"HIS EXCELLENCY."

SOME SCENES FROM MR. GILBERT'S NEW OPERA.

From The London Standard, with illustrations from The St. James Budget.

Many as Mr. W. S. Gilbert's imitators have been, none have ever approached his quaintness of fancy and neatness of humor—a strong point in which lies in the fact that his thorough appreciation of stage effect enables him to set off his droll ideas to the fullest advantage. The production of a new play by him is, therefore, an event of primary importance in the theatrical world, and "His Excellency" has been eagerly looked forward to. Expectation is abundantly satisfied. The book of the new opera is fully up to the standard which Mr. Gilbert has set for himself, and below which he has so seldom fallen; there is, indeed, more plot in it than in many of his works of the sort, and the development of an excellent joke remains in suspense until the very end. The lyrics are as admirable as ever, and are specially remarkable for the wonderful ingenuity of many of the rhymes, elaborate in the extreme, but for the most part irreproachable, nevertheless. The

MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.

late Mr. C. S. Calverly never surpassed some of the verses of "His Excellency." The thing one misses is the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan. Many of the songs seem particularly to invite his setting; it is impossible not to feel curiosity as to the way in which he would have treated them, for his successor, Dr. Osmond Carr, capable musician as he undoubtedly is, lacks the grace, the tunefulness, and notably the humor and suggestiveness of the composer of "H. M. S. Pinafore," the "Gondoliers," "The Yeomen of the Guard," and the rest of the merry and melodious series. There can be no doubt that the partnership was essential to both, for the poorest of Sir Arthur's scores was unquestionably "Haddon Hall," and it is to be deplored that any circumstance should have arisen to prevent the co-operation of an author and a musician so eminently well qualified to work together.

Before the curtain rose on Saturday evening a very vigorous demonstration, note of which cannot be omitted in an account of the proceedings, took place in the gallery. Mr. George Edwardes, temporary manager of the Lyric, is also managing director of the Empire, and while visitors awaited the beginning of the play, three cheers for him were demanded and lustily given. "Our opinion of Mrs. Chant" was then shouted by an occupant of the upper regions, and a loud and long-protracted "boo" was the response. "What about the County Council?" was the next comment, and when these unrestrained exponents of public feeling had recovered their breath, a deep and resounding groan filled the theatre. The appearance of Dr. Carr in the conductor's chair quelled the tumult, and the overture followed, a composition made up of the principal numbers of the score, not by any means without tunefulness, but deficient in distinction and freshness of idea. The curtain then rises on the market-place of Elsinore, where the townspeople, led by Mats Munch, the Syndic, are assembled to make much of a young sculptor, Erling Sykke, on the completion of a statue of the Prince Regent of Denmark, which occupies the centre of the scene. An opening chorus naturally occurs, and, put together in skilful and very musicianly style, wins reserved favor for Dr. Carr. When the others are gone Erling and his friend Tortenssen remain to congratulate each other, for the former has been (as he supposes) appointed Sculptor Extraordinary to the Royal Family, with the rank of Count, the latter Personal Physician to His Majesty the King, it having further been intimated to him that he will be created baron. They discuss the situation.

Tor.—It seems incredible. It can't be—but, no—that's out of the question.

Erl.—What can't be?

Tor.—It can't be one of Governor Griffenfeld's practical jokes.

Erl.—My dear fellow, don't suggest such a thing. It would be too cruel—why, it would be our ruin!

Tor.—But he is cruel. When a scheme for a practical joke enters his head he sticks at nothing in its accomplishment. Why, he has caused the very soldiers of the garrison—war-worn veterans as they are—to be drilled as ballet girls, and to perform all their evolutions to dance steps, simply in order to make them ridiculous in the eyes of the girls they're engaged to.

Erl.—He's a malicious devil enough, but he would hardly venture to play pranks in the name of his Sovereign. Besides, there's the statue—a commission from the King.

Tor.—True. By the way, I suppose it is a commission from the King? That's not one of his Excellency's practical jokes?

