In the wake of his apparently comprehensive *The Walter Scott Operas* (1977) Professor Mitchell has found a number of previously unconsidered works, and done further justice to some already discussed. According to his preface the total number of Scott operas is 89, not including short or insubstantial works based on Scott. *Kenilworth*, with 14 operas, appears to have been the most attractive novel to composers, followed by *Ivanhoe* (11) and *The Bride of Lammermoor* (9). The *Ivanhoe* operas listed by Professor Mitchell are as follows: 1) *Ilda d'Avenel* - Francesco Morlachi (1824); 2) *Ivanoé* - Rossini (1826); 3) *Ilda d'Avenel* - Giuseppe Nicolini (1828); 4) *Der Tempeler und die Jüdin* - Marschner (1829); 5) *Ivanhoe* - Pacini (1832); 6) *Il Templario* - Nicolai (1840); 7) *Ivanoé* - Thomas Sari (1863); 8) *Rebecca* - Bartolomeo Pisani (1865); 9) *Rebecca* - Armand Castegnier (1882); 10) *Ivanhoe* - Attilio Ciardi (1888); *Ivanhoe* - Sullivan (1891). On page 175 is a charming illustration from Ciardi's *Ivanhoe* showing Ivanhoe receiving the prize from Rowena at the Ashby tournament.

In a short Introduction Professor Mitchell discusses developments in the field of Scott opera since 1977, from which it emerges that Sullivan and his *Ivanhoe* have done relatively well. The Prince Consort recording is discussed, as is the Boston concert performance. Since *Ivanhoe* remains the most popular work of Sir Walter Scott any opera based on it probably stands more chance of receiving attention than most.

An valuable chapter discusses the aristocratic English composer John Lodge Ellerton (1801-1873). Ellerton was an amateur musician, firmly committed to the Germanising tendency in English music. He made friends with Wagner during the latter's visit to England in 1855, and was rewarded with generous remarks from a composer hardly noted for them. Ellerton's unperformed opera *The Bridal of Triermain* (c1831) survives only in a single ms, but it appears to be an interesting contribution to the forlorn hope of English opera. Another such is *The Lord of the Isles* (1834) by George Herbert Bonaparte Rodwell to a libretto by Edward Fitzball. This 'musical drama' was praised for its generous content of music relative to the spoken text, but the music itself is not unfortunately of a quality to warrant revival. **D.E.**

Jerome Mitchell: *More Scott Operas*; University Press of America Inc, Lanham, New York & London, 1996.

## A NOTE ON THE GRAND DUKE

In an article published in *The Savoyard* in 1982 (1) David Mackie points out that the song 'Come, bumpers-aye, ever-so-many' has been inspired by a poem, 'One bumper' at parting, though many' published in *Punch* 27 July 1861 (1). Mackie says that this poem, written to celebrate the retirement of Grist, is the work of 'Henry Silver'; however he cannot identify the author. I am informed by John Gardner that the pseudonym 'Shaver Silver' was used by the music critic Henry Sutherland Edwards (1828-1906). Sutherland Edwards was Gilbert's cousin, being the son of his aunt Harriet. He was a regular contributor to *Punch* and the author of a standard book on opera singers called *The Prima Donna*. It seems as likely as not that 'Henry Silver' and 'Shaver Silver' are the same, and that in making use of the song Gilbert was actually borrowing from his cousin. Ed

## Note

1) *The Savoyard*, Vol XXI No 2, September 1982, pp.10-11.

## GLIMPSES OF SULLIVAN

An amusing story went the round about Arthur Sullivan and Sir Alexander Mackenzie. They were going out to dinner one night in Savile Row. Neither of them could remember the number.

"How can I recollect numbers?" said Sir Alexander. "All I know is the door scraper is *E Flat*."

Away they went kicking the door scrapers along the row.

"Here we are, this is *E Flat*!" exclaimed Arthur Sullivan. And it was the house right enough.

(Mrs Clement Scott: *Old Days In Bohemian London*; Hutchinson, 1919, p.158).

With Sir Arthur Sullivan I only worked once, and then it was for about half an hour. After poor Freddy Clay's seizure on the second night of the new Alhambra spectacular comic opera *The Golden Ring*, it was decided that certain alterations were advisable in the score. Rivière [conductor] did not care to interfere with Clay's work, and I suggested that I should take it to Sir Arthur Sullivan, who knew all about it, as Clay had been away with him at Carlsbad for the cure, and had been at work on the opera during the time.

I took the score to Sullivan and had a short and rather sad little conference, for Sullivan was as deeply distressed at the tragedy as I was. Sir Arthur gladly undertook to do the necessary work there and then, and told me that if Rivière would come and see him the next day everything would be ready. [December 1883]

(George R. Sims: *My Life - Sixty Years' Recollections of Bohemian London*; Eveleigh Nash, 1917, p.225.)

## RICHARD BAKER

Richard Baker played Sullivan in his *Evening With Mr Gilbert & Mr Sullivan* at Huddersfield Town Hall on Saturday 6 July 1996. Jerry Jarratt played Gilbert, and the Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra accompanied the combined local G&S Societies (Honley, Huddersfield & Metham). Information Derek Hodge.



## **SAN DIEGO OPERA**

'The Best of Pirates and Pinafore' is the title of 'a delightful compilation of the comic operetta classics' to be played for only the third time in 60 years aboard the sailing ship *Star of India* at the Maritime Museum, San Diego. The show is directed by Leon Natker. Two performances nightly 6 & 8 pm; August 15-17; 22-24; 29-31. Tickets \$20. Maritime Museum of San Diego, 1306 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, California 92101.

## **THE PRODIGAL SON**

Brian Macdonald, the director of *The Music Man* at Stratford, Ontario, is leaving the Festival to pursue new projects. 'He wants to write a couple of books, one on directing musical theatre, and another of W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. Macdonald plans to add Sullivan's 1869 oratorio, *The Prodigal Son*, to his expanding repertoire when next year he fulfils a request issued by Nicholas Goldschmidt to direct the work for the National Art Centre. **The Globe and Mail**, Stratford, Ontario.

## **RUMOUR HAS IT**

That Marco Polo intend to record *Ivanhoe* and possibly *The Rose of Persia*. (Information David Lardi, quoting John R. Carter of the Ottocento Archive). We will try to confirm this.

## **FUNERAL of Mr F. SULLIVAN**

The remains of the above-named gentleman were interred on Tuesday last at Brompton cemetery, in the grave where lies his father, who died some ten years ago. The burial service was impressively read by two old and attached friends - the Rev. Thomas Helmore, M.A., priest in ordinary to the Queen (who, it may be mentioned, conducted the marriage ceremony of the deceased fifteen years since), and the Hon. and Rev. Francis Byng, M.A., Chaplain to the Queen and to the House of Commons. The funeral procession consisted of a hearse and three mourning coaches, the first containing deceased's widow, mother, and brother Mr Arthur Sullivan, the eminent composer, and his two eldest children. The coffin was liberally covered with the floral tributes of loving friends. Among those present at the grave were Mr W.S. Gilbert, Mr Frederic Clay, Mr Edward Dacey, Mr Harold Power, Mr J.G. Taylor, Mr J. Stoye, Mr F. Wood, and many ladies. It may here be mentioned that Mr Fred. Sullivan was for many years an architect and surveyor, relinquishing that profession for the stage some four or five years ago. He leaves a widow and seven children, the eldest being under fourteen years of age, to lament his loss.

