



Precious Nonsense

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWESTERN GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

May 1991 -- Issue 30

"After all, for thorough, unconstrained unconventional enjoyment give me a pic-nic." . .

As Thespis says in Thespis. Plans for a theater outing Annual Meeting have, I'm sorry to say, fallen through, so we're going to do the next best thing and have a picnic. The date is July 27th, the place is the Gezik house in Lisle, Illinois, and we'll look forward to seeing you there.

In the meantime, we have some other interesting things to think about, like the Annual Big Quiz (which is plenty for anyone to think about!), a review and description of the film Dick Deadeye, plus other news we've managed to pick up here and there. Let's see what's going on.

Oh, Members, How Say You, What is it You've Done?

Many of us no doubt remember the fascinating talk Member Dr. Hal Kanthor gave at the 1989 *Basingstoke* G&S weekend in Pennsylvania. Well, his article about the numerous productions of H.M.S. Pinafore that went on during Boston's 1878-1879 theater season has finally been published: in the Spring 1991 issue of the Journal of Popular Culture (v. 24, p. 119-127). Congratulations!

The Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society recently donated compact disc recordings of *Iolanthe* and *Ruddigore* to the St. Charles Public Library (Illinois) in honor of member Carol Vilien, and a copy of *The Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon* to the DeKalb Public Library (again, Illinois) in honor of members Lorna and Norman Vogt. We certainly hope they, and the other library users, will enjoy the materials, and put them to good use.

What Cheer! What Cheer! {Midwestern}

The Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Co. are tentatively scheduled to give H.M.S. Pinafore during the

University of Chicago's Summer Nights Festival, on August 16-18. We'll pass on any more information as we get it.

As far as we know, the Savoy-Aires (P.O. Box 126, Evanston, IL 60204) are still going to be giving Offenbach's opera The Brigands, with the libretto translated by W.S. Gilbert, sometime during the summer (probably during the middle of August). We'll look forward to hearing the specific performance dates. *If you can't wait that long to see them perform, though, they are scheduled to give a performance sampler entitled "A Gilbert and Sullivan Anthology" at the Chicago Historical Society on June 2, 1991, at 2:00 pm. Tickets are \$7.00 for Historical Society Members and \$12.00 for non-members. Reservations are required. For more information, call the Historical Society at (312) 642-4600, and to register by mail (the form we have says mail registration is required), write The Chicago Historical Society; The Elizabeth F. Cheney Center for Education and Public Programs; Clark Street at North Avenue; Chicago, IL 60614.*

We have received the performance schedule for the 1991 Ohio Light Opera (The College of Wooster; Wooster, OH 44691 {[216] 263-2345}). This year, they will be presenting *The New Moonx* (June 12*, 15, 16, 20, 26; July 7, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 31; and August 9), *A Night in Venice* (June

13*, 15, 19, 21, 29; July 2, 6, 24; August 4, and 11), *A Waltz Dream* (June 14*, 22, 25; July 3, 13, 18; August 4, and 11), **Patience** (June 18*, 22, 7; July 5, 13, 21, 31; and August 10), *The Land of Smiles* (June 23*, 29; July 25; 30; August 2, and 7), *Orpheus in the Underworld* (June 28*, 30; July 6, 10, 23, 27; August 1, and 10), *L'Etoile (The Star)* (July 9*, 11, 14, 20, 26; August 3, and 7), and **Iolanthe** (July 17*, 19, 27, 28; August 3, 6, and 8). Underlined dates are 2:00 matinees, and the rest start at 8:00 pm. Starred (*) performances are opening night gala celebrations (although some of them are matinees), at which the audience is invited to a reception in the theater lobby following the performance. If we should, though, it would probably be the weekend of July 19-21. Individual tickets are \$18.00 for Tuesday Matinees, and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings, and \$20.00 for Wednesday matinees, and both performances on Saturday and Sunday. Group prices start at 20 people.

What Cheer! What Cheer! {Elsewhere}

As far as we know, the Washington Savoyards (P.O. Box 34584, Bethesda, MD 20827 / (301) 946-6250) are going to be presenting Patience May 30-June 2. Individual tickets run from \$11 to \$16, depending on age and seating preference. For more information, get in touch with the company.

