

"I THOUGHT I HEARD A NOISE!"

"I THINK IT IS A SNEET FACE"
"IT IS! IT IS!"

"OUR
FEELINGS WE
WITH DIFFICULTY
SMOTHER!"

"BOUQUETS
FOR THE SERGEANT"

"HA HA! HE THOUGHT HE HEARD A NOISE!"

The Pirates of Penzance

"HA HA! HO HO!
THAT MOST
INGENIOUS
PARADOX!"

"THE
VERY MODEL
OF A
MODERN
MAJOR GENERAL"

"HERE'S YOUR CRIBBARI!"

"OUR OBVIOUS
COURSE
IS NOW TO HIDE!"

"NOW WHAT IS
THIS, AND WHAT
IS THAT!"

"FIVE YEARS AND A QUARTER
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KEEP ME
TO THAT!"

"WE HAVE
THAT POINT
WE LOOK
OVER IT!"

ON THE STAGE AND OFF

M. G. SANDS
DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

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The Winchester Amateur Operatic Society gave three highly successful performances of 'The Pirates of Penzance' this week.

PIRATES OF PENZANCE AT WINCHESTER. AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY'S FIRST VENTURE. ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

One of the most inspiring sights in the world is the launching of a ship. It is an event which is always fraught with great anxiety. In all its pride and beauty, with flags and pennons gaily fluttering, the good ship stands in dock, a monument of labour, of great forethought, of patient skill, of mathematical science, ready to take the water. Will she prove a success? Will she ride the water safely and do all that is expected of her? Then comes the supreme moment, the ribands are cut, and away she slides on the bosom of the water, and with Longfellow those who have been concerned with her fate may well exclaim—

Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,—
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee!

The analogy between this picture and the Winchester Amateur Operatic Society is obvious. Only recently formed, months of care, of thought, of skill, of zeal, of energy, and not a little of "matters mathematical," had been lavished on the preparation for the launching of the society's first venture, "The Pirates of Penzance," and everything depended upon the stability of the structure which had been erected. The hearts, the hopes, the fears, the prayers and the tears of every member of the society were with the launching of their ship, and when it "took the water" at the Guildhall on Tuesday evening, not a single doubt remained of its seaworthiness and its ability to ride the waters of public opinion, which grew in volume as it sailed on during the two following nights. Let us take a glance back over the past. The love for the Gilbert and Sullivan operas was awakened a good many years ago by Mrs. Scott, who produced with the greatest success two or three of them, and we believe it was her dream to found a society, but circumstances intervened and the dream never came true. Then Dr. and Mrs. Scott left Winchester for the Bournemouth district, but when she heard of the formation of the society she wrote to one of the principals wishing it success, and made the remark, "It seems like my child grown up." Mrs. Scott was present on Wednesday evening to witness her grown-up child, and we believe she had every reason to be satisfied with the result. Nothing more was done towards forming a society until some three years ago, when the question was discussed by a few enthusiasts, and a Gilbert and Sullivan evening planned, consisting of an explanation of the collaborators' methods, of the stories of their operas, their points of distinction, and other interesting details, to be illustrated with excerpts from the operas in costume. The writer was involved in this scheme, which, although it simmered for more than twelve months, never came to anything, although it was hoped that a proposal to found a Gilbert and Sullivan Society for the study and production of their operas would result. While it was simmering the promoters heard that certain Lay Vicars of Winchester Cathedral were moving to form an Operatic Society, and as this was the object the other party had in view, they dropped their project and decided to back up the efforts of the Lay Vicars, who had secured a number of promises of support in influential quarters. The principal movers were Mr. J. E. Whitwam, Mr. H. Elsmore, and Mr. F. Major, the last-named having played leading parts in amateur operatic performances in the north of England. They got into touch with Mr. Noel Hanbury, who was enthusiastic, and who had had something to do with a similar society at Torquay, and the project at once materialised. It was, perhaps, only natural that a society of the same sort in the sister Cathedral city of Salisbury, which had met with phenomenal success, should be taken as a model. That freemasonry which exists among Cathedral singers all over the country enabled the Winchester men to enlist the assistance of the originator and conductor of the Salisbury Society, Mr. George Sands, himself a Cathedral singer, with the result that he attended a meeting at the Masonic Hall in Parchment-street, which was presided over by Mr. Hanbury, the outcome of which was the formation of the Winchester Amateur Operatic Society. The keel of the ship was laid in the spring of 1912; it was kept

untouched until last autumn, and then vigorous work was put into it, and gradually the figurative vessel was brought to completion. Happily the society secured the consent of the High Steward of Winchester (the Earl of Northbrook) to act as president, and his lordship manifested great interest in the society's welfare, and they were also fortunate in obtaining the patronage of a large number of influential county magnates and others, all of whose names were given in the souvenir programme of this week's performances.