**THE ERA 28 January 1877 p.6.**

## **PATIENCE & PRINCESS IDA**

Conifer have issued a CD transfer of the Sargent recordings of *Patience* (1930) and *Princess Ida* (1932). As with other discs in the series, digital technology enables us to hear these recordings in a sound quality unavailable in the 1930s. *Princess Ida* is particularly welcome, not having been reissued previously in any format. No technology can overcome the original boxy orchestral sound, but the voices come over clearly. Denied the merciful interposition of surface hiss and needle digs, the ruin of Henry Lytton's voice is only too apparent, but his performance as King Gama is nonetheless a valuable historical document. The ridiculous sleeve notes are by a gentleman identified as Rexton S. Bunnet - apparently an alter ego of our own beloved Charles Tripewell.

**CONIFER: 75605 52273 2. (2 Discs n.a.s.)**





	voluptatis,		auscultari,
Sicut ego, sicut tu, et ceteri,	ceteri.	Et agrestis aedis hymnos adamat,	adamat.
Aequam mentem non est cullibet servare,	'bet servare.	Ut in matrem caupo satis insultavit,	insultavit.
Quando transigendum est negotium,	'otium,	In aprico sole quaerit otium,	otium,
Visne hoc et illud bene compensare,	compensare,	Si quis hoc hoc et illud bene compensavit,	compensavit.
Haud grata vita Capitalium.	O -	Haud grata vita Capitalium.	O -

Quando transigendum est negotium,  
'otium,  
Haud grata vita Capitalium,  
'talium.

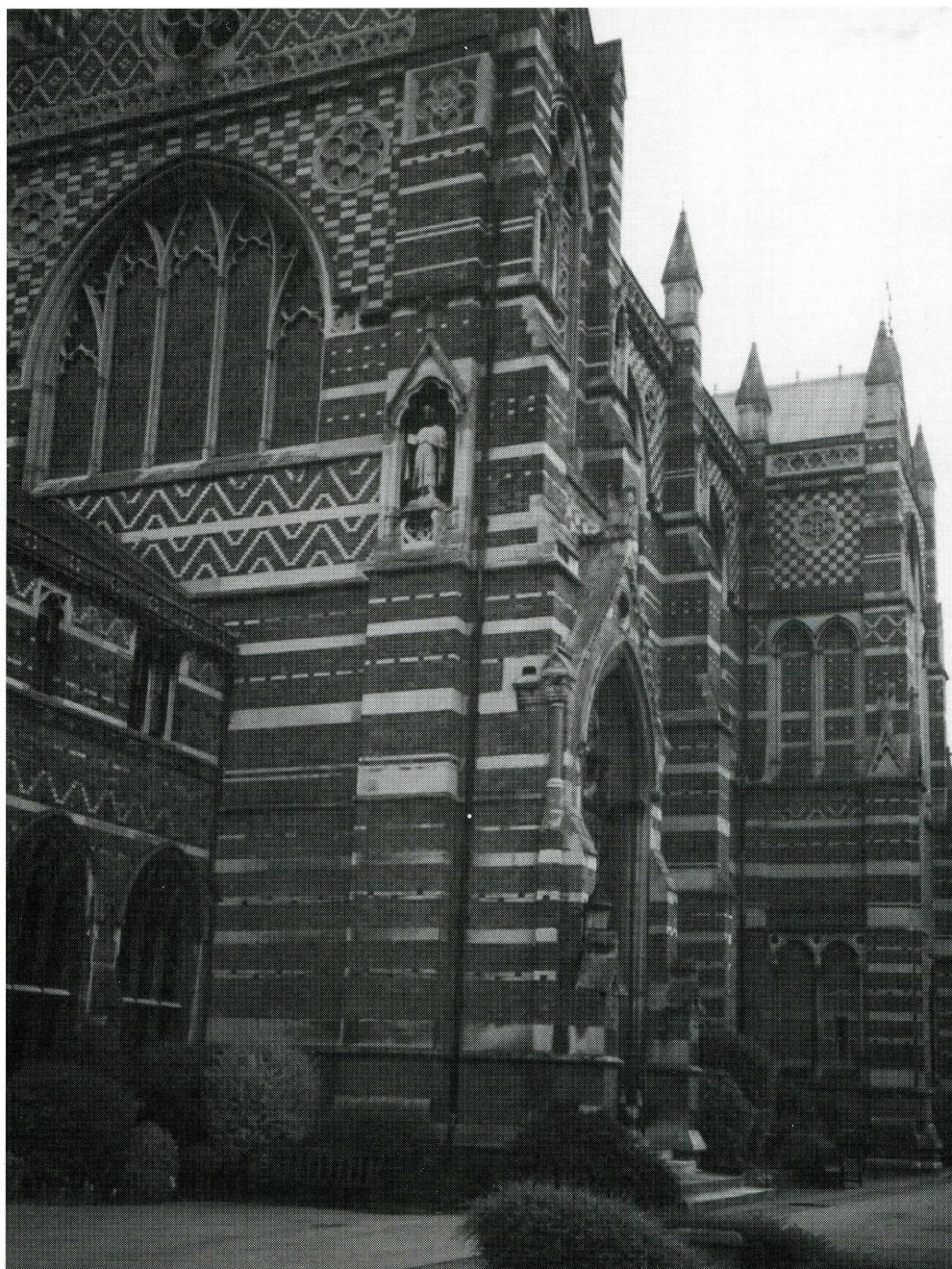
A somewhat inaccurate translation of these words will be found in the second act of *The Pirates of Penzance*. At 9.30 on Saturday morning we heard a fascinating talk from Scott Hayes, who is a descendant of Sullivan's brother Frederic. Using some magnificent archive photographs Mr Hayes traced Sullivan's journey across America when, in 1885, he went to make arrangements for the care of Fred's children whose mother, Charlotte, had recently died. It became clear from Mr Hayes' narrative that Sullivan acted with more than ordinary generosity towards his brother's children, so much so that the name of 'Uncle Arthur' is still revered in the family quite apart from any musical considerations. One was left wondering whether the need to have funds to provide for his brother's children did not play some part in Sullivan's decision to continue with the composition of comic opera during the 1890s.

After Scott Hayes' talk we were free to wander the streets of Oxford in search of dreaming spires and lost causes. Most went via the Bodleian Library, where the two manuscript volumes of *The Light of the World* had been set out on display for our benefit. The manuscript of *Princess Ida* was already on display separately as part of an exhibition of the treasures of the Bodleian. An interesting additional item was an anonymous burlesque of Sullivan's musical style, looking remarkably like *The Lost Chord* (or *Cause*) but written a year earlier, in 1876.

The early part of the afternoon was occupied by a Grand Auction conducted by Rosemary and Roger Wild. Some useful and interesting lots fetched good prices, but the sensation of the afternoon was a copy of *Rutland Barrington By Himself*, which sold for £165 - at least three times more than this book normally fetches, and conceivably more than it is worth. In response to a separate appeal from Brian Jones more than £100 was donated towards the fund for a memorial stone to Barrington.