The April and May 1991 *Palace Peepers* (N.Y. G&S Society) mentioned that the Savoy Company (of Philadelphia) will be presenting a double bill of Trial By Jury and Sorcerer May 31-June 1 at the Academy of Music, and June 7-8 at the open-air amphitheater at Longwood

Gardens. For more information (and to see if the company may be appearing on other dates at Longwood Gardens), contact Geoffrey R. Berwind; 34 Llandillo Rd.; Havertown, PA 19083. Those shows at Longwood Gardens are supposed to really be something to see.

We here from John Tugwell in England that the [New] D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, Birmingham,

is touring new productions of Gondoliers and Iolanthe, under the musical direction of John Pryce-Jones. According to the flyer, the company is performing at the Bristol Hippodrome May 20-25, so if you're going to be in England during the late spring [or early summer, it sounds like you could probably catch a performance somewhere in the country. The flyer says of the company:

The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company has opened a new chapter in its long and illustrious history by establishing its national and international touring base in Birmingham--where its new home is the Alexandra Theatre.

The relocation of the Company follows three successful nationwide tours, two London seasons and a triumphant debut in Los Angeles and has been made possible by the generosity and foresight of Birmingham City Council.

Such foresight was also the hallmark of entrepreneur Richard D'Oyly Carte. . . [I]t should not be forgotten that Richard D'Oyly Carte often presented works by composers other than Gilbert & Sullivan. In keeping with those innovative policies, the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company plans to broaden its performance repertoire and establish itself as Britain's premier light opera company.

This, allied to a new image and a new home, heralds an exciting future for the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company but its traditions remain firmly rooted in the tuneful, colourful and humorous operas of Gilbert & Sullivan.

It's great if it works. Not to dump cold water on the company's enthusiasm, but the May 1991 *Palace Peeper* (New York G&S Society) included five reviews of the company's new Gondoliers, that all seem to indicate it is one strange, surreal production, with pointless gags and a weird set. Perhaps some of our British connections can verify the reports, and tell us about their Iolanthe. In the meantime, we certainly wish the company the success it deserves.

For those of us who are going to be in England this summer, The Mansion House at Grims Dyke (Old Redding, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6SH / Tel: 01-954-4227 / Fax 01-954-4560) has released its 1991 summer programme. They're going to continue to have their Sunday Soirees (Library Bar opens at 7:00 pm, Dinner at 8:00, with a costumed performance of G&S songs. Ends about 10:45 pm. £32.00) June 30th will feature hit songs from musicals since the 50's. They're also open for private parties of 50 or more. If you want to stay over night of a Sunday, after one of these affairs, accommodations are available for £20 a person (including English Breakfast). The specific dates aren't mentioned, but Summer Festival Evenings are also planned. The two hour show begins at 6:00 pm, and will feature Pinafore (not again! Ed.) in the first hour, a light plated buffet in the interval, and songs and choruses from the other operas in the second half. The show finished about 9:15 pm. The price is £27.50 a person. Finally, the first Sunday of June, July, and August, they will feature a guided tour of the grounds, followed by an afternoon cream tea "with intervals of some of the popular and not so well known songs from the operettas". The tour begins at 3:15, and the affair ends about 5:15.

By the way, maybe some of our British members can illuminate some of us benighted Midwesterners: What is a cream tea?

We hear from member Martha Liehe that the University of Colorado at Boulder's Colorado Gilbert & Sullivan Festival Summer '91 is going to be in repertory July 5-27. The shows will be a double bill of Trial by Jury and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* (an unusual combination) July 5*, 8, 11, 13*, 14*, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27; and Yeomen July 6, 7, 10, 12, 18, 20, 24, and 26 (all performances at 8:00 pm). Richard Sheldon, of California's "Opera A La Carte", will be the stage director for the G&S offerings, and on *starred dates will appear as the Judge in TBJ. Tickets are \$13.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children under 12, and \$20.00 (apparently for everybody) on July 8, 13, and 14. Performances are at the Imig Music Building on the campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder. The flyer here

has no telephone number for more information, though there is one for telephone orders {it's (303) 492-4205, for what it's worth. If it turns out to be the wrong number, maybe the operator can give you the right one}. To order tickets by mail, send your order and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Lyric Theatre Tickets; College of Music; University of Colorado; Campus Box 301; Boulder, CO 80309-0301.

