

secured. The stage decorations are under the supervision of Mrs Jas. McDermott, assisted by Miss McIlhenn.

WILLIAMSON AND MUSGROVE.

"A TRIP TO CHINATOWN."

Auckland playgoers, cognizant of the many brilliant attractions which Messrs Williamson and Musgrove have from time to time presented for their appreciation, are invariably delighted when the announcement is made that they intend sending another of their companies to this city. This will be the feeling on the present occasion, as their touring manager, Mr Harold Ashton, heralds the coming of the celebrated American comedian Mr Harry Conor and Messrs Hoyt and McKee's Company from the Madison Square Theatre, New York, the season commencing at the Opera House on Monday, December 11, and continuing for twelve nights. During this limited season two splendid musical comedies, viz., "A Trip to Chinatown," and "A Stranger in New York," will be presented with that elegance and completeness in every department which is so characteristic of all the Firm's productions. The company, which was personally chosen by Mr Musgrove to interpret these comedies, is said to be a very fine one, embracing comedians and comedienne of high reputation, charming vocalists, graceful dancers, and artists with all those multifarious qualities so essential in plays of this description. Moreover, the ladies are reputed to be excellent types of American beauties, and to wear confections which may possibly be better described in feminine language as "a dream." Mr Harry Conor is a comedian who stands in the foremost rank in the United States, and on his first tour through Australia some three years ago immediately bounded into popularity, which has even been enhanced on the present tour. Altogether, this short season should be most satisfactory to the management and their patrons alike.

HOME HINTS.

TABLE DECORATIONS FOR THIS MONTH.

(See page 103.)

Judging from his now famous Latin poem in praise of frugality, it would seem that Pope Leo XIII. does not deem even such a mundane matter as the arrangement of the dinner table beneath his august notice, for he says therein:

Be thy spare table bright With shining dishes and with napkins white.

But whether further embellishment would be permitted by His Holiness one can only conjecture, for, in his picture of the "Lath of Greed," we find that:

Embroidered napkins impudently glow. The cups are ordered in a gleaming row; Goblets and beakers, bronze and silver plate. And fragrant flowers the table decorate.

which might be interpreted as implying that those accessories are to be avoided by those who would cultivate the "diet sage." However, we cannot believe that Dame Nature's flowers, with all their indescribable charms and fragrance, are to be denied us, and whatever we may think of "embroidered napkins," "goblets," and such like, retaining or banishing them as we may, to flowers we must hold, for without them we should be poor indeed. What a wealth of them we can now command to deck our tables! The glorious colourings of the rose, the whiteness of the lily, carnations, geraniums, passion flowers, the trailing convolvulus, heliotrope, watonians, sweet pea, pansies, poppies, and many more, are ready to our hands, breathing the spirit of summer.

For our scheme of decoration this month, four semi-circular troughs of tin or china are required, and these must be supplemented by a number of small flower-holders. Two troughs are set to form a circle in the centre of the table, surrounding a graceful, but not too tall, flower vase of glass or porcelain. The two troughs remaining are then placed as shown in our illustration, and the small vases ranged round the whole to give a definite outline to the centre piece.

With the skeleton ready to be "filled in," the choice of flowers is purely a matter of taste. To complete the designs, delicate festoons of flowers, partly resting on the cloth, should suspend from the small vases, and in the semi-circles formed by the end troughs, Arctic lamps, with one or more lights, as necessity might dictate, would put a perfect finishing touch to the scheme.

VERANDAS MUST NOW BE FURNISHED.

HOW TO DO IT FASHIONABLY.

Outdoor decorations are very much in evidence. The day has gone by when verandas are left to furnish themselves, a few stray cushions dragged from obscure corners, a straw mat or two, a lonely jardiniere

being considered all sufficient. Now the furnishing of the verandah is the subject of no small thought as that of any room in the house, for in reality the verandah has become a summer-room.

Entire sets, including settees, some of staple, some of quaint designs, for two, three or four, corner seats, chairs, tables, can all be obtained in light or mottled bamboo, bent wood, or a new, pretty green rush. Many of the tables and chairs are made to fold up, so they can easily be taken indoors. One is screened from the sun by triple screens, light curtains made of bamboo stick, which come in any length or width as desired and fold up like the Venetians.

A comfortable chair of heavy wood, with upholstered high back and roomy arms, forms a surprise by having its back turned over to rest on the arms, thus forming a table large enough for tea, cards, or any other use.

One of the most artistic verandah decorations is the swing, the evolution of the childish joy swung from a convenient apple tree. These verandah swings are wide and deep, so that two can be comfortably accommodated. They have a back and side arms, and are swung from the top beams.

The five o'clock tea tables have all sorts of odd brackets and shelves, which fold away modestly when not desired, and as verandahs are not elastic this is quite a consideration. The prettiest varieties are in the mottled bamboo.

Jardiniere come in all shapes, sizes and materials. Some pretty ferneries shaped like tiny bird cages, enclosed in glass, are also exhibited.