After a *Sorcerer* tea (Sally Lunn, Strawberry Jam, Rollicking Bun etc) we travelled by bus to the Church of St Barnabas for Solemn Evensong for St Peter's Day according to the Book of Common Prayer. The choir of St Barnabas was augmented by members of the Oxford Operatic Society. The occasion was notable as the first occasion on which the hymn 'The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended' has been sung as a composition by Sullivan. It is of course impossible to demonstrate Sullivan's authorship of the tune conclusively, but the Society has decided to throw scruple to the wind and dare the Clement Scholefield Society to do their worst. The anthem was 'Who is like unto Thee, O Lord', and 'O Gladsome Light' was sung instead of the Nunc Dimittis, both beautiful performances by the augmented choir. 'The March of the Israelites' from Costa's

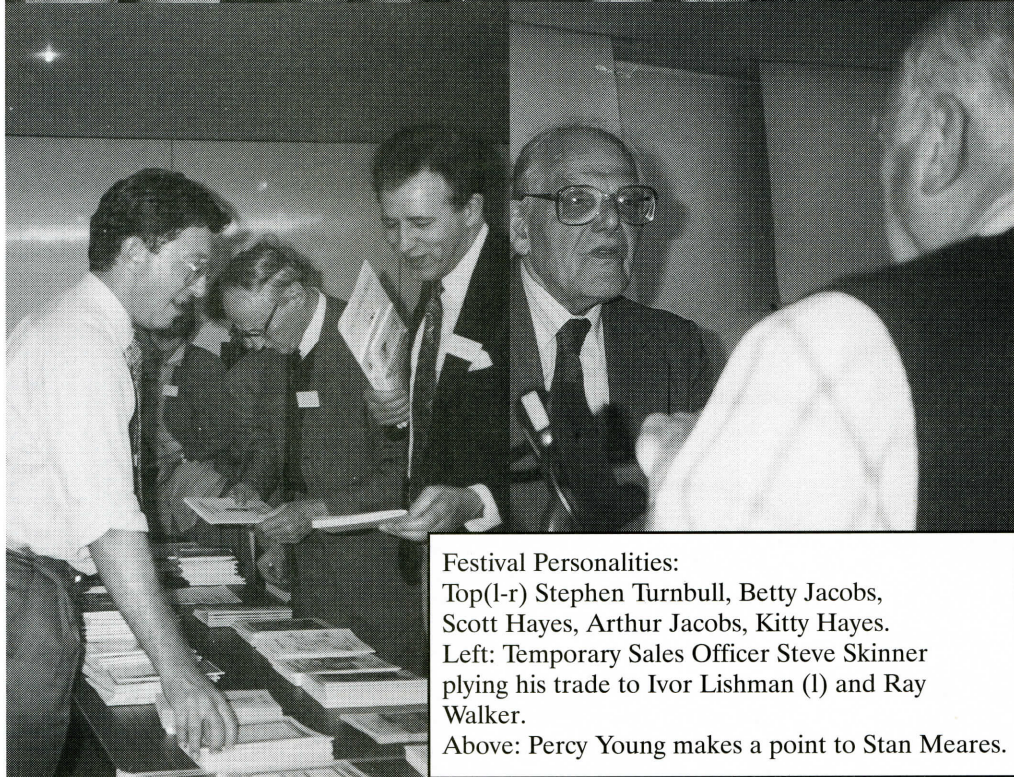




**The Chapel, Keble College, Oxford**

All photographs on these pages were taken by **Martin Sweetzer**





**Festival Personalities:**

Top(l-r) Stephen Turnbull, Betty Jacobs, Scott Hayes, Arthur Jacobs, Kitty Hayes.

Left: Temporary Sales Officer Steve Skinner plying his trade to Ivor Lishman (l) and Ray Walker.

Above: Percy Young makes a point to Stan Meares.



*The Grand Duke.*

This page:-

Top: The cast takes a bow.

Below: Pauline Birchell (l)  
and Gillian Knight

Below right: Catherine Mikić  
signs a programme

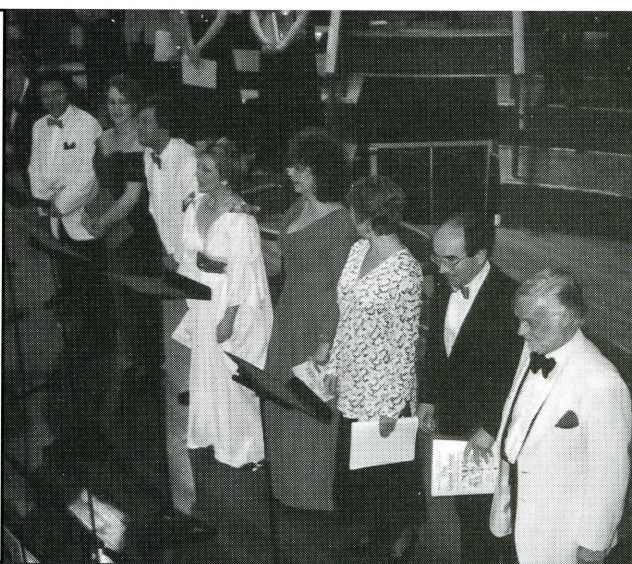
Overleaf:-

Top left: David Steadman  
chats to Michael Yates.

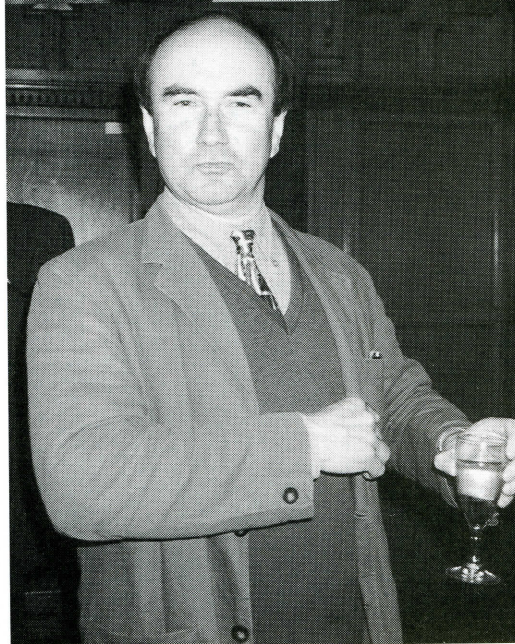
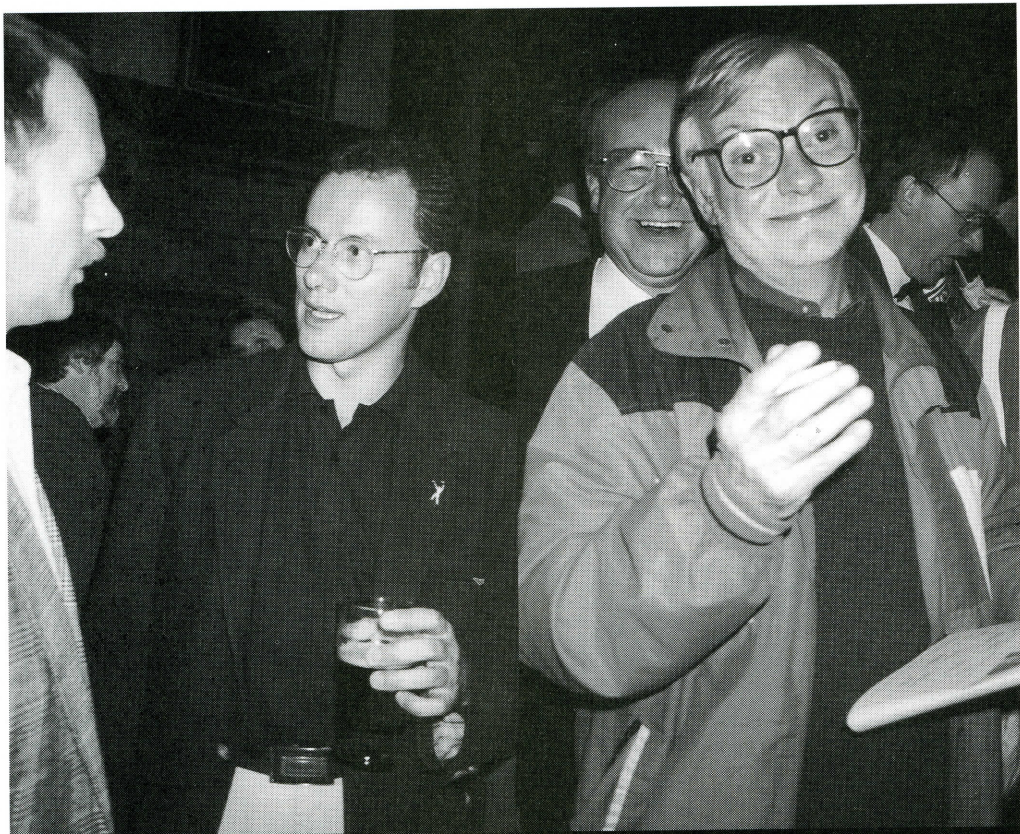
Top right: John Ayldon signs  
a programme.