We learn from Hal Kanthor that Cornell University's Adult University Education Vacations is going to include what appears to be a week of G&S July 14-20. The seminar is called "Gilbert and Sullivan Live!", and, according to the copy in hand, is to be led by classicist Frederick Ahl and historian David Wyatt. The squib goes on to say they have performed in and directed all of the surviving works at one time or another, and they have team taught a full-year Gilbert and Sullivan course at Cornell. It sounds like they're going to talk about all the operas during the week, and like the seminar might be kind of fun. For those interested, inquiries can be made to Cornell Adult University, 626 Thurston Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850. If anyone goes, we'd love to hear what goes on.

The Lyric Opera of Dallas (8111 Preston Rd., Suite 818; Dallas, TX 75225-6316 / (214) 368-2183 {FAX: (214) 368-6466} is going to be presenting The Pirates of Penzance August 21-23 {8:15 curtain} and 25 {2:30 curtain}. Performances will be at The Majestic Theatre; 1925 Elm St.; Dallas, TX 75201 / Box Office: (214) 368-2183 (you can call them for ticket prices, plus information on *Man of La Mancha*, which they will be giving July 18-21). While the cast for the Debut performance (August 21) is different from that of the regular performance, the cast will apparently feature Eric Shilling, a well-known "old school" G&S performer (that is, he does it "straight", not "strange"). Not too long ago, the company gave Gondoliers, and were said to have done it very well, too. We trust their Pirates will be equally pleasing.

We hear from Anne Stanyon and the May 1991 Palace Peeper that the 1992 Sullivan Festival (the one the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society hosts) will be

May 23-25, 1992, in Hull, England. According to the notice in the Peeper, the main event will be a concert by the Hull Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras. The concert should include recently-discovered **Thespis** ballet music (which we understand was discovered in Sullivan's music for "Victoria and Merrie England", though we were perhaps misinformed), a concert performance of *Trial by Jury*, and Sullivan's "Festival Te Deum". Other performances should include "The Window", "Day Dreams", chamber pieces, part songs, operatic rarities, and an organ recital. Prices have not yet been set, but the cost is likely to run upwards of £150. Places can be reserved with the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society by sending a check or whatever for £30 to the Society, c/o Stephen Turnbull; Cockfield House; 48 Front Street; Cockfield, Bishop Auckland; Co. Durham DL13 5DS England.

Let the Welkin Ring with the News

We still haven't heard anything from the Chicago Gilbert and Sullivan Society for some time. Rumor has it that the organization has folded, but so far we haven't heard anything but rumors to that effect. If anyone has any definite information about the group's status, please do pass it on. As we mentioned last time, if you would like to send them some encouragement (since we don't know what their plans are, encouragement at this point would probably be better than money), the address for the Chicago Gilbert and Sullivan Society (so far as we know) is P.O. Box 267840; Chicago, IL 60626. If we hear anything about them here, we'll let you know.

Though we haven't heard from the Chicago group, we did hear from *The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company* (P.O. Box 172, Minneapolis, MN 55440 / (612) 925-9159). They have apparently just completed a successful run of Grand Duke (too bad they didn't hear about us sooner so we could have gotten in on it), and so we'll be looking forward to more news of their work.

This seems to be the season for discoveries. We also heard from *The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin (Texas)* (P.O. Box 684254; Austin, TX 78768). They recently finished a production of Pirates, and plans seem to be underway for a double bill of Cox and Box and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (Gilbert's very funny parody of Hamlet) to be given August 9-25 probably at the new ZSTC Arena Theater (no address is given, but the company could probably straighten out those interested in attending. It will no doubt straighten out S/A Cole if she got the information mixed up). In any event, we will look forward to hearing more news of their work, too.

There is some good news on the rumor front, though. It looks like the Savoy-Aires' Chicago G&S Weekend is going to come off sometime in May, 1992. Nothing is definite yet, other than that the weekend is in the works, but you can be sure we'll pass on what we hear when we hear it!

