



Div. A-1 Rentals

Eastern Costume Co.

510 No. Elm St.
Greensboro, NC 27401

379-1026

COSTUME PLOT for "PATIENCE or BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE"

England 1880

ACT I: Exterior of Castle Bunthorne

ACT II: A Glade

COLONEL CALVERLEY: Officer of Dragoon Guard

MAJOR MURGATROYD: Officer of Dragoon Guard

LIEUT. THE DUKE OF DUNSTABLE: Officer of Dragoon Guard

Red Tunic with brass buttons, epaulettes, dark breeches with stripe down side, boot tops, helmet and gloves.

(Other members of the Dragoons are dressed like this.)

REGINALD BUNTHORNE: A Fleshly Poet: Aesthetic suit of velvet tunic with lace collar and cuffs, large bow at neck, stockings and shoe bows. Fancy trim on tunic.

ARCHIBALD GROSVENOR: An Idyllic Poet: Aesthetic suit of velvet tunic with jeweled belt, tights, Calavier collar, long cape, boot tops. Fancy trim on tunic.

MR. BUNTHORNE'S SOLICITOR: Financier: Dark cutaway, stripe pants, grey best, wing tip shirt, black caravat, top hat, gloves, grey spats

THE LADY ANGELA: A Rapturous Maiden

THE LADY SAPHIR: A Rapturous Maiden

THE LADY ELLA: A Rapturous Maiden

THE LADY JANE: A Rapturous Maiden (An elderly spinster of heroic proportions)
Flowing Renaissance gowns, flowered headpieces, shawls (just opposite of 1880 fashion)

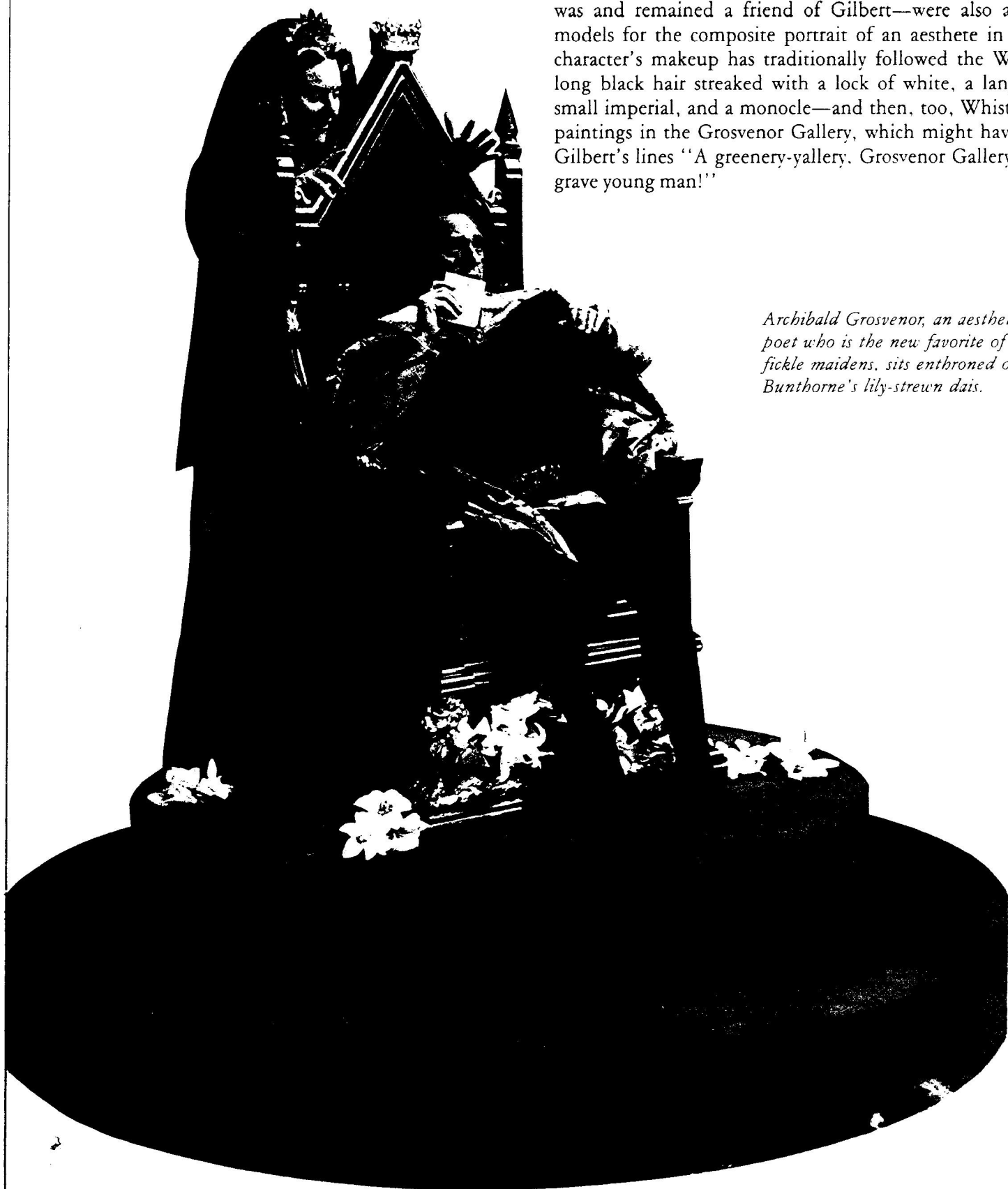
PATIENCE: A Dairy Maid: boned lace-up weskit, looped-up skirt over 3/4 ruffled petticoat, stocking, dairy cap