Mr. Sands was appointed conductor and producer, Mr. J. E. Whitwam undertook the duties of hon. secretary, Mr. E. W. Toby consented to act as treasurer, and the following were elected on the committee:—Messrs. Noel Hanbury (chairman), Mr. B. D. Cancellor, H. Elsmore, W. J. Lansdell, Harold Warren, J. W. Elkins, E. J. Holway, H. F. Savage, C. S. Wooldridge, and Major Hardress Stevenson. Throughout Mr. Sands has been a most patient and faithful guide, counsellor, and friend. It was decided to select "The Pirates of Penzance; or the Slave of Duty," with which to celebrate the launching of the ship, and although time was short and the difficulties ahead were great, it was the magic word "enthusiasm" which carried the society through. Everyone who was selected as acting and singing members had to pass the voice test, and merit and ability were the determining factors in the decision as to the principals. Those who witnessed the performances must have readily noted that fact. To use a theatrical term, there were no "duds," such as one often sees in amateur performances, and the absence of any favouritism was all in favour of the society and its success. There was no anxiety as to the casting of the male characters; certain members seemed built, vocally and physically, for the parts as much as were Grossmith, Rutland Barrington, Richard Temple, and George Power, but a difficulty was apprehended in the ladies' department, and especially for the character of Mabel. All doubts were set at rest when Miss Winifred Fairweather was tried, and by general acclamation she was "elected" Mabel. The same course was pursued with the other ladies, and it is a matter of congratulation that not only were all the principals "home products," but original members of the society, who had joined quite content to take a place in the necessary if humble chorus. It was decided to spare no expense to make the production worthy of the occasion and of the piece, and to count the favour of the public. Here "matters mathematical" came into operation. It was calculated that if the Guildhall were filled each night, not only could the large expenses of the opera be paid, but that a profit would remain, and there was no question as to the disposal of that profit. The Royal Hampshire County Hospital, always justly first with its claims on the charitable, was chosen as the recipient of the superfluous cash, and it is hoped that a gratifying sum will have been realised. Rehearsals were held at Holy Trinity Hall, and it speaks volumes for the enthusiasm of the members that they stuck at these rehearsals for hours at a stretch three or four times a week. Mr. Sands was assisted by Mr. Noel Hanbury, whose knowledge of stage matters made him invaluable as stage manager, and when Mr. Sands could not come to Winchester Mr. Hanbury took up the reins, and having witnessed several of the rehearsals we can support the tribute paid him in the introduction to the souvenir programme. Mr. E. J. Holway was the assistant stage manager and property master. Miss Causton, too, did valuable work as conductor at rehearsals, and Mr. E. Douglas must be remembered that practically every member of the society had never had any previous experience of operatic work, and that they all had to be taught. The infinitude of patience on the part of both teacher and taught was really wonderful; it all lay behind the perfection which was witnessed on the Guildhall stage at each of the performances. It was the Winchester Pageant over again; Lord Chesterfield's advice to his son had been thoroughly learnt and acted upon, and the level of excellence reached left little to compare, excepting to the credit of the Winchester performers, with the highest excellence of similar societies.

Naturally the society had its friends, and among these several must be mentioned. First and foremost was Mr. A. Clements—the "Clem" of the *Observer* cartoons—who designed the souvenir programme, and who was assisted in its arrangement by Messrs. H. Elsmore and J. E. Whitwam, and H. F. Savage, the last-named contributing the historical foreword, and the other two arranging the other matter. The illustrations were left to Mr. Clements's artistic taste, and with this he has won golden opinions. Messrs. Bushell and