A Nice Dilemma We Have Here

Now here's a puzzlement our many video collectors should be able to solve: Does anyone know where one can get a video of Patience? We got a letter a couple of months ago asking if any were available commercially: apparently UMGASS didn't videotape their production, and the inquiring member needs a video copy of the opera. S/A Cole asked a couple of likely members who collect G&S videos, and neither of them seem to have a copy, either. A number of years ago, during the "Compleat Gilbert & Sullivan" series on PBS, some of their productions were released on video, and they presented the New Sadler's Well's production of Patience as part of the series (Sandra Dugdale appeared as Patience, with, I think, Derek Hammond-Stroud as Bunthorne), but whether this production was released on video, and if it was, if it's still available, is a mystery. If someone could clear it up, we'd sure appreciate it!

Here's another difficulty somebody can probably help with. Member Patricia Burton knows of a group in her area that wants to do some G&S. In

order to do it better, they're trying to get copies of William Cox-Ife's two works on performing G&S: Training the Gilbert and Sullivan Chorus and How to Sing Both Gilbert and Sullivan. Does anyone have copies they would like to part with, or does anyone know where one can buy copies of these works? Please do let us know: Patricia Burton and her group have been trying to get them for some time and are looking forward to hearing from you!

The Seventh Annual MGS Big Quiz

It's that ever-popular time again. You may remember in the last Nonsense, we suggested we go a quiz based on G&S's appearance in the movies, and further suggested members send in trivia questions to use. You aren't going to believe this (well, maybe you will), but we didn't get any movie-related G&S trivia questions. I guess G&S at the movies just isn't our thing. Anyway, Quizmaster Arthur Robinson came through again, and we have fifty questions again this year to play around with.

As always, the rules are very simple. The member who answers the most questions correctly wins a prize. You can refer to any reference sources you like, but all responses must be received by the Mid-western Gilbert and Sullivan Society by **August 5, 1991**. The answers will be checked and winners will be notified. In case of a tie, the response received first will take precedence, and decisions of the quiz correcters are final. This year's big prize winner will receive copies of Godfrey Cave Associates' reproduction of the libretti of The Mikado and The Yeomen of the Guard, illustrated by W. Russell Flint and Charles E. Brock, R.I. They were provided by member Norman Vogt and the late Warren Colson, and we certainly appreciated their kindness in donating them.

Now, if you feel intimidated, you need not. The Society's founding fathers, in their wisdom, knew that many members would be novices in matters G&S-ical, so they saw to it that the member who makes an honest effort to answer the questions correctly and answers the fewest correctly will also win a nice prize. Last year's big winners, Larry

Garvin and Laurie Verson, are disqualified from winning a big prize this year, but all are welcome to participate. We'll look forward to hearing from you (before August 5, don't forget). Any Questions? Then let the Revels Commence!

1. What mystery novel by John Dickson Carr has a title taken from a Gilbert and Sullivan Song?
2. In the Mollie Hardwicke mystery novel Perish in July, what role was the murdered character supposed to play in the local production of The Yeomen of the Guard?
3. What G&S opera is being rehearsed in Charlotte MacLeod's mystery novel The Plain Old Man?
4. Who, in the G&S operas, is said to have shell-like ears?
5. Who produced the only affordable concordance to the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas?
6. Who can tell a woman's age in half a minute?
7. Which G&S opera is being performed in the film The Girl Said No?
8. What is the name of Elsie Maynard's mother?
9. What G&S opera is being rehearsed in the Sherlock Holmes pastiche (non-Arthur Conan Doyle) novel The West End Horror?
10. In the film Raiders of the Lost Ark, one of Indiana Jones' friends has a tendency to sing G&S songs when he is happy. What is the name of the actor who played that friend?
11. What novel by Charles Dickens did Gilbert adapt for the stage?
12. Speaking of Dickens, in which two operas is there a reference to Dickens?
13. In which opera is Mr. Micawber mentioned?
14. In Isaac Asimov's short story "Runaround", a robot goes mad. Besides the fact it wasn't doing its job, how could its supervisors tell?
15. Speaking of robots, here's a snappy question: what do Nanki-Poo in the 1939 filming of The Mikado and Artoo-Detoo in the 1977 filming of Star Wars have in common?
16. According to Mr Goldbury (Utopia Ltd.), what is the ideal height and weight for an English Girl?
17. How many G&S operas opened in March?
18. Who describes himself as "Practically Alive"?
19. Who is foiled by a Union Jack and a tiger-cat?
20. In the film Foul Play, an important interna-