The only costume change for the cast is with the Dragoons: They change from their military to very pretentious velvet tunics, knee pants, large-brimmed hats with feathers, fancy trim on tunics, bow at neck, hose.



Bunthorne, asking him to reserve a three-guinea box for the night, "if there is one to be had . . . I am looking forward greatly amused." The poet Swinburne and artist Whistler was and remained a friend of Gilbert—were also assumed models for the composite portrait of an aesthete in *Pantheist*. The character's makeup has traditionally followed the Whistler: long black hair streaked with a lock of white, a languid small imperial, and a monocle—and then, too, Whistler's paintings in the Grosvenor Gallery, which might have inspired Gilbert's lines "A greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery, / grave young man!"

Archibald Grosvenor, an aesthetic poet who is the new favorite of the fickle maidens, sits enthroned on Bunthorne's lily-strewn dais.



contrast to the two willowy poets, Grosvenor and Bunthorne, the Empire-building officers of the 35th Dragoon Guards. In scarlet jackets and plumed helmets, one would think that they had conquered not only far-flung colonies for the Empire but the hearts of every woman back in England. Yet the "twenty love-sick poets," pining away in pastel draperies, are yearning instead for the attention of the "net-clad poets." It is another of Gilbert's startling paradoxes. Needless to say, *Patience* was a hit. "Went splendidly," Sullivan noted in his diary. "Eight encores. Seemed a great success." When the opera opened in New York, business was slack. "Even an audiences who had embraced *Pinafore* and *Pirates* didn't know what to make of this jibe at aestheticism—a cult that had not touched their Puritan shores.

W. G. O'Fly Carte, in a brilliant stroke of showmanship, sent Oscar Wilde, the high priest of the aesthetic movement, on a lecture tour across the United States. The poet came complete with drooping mustache and velvet suit. Carte also saw to it that Wilde attended a performance of the ailing *Patience* at the Standard Theatre in New York. Wilde's lectures, as well as the opera, profited from the subsequent publicity and Carte reported: "Inscrutable are the ways of the American public and absurd as it may appear, it seems that Oscar Wilde's advent here has caused a regular craze and given the business a good fillip up."

But the greatest "fillip up" given to the entire Gilbert and Sullivan business was the building of a large (1,292 seats), modern (the first theater with electric lighting) Savoy Theatre just off the Strand, on the site of John of Gaunt's Savoy Palace. *Patience* opened at the theater in October, 1881, with new scenery and costumes worthy of the larger, brighter stage. Sullivan conducted; his friend the Prince of Wales attended; and the *Daily Chronicle* reported next day, "As if by the wave of a fairy's wand," when Carte signaled for the gaslight to be turned down, "the theatre immediately became filled with a soothing light, clearer and far more grateful than gas... the audience gave a cheer."

Thus, *Patience* became the first "Savoy" opera, as well as breaking all previous records with an initial run of 578 performances. And the new word, Savoyard, would be taken into the language for devotees and performers of Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas.