Erl.—Nonsense! Now, does that look like a practical joke? Why, I'm to get ten thousand rix-dollars for it. Now, as you know, I love his daughter Nanna devotedly, and she has hitherto treated me with contempt, because, as she says, I'm a mere tuppenny-halfpenny stone-cutter. Of course, that's only her humorous way of putting it.

Tor.—And I adore Thora, who has always treated my pretensions with derision, because, as she says, I'm only a pitiful pill-roller. That's her epigrammatic way of expressing it.

Tortenssen's suspicions are, however, all too correct. These little appointments are one of the Governor's jokes; he it was who invented the idea of the commission; he has had the fun of seeing the ambitious young sculptor working for months past for nothing; and the girls, Nanna and Thora, who delight in their father's "gentle, harmless, refined, and utterly inoffensive notion of fun," know all about it. As they talk, after having dismissed their lovers, who entertain no suspicion of the truth, the company of merry girls rush on to announce the approach of the soldiers:

Here are the warriors all ablaze
Sabre and epaulettes, ha! ha!
All of them trained to spend their days
Practising minuets, ha! ha!
Never was seen such jewelry trickery,
Soldiers, tough as oak or hickory,
Turned to votaries of Terpsichore,
Mincing marionettes, ha! ha!

The soldiers dance in, led by Harold, who sings:

Though I'm a soldier, all pugnacity,
Into your presence I'm made to come
In the contemptible capacity
Of a confounded tectotum!

Although the Governor's jokes are numerous,
This is a joke we fail to see—
If this is the Governor's fun so humorous,
Bother the Governor's fun, say we!

Oh you may laugh at our dancing-schoolery—
It's all very well, it amuses you,
But how would you like this dashed tomfoolery
Every day from ten to two?

All the time he sings and his troop dance vigorously. They cannot leave off without the Governor's permission, which is unattainable, as His Excellency has lingered behind to make a butter slide before the Syndic's front door, and as he gleefully declares when he presently enters, the Syndic went down like a shot. A bye-plot, here introduced, is not among the best incidents of the legend. Mr. Gilbert has in several of his works—in the majority of them, indeed—shown an elderly lady who forces unwelcome attentions on a reluctant victim, and here she is found again, in the person of Dame Hecla Courtlandt. The Governor proposed to her for fun, and she will not permit him to escape the oppressive results of his jest; but the main foundation of the plot, which now begins to develop, is altogether excellent. The Regent has heard of Governor Griffenfeld's mania for practical joking, and, a species of Danish Haroun-al-Raschid, has come, disguised as a strolling player, to see what is really going on in Elsinore. The first person he meets is Christina, a wandering singer, who has fallen deeply in love with the Regent's statue, and is, therefore, attracted by Nils Egliscon, as the Regent calls himself, in consequence of the likeness he bears to the figure. This resemblance also strikes the Governor, who at once devises what seems to him quite the best joke he ever tried on. He will make the strolling player dress up to personate the Regent. His Royal Highness will proceed to confer dignities on Erling and Tortenssen, arrange various other matters, order the Governor to be shot—that, he knows, will delight the populace—and then, just as everyone is overjoyed with the new order of things, he can explain where the joke comes in. The best of it all is that the people have become so infuriated that they have determined to appeal to the Regent, whom, they are told, is at the moment in Elsinore.

The second act takes place in the courtyard of the castle. The inhabitants have assembled to make their appeal, and Christina entertains them meanwhile with the quaint legend of the wilful bee:

A hive of bees, as I've heard say,
Said to their Queen one sultry day,
"Please, your Majesty's high position,
The hive is full and the weather is warm.
We rather think, with a due submission,
The time has come when we ought to swarm?"
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Up spake their Queen, and thus spake she—
"This is a matter that rests with me.
Who dares opinions thus to form?
I'll tell you when it is time to swarm!"
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Her Majesty wore an angry frown,
In fact her Majesty's foot was down—
Her Majesty sulked—declined to sup—
In short her Majesty's back was up.
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Her foot was down and her back was up!

