Saint Mary's Beacon.

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March 13, 1879—1y.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE.

Whether the Pirates of Penzance will ever become as popular as Pinafore is yet, of course, to be seen, but to its composers and constructors it is, at least, already a good deal more profitable.—The Fifth Avenue theatre is nightly crowded to its utmost capacity, and the audiences go away in a high state of exaltation. It is quite possible that the demand would be very quickly satisfied with a representation at five theatres simultaneously, as was the case with Pinafore, but there are undoubtedly points [illegible] rage for a season at least. I do not see that the resemblance to Pinafore is so marked as some of the critics have affected to discover. It is Sullivan's music, of course, and is freighted with all of his peculiarities. So is Abt always Abt, and yet who rejects one of his songs because it resembles another? The "piratical maid of all work" is as distinct from the bumboat woman as two women can be, and young "Frederic" is an indefinite distance away from "Rale Rackstraw." There is not as much humor in the piece of the real, rollicking, enjoyable character as there was in Pinafore. There is nothing as taking as the "What, never" gag, nor is there anything as really novel and fine as "He is an Englishman." The chorus, however, at the end of the first act, is a gem in its way, fully as good and moving as the grand chorus in the Chimes of Normandy. The following sketch of the plot I have reduced from one of the play-bills. It will give a pretty clear notion of the principal "points," so that your readers, when they visit the metropolis or are visited by the company, may be moved at the right places and in the right way.

The pirates are a body of soft-hearted marauders whose headquarters are a cave on the coast of Cornwall. As the curtain rises they are discovered in the act of celebrating the "coming of age" of their only apprentice, young Frederic (Mr. Talbot.) Frederic, touched by the kind expressions of his comrades, is still more affected by the consideration that he cannot repay them as they deserve. He explains that having that day attained his majority he is out of his indentures, and he intends to avail himself of his liberty to quit their band forever. The Pirate King inquires his reason for this singular determination, and Ruth, a "piratical maid-of-all-work" explains that Frederic was apprenticed to the pirates through a misunderstanding arising out of the similarity of the words "pirate" and "pilot." As his nurse she had received instructions from Frederic's father to apprentice him to a pilot, and by mistake she apprenticed him to a pirate. Frederic feels himself bound in honor to work as a pirate until his indentures shall have expired, when he proposes to atone for his involuntary association by sweeping them from the face of the earth. These indentures are within half an hour of their decease at the commencement of the piece. The Pirate King regrets the decision at which Frederic has arrived, but cannot conscientiously blame him. Ruth, Frederic's nurse, implores him to take her with him. Frederic hesitates to take so decided a step, explaining that although he loves Ruth dearly, and believes her to be a fine woman, yet, as he has seen no other woman's face than hers for sixteen years, it is just possible that he may be mistaken. Unfortunately for Ruth's prospects, a bevy of beautiful young ladies, some twenty in number, among them the daughters of Gen. Stanley, stroll to the pirate's haunt, with a view to a picnic, and Frederic has, for the first time in his life, an opportunity of comparing Ruth's mature attractions with those of younger and prettier women. He reproaches Ruth for the deception she has practiced on him, and Ruth leaves him broken-hearted as the young ladies enter, climbing over the steep rocks by which the scene is inclosed. Frederic, apprehensive lest his pirate's dress should alarm them, conceals himself in a cave, but is eventually compelled to reveal himself, owing to the fact that the young ladies, believing themselves to be alone, propose to take off their shoes and stockings and "paddle."—The young ladies are much terrified to learn from his owns lips that he is a pirate, but are somewhat reassured on learning that he is on the point of giving up his profession and intends to lead a respectable life for the future.—To that end he implores their assistance:

> Oh, is there not one maiden here
> Who does not feel the moral beauty
> Of making worldly interest
> Subordinate to sense of duty?
> Who would not give up willingly
> All matrimonial ambition
> To rescue such a one as I
> From his unfortunate condition?

The young ladies, however, are not prepared to make such a sacrifice.

> Alas! there's not one maiden here
> Who seems to feel the moral beauty
> Of making worldly interest
> Subordinate to sense of duty.