Below left: Richard Suart  
strikes a pose.

Below Right: Kate Flowers









*Eli*, played as a concluding voluntary, has not remained in your reviewer's memory.

The buses then transported us to the Oxford Town Hall for a concert performance of *The Grand Duke*, conducted by David Steadman. There was to have been a performance of the final scene of *Victoria & Merrie England*, but this unfortunately had to be cancelled because of lack of time for rehearsal. The extra time devoted to *The Grand Duke* proved to be more than justified as the performance unfolded. A judiciously pruned narrative, expertly delivered by John Ayldon, combined with an application of several thousand volts of musical electricity by the performers, had the effect of bringing this difficult work to life. John Ayldon earned, and obtained, an encore for the Roulette Song, but Gillian Knight might equally well have had one for the Baroness's Drinking Song, or Kate Flowers for 'Broken every promise plighted'. Leon Berger bore the brunt of the evening admirably as Ludwig, but the relative silence of Richard Stuart as Rudolph served as a reminder of how little this character has to do. A further highlight of the evening was a magnificent performance of the Galop by the National Concert Orchestra. The Oxford Operatic Society sang like professionals throughout. The principals attended the after-concert reception, which proved to be a pleasant occasion for all concerned.

We began Sunday morning with a talk by Roger Wild, who played recordings made by the original performers of *The Grand Duke*, including Ilka Palmay and Rutland Barrington. He commenced with a cylinder of selections from *The Rose of Persia*, made while the opera was still playing at the Savoy, and included also a remarkably well sung German version of *The Mikado* (pre-war), potted with dialogue on two discs.

Next came our guest Yana Polyanovskaya, who spoke on 'English Operetta on the Russian Stage'. The talk was a fascinating insight into the climate in which operetta came to Russia, only to be more or less forced out of existence by the Communist régime, which regarded it as ideologically alien. *The Mikado* was first heard in 1887 as an amateur performance at the home of Konstantin Stanislavsky, the future founder of the Moscow Art Theatre. Stanislavsky directed the performance with his brother Vladimir, and himself played the part of Nanki-Poo. Professional performances followed, but *The Mikado*, known in Russian as *The Mikado's Son*, was not as popular as *The Geisha*, which had a longer life, being staged as late as 1940. One effect of Communist rule was to keep the musical out of Russia altogether. For Russians therefore operetta is the most recent form of the light musical theatre. Yana is hoping to produce *Trial by Jury* at the British Embassy in St Petersburg later this year.

Our Vice-President Percy Young then spoke on 'The Musical Education of a Chapel Royal Choirboy'. He pointed out that choirboys have not always been the privileged élite they are today. In earlier centuries the probable fate of a boy whose voice broke was to become a servant of a Cathedral. Sullivan lived in a period when education in general was beginning to be taken more seriously, and was fortunate in having an exceptionally gifted master in Thomas Helmore, whose 1865 *Hymn In Time of Cattle Plague* has not yet outlived its usefulness. Even so Sullivan's general education may not have been given all the attention it would receive today, and he was probably left to fend for himself in some respects. Sullivan's teachers obviously detected his talent, but early compositions such as *O Israel* are not especially remarkable.

After lunch we repaired the chapel of Keble College for the final event of the Festival - a performance of *The Light of the World* by the Oxford Pro Musica



Singers. Keble Chapel contains Holman Hunt's original painting of *The Light of the World*, and is the most appropriate place possible for Sullivan's work. Opening with the *Imperial Institute Ode*, the Pro Musica singers immediately revealed themselves to be a superbly disciplined and experienced group, and the makers of a brilliant choral sound. We have never previously heard a performance of *The Light of the World* remotely as good as this, and therefore we have never really heard *The Light of the World*. The highlight of the first part (scenes I and IV) was a moving performance of 'In Rama'. Joanna Forbes, the soprano soloist, stood behind the choir on the altar steps projecting her voice over them to intensely dramatic effect. After the interval she was almost equally effective in the second part (scenes V and VI) when she sang 'Lord, why hidest thou thy face?' However all the soloists were first rate, and the performance as a whole came as something of a revelation. The concert continued with the first modern performance of Sullivan's *Exhibition Ode*, with Annie Thomas standing in for Madame Albani as soprano soloist. At the words 'Britons, hold your own' everyone produced and waved a little Union Jack - a charming gesture of defiance towards the grey-suited men of Brussels.

The Festival reached its traditional end with a beautiful performance of *The Long Day Closes*, sung in memory of Norman Bates, a founder member of the Society, who died in November 1995. We went away convinced, as we always are, that this was the best Festival of all. And perhaps it was. **D.E.**

\*

### **SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE ADVENTURE AT SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN'S**

Georgian Theatre, Richmond; 4 October 1996 (Touring UK until December)

This play ought to be entitled "The Mystery of the Absent Composer". Although he was addressed, observed and subjected to Holmesian analysis, and although the action mainly took place in one of his summer houses at Weybridge, Sullivan did not appear. Instead, Holmes and Watson presented what amounted to dramatised readings of two of the most famous short stories, *A Scandal in Bohemia* and *Charles Augustus Milverton*. Their pretext for doing so was that they had been invited by Mrs Jones of Weybridge to take part in a charity musical soirée at Sullivan's house. Mrs Jones ultimately turned out to be Irene Adler, heroine of *A Scandal in Bohemia*, ["To Sherlock Holmes she was always *the woman*"] who, it seems, did not die tragically after all, and, to secure herself against a possible threat of blackmail, had to steal from 221B Baker Street a photograph of herself.