Lady Jane, an oversized, overage maiden mad about the poet, is about to draw a ticket in a raffle for Bunthorne's fair hand.







Bunthorne, in Patience's dairy, sinfully gorging on fresh butter with a tablespoon.



Patience tells the despondent maidens that she has never loved and, therefore, unlike them she is "blithe and gay."

ly laced bodice, ruffled neckline, and saucy skirts. She is t cent of love, never having experienced it, and looking at other maids' unhappiness, she's rather glad she hasn't.

Thinking to cheer them up, Patience gives them news—the 35th Dragoon Guards have returned to the are on their way to this very spot now. "We care nothing for Guards!" says one young woman with disdain.

"But, bless me, you were all engaged to them a year claims Patience, who really cannot understand what love is even when it is explained to her that the ladies' tastes "etherealized," their perceptions "exalted" in this year. C to serenade their poet on lutes and mandolins, while Patie after them in utter astonishment.

And now the soft colors and tender melancholy sor maidens, their languid attitudinizing, is brusquely replac corps of Dragoon Guards, who march in with a smart flouri ring sight in their brilliant scarlet coats, high boots, and ge "The soldiers of our Queen/Are linked in friendly teth boom cheerfully, having come to call upon the ladies, wh have not seen for nearly a year. They obviously feel them resistible to friend and foe alike, and Colonel Calverle bursting with military fervor, reels off a recipe for "that mystery/Known to the world as a Heavy Dragoon." It is Gilbertian tour de force, a patter song that requires an impo tor with a big voice and commanding personality, and then it

*Take all the remarkable people in history,
Rattle them off to a popular tune.*

Starting with Lord Nelson, adding a mixed bag of great and people like Bismarck, Fielding, Macaulay, Dickens, Th Thomas Aquinas, and Madame Tussaud, among a host c famous and obscure names that are ingeniously linked and r the Colonel directs that they all be melted down in a crucible;

*Set them to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!*

His fellow officers are in complete and immodest agreement.

The dragoons spy their ladies coming across the lawn. "B is the gentleman with the long hair?" they wonder. "He popular." Of course, it is Bunthorne the poet, in the throes c posing a poem. The ladies all kneel to him, but he has eyes o Patience. He recites his "wild, weird, fleshly" poem for he wanders off to write some more. While the ladies find it "fra and "precious," Patience admits honestly that the poem se her to be nonsense.

The Colonel and his men have had enough, and they r the ladies that they are engaged to them. But the ladies are ap

aesthetic dragoons. Lady Jane points to their uniforms. "Yellow! Primary colours!" she exclaims in horror, and the dragoons stomp off two by two singing their lovesick lament while their attendants look after them in chagrined astonishment. Colonel Bunthorne cannot stand this insult to the British uniform. He has been as successful in the courts of Venus as on the field of Mars. He is amazed and angry that the dragoon uniform no longer works its amatory magic on young beauties, and complains:

*the peripatetics
long-haired aesthetics
try much more to their taste—*

Dragoons stomp off in high dudgeon as well as in the high heels that used to be considered so devastatingly attractive. Bunthorne, alone and unobserved, drops his pose, admitting to himself an "aesthetic sham":

*Let me confess!
Lovers of lilies does not blight me! . . .*

*Not fond of uttering platitudes
Stained-glass attitudes.
Hence, my mediaevalism's affectation,
Of a morbid love of admiration!*


Bunthorne sings a brilliant "point patter," a patter song taken at breakneck speed in order to make clear the important sentences—*in this case, what is needed "to shine in the high heels as a man of culture rare."* If one of the requirements is "to be in love," of lilies or sunflowers, for example, then that is all right, says Bunthorne. For here comes Patience, and he loves her. Bunthorne even offers to cut off his hair if she would like him to. Patience, who knows nothing of love, having never loved before, Bunthorne's great-aunt, says she's quite sure she could never love Bunthorne. Brokenhearted and desolate, Bunthorne takes his leave. Patience, puzzling over this mysterious thing called love, is troubled. She asks Lady Angela and asks her about it: ". . . how is it to be distinguished from insanity?"

Lady Angela tells her it is "the one unselfish emotion," and Patience resolves to fall head over heels with *somebody* rather than *anybody*. The only experience of love she might have had, was when she was a babe of four and played with another little boy "of beauty rare." But, "Pray don't misconstrue," says Lady Angela. "Remember . . . He was a *little* boy!" And the lovely Lady Angela responds, "The interesting fact remains—/He was a *little* boy!"