Frederic is in despair, when Mabel, the youngest daughter of the twenty, comes forward and declares she is prepared to devote herself to Federic's reformation. Frederic is overjoyed, and Mabel's sympathetic sisters, in order to give the young couple an opportunity of arriving at a satisfactory understanding, determine to shut their eyes to what is going on, "and talk about the weather." Accordingly, they sit at the back of the stage and commence an animated discussion as to the prospect of "a warm July," while the lovers indulge in a love duet. This is clever and deliciously absurd. The music resembles the "gaily tripping" chorus in Pinafore.—Frederic and the young ladies are on the point of departure when they are surprised by the re-entry of the Pirate King and his followers, who seize the young ladies, whom they propose to marry there and then through the agency of

> A doctor of divinity
> Who resides in the vicinity—[illegible]

A course of action which is arrested [illegible] Mabel, who warns them [illegible] bable consequence:

> Hold, monsters! Ere your pirate caravansery
> Proceeds, against our will, to wed us all,
> Pray bear in mind that we are wards in chancery,
> And father is a major-general!

This announcement is followed by the entrance of the major-general, in the full uniform of his rank, who introduces himself in a patter song in which he describes himself as possessed of every accomplishment under the sun—except the practical details of the military calling:

> I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Sir Caradoc's,
> I answer hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox;
> I quote, in elegiacs, all the crimes of Heliogabalus.
> I confess I can floor peculiarities parabolus.
> I can tell undoubted Raphaels from Gerard Dows and Zoffanies,
> I know the croaking chorus from the "Frogs" of Aristophanes.
> Then I can hum a fugue of which I've heard the music's din afore,
> And whistle all the airs from that infernal nonsense "Pinafore."
> I can write you out a washing bill in Babylonic cuneiform.
> And tell you all the details of Caractacus' uniform.
> In short, in matters vegetable, animal and mineral,
> I am very model of a modern major-gineral!

Having introduced himself, the major-general is horrified to hear that the pirates propose to marry his large family on the spot. It suddenly occurs to him, however, that one peculiarity of these soft-hearted pirates is that they make a rule of never molesting an orphan. "They are orphans themselves, and know what it is." Availing himself of this fact he appeals to them as an orphan to spare him and his daughters, and his appeal is successful, the pirates are moved to tears on learning that

> These children whom you see
> Are all that I can call my own.

And the Pirate King at once release them, explaining his motive for so doing in the following lines:

> Although we live by strife,
> We're always sorry to begin it;
> And what we ask is life
> Without a touch of poetry in it,

At the mention of poetry the pirates and the ladies are moved to kneel and sing the following hymn to her:

> Hail, Poetry! thou heaven-born maid,
> Thou gildest e'en the pirate's trade.
> Hail, flowing fount of sentiment!
> All hail Divine Emollient!

The young ladies are at once released, and they, with Frederic and their father, scale the rocks by which they descended, waving an adieu to the pirates, who indulge in a wild dance of exultation at the triumph of their guiding principle as the curtain falls on the first act.

The second act takes place in a ruined chapel on Gen. Stanley's estate. The General is in a state of terrible depression, owing to remorse caused by the contemptible lie by which he escaped from the pirate's clutches. His daughters endeavor, but vainly, to console him, and he has come to kneel at the tombs of his ancestors and implore their pardon for the disgrace he has brought upon a hitherto unstained escutcheon. It is little to the purpose that he is reminded of the fact that he only bought the property a year ago. His reply is unanswerable.

> Frederic, in this chapel are ancestors—you cannot deny that. I don't know whose ancestors they were, but I know whose ancestors they are, and as their descendant "by purchase" (if I may so describe myself,) I shudder to think of the disgrace that I have brought upon them.

Young Frederic, the ex-pirate, who is by this time formally betrothed to Mabel, and who has obtained a commission in the Eleventh Hussars, is that night to lead a body of policemen against his former associates, and the police enter to receive the General's blessing before departing on their hazardous expedition.

The frame of mind in which they embark on this duty is revealed in a song by the sergeant of police (Mr. Clifton,) which is chorused by the rank and file, who use their clubs as trumpets:

> When the foeman bares his steel,
> ALL (trumping)— Tarantara, tarantara!
> We uncomfortable feel;
> ALL— Tarantara!
> And we find the wisest thing,
> ALL— Tarantara, tarantara!
> Is to slap our chests and sing,
> ALL— Tarantara!
> For when threatened with *emeutes*.
> ALL— Tarantara, tarantara!
> And your heart is in your boots,
> ALL— Tarantara!
> There is nothing brings it round,
> ALL— Tarantara, tarantara!
> Like the trumpet's martial sound,
> ALL— Tarantara!