Pritchard, proprietors of Rider's Studio, took the photographs of the principals and the police, which Mr. Clements used with such artistic effect in the arrangement of the programme, and it certainly excels anything of the same kind we have seen elsewhere. Mr. Clements's design for the cover—a Pirate, grasping the pirate flag, gazing out to sea on a full-rigged sailing vessel as a possible prize—was capital, and gave a good impression of the contents. Into the inner title page portraits of Gilbert and Sullivan were worked, and also a view of the Guildhall. The souvenir programme was produced in sepia by Messrs. Warren and Son, Ltd., at the Wykeham Press, and will, no doubt, be treasured by those who possess it. Then Messrs. Leach and Seevour arranged a miniature stage for advertising purposes, and on this various scenes from the opera, by means of coloured photographic figures, were on view from day to day in Messrs. Jacob and Johnson's windows. Mr. J. Sim (head constable) lent police uniforms, Messrs. Aylward and Sons gave the use of properties for rehearsals, Mr. E. Batchellor supplied confectionary on favourable terms, the scenery was supplied by Messrs. J. T. Bull and Sons, London, the dresses and properties by Messrs. B. J. Simmonds and Co., London, Messrs. Clarkson and Co., of London, and Mr. W. D. Sheppard, of Winchester, were the perruquiers, and Messrs. Whitwam and Coys, of High-street, had charge of all the seating arrangements. The floral decorations for the hall at the performances were of a superb nature, and reflected the greatest credit on Mr. Ernest Forder, of the Kingsgate Nurseries, who had arranged them. In addition to Mr. Forder's flowers, palms were kindly lent by Mr. Noel Hanbury, and flowering plants by Miss Turnour, of King's Worthy, and Mr. Forder was assisted by Mr. Harbert, gardener to Mr. Noel Hanbury. Each side of the stage was a mass of flowers rising from wide spreading banks, and the varieties used were palms and ferns, heliotrope, scarlet and white geraniums, hydrangeas, salvias, dracenas, eucalyptus, marigolds, pelargoniums, and schizanthus. Messrs. Jeffery and Co. also gave flowers for use. The lighting was carried out by Messrs. Dicks, Ltd. Others need to be mentioned with thanks—the ladies who sold the souvenir programmes, and the stewards under the direction of Mr. E. W. Toby. The former were the Misses Alexander, K. Alexander, Anderson, Conduit, Awdry Gard, D. Hinxman, J. Hinxman, M. Hone, Dorothy Lavery, Mathews, Amy Savage, and Toby. The latter were Messrs. R. Alexander, W. V. Anderson, W. H. Batts, C. F. Blake, W. E. Butt, B. D. Cancellor, M. Carter, W. Fry, E. Lansdell, W. R. Mathews, H. J. Moreton, R. S. Mugford, E. Picken, F. G. Piper, E. W. Savage, and H. W. Warren.

In selecting "The Pirates of Penzance" the society chose one of the most piquant and picturesque operas of the Savoy series. As Percy Fitzgerald says, there is a colour about it, with a genuine piquant story. Like the "Sorcerer," it was suggested by an allusion in one of the old "Bab Ballads," and is based on a characteristic Gilbertian idea, viz., that of a band of pirates whose proceedings are regulated by a sort of topsy-turvy logic. The curious grotesque inversion of things was always an essential part of that humour which is known as Gilbertian, a word which has passed into currency. When Gilbert was appealed to on the subject he actually wrote "I have no notion of what Gilbertian humour may be. It seems to me that all humour, properly so-called, is based upon a grave and quasi-respectful treatment of the ridiculous and absurd." But no one treated humour with greater gravity or in a more quasi-respectful manner than Gilbert himself, and only he had the real patent. For some of the ideas of his operas he went, as we have hinted, to himself—to his own "Bab Ballads," which he expanded in an amazingly fertile way. The same thing occurred in his later operas. He got ideas from earlier works which underwent the same process of expansion. Gilbert was very fond of using the same idea in another form. In "Finafore" we get the "Bumbostle Woman changing the places" of Corcoran and Rackstraw when babies, so that in the end Corcoran became an humble seaman and Rackstraw the captain of the ship; in the "Pirates" there is the same sort of character in Ruth, who, instead of apprenticing Frederic to a pilot, bound him to a pirate; in "Ruddigore," which was inspired by "Ages Ago," a drama which Gilbert wrote for the German Reeds long before he dreamt of comic opera, Rose was a workhouse foundling, who was "hung in a plated dish-cover to the knocker of the workhouse door," and in the "Gondoliers" the Frederic idea is repeated in the stealing of a baby prince, who was placed in the custody of a gondolier to rear. The remark in