This was all presented engagingly, and with not a little humour, by a cast of four headed by Miles Richardson, in appearance and voice uncannily like his father Ian (another of the hundreds of actors to have essayed this rôle). Andrew Bridgmont supported solidly as a far from foolish Watson; Fiona Evans and Dominic Gray played everyone else. A perfectly enjoyable evening's entertainment, this play was a disappointment only insofar as there was virtually no Sullivan content - despite suggestions in the programme notes that items of his music would be performed, all we got was a snippet of the *Pirates* overture as a scene link, and part of *Di Ballo* played badly on the piano as interval background. The biggest crime of the evening was undoubtedly the fraudulent misappropriation of the name of a famous composer for the purpose of selling tickets. But then, we have known for years that the presence of Sullivan's name on a handbill brings the punters in. **S.H.T.**

## A GLIMPSE OF SULLIVAN

Before I conclude the subject of theatricals, I must notice some private theatricals which were given by Sir Henry Cunningham in his house in Craven Hill.

Sir Henry was, amongst other things, a bit of a journalist, and was connected with the best weekly papers. Consequently we had a very intellectual and critical audience, including the famous Master of Balliol, Dr Jowett, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, and the wonderful singer, Jenny Lind. The play was *John Dobbs*, and I was told off to play the principal part. I can remember Charlie Bowen (afterwards Lord Bowen) made up as an admirable footman. John Dobbs was supposed to be a sort of Admirable Crichton - amongst other things a great musician - and a solo at the piano had to be played in the middle of the piece. I never could play a note of music in my life, but the great Arthur Sullivan was there, and I said to him, "Arthur, you must manage this for me." So we draped the piano and arranged a screen round it. I sat down at the piano, and made Sullivan sit on the floor between my knees; I made some imaginary flourishes whilst Sullivan played the whole piece and finished amidst thunderous applause. Now, a most ludicrous thing happened as a sequel to this. I went down to a small garden-party at Wimbledon, given by my old friends Tom Phinn and W. Vernon Harcourt. I was walking in the garden when I saw a beautiful lady, who I afterwards learned was Miss Gray, walking with Sir John Millais. When she saw me she turned round to Millais and said, "There is the gentleman who plays so beautifully."

**Edward Chandos Leigh: Bar, Bat and Bit; London, John Murray, 1913. pp. 89-90.**

This incident must date in or before 1866 because Sir Henry Cunningham (1832-1920) went to India in that year, remaining till 1888. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen was the uncle of Virginia Woolf; he appeared for *The Pall Mall Gazette* in 1873 when Gilbert prosecuted the paper for accusing *The Wicked World* of indecency. Ed.

## OFFENBACH SOCIETY

Colin Hayward writes: I have been very kindly invited to use the *S.A.S.S. Magazine* to draw your attention to the fact that an attempt is being made to form an Offenbach Society. The aim is to bring together both enthusiasts and those who wish to become more familiar with the largely unknown music of this neglected master. Initially, I hope to be able to start a study group and then, as members increase, to form a full Society. I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who is interested. Please contact: Colin Hayward, Brummell Stables, Hanley Swan, Worcester, WR8 ODN. Or telephone 01684 310938; 01432 274821; Fax 01432 340100; email [offenbach@bbcradio.demon.co.uk](mailto:offenbach@bbcradio.demon.co.uk)

## WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT

*William Sterndale Bennett - A Descriptive Thematic Catalogue* by Rosemary Williamson is published by Oxford University Press at £90.00. Each entry in the catalogue begins with a summary of the work's history, followed by detailed descriptions of all the authentic ms and printed sources with their locations.

## DAVID JACOBS

Has kindly donated £70 to the Society funds, being the proceeds from the sale of the collection of the late Alan Benham.





# IOLANTHE IN AMERICA:

COLLIER'S Grand Production at the  
Boston Bijou Theatre, 1882-83

By

Harold Kanthor M.D.

Although the earliest American production of *Iolanthe* opened at the Standard Theatre in New York (on November 25, 1882, the same date as the London première), by no means does interest in American *Iolanthes* end there. For, at the same time that D'Oyly Carte's production was sustaining its 80 or so New York performances, American cities were visited by numerous touring companies bringing *Iolanthe* to the heartland. And, in Boston, a most successful resident production by Collier's Standard Opera Company almost doubled the New York run and provided twentieth century collectors with a variety of attractive memorabilia.

The success of previous Gilbert and Sullivan operas had sustained significant interest in *Iolanthe*. Major touring opera companies, such as Ford's, Barton's, E.E.Rice's and Emma Abbott's, were quick to criss-cross the eastern and mid-western states, even venturing as far south as Kentucky to satisfy this interest. Companies would typically perform in a city for perhaps a day, rarely for more than a few, before packing up for the next engagement. In addition to *Iolanthe*, the touring companies would include a repertoire of other operas such as *The Merry War*, *Manteaux Noirs*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. By the end of the season, many American cities had the opportunity to compare a variety of *Iolanthe* productions (often within a few days of each other). So, in the same week in January 1883 that two members of the New York Standard Theatre chorus were suing D'Oyly Carte for two weeks of their wages, a *Battle of the Iolanthes* was waged in Indianapolis, when both Barton's and Ford's touring companies were scheduled at the same time (Ford lost). In the same week, another mishap occurred in an *Iolanthe* touring Cincinnati, Ohio. Two members of the brass band assembled on rustic bridge, that was part of the first act scenery, suddenly disappeared, having taken one step too many backward (1).

But perhaps no regional *Iolanthe* production sparked as much interest as that of Collier's Standard Opera Company, which was the opening attraction of the Boston Bijou Theatre. The events leading up to the opening were as celebrated as the production itself. The Gaiety Theatre, which had been the site of so many successful *Pinafore* productions just a few seasons back, had been completely gutted and renovated, tastefully and luxuriously decorated, fitted







with Edison's Incandescent Lights, and transformed into the Bijou Theatre, the purported American "Home of Parlor Opera". The Bijou management wisely procured the organization of James W. Collier and Edward E. Rice, as proprietor and manager respectively of a quality opera company, to open the theatre with *Iolanthe*. So great was the demand for tickets for the opening performance that seats were sold by public auction at the Stock Exchange Room of the Parker House. Fifty-nine seats were reserved for the press in the balcony, and the proscenium boxes were reserved for the Governor and Mayor, but all the remaining seats were auctioned. While the advertised prices ranged from \$1.50 to 50 cents, the early bids went as high as \$10 each. (After the sale had proceeded for almost an hour, a misunderstanding arose as to whether the bids represented a premium over the ticket price or the price of a ticket itself, and the auctioneer was forced to correct an earlier decision). Successful bidders were identified in the newspapers (2).