That hive contained one obstinate bee
(His name was Peter), and thus spake he—
"Though every bee has shown white feather,
To bow to fashion I am not prone.
Why should a hive swarm all together?
Surely a bee can swarm alone?"
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Upside down and inside out,
Backwards, forwards, round about,
Twirling here and twisting there,
Topsy-turvily everywhere—
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

Pitiful sight it was to see
Respectable, elderly, high-class bee
Who kicked the beam at sixteen stone,
Trying his best to swarm alone!
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
Trying his best to swarm alone!

When the Regent comes the soldiers begin with their complaint. They are made to dance ballets, and they give an exhibition of the sort of thing that is expected of them. The spectacle is funny in the extreme, as the bespurred, mustached warriors trip, pirouette and pose, with waving arms and the set ballet smile. Harold, with the aid of a trooper, throwing himself into the attitude common to the première danseuse. Spectators roared with laughter on Saturday evening, and insisted on a repetition of this most whimsical episode. The Regent, to resume the story, expresses his fullest sympathy. He will carry out the Governor's promises, he says, as

MISS M'INTOSH AND MR. ARTHUR PLAYFAIR.

regards Erling and Tortenssen, and as for the Governor, he is sentenced to degradation to the ranks. When presently the two are left alone, the Regent asks how he filled the character, and does not meet with unmitigated approval. His bearing was not the right thing, he is told, and then again the Governor's instructions were that he be ordered to be shot in twenty-four hours. "Why didn't you do that?" he asks. The Regent explains that, seeing how cordially His Excellency was detested—most unjustly, he is sure—he feared that the people would not wait till the twenty-four hours had expired. The Governor agrees that in this little matter a wise discretion was, perhaps, exercised. "But, I say—it's—it's a good joke, isn't it?" he observes.

Reg.—It's a perfect monument of practical humor. Only—forgive the suggestion—isn't it a little risky?

Grif.—Risky! What do you mean?

Reg.—Somehow these practical jokes have such a tendency to recoil on the heads of their perpetrators. Now, mere verbal humor is so much safer—a quip, a crank, a jibe, jape or jest.

Grif.—Nonsense, sir, don't talk to me about japes and jests! Return to the castle, and when you've resumed your rags, I will pay you the five golden friedrichs I promised you. Be off!

Reg.—As Your Excellency pleases. (Exit Regent into castle.

Grif.—What does he mean about practical jokes recoiling on their perpetrator? I ought to know. I've played them with impunity for fifteen-forty years! It's all very well to talk about verbal humor, but where is it to come from? Why, everything of the kind has been said—there's absolutely nothing left!

His Excellency proceeds to explain himself in a song:

Quixotic is his enterprise, and hopeless his adventure is,
Who seeks for jocularities that haven't yet been said.
The world has joked incessantly for over fifty centuries,
And every joke that's possible has long ago been made.
I started as a humorist with lots of capital for stock,
But humor is a drug which it's the fashion to abuse;
For my stock in trade, my fixtures, and the goodwill of the business
No reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.
And if anybody chooses
He may circulate the news
That no reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.

Oh, happy was that humorist—the first that made a pun at all!
Who, when a joke occurred to him, however poor and mean,
Was absolutely certain that it never had been done at all—
How popular at dinners must that humorist have been!
Oh, the days when some stepfather for the query held a handle—
The door-mat from the scraper, is it distant very far?
And when no one knew where Moses was when Aaron put the candle out,
And no one had discovered that a door could be a jar!
But your modern hearers are
In their tastes particular,
And they sneer if you inform them that a door can be a-jar.

The end is now in sight. Thora and Nanna, after teasing their lovers, begin to recognize the fact that

MR. CRAMER. MR. KENNINGHAM.

they are really fond of the poor fellows and would be glad to marry them if it were possible. Some scores of other weddings have been arranged, the Syndic has been made Governor, Griffenfeld has assumed the uniform of a private soldier, the latter, as he thinks, to work out his exquisite idea, and at length he suddenly astonishes every one by revealing the nature of his champion practical joke. It is all his fun. The "Regent" is Nils Egliscon, a strolling player; no one is to be married; he remains Governor; but at this moment two of the Regent's officers enter, kneel humbly to the suppositious Nils Egliscon, now in his humble clothes again, and present him with a dispatch. It is a joke, indeed, but with a grim side to it, and altogether different from what the Governor imagined.

