

**THE SYNDIC: A
COMIC OPERA IN
THREE ACTS**

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The Syndic: A Comic Opera in Three Acts by D. S. Hollingshead & Washington Davis

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D. S. HOLLINGSHEAD & WASHINGTON DAVIS

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COMIC OPERA IN
THREE ACTS**

THE SYNDIC

A COMIC OPERA
IN THREE ACTS

Compliments of the author

Written by WASHINGTON DAVIS

Author of "Camp-Fire Chats of the Civil War," "Silent Bliss," "The Provost Guard,"
"Three-Cornered Wedding."

Literary Associate of Hubert Howe Bancroft, etc.

Composed by D. S. HOLLINGSHEAD

Composer of "Toward the Chambers of the Dawn," "Present in Absence," "The Girl I
Dream About" and the opera "Mrs. Sippy."

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HISTORICAL NOTE.

"Quebec was founded by Samuel Champlain in 1608. It was taken by the English in 1629 and restored to France by the treaty of 1632. In 1636 it had one hundred inhabitants. It was the colony of a concessionary company who did not fulfill their promises to the settlers, and hence its growth was slow.

"The Magistrate, named by the company, was called a SYNDIC, and had powers similar to those of a Mayor. The King (Louis XIV of France), dissatisfied with the management of the Company, took the colony into his own hands, and in 1663 appointed a Governor, and created the Sovereign Council of Quebec, who were charged with its government."—Appleton's Cyclopædia, Article, "Quebec."

[ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—This Libretto was written after a study of W. S. Gilbert's works.]

LIST OF CHARACTERS.

LOUIS XIV, King of France.

THE SYNDIC, Governor of Quebec and a bachelor of great promise.

SIR ROYAL MERINO, Secretary of the Treasury.

GENERAL AU REVOIR, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of State.

COUNT VINUM DU GRAPE, Absconding Commissioner.

MAJOR AFLOMB, a Self-Made Statesman.

FATHER DRIEUILLET, a Sojourning Priest.

SCRIPTUM MAJORIS, Secretary of Everything *not* pertaining to the Colony.

SWEET JASMINE, Daughter of Sir Royal Merino.

MADAME SANS DENTUM, Mother of Charity.

LOVILLA, Adopted Sister of Syndic.

ESTELLE, Adopted Cousin of Syndic.

First Guard of the King.

Second Guard of the King.

Chorus of Acadian Peasants.

Time and costumes of early part of reign of Louis XIV. of France.

SCENE—Early Quebec, Canada, 1658, and Paris, France.

THE SYNDIC

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Foot of Esplanade at Quebec in 1658. A harbor and boat landing right lower, with practical rock center and left. Church steeple shows behind rocks, and FATHER DRIEUILLET ascends and rings bell joyously as curtain goes up. Left lower is set with open reception room, with table, chairs and fireplace. Right lower shows river. SCRIPTUM MAJORIS blows horn, GENERAL AU REVOIR fires off small mortar gun at left toward right, with very little powder and drum beat behind the scenes to make the report. COUNT VINUM waves the flag of France, SIR ROYAL waves his hat and ladies their handkerchiefs, all as a greeting to SYNDIC as he is pulled ashore by MAJOR in rowboat.*

GREETING CHORUS.

All hail this day of jubilee!
Give cheer on cheer till three times three!
Ring out, glad bells, and trumpets blow,
That every patriot may know
The joy we feel, and greetings bring
To our new Syndic from the King.
Then cheer on cheer,
As the ship draws near;
When he comes ashore,
Let the cannon roar,
And colors gay
Unfurl today,
That he may see
Our cup of glee
Fills to the brim
To welcome him,
With cheer on cheer till three times three,
This glorious day of jubilee!

(Enter SYNDIC, right upper, before chorus is finished and makes frantic gestures of disapproval at the cheering, while MAJOR AFLOMB lies up the boat.)

SYNDIC. Very good! excellent! a royal reception! It commends your loyalty and does me a world of honor; but by every grace of all my patron saints, don't let it go any further. Stop it right here!

GENERAL. (*Salutes.*) Why, sir, we thought you would be pleased.

SYNDIC. So I am, wonderfully pleased—pleased beyond the bounds of pleasure.

SIR ROYAL. Then let us cheer—a reception without cheers is cheerless. Ha, ha! I'm getting young again. (*Chuckles and cheers.*)

SYNDIC. No, no! If news of this should get back to France, the King's jealousy at my popularity would at once return me to the Bastile.

ALL. Oh, oh.

SYNDIC. And thus nip in the very bud the brightest hopes of our beautiful administration that is to be.

SIR ROYAL. So it would—so it would.

SYNDIC. Hence, on my behalf, don't be guilty of such good humor again. I know you only meant it as good humor.

GENERAL. But the public demonstration! We must quell the riotous public spirit by a tremendous parade, or something, in your favor—or in somebody's favor! It has become absolutely necessary to favor somebody publicly; and each of us being loaded with more honors than we can carry already, we naturally selected you, our new governor. Three times three! (*All cheer.*)

SYNDIC. Don't! Don't!! Don't!!!

GENERAL. But we *must* cheer.

ALL. Yes, we *must* cheer.

GENERAL. A revolution will break out if we don't cheer! We've had no governor for a whole year—no one to look up to. We couldn't look up to ourselves very well, being only heads of departments, and we are just dying to be governed—three times—

(*Start to cheer, but are stopped by SYNDIC.*)

SYNDIC. No, no! You must never display any good feeling whatever, especially in public. His Majesty, acting through My Excellency, *might*—I don't say he would, but he *might*—think you too prosperous, and either increase the taxes or wipe out the whole colony.

ALL. (*Mournfully.*) Oh, oh!

SYNDIC. I'll tell you how to escape a revolution without noise. Why, I've escaped a hundred revolutions in the Old World, and never made a bit of noise about it, particularly while I was escaping. Just hear ME.

ALL. Hear! Hear! (*Wave handkerchiefs, hats and flags.*)

THE SYNDIC'S SONG.

SOLO—SYNDIC.

O, I'm the governor-general great!
 The Syndic is my title—
 Adorning Quebec's chair of state,
 And my edicts all are vital.
 For all your ills I'm the panacea—
 The proof of this is *prima facie*—
 And I'll rule your roost in style, I ween,
 For I come direct from Louis Fourteen.

CHORUS.

He'll rule our roost in style, we ween,
 For he comes direct from Louis Fourteen.

The King of France is a very nice man,
 Who reigns quite well when sober,
 And has a good time whenever he can,
 From May until October.
 His ambassadors are men of brains,
 Who know enough to come in when it rains,
 And are never bribed by sordid pelf,
 But are oft mistook for the King himself!

CHORUS.

They're never bribed by sordid pelf,
 But are oft mistook for the King himself.