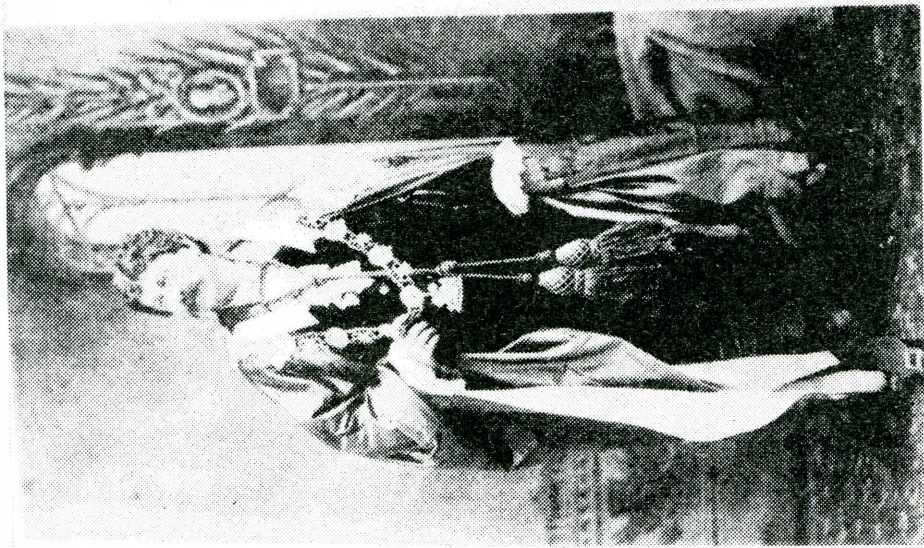
Collier's *Iolanthe* opened 11 December 1882, authorized by special arrangements with Richard D'Oyly Carte 'through his representative Helen Lenoir'. But the opera itself took second place to the new theatre in contemporary reviews. The Bijou, indeed, must have been a jewel: a 950 seat domed auditorium, decorated with frescos, and lit with several pendant electric lanterns, which imparted a warm copper and bronze tinted glow. The total picture was that of 'luxurious splendour'. The first night audience was described as 'brilliant', if not brilliantly attired. A publication of the Bijou Theatre includes the following full page admonition from an exclusive tailor:

To the Gentlemen patrons of the Bijou: From this date all gentlemen are politely requested to appear in full evening dress at all entertainments occurring in the evening. The full dress being especially requested for the Opera. Your dress-coat should be faced with ribbed silk, either to the button holes, or the extreme edge. Your dress waist-coat may be either a black embroidered one, or a white corded pique . . . (3)

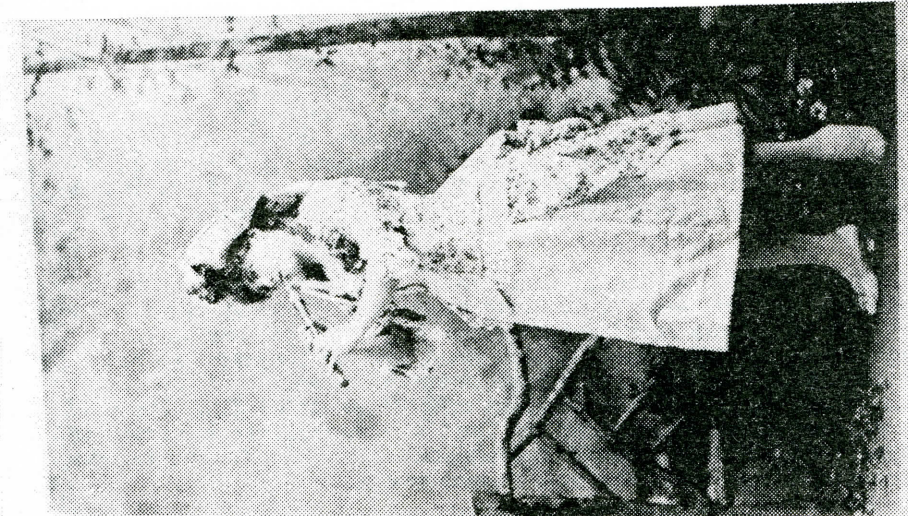
The performance was preceded by the national anthem and a celebratory address written for the inauguration of the theatre. The curtain rose on a rather elaborate Arcadian setting (a photograph by Mr N.L. Stebbins shows a scene crowded with trees and foliage, a large two-story rustic building upstage and a bridge traversing the entire stage, upon which are half a dozen members of Reeves' Military Band of Providence, Rhode Island). Press reports were enthusiastic about this setting and praised the costumes as 'the handsomest we have seen outside the Italian opera or spectacular ballet.' The cast included the Strephon of Mr Brocolini, the Brooklynite with an Italianized name (whom D'Oyly Carte had engaged for his New York *Pianfore* and *Pirates*) and H.E. Dixey, a young Lord Chancellor, early in his celebrated American career. The *Evening Transcript* made short work of the individual performances, and indicated that the cast was not at its best on the opening night. Most of its criticism was surprisingly reserved for the composer:

In *Iolanthe* Mr Sullivan has gone even farther than in *Patience* in italicising his prime fault as a composer of comic opera. *He is not sprightly enough*. That he has taken especial pains with this score is evident; there is much beauty in the music (albeit we think that some critics have been inclined to overrate it), and there is much very admirable workmanship in the matter of fine orchestral details. The score could never be taken for anything but the work of a practised and excellent musician. But, with all this, the music lacks