At this point, enter Grosvenor, the "Idyllic Poet," rival of Bunthorne in literary style and, as it immediately transpires, in love as



*"The soldiers of our Queen
Are linked in friendly tether;
Upon the battle scene
They fight the foe together."*



*Grosvenor, the Idyllic Poet,
asks: 'Prithee, pretty
maiden—prithee, tell me true
(Hey, but I'm doleful,
willow willow waly)
Have you e'er a lover
a-dangling after you?'*

well. He wastes no time, courting Patience in a charming duet with eighteenth-century overtones in its "Hey willow waly O!" refrain. (Audiences left the theater delightedly repeating, "Hey willow waly O!" though nobody knew exactly what it meant.)

In spite of the catchy allure of his song, Patience will not marry Grosvenor because she doesn't know him. But wonder of wonders! Grosvenor turns out to be her little playfellow, Archibald.

A cross Archibald must bear is his unrivaled beauty, which causes him to be "madly loved at first sight" by every woman he meets. He cannot follow Patience's suggestion and disfigure himself, for he is "a trustee for Beauty" and has an obligation to fulfill. He is also called "Archibald the All-Right" because he is infallible.

Patience is now marvelously happy. She knows what love is at last. It is Archibald Grosvenor!

But horrors! If he is perfection, and "a source of endless ecstasy," then there can be nothing unselfish in loving him. So, tragically, they must part. Patience's sorrow is short-lived, however, for since she is "plain, homely, unattractive" she realizes that the love of a man like Grosvenor for a girl like her would perforce be unselfishness itself. He may continue loving her, then, though they cannot wed.

Act I ends in a glorious finale. Bunthorne is led in, rose-crowned, hung about with garlands, and looking very miserable as might befit a sacrificial offering. He is led by two of the maidens and accompanied by a procession of the others, dancing classically and playing on cymbals, double pipes, and other archaic instruments.

Despairing of Patience's love, Bunthorne, on the advice of his Solicitor, has put himself up to be raffled. Money to go to charity, Bunthorne to go as husband to the winner. This turn of plot most probably was carried over from Gilbert's earlier concept dealing with rival curates rather than poets. As a satirization of popular church lotteries it would have been doubly funny.

When the dragoons march in and see what's up, they curse the Solicitor and implore the maidens on bended knee (that never bent "to foemen's steel") not to abandon the men to whom they are plighted. Bunthorne's patience is wearing thin, and to speed up the raffle he resorts to a bit of high-pressure shilling:

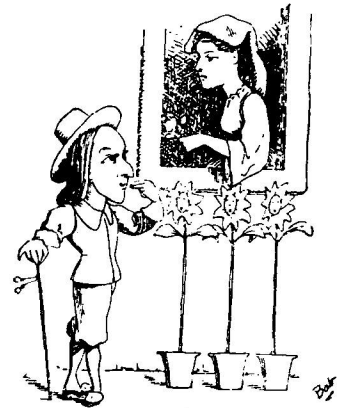
*Come, walk up, and purchase with avidity,
Overcome your diffidence and natural timidity,
Tickets for the raffle should be purchased with avidity,
Put in half a guinea and a husband you may gain—*