Quaint footstools are formed of curly haired spaniels, made so startlingly like the original that one hesitates to touch them, fearing a welcoming snarl. They are moderately soft to the touch, covered with some soft, crinkly, woolly hair, and are catalogued as high as 12 or 15 dollars. If successful in their initial appearance, they will no doubt in time be furnished with an internal electrical attachment of bark and bite warranted to drive away burglars.

For the floor strawmats of different colours and straw cushions are still popular, while dainty work baskets of cretonne, made in the shape of shut-up parasols, the pockets forming places for the embroidery, are made to hang on brackets or nails.

THE DELICIOUS STRAWBERRY. IN MANY FORMS.

Strawberry Mousse.—Pass one pound of ripe strawberries through a fine hair sieve into a saucepan. Mix with a few tablespoonfuls of sugar and set the pan on the stove, stirring constantly until the puree is well mixed. Move from the fire and set the pan on ice. Flavour a pint and a half of cream with powdered sugar and a little essence of vanilla and whip it well. Mix the cream with the strawberries. Line a deep mould with white paper, fill with the mixture, put the lid on tightly and pack in pounded ice. When ready to serve turn the contents of the mould on to a folded napkin laid on a dish.

Strawberry Bavarois.—Mash one quart of ripe strawberries with four tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar and pass through a sieve. Dissolve an ounce and a half of fine isinglass in a little warm water, add half a pound of fine sugar, and when this is dissolved add the juice of an orange and twenty drops of essence of lemon. Pass through a sieve and stir in the strawberries by degrees. Place on ice, and as it thickens mix in four tablespoonfuls of whipped cream. Pack in a deep mould in ice. When ready to serve turn on to an inch-thick slice of Genoa cake. Decorate with whole strawberries.

Strawberry Blanc-mange.—Crush with a wooden spoon a quart of ripe strawberries, place in a basin and sprinkle with one-quarter of a pound of powdered sugar. Allow to stand for a few hours. Put into a saucepan a quarter of a pound of sugar and two ounces of isinglass with a pint of milk. Stir over the fire until dissolved. Strain through muslin, mix in a quarter of a pint of cream and stir until cold. Pour the cream and milk over the strawberries, beating at the same time; then squeeze in gradually the juice of a lemon. Pack in ice in a mould.

Strawberry Chantreuse.—Cut in halves two pounds of ripe strawberries. Pour a thin layer of prepared calf's foot jelly in the bottom of a mould, cover the layer with strawberries, then

pour on more jelly and leave to set. When the jelly is quite firm stand a small mould inside the large one and fill the space between with strawberries and jelly. Set the mould on ice. Dissolve one-half ounce of isinglass in a little water, mix in one-half pint of strawberry juice, and sugar to taste. Beat one-half pint of cream to a froth and stir in slowly with the strawberry juice. When the jelly has set remove the smaller mould and fill the hollow with the cream. Leave the mould in ice until the cream has set.

Strawberry Shortcakes.—Prepare individual cakes as follows:—One-half pound of butter, two heaping cups of sifted flour, two tablespoonfuls of brandy and half a cup of cold water. Wash the butter, dry it, and put on ice before using. After it is cold knead it with half of the flour to paste and roll into a thin sheet. Knead the remainder of the flour with the brandy and water and about two tablespoonfuls of sugar. Roll out the same as the other, place one sheet on top of the other, fold in from the corners, roll out again. Repeat this three times. Cut with a round enter and bake on waxed tins in quick oven. Mash some strawberries slightly, mix with powdered sugar and place in little moulds on the biscuits. Pour over sweetened whipped cream and serve.

Strawberry Jelly.—Put 13 pounds of strawberries in a basin, cover them with a quart of sugar syrup that has cooled a little, and let them stand for an hour. Beat in a saucepan over the fire 34 ounces of gelatine, the whites of three eggs, the juice of a lemon and a quart of water. When it boils remove it. Strain the strawberries and mix the syrup with the gelatine. Pour into a mould, pack in ice, and allow it to set for two hours.

Strawberry Meringue.—Beat five eggs with one cupful of sugar, adding 1 pound of slightly warmed butter, and one cupful of milk. Mix one teaspoonful of baking powder with three cupfuls of flour, then sift into the first mixture, and stir until smooth. Turn into a shallow baking pan and bake. Cover with a layer of ripe strawberries and then a layer of meringue, and bake for a moment more.

Strawberry Tarts.—Boil to a syrup one pound of crushed loaf sugar and 1/2 pint of water. Put into the syrup the whites of two eggs, and remove the scum as it arises. Put in a quart of strawberries and boil until they are clear. Line a tart dish with short paste and bake. When the paste is done pour in the stewed strawberries and serve.

Strawberry Ice-cream.—Sweeten one pound of strawberries to taste, and add the juice of two lemons and a little cochineal for colouring. Mix with two cups of cream and freeze.

Two ladies who had not seen each other for years recently met in the street. They recognised each other after a time, and their recognition was cordial. "So delighted to see you again. Why you are scarcely altered." "So glad; and how changed you are. Why, how long is it since we met?" "About ten years." "And why have you never been to see me?" "My dear, just look at the weather we have had."

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