Grif.—Why, you don't mean to tell me that you are the Regent after all?

Reg.—The very Regent at your service. (All kneel.)

Grif.—I've made an ass of myself!

Reg.—Don't say that. We are indebted to you for some valuable hints for promotions, appointments and marriage arrangements, all of which will take effect to-day—as indeed will the best and wisest of your suggestions—your permanent degradation to the ranks.

The amazement of His Excellency is not to be described, and as the others dance off joyfully he is left alone, musket in hand, gazing dazedly after them.

Whether any of Dr. Carr's songs will win popularity, apart from the score, remains to be seen. The opening chorus has been commended, and the composer enters into the spirit of the plot with his well-marked dance-march for the soldiers. This could not well be better. The quartet for the four lovers, "If all is as you say," is bright and agreeable, and the Bee Song, with its bouche fermée accompaniment, is quaint and effective as well as pretty. The instrumentation is always tasteful, if seldom very noteworthy. On the whole, Sir Arthur Sullivan not being available, Mr. Gilbert did wisely to accept the partnership of Dr. Carr, but that the latter adequately replaces Mr. Gilbert's old associate it is impossible to admit. Taree of the leading exponents of Savoy opera are here happily employed. Mr. George Grossmith returns to the stage, after several most successful tours in England and the States as an entertainer to fill the part of the mischievous Governor, and the foregoing summary of the plot will show how admirably he is fitted with a character adapted to exhibit his characteristic humor. Mr. Rutland Barrington plays the Regent with excellent discretion. The little touch of sentiment at the end of the piece, where the Regent declares his affection for Christina, is a somewhat awkward incident for a comedian, but Mr. Barrington acquits himself with much tact. Mr. Barrington acquits himself with much tact, and, indeed, gives throughout a sound and well-considered study of the part. Miss Jessie Bond, cordially welcomed, as were her old companions, plays as Nanna with the delightful piquancy and keen sense of fun which have made her so great a

MR. A. PLAYFAIR.

favorite with audiences. She could not possibly have a more entirely fascinating sister than Miss Ellaline Terriss, whose daintiness and grace are charmingly exhibited. Miss McIntosh plays with much refinement as Christina, and sings in cultivated style. The music here is better suited to her voice than that which she was called upon to sing in "Utopia," where several passages lay so high as to test the extremity of her vocal means. Miss Alice Barnett, as Dame Hecla, fills a difficult part with much judgment. Messrs. Charles Kenningham and Augustus Cramer sing well and act cleverly as Erling and Tortenssen, Mr. Arthur Playfair does

MISS BOND. MR. GROSSMITH. MISS TERRISS.

capital service as Harold, notably in leading the Hussars' ballet, and Mr. John Le Hay contributes a neat little sketch of the senile Syndic. Miss Gertrude Aylward makes a most vivacious vivandiere, and Miss May Cross a sprightly peasant. The opera owes not a little of its success to Mr. Percy Anderson, who has designed the dresses with the artistic taste that is always so happily conspicuous in his work. The subdued tones of the costumes are singularly pretty. Mr. Gilbert has stage-managed the opera, and all that this means will be readily understood by those who are familiar with his pieces. Encores were frequent throughout the evening, and at the fall of the curtain the applause was long and loud.