They receive the General's blessing and withdraw, Mabel taking a fond farewell of Frederic, who is left alone to prepare himself for the coming struggle. To his astonishment, Ruth and the Pirate King appear at the window at the back of the stage, and, holding pistols to his head, implore him not to slaughter them until he has heard what they have come to tell. They proceed to tell him that after his departure they discovered that he was apprenticed to their band, not until he reached his twenty-first year, as they had imagined, but until he reached his twenty-first birthday—a more material distinction than might at first sight be supposed, inasmuch as he was born on the 29th of February in leap-year, and that birthday will not be reached until A. D. 1940. Frederic is horrified at this discovery, and he has little difficulty in coming to the conclusion that until that date he is bound to devote himself to the interests of the pirates. Overwhelmed as he is at this discovery, and notwithstanding his attachment to Gen. Stanley, he nevertheless feels bound, as a member of the gang, to reveal the fact that Gen. Stanley escaped from them on a fraudulent plea, inasmuch as he not only is not an orphan, but, worse than that, he never was one. Furious at having been made the victims of a deception, the Pirate King and Ruth depart to collect their band and attack Tremorden castle that very night.—Frederic takes a fond farewell of Mabel, promising to return in 1940 and claim her, and then follows his old associates. Mabel summons the police; informs them of the fact that Frederic has felt himself bound to rejoin his old associates, and urges them to attack the pirates alone. This they determine to do, notwithstanding the fact that they sympathize rather with criminals than with prosecutors, on grounds explained by the sergeant in a song, of which the following is the second verse:

> SERG.—When the enterprising burglar's not a burgling—
> ALL— not a burgling;
> SERG.—When the cut throat isn't occupied in crime—
> ALL— pied in crime,
> SERG.—He loves to hear the little brook a gurgling—
> ALL— brook a gurgling,
> SERG.—And listen to the merry village chime—
> ALL— village chime.
> SERG.—When the coster's finished jumping on his mother—
> ALL— on his mother,
> SERG.—He loves to lie a basking in the sun—
> ALL— in the sun;
> SERG.—Ah, take one consideration with another—
> ALL— with another,
> SERG.—The policeman's lot is not a happy one—
> ALL— happy one!

At this point the pirates arrive and the police conceal themselves in the left aisle of the chapel. The pirates, whose tendency to indulge in vigorous choruses, is not even checked by the fact that they are committing a burglary, describe the cat-like way in which they steal upon their foe in a vocal explosion which is almost calculated to wake Gen. Stanley's "ancestors by purchase." In effect it attracts the General's attention, who enters under the impression that he "heard a noise." By this time the pirates have concealed themselves in the right aisle of the chapel, and as the General sees nothing to account for the sound that arrests his attention, he concludes that it must have been the "sighing of the breeze." He at once sings an ode to the evening breeze. The pirates are supposed to be unaware of the presence of the police, and the General is supposed to be unaware of the presence of either, but this consideration does not prevent all parties from joining in the chorus whenever an antiphonal effect is required.—Eventually the pirates declare themselves and seize the General, whom they propose to put to death on the spot. This calamity is averted by the police, who, having screwed their courage to the requisite pitch by repeated "nips" of "Tarantara," rush on the pirates, who, after a brief struggle, conquer the police. The condition of the police seems hopeless, but the sergeant is not without resource.

> SERG.—To gain a brief advantage you've contrived,
> But your proud triumph will not be long-lived!
> KING.—Don't say you're orphans, for we know that game.
> SERG.—On your allegiance we've a stronger claim.
> We charge you yield in Queen Victoria's name!

This is an appeal that no Englishman, not even a pirate, can resist. The King and his crew at once surrender.

> KING.—We yield at once, with humble mien,
> Because, with all our faults, we love our Queen.

The General orders them to be marched ed off in custody, when Ruth enters.

> RUTH—One moment; let me tell you who they are—
> They are no members of the common throng.
> They are all noblemen who have gone wrong!

This announcement has an electrical effect on the General and the police, who at once kneel in homage at the feet of their late foes.