- tional figure is supposed to be assassinated during a production of The Mikado: who was that important personage?
21. In which opera is the name Sir Martin Byfleet found?
 22. Who went to live among the frogs, and why did he or she do it?
 23. In the short story, "A Feline Felony", by Lael J. Littke (it appeared in Alfred Hitchcock's anthology Stories to Stay Awake By, for what it's worth), the hero was taught, among other things, to sing songs from the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. Why?
 24. Who is described as "A plump and pleasing person"?
 25. Who is threatened with a nephew's curse?
 26. For what crime was Ko-Ko originally condemned to death?
 27. Who is described as "a clean old gentleman"?
 28. In which G&S opera is there a reference to Offenbach's La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein?
 29. Speaking of androids, at one time Gilbert thought of writing a comic opera, to be set by Sullivan, based on Frankenstein (yes, that's what it says). Whom did Gilbert have in mind to play the Monster?
 30. How long had Sir Roderic been dead when the action of Ruddigore begins?
 31. How old is the Piratical Maid-of-all-Work Ruth?
 32. The famous former D'Oyly Carte-r Martyn Green is known to have been in three movies. What was the title of the one that was not G&S-related?
 33. What is S/A Cole's middle initial?
 34. Who often rolls down One Tree Hill (or claims to do so)?
 35. In what month does The Yeomen of the Guard take place?
 36. Who played the three little maids from school in the 1967 film version of The Mikado?
 37. In various operas there appear characters of such professions as Lord Chancellor (Iolanthe), Lord Chamberlain (Utopia Ltd.), and solicitor (Patience). In which opera are all of these professions represented?
 38. What three operas contain a character with the knightly degree K.C.B.?
 39. What is the name of the castle which Princess Ida converts into her university campus?
 40. What G&S songs are performed in the movie Chariots of Fire?
 41. Speaking of Chariots of Fire, what was the name of the Savoyard who married one of the story's heroes, Harold Abrahams?
 42. In which opera does a character named "Hercules" come on stage?
 43. Who played Pooh-Bah in the 1939 filming of The Mikado?
 44. Who played Pooh-Bah in the 1967 filming of The Mikado?
 45. Which G&S opera was recently picketed in California for being racist?
 46. Who played Gilbert and Sullivan in the 1953 film The Gilbert and Sullivan Story?
 47. John Philip Sousa, the United States' "March King", wrote a march based on themes from one of the G&S operas. What was the name of the march?
 48. Which G&S song is quoted in Booth Tarkington's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel The Magnificent Ambersons?
 49. How many of the G&S operas have plots that hinge upon the switching of children in infancy?
 50. What is a snickersnee?
- BONUS QUESTION (oh, you're going to hate this one!): As we know, in Ruddigore, there is a scene in which the hero is haunted in a picture gallery by his ancestors who accuse him of cowardice. Name a film in which this scene is inverted: in which the hero haunts the picture gallery of his "accursed line" and accuses them of cowardice. (Hint: Perhaps there are more than one, but the film the quizmaster has in mind is set during World War II).
- Last time around, you may recall, we were looking for a plot description of the full-length animated feature Dick Deadeye, which is now available from Procenium Entertainment (P.O. Box 909; Hightstown, NJ 08520 / (1-800) 222-6260). We didn't get a plot description, but member Winfield Smith has come through with his review of the film. Since he printed it off in such a way that the MGS

Editorial Board (such as she is) could cut-and-paste it into the Nonsense, that's just what she did. Here is his review of Ronald Searle's Dick Deadeye:

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Dick Deadeye, or Duty Done.

The editor tells me that this 1975 animated feature movie has again been released in VHS form and, knowing that I have a copy of the original release, requests a review.

Dick Deadeye is an 80-minute animated cartoon of which the most worthy creators are Gilbert, Sullivan, and Ronald Searle. The latter's designs were turned into animated film in England by Bill Melendex, the U. S. animator responsible for the Charlie Brown cartoon TV specials. Searle's busy, scratchy designs, marvelously suited to the Victorian subject matter, may have been magnificent on the big screen, but they suffer in the transfer to 525-line video. Most unfortunately, the writer(s) efforts to synthesize a new script out of the G&S characters, plots, and dialog achieved very uneven but mostly uninteresting results, with much of the dialog below the level of the average Saturday morning TV cartoon. The result is a curiosity with numerous engaging aspects and some serious flaws. Neither a kiddie movie nor one with much appeal to the general market. Dick Deadeye will please most heavily the rare G&S aficionado who is able to be amused rather than enraged by the considerable liberties taken with Gilbert's words as well as with Sullivan's melodies and scoring.