the dialogue of the "Pirates" concerning mermaids being only human down to the waist is elaborated in "Iolanthe" in the character of Strephon, who is fairly down to the waist, and whose legs carry him into the wrong lobby. Then again, the curtain of the first act of the "Pirates" is practically used over again in the curtain of the first act of the "Yeomen of the Guard," excepting in the latter case it is a man who falls prone on the stage instead of a woman. These instances are mentioned not to suggest that Gilbert had only a limited mine to work, but the reverse. The amazing feature of his methods is his resourcefulness, his fecundity of idea, his marvellous whimsicality. And this is the reason why his operas are never stale. No one had before dealt with a chorus as he did. He avoided the conventional methods of a professional crowd who came in at intervals and raised their voices. He was more probable and natural. Assuming that the conspicuous personages must have some following connected with or dependent upon them, he contrived to emphasise these attendants in a picturesque way. As a result they have the air, not of a crowd, but of a large number of friends. In "Trial by Jury" it is the bridesmaids and the jury; in "Pinafore" the famous "sisters, cousins, and aunts"; in the "Pirates" the pirate band, and the daughters of Major-General Stanley; in "Iolanthe" the members of the House of Lords and the fairy band; in "Ruddigore" the ancestors, and in "The Yeomen" the beef-eaters. Thus he obtained the most charming groups on the stage; the chorus became a personage, and a personage is always an attraction. Nothing on the operatic stage is more dainty than the group of daughters—all wards in chancery, like Phyllis in "Iolanthe"—in the "Pirates" in their Early Victorian dresses and broad-brimmed hats, and the charm here is individual. And, by the way, when the piece is stamped with the Early Victorian air in this matter, why should Mr. Sands have allowed the Sergeant of Police to perpetrate such an anachronism as "We charge you yield, in good King George's name"? The opera does not concern to-day; it was written "in Queen Victoria's name," and as Gilbert was such a stickler in having his text adhered to, the wishes which he left as a legacy might well be respected. As this was altered, perhaps we may be informed why the date when Frederick would come of age was not advanced to somewhere near the end of the present century?

The story of the "Pirates" is too well-known to need being detailed here. It has all that whimsicality which Gilbert made his own, and is allied to music which, though not quite so catchy as "Pinafore," is sparkling and vivacious, but more advanced in style. As he produced opera after opera, Sullivan worked on a larger canvas, and the "Pirates" shows a larger breadth in orchestral effects and style than its predecessor. In every case, however, the musical setting is consonant with the words, and the sprightly melodies—good, down-right English music—haunt the ear, while the more imposing numbers, such as the scene where the Major-General tells the Police to go, rise almost to the style of grand opera. While the first act of the "Pirates" is deliciously humorous, especially in the passage where the Major-General pleads the dreaded plea that he is an orphan and the pirates are overcome with grief, it is in the second act that the fun really asserts itself, and on which the opera gained most of its popularity. There is nothing better than the passages dealing with the Police Force, and the naïve expression of their emotions is delightful, and not at all far fetched. The opera might have been called—perhaps less picturesquely—"A Lie and its Consequences," for if the Major-General had never told that terrible tarradiddle that he was an orphan, he would have been exterminated in the first act, and there would have been no need of the delightful episodes with the police. The idea must have been an inspiration. From first to last the opera is one changing kaleidoscope of colour. There is the greatest contrast between the brilliant red, blue, and yellow picturesque attire of the pirates and the dainty dresses of the ladies, and when all are grouped together on the stage the scene is one of intense splendour. The settings of the two acts are also most delightful—one a cleft in the rock-bound Cornish coast, with high towering cliffs around and above, a placid sea with a schooner at the back, and in the middle distance rocks which remind one of the natural arch at Torquay. The other scene is even prettier—a ruined chapel on the Tremorden estate, which the Major-General has purchased, together with the tombs of the ancestors who lie buried therein. This is by moonlight, and the ruined columns, the broken tracery windows, the Norman and Decorated arches, and the creeper grown fragments make up a pic-

ture which has hardly been surpassed in any other opera. Moreover, there were additional great factors—the Gilbert and Sullivan atmosphere and the Gilbert and Sullivan tradition, without which the work would have miserably failed. The lighting was excellently managed on each night of the production, and in this department Mr. A. Clements proved exceedingly useful.

THE CAST.