> GENERAL.—No Englishman unmoved that statement hears,
> Because, with all our faults, we love our House of Peers.

He begs them to resume their ranks and legislative duties, and at once consents to their marriage with his daughters.

☞ An English lord once said to Train: "Mr. Train, have you the law of primogeniture in America? Said Train, "No." "What," said he, "no *hentail*." Said Train, "No; but we have the cocktail?"

☞ Alexander, of Russia, must feel very much as one of our soldiers did at Malvern Hill; he must experience a desire to creep into a cave somewhere and shut down the blinds.

A Weather-Talker Who Got Left.

There is one Detroiter who will never refer to the state of the weather again as long as he lives. The condition of the weather has been a hobby of his for years, and he has fairly reveled in the rains and fogs which have been ours since the New Year. On meeting an acquaintance he has invariably said:

"Ever see such a winter before? Curious country, this. Who'd have looked for spring in January? Have you any idea when it will change? This mud is killing business, but we can't help it. Ever know of such a succession of fogs?"

Yesterday morning he was coming up town by the Fort street line. His umbrella fell from his hand as he entered the car. A stranger picked it up, moved along, and the citizen sat down beside him and said:

"Thankee. Terrible weather, isn't it? Ever see such weather before? We'll all be sick unless there's a change. Can you account for this mild weather at this season?"

"I'd like to speak a few words to you in private," replied the stranger in a guarded voice. "Please get off the car with me."

The two got off together, the citizen greatly puzzled, and when they reached the walk the stranger continued:

"You remarked that this was terrible weather. I quite agree with you. You seem to be a well educated and very observing man, and I am glad to have met you. I hadn't taken any notice at all of the weather until you spoke, but I quite agree with you—quite."

The citizen cleared his throat, but did not reply, and presently the man went on:

"You asked me if I had ever seen such weather before. I am satisfied that I have at some time in my life, but I cannot just now recall the date. Let's see? Let's see? Was it in 1857? No. Let's see? Well, I cannot recall it now, but on reaching home I will look up my old diaries. If I can do anything to oblige you I shall be only too glad."

They walked a block in silence, the citizen amazed and astounded, and then the stranger suddenly said:

"You said we would all be sick unless there was a change. That remark shows your interest in your fellow-men. I quite agree with you—quite. Yes, we shall be ill, and many of us may never recover. I hope you are prepared to die."

The citizen now began to get mad, and after hoofing it for another long block he growled:

"What did you want to say to me in private?"

"You asked me," replied the other as he gestured with his clenched hand, "if I could account for this mild weather at this season of the year? Yes, sir, I can; but I didn't want to give it away to all in the car. My theory regarding this warm spell can be explained in just two hours, and I'll go to your office and do it."

"No, you won't," was the blunt answer.

"But I will! When I set out to oblige a man I'm willing to spare four hours if necessary."

The citizen crossed the street hoping to shake the man off, but he also crossed and went on:

"Having been appealed to by you to explain the cause of this mild——"

"See here!" said the other as he halted, "I don't want any more of you!"

"But you asked me to explain."

"I didn't!"

"You are a liar—you did!"

"What!"

"Don't bristle up to me with any of your whats!" warned the stranger, "or I'll knock your nose off! I never allow anybody to trifle with me!" We will either go to your office and devote two hours to an explanation of my theory, or I'll lick you for asking me useless questions and taking up my valuable time!"

The citizen turned pale, looked all around and then made a rush into the nearest house. The stranger waited around a while and then started off with the remark:

"Never you mind, sir! I'll hunt this whole city over but I'll find your office! No man can get me all worked up on a mild spell of weather and then snub me like a heathen!"

WISE SAYIGGS.—Anger dies soon with a wise and good man.

Too much prosperity make men fools.

Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other.

Wealth is not his who gets, but his who enjoys it.

Employ your time well, if you mean to gain leisure.

A man may have a thousand acquaintances, and not one friend among them.

It is better to live on a little, than outlive a great deal.

By others' faults, wise men correct their own.

We should take abundant care for the future, but so as to enjoy the present.

☞ Indignant wife—"If I had known you were coming home in this condition, I should have gone home to my father's." Inebriate husband—"Hic—would you? I'm awful sorry didn't send you word—hic."

☞ Gentleman—"I say, waiter, I've just cracked this egg: look at it." Waiter—"Don't look very nice at that end, I must say; try the other."