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ADVERTISEMENTS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE NEW-YORK TRIBUNE WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE UPTOWN OFFICE, No. 1,242 Broadway, 2d door north of Thirty-first-st.; and ADVERTISEMENTS at the following Branch Offices: 254 Eighth-ave., s. e. corner Twenty-third-st.; 152 Sixth-ave., 157 Fourth-ave., cor. Fourteenth-st.; 650 Third-ave., 760 Third-ave., cor. Forty-seventh-st.; 1,026 Third-ave., near Sixty-first-st.; 1,708 First-ave.; 106 West Forty-second-st.; 192 Columbus-ave.; 52 Avenue A; 1,323 Third-ave.; 20 West Fourteenth-st.; 257 West Forty-second-st.; 554 Third-ave.; 1,338 Third-ave.; 2,051 Third-ave., between One-hundred-and-twelfth and One-hundred-and-thirteenth sts.

REAL ESTATE.

BUSINESS ON THE EXCHANGES.

The real estate property offered at auction yesterday was not of much interest, and the plaintiffs were the chief buyers. At the Trinity salesroom John N. Golding offered No. 257 to 271 West One-hundred-and-thirty-sixth-st., six three-story brick dwellings, on land 98x99.11. They sold to the plaintiff for $31,575 31. The auctioneer then offered the same property separately, and free and clear. The houses brought $20,000 and the lots $10,000, from the same buyer. William Kenneily sold under foreclosure No. 495 Water-st., extending to No. 251 South-st. Two five-story brick store buildings, on a lot 24x100, sold to August Lambert, trustee of the property, for $18,000. The same auctioneer offered at public auction three lots at the southeast corner of Tiffany and One-hundred-and-sixty-seventh sts., about 79x110. They sold to Phillip Reville for $3,600. The other sales were adjourned.

As is usual on a Monday, the real estate market was somewhat dull. The owners of property have, in consequence of the recent election, hardened their prices. Although many deals are known to be in progress, but few sales are reported.

John N. Golding has sold the residence property, No. 4 East Seventy-eight-st., 22.6x90x82.2, for Mrs. Falk for about $60,000. The lot was sold by William N. Cohen to Mrs. Lauderbach for $27,000 in November, 1886. In July, 1887, Mrs. Lauderbach disposed of her interest to Edward Kilpatrick, the builder, He erected the house and sold it to Mrs. Falk.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS.

Sheriff-st., w. s. 100 ft. s. of Rivington-st., 25x100, and other property; Robert B. Merritt and wife to Amelia F. Baker	$1
Willett-st., w. s. 150 ft. s. of Rivington-st., 25x100; Nathan Ritterman and wife to Abraham Schulder	33,000
18th-st., n. s. 25x92, lot 69, map estate James R. Smith; Henry A. Hurlbut to William Wetterer.	1
31st-st., Nos. 303 and 305 East; Emanuel Hellner et al to William W. Gallagher	14,500
32d-st., No. 362 West; Mary R. Bow and another to Jennie T. Wells	1
91st-st., s. s. 100 ft. e. of Amsterdam-ave., 425x100.8; Meyer A. Bernheimer et al to Frederick W. Sauer et al	195,500
54th-st., n. s. 125 ft. w. of 10th-ave., 25x100, ½ part; Henry Simermeyer et al to John Simermeyer et al	19,500
86th-st., n. s. 225 ft. w. of Central Park West, 25x100.11; Samuel Colgate to Dwight H. Olmstead.	1
Amsterdam-ave., No. 345; Jacob and Skinner Realty Co. to Frank L. Fisher	1
84th-st., n. s. 262 ft. w. of West End-ave., 18x102.2; William E. Pruden to Katie Dick	1
24-ave., s. e. corner of 26th-st., 100.8x200; Fred. erick W. Rhinelander and wife to Joseph J. Schreiner	75,000
44th-st., No. 226 East, one-fifth part; Barbara Kumpf to Rosalie J. Kumpf	1
Same property; Michael J. Kumpf and another to same	1
10th-st., s. e. corner Madison-ave., 75x100.11; John McCarthy and wife to Fredericke Mayer	1
148th-st., s. s. 367.6 ft. w. of Amsterdam-ave., 15.6x99.11; William H. Brandt and wife to Lot. to S. Reynolds	15,000
134th-st., n. s. 100 ft. w. of 8th-ave., 16x99.11; Henry Frankenfield to Hattie E. Engelhell	6,750
P. De Voursney to Hattie E. Engelhell	1
121st-st., Nos. 247 249 West; Henry M. Weed to Frank H. Finch	24,000
West End-ave., w. s. 50 ft. s. of 97th-st., 16.6x100; Peter R. J. Coughlan and wife to Elizabeth L. Barrett	13,000
Edgecombe-ave., e. s. 37.4 ft. s. of 137th-st., 17.6x90; John L. N. Hunt, referee, to Frederic J. de Peyster	1
147th-st., n. s. 342 ft. e. of Boulevard, 16x99.11; Bernard Havanagh and wife to Alice F. L. Duffy	1
Kingsbridge Road, e. s. 189.10 ft. n. of 187th-st., 50x irregular; Elizabeth B. Carlin to John W. Horner	1,800
Dawson-st., s. s. 91.10 ft. e. of Prospect-ave., 25x127.4x25x126.3; Simon Danzig et al to Joseph Kammeier and wife	750
Franklin-ave., s. w. corner Spring Place, 110x80x100x136; John P. Schuchman to Thomas Darling	1,550
170th-st., s. s. 300 ft. e. of Jackson-ave., 100x125; George M. Van Hoesen, referee, to August Roskamp	825
Croton-ave., e. s. 50 ft. s. of John-st., 25x102; Rufus R. Randall and wife to Sarah J. Foster	450
Martha-ave., e. s. 125 ft. n. of 21-ave., 25x100; Ella L. Hedbert to Robert Allen	1
Bainbridge-ave., e. s. 130 ft. s. of Travers-st., 25x100.2x25.3x107; Benjamin F. Dekiyn to John Haupt	8,000