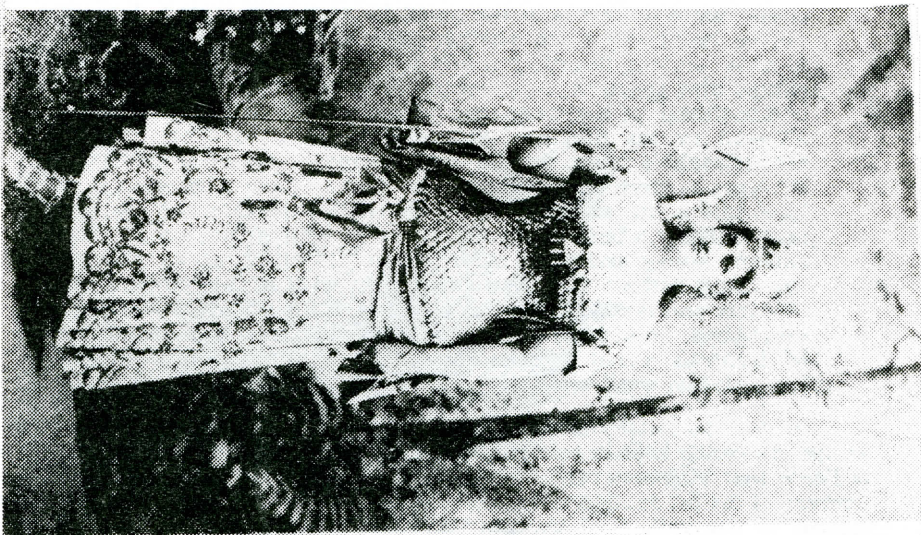


Mr. W H PESSENDEN  
AS THE EARL OF TOLLOLLER

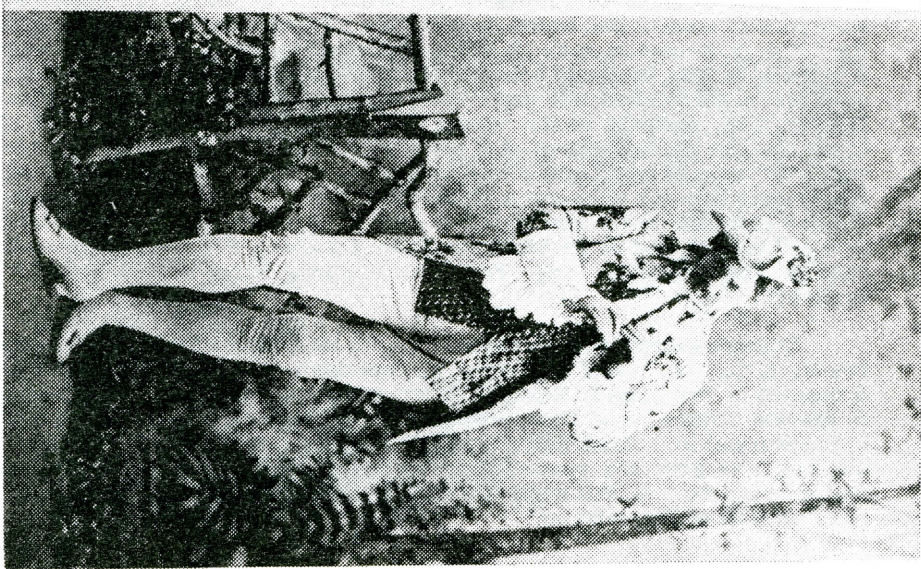


MISS JANET EDMONDSON  
AS PHYLLIS





MISS MARY A. SANGER



SIG. BROCOLINI

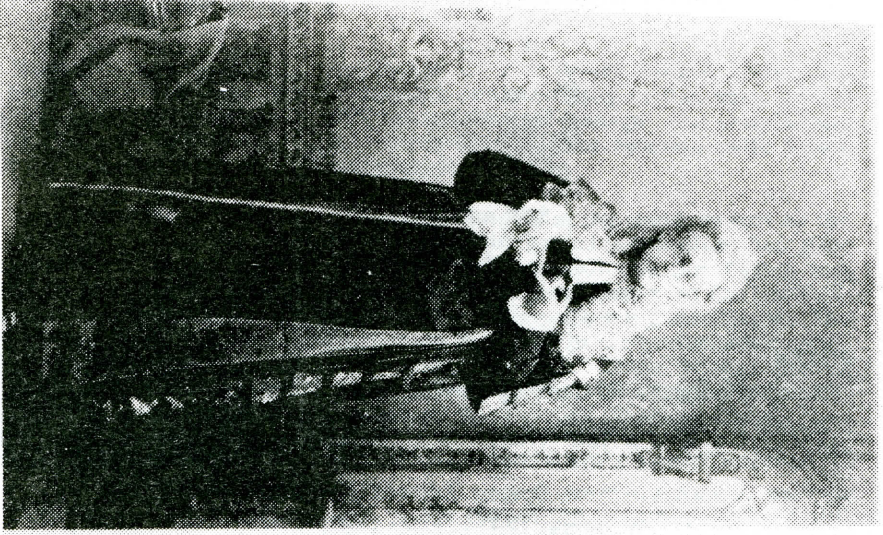


for the most part that snap and sparkle which alone can appeal to our sense of enjoyment when we are in the magic attitude into which Mr Gilbert's droll humour inevitably throws us. The fine points in Mr Sullivan's work are of the sort that can be appreciated only by listening to the music seriously, and in face of this sort of comic opera no one is in the mood for serious listening. And after all, we doubt very much whether the music has real calibre enough to repay serious listening in any circumstances. To compare small things with great, Mr Sullivan in his *Iolanthe* shows just that want of knowledge of the exigencies of comic opera that Mendelssohn showed in his *Son and Stranger*. With all his high beauty, Mendelssohn's music for the latter operetta makes one gape, when the work is given on the stage. Just so the music of *Iolanthe*: it may have this merit, and and amy have that, but it has the one grave fault of being a bore to anyone whose mood is attuned to the mad-cap wit, humor and satire of Mr Gilbert. Offenbach would have done the thing better - but then Offenbach, with all his vulgarity, his triviality and tinsel glitter, was a genius. If his brilliancy was that of pinchback, he at least knew how to sparkle. Now, the trouble with Mr Sullivan is that he does not sparkle at all . . . . at least not in this, his last work. (4)

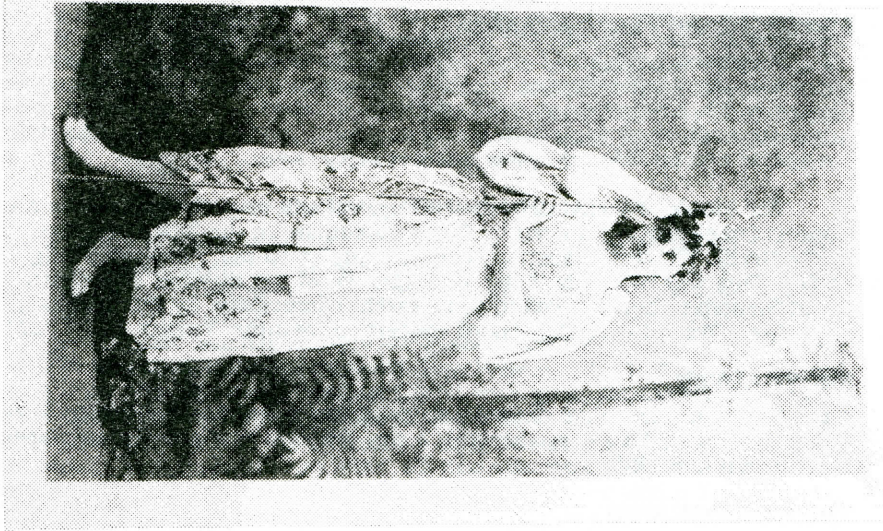
Sullivan's music must have been more enthusiastically received by the audiences which kept the production going for 151 performances. Press reports indicate that business receipts remained high even at the end of the run. The success of the production is underscored by the variety of souvenirs which were issued to the delight of the patrons of the Bijou, and to the modern day collector. For in addition to the regular four page program with its cover illustrating scenes from the opera, there were also distributed a small broadside announcing the gala opening week; a souvenir program for the opening night (a grey printed card cover with inner pink silk program, attached with a blue cord); a souvenir program for the 50th performance, January 22, 1883, which incorporates a small illustrated booklet 'Gems From *Iolanthe*'; and a souvenir of the 150th performance, April 18, 1883, (described by the newspapers as 'superb'. it actually is, with front and back covers showing color lithographed scenes from each act, a gilt-lettered title page, illustrated portraits of Sullivan, Gilbert and D'Oyly Carte, portraits of the managerial staff of both the theatre and opera company, and photographs of each principal cast member in costume, the entire tied with blue ribbon). And for the die-hard collector of memorabilia of this production, one can also find a stock poster with the same illustration as the regular program cover, and librettos printed variously for Collier's Standard Opera Company and Rice's Standard Opera Company. Each contains the Bijou cast list and prints the songs 'Fold Your Flapping Wings' and 'DeBelville Was Regarded'.

Collier's *Iolanthe* was succeeded on April 19, 1883 by the first production of *Pounce & Co., or Capital vs. Labor*, an American satiric operetta written and composed by Benjamin E. Woolf. Collier's cast was for the most part the same as in *Iolanthe*. Critics found the music strongly suggestive of Sullivan. 'This is one of the musical influences that is part of the very air we breathe nowadays.' The operetta was generally praised, and indeed, lasted 52 performnaces beforee disappearing for ever. But while Woolf might have imitated a master's music, his lyrics were laughably original:





MR. HENRY E DIXEY



MISS CLARA POOLE  
AS IOLANTHE



Life is ever as we make it;  
Sad or happy, as we take it.  
Then enjoy it,  
And employ it,  
In laughing and singing,  
And merrily flinging  
All envy, for aye,  
Far away.