Major-General Stanley.....Mr. Ernest Hinxman
 Frederic.....Mr. Frank Major
 Pirate King.....Mr. J. Atkins
 Sergeant of Police.....Mr. J. E. Whitwam
 Samuel.....Mr. A. J. Crosby
 Mabel.....Miss Winifred Fairweather
 Ruth.....Miss Elkins
 Edith.....Miss Lucy Richards
 Kate.....Miss Ida Jeram
 Isobel.....Miss Ruth Savage
 Chorus of Pirates, Policemen, and Major-General Stanley's daughters: Messrs. D. Alexander, H. Broomfield, J. D. Boorman, H. M. Brown, B. Conduit, R. Elkins, H. Elsmore, E. J. Fielder, J. W. Grimmett, W. J. Lansdell, W. F. Lench, E. J. Holway, J. T. Lavery, C. Y. Pinnick, Harold Savage, and S. H. Seevour; Mrs. Butcher, Mrs. Murray, Mrs. Hunter, the Misses Chandler, Ethel Gandy, Grace, Godden, E. Fielder, Moody, G. Fielder, Heather, I. Lake, Lamb, Page, Pinnick, Rumbold, Snook, Williams, and Winter.

The orchestra was composed of the following:—

First violins: Mrs. Connellan, the Misses Causton, Everett, and Peyton; second violins: Mrs. Bernard Capes, Miss F. Wooldridge, Miss Stroud, Mr. R. Farmer; violas: Mr. J. W. Elkins, Mr. H. F. Savage; cellos: Miss Froome, Mr. H. R. Eady; double bass: Mr. E. Chalkley; flutes: Mr. E. Stilwell, Mr. Collins; oboe: Mr. G. Lane; bassoon: Mr. Nash; trombone: Mr. Thorpe; cornets: Mr. E. Morris, Mr. Jacobs; clarinets: Mr. E. Chalkley, Mr. Woods; horns: Mr. L. Heard, Mr. Kingshot; cymbals, tympani, triangle and side drum: Mr. A. W. Hall.

The principals might all have been lineal descendants of the original group at the Savoy, and they all might have been built for their parts. It needed little illusion to see George Grossmith in Mr. Hinxman, Richard Temple in Mr. Atkins, George Power in Mr. Major, Rutland Barrington in the Sergeant of Police, and Marion Hood in Miss Fairweather. As we predicted a fortnight ago, the audiences found an agreeable surprise in Miss Winifred Fairweather. The music for the part of Mabel is written in a high register—higher, indeed, than any other similar part in the Gilbert and Sullivan series—but even in her highest notes Miss Fairweather was clear and bell-like. Her first entry, greeted with manifestations of approval each evening, was a difficult one, but it at once elicited the sympathy of the audience because she was such a sturdy champion of the rejected Frederic. Miss Fairweather's singing of her first song, "Poor wandering one," was remarkable, the difficult cadenzas being sung with an ease and brilliance that took the house by storm, and she was loudly encored. She had already won her way to the hearts of the audience, and they were quickened by the subsequent duet with Frederic to the accompaniment of the clattering chorus of her sisters. Miss Fairweather showed also that she was an actress of no mean ability when the Pirates appear and praise the ladies and declare that

Here's a first-rate opportunity
 To get married with impunity,

By a doctor of divinity
 Who resides in this vicinity.

Her recitative, "Hold, monsters," was given with declamatory anger, and triumph rang in her tones when she played her trump card—Just bear in mind that we are wards in Chancery—And father is a Major-General!

The terror this announcement produced on the pirates was a delightful prelude to the appearance of the Major-General himself. In the second act Miss Fairweather proved herself even more accomplished. Realising the dramatic and humorous possibility of the scene with the Police, in which she bids them as heroes to go to glory were fully realised, she acted with much force and spontaneity, and her subsequent scene with Frederic, in which he reveals the fact that he is still a member of the pirate band because the was bound to them until his twenty-first birthday, which, having regard to the fact that he was born on the 29th February in leap year, occurs only once in four years, was full of tenderness. In the lovely duet, "O leave me not to pine," Miss Fairweather's name must be bracketted with Mr. Major's in awarding praise. It was one of the best pieces of love-making we have seen on the amateur operatic stage, its naturalness and unforced tenderness making it very real and touching. The blending of the two voices produced one of the gems of the opera, and it was deservedly encored each evening. The dramatic side of her art was again to the fore in the scene where the Major-General is seized, and in the finale, in which her solo, "Poor