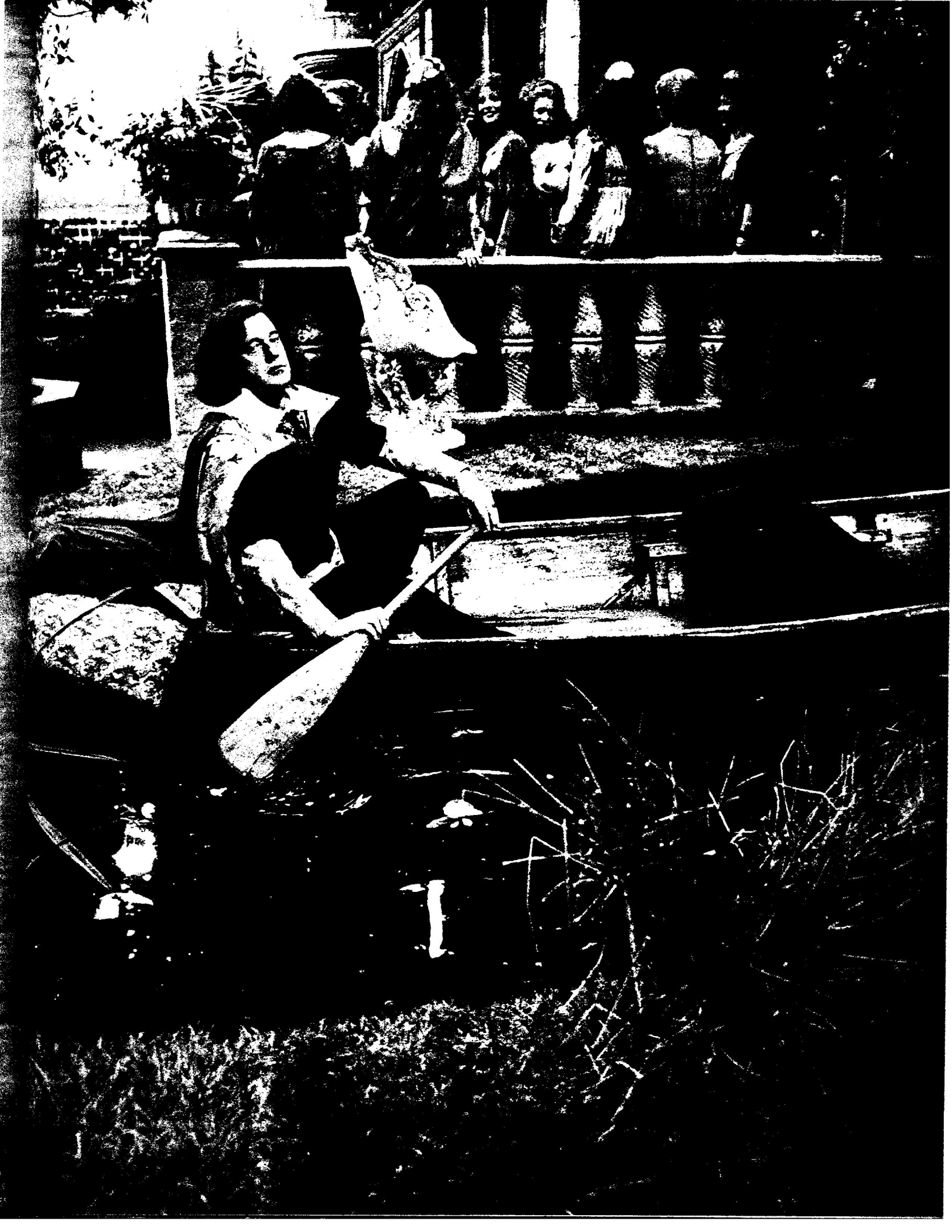
Just as Lady Jane is about to reach into the bowl to draw her ticket, Patience enters and stops her. The milkmaid will marry Bunthorne after all, since loving him would be the height of unselfishness. And off they go together, hand in hand.

At that, the Dragoon Guards suddenly appear very attractive to the maidens, who remember the "soft note of the echoing voice/Of



Patience interrupts Bunthorne's raffle to offer herself unselfishly as his bride.







"How rapturously these maidens love me, and how hopelessly! Oh, Patience, Patience . . ." murmurs the beleaguered Grosvenor.



Lady Jane laments how sad "that woman's lot who, year by year, / Sees, one by one, her beauties disappear . . ."

an old, old love." Each girl embraces her dragoon, Patience and Bunthorne return, everything seems happily sorted out, when beautiful Grosvenor strolls by, immersed in the book he is reading. He takes no notice of the others, but the maidens are strangely fascinated by this new and very graceful poet.

Little by little they move away from their dragoons, and when they discover that Grosvenor, too, is an aesthetic they kneel around him. The Dragoon Guards are horrified; Bunthorne and Patience are horrified; Grosvenor himself is triple-horrified. Bunthorne is so envious that he throws a small daisy in his rival's face; Patience is about to attack the maidens in a frenzy of jealousy; Grosvenor inveighs against his "cursed comeliness." The dragoons, however, have the last word, a rousing reprise of their song upon first discovering their ladies' unbelievable attachment to a literary man:

*Now is not this ridiculous—and is not this preposterous?
A thorough-paced absurdity—explain it if you can.*

ACT II: A glade.