The producers must have expected to register

heavily with both adults and children, and accompanied the original release with a deluxe-jacketed LP record of the sound track and also a colorful storybook with lots of Searle-inspired art (and insufferable text by Jeremy Hornsby). All their hopes were quickly dashed, however, by the picture's total failure in its initial runs in London, Boston, and Los Angeles (and despite its being dubbed "One of the top 20 films of the year" by the generally more reliable Charles Champlin of the L.A. Times).

The editor has requested an account of the plot. This is a task that would be several times more difficult as accounting for the plot of *The Grand Duke*, so I shall only say that it borrows characters, songs and plotlines from *Trial by Jury*, *Sorcerer*, *Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *The Mikado*, and *Utopia, Limited* (although not much from the last: *Princess Zara* and her maidens appear as bare-breasted Los Vegas showgirls in the finale, but their music is mostly from *Iolanthe*).

The lyrics are clever at least half of the time, and most so when they stick rather close to the originals. Here are some things I liked about the show:

- o the initial sequence, in which the voice of an unseen royal person declares the motion picture to be open, as if it were a public improvement or a charity fair;
- o all the voice characterizations, from Dick Deadeye (who sounds like John Lennon) and Nanki-Poo (who sounds like any guitar-strumming, love bead wearing '60's teenager) to the judge and all the growling, burping pirates and uniformed officers of high and low rank -- a magnificent gallery of dirty old men;
- o the varied orchestrations (Nashville, Gospel, Delta, Las Vegas, Broadway and in some places plain old fully scored sound stage);
- o and of course, the faces (and bodies!) and settings designed by Ronald Searle.

I should note that while the stereo phonograph record has very nice, clear sound, the soundtrack on my VHS tape sounds rather muddy in spots. My present stereo VCR is not equipped to separate the two linear tracks that were first used to record stereo (assuming, as I do, that my videotape is recorded in stereo). A reissue, if it is re-mastered, might allow both to be heard at their best.

After the dismal failure of the film, the collateral book and record album were dumped on the remainder market, where I purchased a dozen of each. The book is interesting for its Searle-inspired art rather than for its value as a childrens story. (The exact division of drawing labor seems to be that the endpapers reproduce Searle's character drawings for Buttercup and Major General Stanley, and the title page his designs for Dick Deadeye. The book uses his background designs, mostly Victorian interiors and exteriors. The actual film animation and the character drawings for the book are the work of Melendez and his crew, working from Searle's designs.) The phonograph record makes the music and lyrics clearly audible and omits the dialogue, which is mostly boring where it isn't silly.

My impulsive purchase does not stand as one of my better investments, and I am now prepared to part with mint copies of the records, in the original shrink wrap, at the reasonable figure of \$5.00, post-paid to any domestic address, while the supply lasts. Address orders to me at 5825 S. Blackstone Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. I could only find one extra copy of the book and shall contribute it and a record to the upcoming Pinafore sing-a-long and silent auction to benefit the Savoy-Aires, who need the money.

Well, now we know what the film looks and sounds like, and that it is thick with bouncing beauties and dirty old men, but we still don't know what it's about. For what it's worth, there are those who have seen the film who still aren't sure what it's about. It really is one weird film. It's been years since she's seen it, but Sarah Cole (with much referring to a copy of the Picture Book) is willing to hazard an explanation. As she recalls, this is how it goes:

Somehow or other, Dick Deadeye finds out that England's most important possession, the "Ultimate Secret", has been stolen and he spends the rest of the film trying to get it back. After trying to enlist the help of the Military (through the Major General), he finds the Sorcerer who has stolen it, and who plans to sell it to the Pirate King. In order to keep Dick Deadeye from getting it, the Sorcerer gives it to his lizard familiar (in the book, it's called a schlamelian, but it really doesn't make any difference to the story), who somehow winds up in Buttercup's basket of wares.