wandering one," occurs again, her voice rang out clear and resonant above all the others. There can be no doubt that the society have made a valuable discovery in Miss Fairweather, and they will never want for a leading lady while she remains in their ranks. The character of Frederic is pedantic, and requires careful handling to be effective. The insistence on mere forms—his sense of duty to his pirate companions, his frank truthfulness (he is a dangerous rival to George Washington), his hyper-sensitiveness, and his conscientiousness—which are like woven threads in the texture of his character, were all displayed with gravity and seriousness by Mr. F. Major. We could hardly believe that there was "no keener hand at scuttling a Cunarder, or cutting out a White Star," for this side of his character is not apparent in the opera, but, as the Pirate King would say, we waive the point; we look over it. Mr. Major's progress through the opera was watched with great interest, and histrionically no one could find much fault with his performance. Vocally it could not have been better. Possessing a tenor voice of the utmost purity, he reminds us irresistibly of Mr. Courtice Pounds in his palmiest Savoy days. He made a distinct hit in the aria, "Oh! is there not one maiden breast," and in the lilting trio, "A paradox," he not only put full wonderment into his tones, but invested the whole thing with lively interest. In the dramatic passages with Ruth, whom he spurns because he has discovered in Mabel what feminine beauty is like, he rose to the occasion, and won the hearty approbation of the audience. Probably many of those present remembered the late George Grossmith in the part of Major-General Stanley, and therefore Mr. Ernest Hinxman had a difficult task before him. When we say that his impersonation of the quaintly-impossible, but plausible officer, was worthy of the best Savoy traditions, we are only giving the praise that is due. Not only did Mr. Hinxman look the part, but he played it—an important point. From his dramatic entrance, when he announces that he is the Major-General, down to the finale of the second act, his part was a cumulative success. He made the character quietly intellectually grotesque. The Gilbert-Sullivan recipe of making a dignified personage supply a humorous biography of himself for a display of his qualities or characteristics in a patter song of many verses is here in its most difficult form, and it fell to Mr. Hinxman's lot to rattle off the enlivening "I'm the pattern of a modern Major-General," with its tremendous rhymes and breathless metre, with rapidity and accuracy, and introduced a bit of persc Gilbert himself would have last line in the last two verses prompted by whispers from two of his daughters, and when the inevitable encouragement "sat a gee" to rhyme he sang "sat a horse," promptly corrected, amid which only increased in volume the figure of the Major-General round with his sword. Mr. Hinxman is too well known as an actor to need many words from us, his elocutionary efforts of praise, and the way in which he made his points was beyond criticism. The scene in which he describes himself as an orphan and handled that bit of fragile which would be nothing if not handled carefully was excellently done by him and the Pirate King, and in the second act when he is bowed down with remorse at having told this tarradiddle, and when he appears in his dressing gown and sings his solo "Tormented with anguish dread" and the ballad "Softly sighing to the river"—an inspiration for the famous dream song in "Iolanthe"—he surpassed all previous efforts. Grossmith parts will never go begging so long as Mr. Hinxman is willing to impersonate them. The Pirate King found a splendid exponent in Mr. Jack Atkins. He emphasised the swashbuckling and freebooting aspect of the character in a most dramatic manner, and his fine presence and powerful voice, together with his splendid make-up, gave the part picturesque distinction. Possessing a resonant bass voice of obvious cultivation, he sang the popular song "O better far to live and die"—better known as "I am a Pirate King"—with great gusto, and received a well-merited encore. He was easily the most picturesque figure in the picturesque episodes, and a tower of strength to the company. Her *vis-à-vis* was Miss Elkins, as Ruth, the pirate maid-of-all-work, who had "the remains of a fine woman" about her. Attired in a Carmenesque dress she, perhaps, looked a trifle too young and pretty, but one easily forgot that under the spell of her sound acting, which had just that melodramatic touch to make the character Gilbertianly grotesque.