We cannot change the decree of fate  
By even the hardest endeavour,  
So on its pleasures we all must wait,  
For aid us, complaining can never.  
Crows, you're aware, gorgeous peacocks are not,  
Still may a crow be content with his lot.  
And have his measure  
Of pleasure  
Yes! that is so,  
You well know. (5)

## NOTES

- 1) *New York Clipper*, 27 January 1883.
- 2) *Boston Evening Transcript*, 4 December 1882, p.8.
- 3) *Historical Review of the Boston Bijou Theatre . . . With Photographs Illustrative of the Various Scenes in them*. Boston: Edward O. Skelton, 1884.
- 4) *Boston Evening Transcript*, 12 December 1882, p.1.
- 5) *Boston Evening Transcript*, 16 April 1883, p.1.

\*

## FORTHCOMING PERFORMANCES

Numbers 1,2,8,10,11 and 12 of *L'Ile Enchantée* will be performed at a concert at the Winter Garden, Hexham, Northumberland (part of the Hydro) on Saturday 23 November at 7.30. Tickets available at the door. Follow the Allendale road when you reach Hexham. Ample parking on site. The concert is conducted and introduced by our member Percy Lovell.

The Finale of *Victoria and Merrie England* will be performed by the National Concert Orchestra, conducted by David Steadman, in the New Year's Eve concert in the Grand Theatre, Blackpool, commencing at 10 pm. For tickets ring 01253-28372. This will be the first live performance of the number this century, and David Steadman hopes it will to some extent compensate for the disappointment of having to omit it from the Oxford concert on 29 June. Tickets £9.50 - £21.50.

## FRONT COVER

Anne Stanyon's evocative drawing of Philip and Laine in *The Beauty Stone* was done for Martin Yates' production. I am grateful to Anne for permission to reproduce it here. **Ed.**

## THE PHOTOGRAPHS

In the centre pages were kindly supplied by Martin Sweetzer.

## FESTIVAL TE DEUM

### St Peter's Church, Oundle

Sullivan's *Festival Te Deum* was performed in St Peter's church, Oundle, on 11th May 1996. The performance was part of an evening of Victorian Choral Music, in which the other main item was Stanford's *Revenge*. The Oundle and District Choral Society were conducted by Christopher Pearson, with Helen Wright (Soprano) and Sheila Ackroyd (Piano and Organ).

Normally when a work by Sullivan is performed at the same concert as the work of another composer one feels that all the effort of preparation has gone into the work of - the other composer. On this occasion the impression was reversed as the concert opened with an uncertain performance of *The Revenge*, not altogether helped by the use of the piano as accompanying instrument. The omens for the *Festival Te Deum* did not seem good, but in the performance when it came was altogether businesslike and effective. Helen Wright proved something more than a capable soprano soloist, and the use of organ added the weight of sound that had been missing in *The Revenge*. Perhaps Christopher Pearson took the roof-raising finale a trifle slowly, but this is a legitimate interpretation.

Sullivan was not unrepresented in the rest of the programme. We heard *The Long Day Closes*, nicely sung, and 'Brightly dawns our wedding day', performed by Olive Leonard, Kate Howell, John Goode and Bob Leonard. Dibdin's 'Tom Bowling' was promoted to honorary Victorian status by Nick Crook, and David Dew rather unwisely sang 'The Old Superb' from Stanford's *Songs of the Sea*. This song has a landlubber's lyric, as any reader of *Hornblower* can testify. No ship of the line would ever cease to keep the log, which had to be returned to the Admiralty at the end of the voyage; any ship which actually did so would be unable to navigate, quite apart from the ensuing court martial. Nor do sailing ships cease to move forward at night (they are propelled by the wind). To this absurdity was added another in the shape of Balfe's 'Excelsior', robustly performed by John Goode and Christopher Pearson. However the chorus redeemed all with Elgar's 'As torrents in summer' and 'My love dwelt in a northern land'. Altogether a worthwhile evening. **D.E.**

### AS A MATTER OF PATTERN

*As A Matter of Pattern* is Richard Suart's one-man show based on the G&S patter songs. Reminiscent of Ian Wallace's show of a generation ago, it is a sequence of songs linked by a selection of brilliantly told - almost acted - anecdotes of his experiences in the so-called patter parts. The audience gets a chance to join in some familiar refrains (song-sheet provided), and the enthusiast is catered for by the inclusion of material from *Princess Ida* (2), *The Sorcerer* and *The Grand Duke*. He also sang *The Lost Chord* with great sensitivity. As well as Sullivan we had arias by Donizetti and Rossini, a new song by Robin Hemingway about the Channel Tunnel, and Flanders and Swann's sparkling parody on Mozart's fourth horn concerto - *Ill Wind*. All this was faultlessly accompanied at the piano by Richard's wife Susan Cook. Excellent singing and a lot of laughs made this one of the best evenings out I have had for years. If the show comes to a theatre within travelling distance of you, don't miss it. **S.H.T.**



## **DURWARD LELY**

David Thomas writes: I believe that a photograph was taken of Durward Lely in his old age, being interviewed - I think by the BBC. This photograph was reproduced in one of the many books on G&S, and I recall having once seen it. However, thorough research has proved useless in trying to find this photograph again. Can any reader please help me? Write to me at P.O. Box 1109, CARLTON, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, 3053.

## **COLDITZ REVISITED**

The TV programme *The Governor* (LWt 27 April 1996) featured a prison break-out using a performance of *The Mikado* as cover. The programme showed rehearsals as well as bits of the (very) amateur performance by prisoners and staff.

## **RADIOS 2 & 3**

The Radio 2 Arts Programme on Sunday 12 May 1996 (10pm) devoted two hours to the Gilbert & Sullivan partnership. Introduced by Sheridan Morley, the first part of the programme included an interview with Jane Stedman and a complete performance of the *Thespi*s ballet (RTE/Penny). After a complete performance of *Trial by Jury* in the new Mackerras/WNO recording the programme concluded with an interview with Benny Green, who talked trash, and an archive recording of the voice of Jeffery Snelson ('Master Snelson', who played Pedrillo the Goatherd in *The Chieftain*). Wonderful to relate, the Radio 3 'On Air' programme played the *Imperial March* (Hughes) on 19 May, having played *The Merchant of Venice* (Dunn) earlier in the year.

## **THE GRAND DUKE**

*The Grand Duke* will be performed by the Petersfield Operatic Society, Petersfield, Hampshire, in the Festival Hall, Petersfield, from 26-30 November (six performances). For information tel 01730 893378. Conductor Michael Hurd.

## **ELEGANT EXTRACTS**

Under the title *The Most Unforgettable Gilbert and Sullivan Classics Ever* H.M.V. have descended to yet another rehash of the Sargent recordings. The works represented are *Pinafore*, *Pirates*, *Iolanthe*, *Mikado*, *Patience*, *Gondoliers*. CDT 5 688152.

## **NANKI PURR**

The first Siamese cats who came to America in the early 1900s cost at least \$1000, plus transportation charges and other fees. Champion Oriental Nanki Pooh of Newton was well worth the investment as he sired more than 1300 kittens in his 17 years. (**Cats Calendar, 9 July 1996**)

## **ENGAGED**

A professional revival of Gilbert's *Engaged* took place at the Park Avenue Christian Church, 85 Street, New York in April/May 1996. The front of the programme is reproduced on our inside back cover. (Information Professor G.W.Hilton).

## **BOER WAR TE DEUM**

The *Boer War Te Deum* will be performed in Stockton Parish Church, Stockton-on-Tees on Sunday 22 December at 2.45. There will be a choir of 60 voices and David Mackie's arrangement for organ, brass and percussion (made for the Society in 1992) will be used.



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