



The Guide to Musical Theatre

THE EMERALD ISLE OR THE CAVES OF CARRIC-CLEENA

A comic opera in 2 acts: Book and lyrics by Basil Hood. Music by Arthur Sullivan (Completed by Edward German).

Savoy Theatre, London - 27 April 1901 (205 perfs)

Herald Square Theatre, New York - 1 September, 1902 (50 perfs)

SYNOPSIS

A jolly spoof-Irish chorus introduces the hero, Terence O'Brien, an Irish patriot who, as he claims in song, is 'descended from Brian Boru'. But, alas, he speaks with an English accent, having been brought up in 'the luxurious lap of London'. He is not alone, however. All his countrymen now speak with an English accent for the English Viceroy has been giving elocution lessons in the infant schools and now there's not a man nor a colleen here that could dance an Irish jig correctly, and say 'Begorra' at the end of it with any conviction.

To the village comes one Professor Bunn, 'Mesmerist, Ventriloquist, Humorist and General Illusionist, Shakespearian Reciter, Character Impersonator and Professor of Elocution. Children's Parties a Speciality'. He has been employed by the Lord Lieutenant for his re-education programme but offers to change sides and re-teach the Irish how to be precisely that.

Terence is anxious to meet up with his sweetheart, Rosie, who is, unfortunately, none other than the daughter of the Lord Lieutenant. It is arranged that Terence shall hide out in the reputedly haunted caves of Carric-Cleena, and that Rosie shall come to him there. But Bunn notifies the Lord Lieutenant of their plans, and the Irish are obliged to find a subterfuge to keep the redcoats away. They decide that Molly, one of their number, shall appear as the fairy, Cleena, and Bunn as an ancient who has been held captive by her for fifty years, and thus they shall scare away the superstitious Devonshire soldiers. The first act ends with them bringing their trick off successfully.

The second act carries on in much the same vein. Bunn goes through his paces, Terence and Rosie pursue their romance and Molly carries on with the hereditary 'blind' fiddler, Pat Murphy, who dares not confess his perfect sight for fear of losing her sympathy and love. When the Lord Lieutenant descends upon them all, Bunn succeeds in saving the 'rebels' by proclaiming:

"If we had guessed (as we ought to have guessed) that you, being a scion of a noble English house, had so much American blood in your composition, we should not have rebelled against you. America is the friend of Ireland. You are an English nobleman. Therefore you are, nowadays, more than half American. Therefore you are our friend.. ."



MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. Have you heard the brave news?
2. I'm descended from Brian Boru
3. Of viceroys though we've had
4. If you wish to appear
5. On the heights of Glantaun
6. Two is company
7. I am the Lord Lieutenant
8. At an early stage of life
9. When Alfred's friends
10. Oh, setting sun
11. Their courage high
12. That we're soldiers
13. Now this is the song of the Devonshire men
14. It is past my comprehension
15. Many years ago I strode
16. Their fathers fought at Ramillies
17. Is there anyone approachin'?
18. Bread, it's for him
19. Och! the spalpeen
20. Oh, have you met a man in debt?
21. 'Twas in Hyde Park
22. I cannot play at love
23. The age in which we're living
24. Sing a rhyme
25. Listen! hearken my lover
26. Goodbye, my native town
27. I love you! I love you!
28. There was once a little soldier
29. With a big shillelagh

CAST

- Pat Murphy
- Professor Bunn
- Black Dan
- Sergeant Pincher
- Dr Fiddle D.D
- Terence O'Brien
- Perry
- Earl of Newtown
- Mickie O'Hara
- Countess of Newtown
- Lady Rosie Pippin
- Susan
- Kathleen
- Molly O'Grady
- Nora