

possibility of; although we scarcely think that the somewhat ambitious alterations in Sullivan's score were improvements on the original or altogether in keeping with its general *motif*. Mr. McWade acted *Captain Corcoran* with refreshing life and zest, it being a part, as a rule, played very tamely. Miss Bartlett made his attachment to *Buttercup*, as charmingly represented by her, one in which the audience could heartily sympathize. With these exceptions, however, the acting was very *amateurish* and flat. The parts of *Sir Joseph* (Mr. F. A. Bowden), *Dick Deadeye* (Mr. L. W. Raymond) and *Hebe* (Miss Ada Somers), losing all their due prominence, and, indeed significance. The crew in this Company are so sombrely—almost dingily—dressed, as to detract very materially from the general brightness of the effect.

The Saville-Lee English Opera Company, who paid their second visit to the 'Grand' a few weeks ago, do *Pinafore* full justice all round; and have, in Mr. Digby V. Bell, an excellent singer and actor, who catches the full humour of the part of *Sir Joseph Porter* and renders it inimitably. He is ably seconded by Miss Carrie Burton, who makes a dainty and coquettish *Hebe*. This Company, however, is scarcely strong enough to attempt 'The Bohemian Girl' with much success; nor did Mr. J. J. Benitz (as *Devilshoof*), and Mr. Percy J. J. Cooper (as *Florestine*) improve matters by introducing buffoonery utterly incongruous and out of place in that opera. The most interesting performance by the Saville-Lee Company was that—for the first time in this City—of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operetta, 'The Sorcerer,' which met with success almost as remarkable as that of *Pinafore*, on its production at the *Opera Comique*, in London, a year or two ago, with George Grossmith and the late Mrs. Howard Paul in the leading parts. Whether it be that the 'points' of its satire are best appreciated in England, or that its music, although fully as charming, is not so full of 'catching' airs as *Pinafore*, it certainly has not created anything like the same enthusiasm on this side of the Atlantic. Though

it be heresy to say so, we think it superior to *Pinafore* in the humour of its plot and the quaint satire of its *libretto*; while its music, although in a somewhat higher vein, is bright and captivating in the extreme. It was well received here, and rendered very satisfactorily, Mr. Bell again decidedly taking the lead, both in acting and singing, in the part of *John Wellington Wells*, the Family Sorcerer. The marvellous grotesque dancing of Mr. George Grossmith, the originator of this part in London, contributed in a great degree to the original success of the opera. Mr. Bell, not being George Grossmith, cannot justly be taken to task for its omission; but the dancing having been omitted, we think we may fairly say that Toronto has not yet seen the 'Sorcerer.'

Mr. John T. Raymond, in a three nights' engagement last week, made his first appearance here as *Ichabod Crane*, in a new play by Mr. George Fawcett Rowe, entitled *Woolfert's Roost*, and dramatized, with many variations, from Washington Irving's book of that name. The drama is no better—rather worse—than Mr. Rowe's former not very successful attempts. There is no coherence or sequence in the plot—if plot it can be said to have—and there is not much literary merit in the dialogue by way of compensation. Some of the situations would be good if anything led up to them, or they led up to anything, but neither is the case. The associations of the piece, and the very pretty scenery it introduces, give it a sort of idyllic interest; and Mr. Raymond makes *Ichabod*, the Schoolmaster, an amusing, if not a very distinctive, character. In fact, if *Ichabod* were suddenly to exclaim 'there's millions in it!' we do not think the audience would resent it as much of an incongruity. Mr. Raymond played *Colonel Sellers*—intentionally—once again during his stay, and when we hear of Sothorn doing something better than *Dundreary*, or of Jefferson eclipsing his *Rip Van Winkle*, we shall be ready to believe that Mr. Raymond will ever make the mark in any other part that he has done in *Colonel Sellers*.

October 28th, 1879.