Evidently she revelled in the part, and she completely carried her audiences with her, as was manifested in no uncertain way. Of course she had to announce in a song how she came to apprentice Frederic to a pirate instead of a pilot, and she led the way to the encores which came frequently during the performances. Her tragic scenes with Frederic, and her part in the trio, "A paradox" (we should praise Mr. Atkins's share too) were admirable, and all through it was a performance which will awaken many pleasant memories for a long time to come. Miss Elkins is peculiarly suited for the Rosina Brandram parts. Perhaps the hit of the opera was Mr. J. E. Whitwam's Sergeant of Police. It was clever in the extreme, and a good-natured burlesque on the heavy policeman. Indeed, it was the best amateur Sergeant of the Police we have seen on the operatic stage. There was a suavity about his acting which raised the risible faculties of the audience to the highest point, and the ripples of merriment which followed the ungainly evolutions of the Sergeant and his inimitable band were a tribute to the success of their performance. Ever popular, Mr. Whitwam made the famous Policeman's song, "When a felon's not engaged in his employment" exceedingly droll, and he had the distinction of scoring a treble encore. He sang the last verse first as a coster would sing it, then as it would be sung by a "nut," and then as it might be sung by a circumspect parson. No wonder emblems such as a bouquet of evergreens, another of vegetables with showers of onions, and cookie's little pie were showered upon him. They were all good-natured tokens of appreciation. As Edith Miss Lucie Richards sang and acted well. The leader of the band of daughters she occupied a conspicuous part, and she invested it with a charm that was irresistible. Here sweet mezzo-soprano voice was used with distinction, and the light touch necessary for these works was much to the fore in her impersonation. Miss Jerram, too, did no less with the part of Kate, and as Isabel—not a singing part—Miss Ruth Savage was daintily graceful. Her darling was a feature of the opera. The part of Samuel was discharged by Mr. A. J. Crosby in a manner that left little to be desired, and his light baritone suited the music very well. He proved a great support to his pirate leader. Of the chorus we have nothing but praise. We could have wished there had been more pirates in the second act, for they not only looked sparse in numbers, but at times their singing was weak. Otherwise both they and the police—the latter were pirates in the first act—did excellently. The ladies proved a great success, and their chorus and dances in the first act was so much appreciated that it was rapturously encored. And they all looked charming. We must particularly mention the singing of the unaccompanied "Hail, poetry!" and all the concerted numbers were worked up with true operatic feeling.

Mr. Sands ably conducted each evening, and the band was augmented by members of the Royal Marine Band from Portsmouth. There were many presentations during the week. On Tuesday evening, at the close of the first act, beautiful carnation bouquets, supplied by Messrs. Hillier and Son, were presented to each of the lady principals by Mr. and Mrs. Noel Hanbury, and at the conclusion of his song Mr. Whitwam was handed a bouquet of evergreens. On Wednesday evening Mr. Whitwam was presented with a bouquet composed of a cauliflower, with other vegetables, and showers of onions by Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Savage, and another vegetable bouquet from Mr. Ernest Forder. Miss Fairweather received a tribute from Mr. Major in the shape of a bouquet of white double narcissi, orchids, and other flowers, tied with primrose ribbon, with a card bearing a quotation from the opera. Mr. Sands received a huge chaplet of laurels, and all the performers received enthusiastic calls, a tornado of applause being reserved for Mr. Noel Hanbury when he responded to the call for "stage manager." On the last evening there were enthusiastic scenes. Not only were the principals repeatedly called before the curtain, and at the close each of the lady prin-

cipals and Miss Causton were presented with beautiful bouquets, and from the Mayor and Mayoress Miss Fairweather received a magnificent basket of white carnations, and Miss Elkins an equally beautiful basket of deep red carnations. After his song Mr. Whitwam was the recipient of a pie and of a huge biscuit medal, inscribed with "For Valour" in large pink letters. The latter was made by Mr. G. W. Till, who also on Wednesday evening presented each of the lady principals with a souvenir box of his famous chocolates. At the end of the first act on Thursday night, the "daughters" of Major-General Stanley, from Mabel downwards, were given a sachel of Till's chocolates by the Pirate and Policemen, as souvenirs of the occasion. The performance on Wednesday evening was witnessed by 30 members of the Salisbury Amateur Operatic Society, who were greatly impressed with it, and showered encomiums on the society. Before leaving for Salisbury they had supper at Messrs. Dumpers, Ltd.

In response to a call for a speech, Mr. SANDS thanked all who had assisted for the hearty support they had given him, and especially Miss Causton and the ladies of the orchestra. It would, he added, be affectation on his part if he did not propose a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Hanbury. (Loud applause.)

Three cheers having been given for Mr. HANBURY, that gentleman stepped forward, and said he took that opportunity of thanking the public in the name of the society, for the splendid support which the public had given them during the entire performances. It would make them start another year with far more assurance than that which they began. They had had difficulties, but the public's appreciation of their efforts had been so splendid that he really felt now that they were on a firm footing and that they had the love of the public with them. He also emphasised the splendid loyalty running through the society, which had kept them well together. They were disappointed, he added, that their president, the Earl of Northbrook, was unable to attend any of their performances, owing to the accident to Sir George Abercromby, but they hoped next year that both his lordship and Lady Northbrook would be present. (Applause.)

