

The Synopsis

1884, the year of **Princess Ida**, almost saw the end of the Gilbert and Sullivan partnership through the of several disputes between the partners regarding their respective contributions to the operas that had le them famous. **Princess Ida** had not been as popular with the public as its immediate predecessors **M.S. Pinafore**, **The Pirates of Pénzance**, **Patience** and **Iolanthe**, and three weeks after it opened Sullivan te to D'Oyly Carte announcing that he would write no more pieces for The Savoy. Gilbert wrote to him n effort to make him change his mind but Sullivan replied: "With **Princess Ida** I have come to the end my tether—the end of my capability in that class of piece".

Gilbert and Sullivan did meet to discuss a new opera, but Gilbert proposed—not for the first or last time—so-called 'lozenge plot' (in which a person could change character by swallowing a magic lozenge) and ivan, preferring a plot with "human interest and probability", refused to set it to music. Sullivan wrote ing that further discussion was useless, and for a time it seemed that there would be no more Gilbert and ivan operas.

Gilbert saved the situation, however, by agreeing to write a plot with no magic element, and Sullivan so delighted to be rid of the 'lozenge' that he agreed to set it "Whatever the subject is to be". He was ource right to trust Gilbert's judgment for **The Mikado** (which was the opera they came up with) was r greatest success, running for 672 performances in London and bringing their name to audiences as far rt as America and Australia.

Rather than confuse you by trying to explain the plot (Gilbert wrote a whole book doing that just for dren) I will present you with a few "Corroborative Details" to a 'Bald and unconvincing programme e'!

In Germany Pooh-Bah becomes Der Collectivministerportefeuilletonist!

A Berlin performance of **The Mikado** in the 1920's featured a 'Folies Bergères' chorus line, the Charles- and a nude Yum-Yum.

The Mikado was banned in 1907 for fear of offending a visiting Japanese dignitary.

Richard Temple, the original player of the Mikado, made a record of "My Object All Sublime" in which sung several wrong notes and got some of the words wrong.,.

There have been several jazzed up Mikados; it has been Šwung, Hot and Black.

Ko-Ko has been played by Harry Worth, Frankie Howerd and Groucho Marx.

A. HUBBARD