

THE SCHOOL CONFIRMATION SERVICE

The School Confirmation Service was conducted by the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Buckingham at St. Francis' Church, Terriers, on Thursday, March 19th, 1959. The Bishop was assisted by the Vicar of Terriers, the Rev. E. Shaw, by the Rural Dean, the Rev. A. L. Evan Hopkins, and by the Rev. John Skipp, who acted as Bishop's Chaplain.

In his sermon to the candidates the Bishop gave them as their motto the promise which our Lord made to His disciples, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses . . ." He said that they were the Lord's disciples of today, and would receive the same power as had those early disciples by the "laying on of hands"; not, he emphasised, the noisy, violent power which is so evident in business and politics, but the quiet confidence to face life and its difficulties as a true disciple of the Master, and to be His witnesses.

The need to bear witness for God was all the greater in this age when so many new scientific processes and laws were being discovered, and which so many people failed to realise or admit were God's gift to mankind of the "things hidden in the world." They were given to us, he said, to enrich life, but were too often turned to evil purposes by man.

The names of the 35 boys confirmed were :—

C. B. Antill	B. J. Hankey
J. M. Barlow	B. H. Hart
J. F. Blakesley	I. A. Johnston
P. Booth	R. M. Layton
A. R. L. Brain	R. J. Martin
M. W. Clarke	S. Merrington
P. S. Cockerham	J. L. Newman
R. H. Coward	M. J. Payne
T. M. Davis	J. S. Ray
W. D. Downing	B. A. Richards
J. L. Evans	M. S. Rothwell
C. H. Farmer	J. D. Slack
R. A. Fewtrell	R. C. Smith
P. A. J. Findley	C. D. Wagstaff
J. N. Fowler	D. R. Walker
N. C. Gravette	A. D. Warren
P. D. Hamilton-Eddy	S. J. Whiteman
	P. E. Woodend

On Friday, March 20th, 180 boys and masters made their Communion at the Annual Service at St. Francis'. The Vicar of Terriers was the Celebrant, and he was assisted by the Rev. John Skipp.

H.M.S. " PINAFORE " 1958

It was with a sense of relief—like that which a batsman feels on a return to form after a bad patch—that we (both the School and the town) welcomed the return of Gilbert and Sullivan at Christmas, after their year's absence. For Christmas 1957 had been the first without a Gilbert and Sullivan opera since the first adventurous performance ten years before. However, mingled with this sense of relief was a certain timidity and apprehension lest the "come-back" performance should fall short of what had come to be considered the normal high standard. The only "planned" difference was that this year there should be four performances instead of the usual six—six performances in the space of five days being considered (correctly) too arduous, particularly for treble voices.

The opera chosen was H.M.S. *Pinafore*, not, perhaps, one of the most popular of Gilbert and Sullivan operas. It is fair to say that, while music and words are inextricably joined in these operas, they are renowned more for Sullivan's music than for Gilbert's words. *Pinafore* is unusual in the sense that its tunes, although known, are not so popular as, for instance, those of *The Mikado*, *The Pirates* or *Iolanthe*, and pleasure obtained from this opera comes as much from the subtlety of the dialogue as from the delightfulness of the music. Audibility and clarity of diction must, therefore, be as essential as tuneful and lively singing. Also, *Pinafore* had the advantages—and disadvantages—of having been performed by the School before, in 1951.

One of the greatest pleasures that those within the School receive from the opera is seeing a collection of rough and unconvincing shapes transformed into an imposing and realistic set. We thus watched with interest—and, perhaps, some doubts—the work of Mr. Eaton and his assistants (whom we now forgive for their disturbance of lessons). The result was magnificent: the quarterdeck of the ship with all its trappings and in the background Portsmouth harbour with its pattern of shipping.

In the opening scene, this set was enhanced by the "gallant crew" of H.M.S. *Pinafore* busily preparing their ship for inspection. The industry and apparent indifference of the sailors gave the whole scene an air of reality. If there is a criticism of the male and female choruses it is that reality in both cases was sometimes achieved at the expense of volume and audibility (which we have claimed as vital to this opera). The male chorus convinced us—and, no doubt, their captain—of their "sobriety, integrity and attention to duty" and sang quite well in support