He Know'd I'd be Thar.

The following perfectly true story is hardly entitled to a place in this column, but as its lack of humor is somewhat atoned for by a very obvious moral, and as it would doubtless fail to reach the public in any other way, we give it herewith:

The other day we met on Kearny street an old Washoe acquaintance, called Jem Briggs, whose usually seedy miner's apparel was on this occasion replaced by a gorgeous display of velvet vest, checked pants, red tie, and ponderous gold watch chain, while his honest and simple face shone above these evidences of prosperity with the placid contentment of a full harvest moon.

"Hello, Jem," we said; "glad to see you looking so well. Look like you'd struck it rich recently."

"So I have," said Jem; and then as his honest face saddened a little, he continued, "but I've just had a mighty tough loss, though. My partner—Ned Bimber—you remember Ned?—has gone up the shaft."

"Dead, eh?"

"Yes. I'll tell you how it was. You see Ned and I had a quarrel about two years ago. Don't matter now what it was all about. Mebbe Ned was wrong, and mebbe I was; but all the same, neither of us would back down—couple'er dern fools, you'll say; and so we were—and the upshot was we parted and agreed never to speak to each other again."

"And didn't you?"

"No, sir; we didn't—more shame for us, as had been pards fifteen years together. Well, about a year ago Ned got a good gravel claim upon the Feather, and struck it thick. Cleaned up over two hundred thousand in six months."

"And how were you getting on?"

"Oh! clean broke; working up on the Com. for four dollars a day. Well, I was kinder sneakin' glad to hear of Ned's luck; but the next thing I heard was that he had been killed by the mine's caving in on him. He lived just long enough to make his will. Well, the lawyer found that Ned was worth about $220,000, and the will gave $5,000 to each one of his three brothers—they had all come out from the East when they heard of Ned's find—and the same amount to me, for all we'd quarrelled. But Ned allers was a 'centric sort of cuss, and the will provided that none of us should get the money if we attended the funeral. He didn't want anybody present but the minister and the undertaker. He said he had 'died lonely, and he wanted to be buried lonely.' Them's just his words. The distribution of the rest of the estate, about $200,000, he had provided for in another codicil, to be opened the day after the funeral, but we all understood it was donated to a charitable object."

"Of course, you stayed away from the funeral?"

"Well, you see, that was just the point. Somehow I felt so kinder miserable and down-hearted—you see Ned was the only partner I ever had—that I determined to go and see him sent down on his last cage anyway—money or no money—and I did."

"And the three brothers?"

"No, they none of them went; in fact, they were so disgusted at the 'divy' that they cleared out down to 'Frisco right away to see about breaking the will. So I was the only person at the funeral. My friends all thought me a lunatic to throw away $5,000 in that style, but somehow I couldn't help it. As it turned out, however, it was the luckiest thing I ever did."

"How was that?"

"Why, the next day when the main will was opened, we found it really gave the entire balance of the property to whichever one of us four disobeyed the conditions of the $5,000 bequests. So you see, I came in for the whole $200,000 just like a knife. And, do you know, I shall allers think," said the legatee, as he hastily steered us into the nearest barroom to conceal the gathering moisture in his eye, "I shall allers believe that Ned kinder put up the whole job a purpose, *'cause he know'd I'd be thar!"*

☞ An Irishman was going along a road, when an angry bull rushed down upon him, and, with his horns, tossed him over a fence. The Irishman, recovering from his fall, upon looking up saw the bull pawing and tearing up the ground (as is the custom of the animal when irritated), whereupon Pat, smiling at him, said, "If it was not for your bowing and scraping and your humble apologies, you brute, faix I sho ll think that you had thrown me over this fence on purpose."

☞ ENIGMA, Boston.—The enigma to which you refer is attributed to Charles James Fox, and runs thus:

> "What is pretty and useful in various ways,
> Tho' it tempts some poor mortals to shorten their days,
> Take one letter from it, and there will appear
> What youngsters admire ev'ry day in the year;
> Take two letters from it, and then without doubt
> You are what that is, if you don't find it out."

☞ "Women," says a literary journal, "live on love." That may all be; but we notice all that have the pleasure of our acquaintance linger around the table three times a day and get on the outside of an awful lot of [illegible] potatoes, as well as other substantial articles of food.