

tenors lacked attacking power. The choruses, 'Be comforted' and 'Praise the Lord,' were splendidly sung, but the most successful number of the evening was the march, 'With Sheathed Swords,' in which the full strength of the orchestra and chorus found material to try their mettle, and which was sung with a *verve* seldom met with in older and larger organizations. The orchestra was augmented by drafts from the talent of other towns, and played more intelligently than at any previous concert, being well in hand all the evening, except certain reeds which were sometimes painfully obtrusive. A lack of confidence in attack was evident in all the instruments except the flutes, but when once started they played with praiseworthy restraint, and with excellent observation of the conductor and conception of his wishes. Altogether, the performance was an extremely creditable one, and one which, while it showed what can be done by energy and the will to overcome difficulties, should at the same time teach the Society that the only way to achieve success as a whole, is for each individual member to perfect himself in his own part and in his capability to perform it. To Mr. Torrington must be given all praise for his energy and unwavering courage, in bringing to a successful performance such a work as 'Naaman,' in so short a time, and with such diverse material as must necessarily compose the orchestra and chorus of the Society.

The principal events of the month at the Grand Opera House were the production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest operatic extravagance, 'The Pirates of Penzance,' and the appearance of Mr. Jefferson in 'Rip Van Winkle,' of Mr. Sothern in his customary round of characters, of Mr. and Mrs. Florence, and of the 'Pullman Car Company.'

With regard to 'the Pirates of Penzance,' the first question that will be asked, no doubt, is: How does it compare with the irrepressible but ever-popular 'Pinafore'? The question is susceptible of a ready answer. Those who prefer broad humour and catchy melodies, will still stand by their old favourite: but a critical taste will prefer the more delicate satire of 'the Pirates,' and the delightful melodiousness and richer harmonies of its almost classical music. Since the two accomplished collaborators produced their first joint work, 'Thespis, or the

Gods Grown Old,' brought out in London about eight years ago, but, curiously enough, never even mentioned on this side of the Atlantic, they have produced four works, 'Trial by Jury,' the 'Sorcerer,' 'Pinafore,' and the work now under notice. As neither the score nor the libretto of 'the Pirates' is accessible to the public, it may be worth while to give a sketch of the plot and of the principal numbers of the music.

The curtain, on rising, discovers a scene on the rocky coast of Cornwall, with the Pirate band singing a chorus somewhat after the style of the sailors' chorus with which 'Pinafore' opens. Frederick, a youth whose most noticeable quality is an extraordinarily keen sense of duty, and who has been apprenticed to the pirates in consequence of his nurse confounding the word 'pirates' with 'pilots,' appears and tells his masters that, as he will become of age in half an hour, his apprenticeship will then come to an end; and that, much as he loves them, it will then become his duty to use every effort in his power to have them exterminated, unless they will abandon their calling and return to civilization with him. The Pirate King replies that he was born a pirate, and will die a pirate, finishing by expressing his glory in his occupation in a song for baritone, 'I am a Pirate King,' a dashing air in six-eight time, with choral refrain. Ruth, Frederick's nurse, begs him to take her with him, and marry her, assuring him that she is a fine woman. Frederick is rather dubious on that point, seeing that it is sixteen years since he has set eyes on any other of the sex, but he is on the point of agreeing to her proposal, when Major-General Stanley's daughters, about fifteen in number, who are out picnicing, enter the pirates' haunt. After a spirited chorus, a proposal is made to paddle in the water, and they commence to take off their shoes, when Frederick returns, is entranced with the vision of feminine loveliness which meets his gaze, and re-leaves his feelings in the following strain:

'Oh, is there not one maiden here,  
Who does not feel the moral beauty,  
Of making worldly interest  
Subordinate to duty?

'Who would not give up willingly,  
All matrimonial ambition,  
To rescue such an one as I  
From his unfortunate condition?'