IN A GREEN GLADE THE ELDERLY LADY JANE IS DISCOVERED leaning upon a violoncello, with which she presently accompanies herself. She alone has remained loyal to Bunthorne and hopes, since her charms are already "ripe" if not "decaying," that he will soon abandon the milkmaid for her.

The other maidens are once again sick with hopeless love of a poet—this time it is Grosvenor at whose feet they worship. His thoughts are of Patience, and desperate to escape his adoring followers he reads and sings to them several truly atrocious poems, including "A Magnet Hung in a Hardware Shop." This last seems sufficiently depressing to cause the maidens to drift away with sad backward looks from time to time. "A curse on my fatal beauty," sighs Grosvenor, "for I am sick of conquests!"

Patience has managed to slip away from Bunthorne in order to ask Grosvenor if he still loves her. In the course of their conversation—during which Grosvenor tries to hold her hand or come closer and is always conscientiously repulsed—Patience lets him know that she doesn't really love Bunthorne and is only acting out of a sense of duty, but she must stay with the man she's promised to. Grosvenor gazes at her sorrowfully and takes his leave, at which Patience bursts into tears.

When Bunthorne and Lady Jane come upon the weeping dairymaid, Bunthorne is angered to discover that Patience thinks "dear Archibald" is "the noblest, purest, and most perfect being I have ever met." Snapping his fingers in her face, he stalks off, with Lady Jane in hot pursuit. He is furious that his "love-sick maidens" all follow Grosvenor now, and resolves to confront the poet and de-



*"You hold yourself like this (attitude)
You hold yourself like that (attitude),
By hook and crook you try to look
both angular and flat (attitude)."*

and that he abandon aestheticism—there is room for only one
theatre in the county.

However, the field is going to be more crowded than Bunthorne
could have imagined. For Colonel Calverley, Major Murgatroyd, and
the Duke of Dunstable have traded in their dragoon uniforms for
aesthetic garb; they are carrying a sunflower, a poppy, and an orchid,
respectively. They now have long hair, and are attempting to strike
the stained-glass attitudes—in gross exaggeration—adopted by Bun-
thorne and his maidens earlier. The effect is even more ludicrous
since the three officers tend to strike their languid poses with military
precision. When Saphir and Angela see them, they cry, "How Bot-
wellian!" finding them "consummately utter." And the two agree
that if Grosvenor should not choose either of them, their yearning
hearts will go out to the aestheticized soldiers instead.

Bunthorne and Grosvenor at last come face-to-face for their
showdown. Bunthorne, who cannot live without admiration, re-
venges himself on his rival with a terrible curse if Grosvenor refuses to make a
complete change at once. "You must cut your hair... In appearance
and costume you must be absolutely commonplace," he orders.

Grosvenor finally yields, and is even cheerful, having long
sought for just such a reasonable pretext to make the change. "I do it
with compulsion!" he says gratefully. The two poets then sing a duet in
which Bunthorne lists his aesthetic attributes while Grosvenor paints
a self-portrait of the commonplace young man he will become:

GROS. *An every-day young man:
A commonplace type,
With a stick and a pipe,
And a half-bred black-and-tan...*

BUN. *A pallid and thin young man,
A haggard and lank young man,
A greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery,
Foot-in-the-grave young man!*

And now Bunthorne, too, is a changed character, giving up his
austere nature for the cheerfulness that was one of his rival poet's charms.
He dances about the stage humming a song, Patience comes upon
him with astonishment. When she discovers how amiable Bunthorne
has now become, she throws herself into his arms. "It will no longer be a
pleasure to love you, but a pleasure—a rapture—an ecstasy!" she ex-
claims. Then, realizing that there can be nothing unselfish in loving
a perfect being as Bunthorne has now become, she renounces him.

At this moment the stage is thronged with a cheerful group of
young ladies who have exchanged their draperies for tennis frocks,
and their long habits, even Scottish Highland dress. They are following
Grosvenor, who is wearing a business suit, his short hair covered by a
fedor hat. Last of all, in come the splendidly martial Dragoon
soldiers.



*Aestheticism has been discarded and
the dragoons are once again in
military uniform; the maidens have
become "pattering," "chattering,"
"every-day young girls."*