Now, roaming through the plot are a pair of identical twins, Nanki and Poo. Nanki is very good, and Poo is very bad. In any event, Poo steals Buttercup's basket, and Nanki is arrested and imprisoned for it. In the meantime, Poo tries to sell the basket and all it contains to the Sorcerer. The Pirates figure out that Poo has the Ultimate Secret, so they grab Poo, the Sorcerer, and decide to put out to sea. Dick Deadeye somehow gets wind of it at a pub frequented by pirates (I think he is in love with the barmaid Rose Maybud, but I'm not sure. She's there in any event, and figures at the end of the story) Anyway, he goes to see the Admiral (sic. In his bathtub, attended by the sisters, cousins and aunts who follow him everywhere, or something to that effect) about getting a ship to follow them. He gets the Pinafore, and they take off after the Pirates. They catch up with the pirates, and somehow or other, it is determined that the Captain of the Pinafore is really the Pirate King, and visa versa.

While all this is going on, Poo escapes to a desert island with the Ultimate Secret. Everybody follows him, and find themselves on the island of Utopia, which is peopled by Las Vegas Showgirls. The queen of the island is Princess Zara. (Incidentally, while looking through the picture book, it struck me that these are the only women in the whole story whose figures have normal proportions. None of that figure is left to the imagination, either, but anyway.) They catch up with Poo, get the Ultimate Secret away from him, and it is revealed to be:

It's Love that Makes the World Go Round.

It turns out that Nanki and Poo were just halves of one man, so they somehow turn into one individual. Now that the Secret is Revealed, Princess Zara

turns into the fantasy woman Nanki had been in love with (and now that Nanki-Poo is a complete man, she can love him in return). Everybody picks a mate, and in light of the Ultimate Secret, Dick Deadeye turns into a handsome sailor that Rose Maybud falls in love with, and they all presumably live happily ever after.

If anyone has seen the film lately and wants to correct the plot, go right ahead. Anyway, that's the upshot of the story as I recall. If you want to look at the picture book, it should be easily obtainable through interlibrary loan. Ask for: Searle, Ronald. Dick Deadeye. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975. ISBN 0151256004.

Where Can it Be?

Harry Benford's revised Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon is now available from Sarah Jennings Press (2222 Fuller Rd.; Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2313 / (313) 665-7410) for \$20.00. For Canadian addresses, it's \$25.00 Canadian, and for the U.K., £11. All prices include shipping, handling, and sales tax. (If you live somewhere else, the price of the book is US\$19.00, and shipping and all will be billed. Discounts are also available on orders of five or more). It's a nice, yellow, trade-size paperback (7" x 10", 270 pages) with lots of pictures and an index, a bibliography, and the libretto of *The Zoo*. We still don't have a review of it ready, but if all goes well, there will be one in the next *Nonsense*. In the meantime, what we've seen of it so far looks pretty good. **By the way, the MGS has obtained several copies, and is now looking for public, school, or college libraries to donate them to. If you would like to see your local needy library (these days, they are all needy: ask your local librarian if you don't believe me!) so honored, tell S/A Cole the name of your library and the name of the acquisitions librarian, and she'll see what can be done.**

As such, this notice doesn't have much to do with G&S, but it would no doubt be of interest to costumers or those of the Victorian persuasion. We don't know how many of us are in the market for "Items

for the 19th Century Impression", but that is the motto of Amazon Vinegar & Pickling Works Dry Goods (2218 E. 11th St.; Davenport, IA 52803 / (309) 786-3504), and they certainly seem to be the shop for them. We received a 120-page catalog of patterns for clothes and accessories through the ages, and a smaller one of period ("period" being the Victorian period and the 1800's in general) books of virtually all varieties, ready-made period clothes and accessories, and period sewing notions that regular fabric stores don't normally stock. The price on the big catalog is \$5.00, and that on the small one is \$2.00 (they just sent them to the MGS: we didn't know about the company in the first place to ask for catalogs). Since we haven't had any experience with them, we also don't know how reliable a company this is--maybe some of our members who have dealt with them already can clear us up on this point--but if you're looking for vintage patterns and notions and books and what-have-you, it wouldn't hurt to get in touch with them. I never saw so much period stuff!

Well, here they are: The Plans for the 1991 MGS Annual Meeting! (and a Postcard Drawing slipped in on the side!)