RECORDED MORTGAGES.

Andrews, Elizabeth F. to P. S. Purser, as executor, 8th-st., n. s. 100 ft. e. of Railroad-ave., 3 years	20,000
Budelman, Henry, and wife to Title Guarantee and Trust Co., 3d-ave., e. s. 50 ft. n. of 110th-st., 3 years	2,000
Bluxome, Louisa, to Lydia S. Horn, 131st-st., s. s. 300 ft. e. of 7th-ave., 3 years	8,700
Camp, Hugh N. and wife to C. M. Bartelle, extra parcel in 24th Ward, lying west of and near Macomb's Dam Road, 3 7-10 acres, 1 year	1,200
Dick, Katie, to William E. Pruden, 84th-st., n. s. 262 ft. w. of West End-ave., 1 year	17,500
Fisher, Frank L. to F. P. Middlebrook, Amsterdam-ave., e. s. 52.2 ft. n. of 70th-st., 1 and 3 years	17,500
Gallagher, William W. to Emanuel Hellner and another, Nos. 303 and 305 East 31st-st., 1 year, 2 mortgages	1,436
Gillingham, Thomas L. to John Remschmidt et al.	400
Home-st., n. s. 100 ft. w. of Fox-st., 2 mortgages	5,000
Gillingham, Margaret, to James Hart	11,000
Tiffany-st., w. s. 152.11 ft. n. of 167th-st., 1 year	3,000
Hackett, Mary A. to Alfred Roe and another, trustees, 3d-ave., n. s. 120.6 ft. n. e. of 129th-st., 1 year	1,000
Horner, John W. to Elizabeth R. Carlin, Kingsbridge Road, e. s. 189.10 ft. n. of 187th-st., demand	3,000
Hansen, Emilie L. to Thomas E. Greacen et al, executors, Suburban-st., w. s. 177.6 ft. s. of Bainbridge-ave., 3 years	10,000
Hay, Isabella, and another to the New-York Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men, 127th-st., s. s. 396.8 ft. e. of 8th-ave., 3 years	13,500
Kammeier, Joseph, and wife to Simon Danzig and another, Dawson-st., s. s. 91.10 ft. e. of Prospect-ave., 2 mortgages, 2 and 3 years	750
Keenan, Matthew C. to the Bradley and Currier Co., 104, 133d-st