There were enthusiastic scenes on the stage after the last performance on Thursday, when all the members of the company, the stewards, programme sellers, and helpers gathered together and partook of refreshments. The Mayor and Mayoress (Councillor and Mrs. Howard Elkington), who had witnessed two performances, were also present, and also Mrs. Noel Hanbury and Mrs. Sands.

In the course of the proceedings the Sergeant of the Police said he had to thank Mr. Noel Hanbury, on behalf of the society for all he had done for them, and as a token of their admiration, respect, and thanks, asked his acceptance of a pair of silver candlesticks, inscribed "To Mr. Noel Hanbury, from the members of the W.A.O.S., May 22nd, 1913, First Session."

The company joined in singing "For he's a jolly good fellow," with cheers for both Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury.

Mr. HANBURY said he hardly knew how to thank them. His work had really not been hard work, because if one had the faculty and the desire for coaching performers, one loved to exercise them, and he could safely say that he had never had such a nice company as the W.A.O.S. to deal with. He hoped they had found him a strict stage manager, but not a bad-tempered one. ("No, no," and laughter.) He thanked Mr. Sands for the kind way in which he had appreciated the efforts he had put forward, and for the way he had worked with him. (Applause.) Both he and Mrs. Hanbury would prize this gift more than anything he had yet received, because he knew it was prompted by real affection. (Applause.)

Cheers were then given for Mr. and Mrs. Sands, and thanking them Mr. SANDS quoted Frederic, "Individually and collectively I love you all." It had been one of his greatest pleasures to conduct and coach that splendid

society, and he hoped that with his own society they would remain brother and sister. (Applause.) His Salisbury colleagues were absolutely unanimous in their admiration for the Winchester performances. (Applause.) They came ready to criticise, but they went away feeling there was nothing to be critical about. (Hear, hear.) He was grateful to them for their loyalty and enthusiasm, for those were the things to keep them together. He also congratulated them on having such a splendid man at their head as Mr. Hanbury, and he had found his assistance a great help. So long as they stuck to him so long would the society succeed. They had made a jolly good start, and they had won the hearts of the public.

Mr. Sands then presented souvenirs to the Sergeant and Constables of the Force, and on being opened they were found to be silent matches.

The Mayor delivered a short speech, in which he congratulated the society on behalf of the citizens on their undertaking and its success. It was one of the best performances they had had in Winchester for many a long time, and it could only have been produced with a large amount of labour. Mr. Sands had brought them to a high state of perfection, and he believed they had assured success for the future. To gain such success as they had this first time was, he thought, a record. In Mr. Hanbury they had one who thoroughly understood the business, their soloists were to be congratulated, and the chorus were perfection. He hoped the society would go on and flourish for many years, and that their next undertaking would be as equally great a success. (Applause.)

The Sergeant of Police, on behalf of the Society, then presented a massive laurel wreath to Edith (Miss Richards), who had sold the most tickets for the performances, her total being over £25.

Edith smilingly thanked the society, and speeches of a more or less humorous character were made by the Pirate King, Mabel, Frederic, the Major-General, and Ruth.

Mr. SANDS then thanked all who had been unseen by the audience—Mr. Taylor, the accompanist, who had worked hard at rehearsals, Mr. J. W. Elkins, the musical librarian, Mr. Toby and his band of stewards, Mr. Holway, the assistant stage manager, Mr. Clements, and the ladies who had sold programmes.

After Mr. Toby had replied, all present joined hands in "Auld Lang Syne," and the gathering broke up shortly before midnight.

On Thursday evening before the performance the whole of the company and helpers were photographed by Messrs. Rider. At each performance large numbers of people had to be turned away for the want of accommodation, practically every seat in the hall having been taken. The souvenir programme was entirely sold out, and Messrs. Warren are reprinting to supply the large demand for extra copies.

The future of the society is assured. We have reason to believe that "The Mikado" will be essayed next winter, and that there will be numerous accessions to the ranks of performers. As the society intend to exhaust the Gilbert and Sullivan series before they attempt any other work, the Savoy opera will be the thing in Winchester for another dozen years, and there is no reason why the society should not flourish long enough to perform the series twice over, as well as many other comic operas which have worn well. The society has added a new interest to Winchester social life, and we wish it continued and increasing prosperity and success.

Lord Northbrook, the president of the society, wrote expressing his great disappointment that he and Lady Northbrook were unable to attend the first performances of the society.