You may recall we had suggested the possibility of having an annual outing in connection with the Ohio Light Opera's season; how we might want to have some kind of get-together the weekend they would be putting on *Iolanthe* and *Patience*. Well, not long after the March Nonsense came out, I got a call from one of our Ohio members, to say that, among other things, all the reasonably-priced hotels in the Wooster, Ohio, area were already booked solid for that weekend. That kind of put the kibosh

on that idea, and aside from Savoy-Aires' non-G&S summer offering, the summer looks like a pretty "dry" one. Nobody had any ideas about what we could do for an annual meeting/outing.

Nobody but one: Helen Wysocki-Gezik has suggested we have a party at her house in Lisle. So that's what we're going to do.

We are going to have a potluck picnic party at her house on July 27, 1991.

The afternoon will start at 2:00 pm with fun and games in the nearby park (S/A Cole will even bring her croquet set), followed by a picnic dinner, and a showing of that famous (or infamous, depending on who you ask) 1939 filming of The Mikado, starring Martyn Green. In between, we ought to fit in a good deal of visiting, and who knows! maybe even a business meeting. We ought to have quite a time, complete with fun, food, and the MGS's famous funny favors, so do plan on coming.

As I say, this is going to be a potluck picnic. Home-grilled hamburgers and beverages will be provided, so we're going to need some salads, desserts, and "munchies" to fill in the rest of the picnic.

So, here are our postcard drawing questions:

1. *Are you coming to the Annual Meeting July 27, 1991?*
2. *If so, what are you going to bring: a salad, a dessert, or munchies?*

(As the "Lobster Salad and Claret Cup" scene in Thespis shows, knowing who is bringing what is most important to the success of a complete picnic)

Mail your postcard in by July 5, 1991 (or, if you prefer, call S/A Cole (the number is {708} 859-2918) by July 12, 1991)

with your response. As usual, we'll have a drawing among the responses, and the winning response will receive a copy of Richard Traubner's book Operetta. Once we know who is coming, we'll send out the maps and directions to the Gezik house.

We'll look forward to seeing you July 27!

Welcome New Members

Martha, William, and Susan Liehe (Denver, CO): who collect all sorts of things, including G&S items. Eleanore G. Evans (Naples, FL): A former Auroran (from Illinois), she remembers the good old days when West Aurora High School did REAL G&S, like Iolanthe (S/A Cole remembers them performing Pirates every couple of years, but everyone, almost, gives that one.)

And I guess that's about it. We'll look forward to seeing you at the annual outing July 27th (be sure and R,SVP, so we can be sure to have enough food and favors for all). The last couple of Nonsenses have been pretty skimpy, so we are hoping to have a summer issue to make up for them. For this reason, if you have any G&S-sy news or feel inspired to write something (or have any G&S parodies lying about), do pass them on. We're about out.

By the way, while we haven't had any of these types of articles ourselves yet, a couple of members have mentioned how much they've enjoyed "bibliographical" articles in other G&S publications. They don't mean to sound unduly erudite, they just like articles that list related books and talk about them (and I'm sure we would all enjoy something like that).

That interest just gave S/A Cole one of her far-out ideas. The MGS has a fair number of science fiction fanciers: how about if someone came up with a list of SF stories that have G&S themes or elements? I understand one could put together a little list as long as Ko-Ko's from Isaac Asimov's works alone. Or a bibliography of G&S Mystery stories, for that matter. That would be another interesting list to see! There's a rumor that someone is working on a list of G&S-based children's stories. We'll be looking forward to progress reports from our reading members.

Also, one of our members was recently reading Totie Fields' book I Think I'll Start on Monday (about dieting), and one section is apparently devoted to smart retorts to people who make snide remarks about one's size. One of the snide remarks was, "It's a crime to be so fat." The response was, "That's why I wear a girdle--to make the punishment fit the crime." (p.19) She thought it might be fun to have a section

in the Nonsense of other punishments that fit the crime. It might be fun at that, so if you see any interesting instances of poetic justice (or have thought of some appropriate ones), do pass them on.

In any event, we'll look forward to hearing from you, and do keep in touch!

The Midwestern Gilbert and
Sullivan Society
c/o Miss Sarah Cole
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