Woman in Mayfair." Of course she sets her cap at Oliver, though he would bore her to death in a fortnight, just to spite the blameless Martha, and, of course, Oliver thinks she is unhappy, and misunderstood, and is really hurt when Martha objects to his spending a week with the enchantress at La Valliere. Oh, the innocence of scientists—on the stage!

To save Oliver from the fire, Martha brings in the fire screen. Horace Travers, a rich idler, who spends his time in loving and being loved. He is under an obligation to her, and she persuades him to bring his fascination to bear on Angela, to lure her from the pursuit of Oliver, and to be the human red herring across the trail.

So they all go to the country, Oliver and Martha to cure a sick child, Angela after Oliver, and Horace after Angela.

Unfortunately Angela is insatiable. She likes Horace, but she wants Oliver, too, and when Martha puts down her foot she is exceedingly abusive, and poor, deluded Oliver, whose heart, by the way, is all the time in the right place, believes more than ever that she is an ill-used innocent.

Then Martha decides that Oliver must catch Angela red-handed or he will never be convinced. Angela has promised the amorous Horace to visit him at his London flat, and Martha induces him, after some hesitation, to let her know the time. She and her husband arrive, and Oliver at once, with the smallest evidence, believes the worst. Husband and wife depart sententiously happy. Angela still laughs (nothing can ever stay the laughter of a "stage" adventuress) and expresses her opinion of Horace with admirable restraint and temper. And "The Fire Screen" is over.

Marie Hall's Double.

Miss Marie Hall, whose romantic rise to fame as a violinist is well known, has found her double in America. This is how she made the discovery: "They say everyone has a double. I have, and she also plays the violin. She is an American, and we met once under very unusual circumstances. My 'first appearance' had been well advertised in a particular town, and my photograph had appeared in the papers. The hall was packed and when the advertised time of the commencement came without any signs of me my manager began to grow uneasy, fearing that something serious had detained me. Sending a messenger off post-haste to see what had become of me, he was on the point of going on to the platform to try and calm the people down, when the local manager of the hall came to him and assured him that I was sitting in the front row of the stalls. Not knowing what to think, my manager went to see for himself, and could hardly believe his own eyes, for the girl referred to was so like me in every feature that he had to look several times before he was satisfied that it was not indeed myself. And, moreover, she was evidently a violinist. She occupied the end seat of the front row and beside her was a violin in its case. She was, in fact, a teacher of the instrument at a school in the town and had come to my recital on her way home, as it was a half holiday. Fearing that it might still be some time before I arrived, my manager went quietly into the body of the hall, and, approaching the girl, whispered that 'Miss Hall would like to speak to her.' He could not say more there, but this proved enough to 'draw' her, and when she was behind he explained the situation, which was becoming each moment more desperate, and begged her to go on in my place and play something, anything, to satisfy the audience, which by this time was getting exceedingly angry at the delay. She did it. She played the very piece that I was to have played! When I arrived, in the middle of the applause, I could not think what was happening, and when I met my 'double' as she came off, blushing but proud, I began to think I must be dreaming. When I went on myself next time the audience seemed a little surprised at the rapidity with which I had changed my costume, but they never knew of the deception that had been practised upon them, and never will, for I am glad to say that my manager was able to obtain for my obliging double a good position in a much larger town very many miles away, where she has remained ever since, pledged to secrecy, but very proud of her only experience as an impersonator."

Filling a Theatre.

The palm for advertising has generally been conceded to America, but a Berlin theatre manager can claim that he is facile princeps. Recently the following advertisement appeared in the newspapers in the German capital just at a time when a new piece was to be produced:—

"Young Lady, Orphan, with £10,000 at her disposal and proprietress of one of the most important retail businesses in Prussia, wishes to meet a young man capable of managing her business, with a view to matrimony. No special business training necessary, nor need he be possessed of means. Write M.W.B., guardian. No agents."

On the morning of the representation each of those who replied to the advertisement received a beautifully lithographed note in these terms:—

Sir,—It is a most important matter to know whether my niece will please you. This evening she will be with me at ——— Theatre in box No. —.

M.W.B.

The theatre was crowded with young men, and during the play the lorgnettes were all turned on box No. —, but it was empty.

"Gee Gee."

Mr. George Grossmith, actor and entertainer, who died in London a few days ago, aged 65 years, when 19 years of age left school to assist his father, who was a police court reporter on the staff of "The Times." Developing ability as an entertainer, he forsook journalism for the stage, and was soon a public favourite. He played leading parts during the height of the Savoy Theatre comic opera successes, and in 1889 began a 17 years' tour with single-handed humorous and musical recitals. During this time he wrote "A Society Clown," "Piano and I," "The Diary of a Nobody" (in conjunction with his brother, Mr. Weedon Grossmith), "Haste to the Wedding" (the libretto of which was composed by Sir W. S. Gilbert), and more than 600 humorous and satirical songs and sketches. He retired from the stage and platform in 1908. His son, who is a popular comic-opera artist in London to-day, is part author of "The Girls of Gottenburg," "The Spring Chicken," and "Havana."

The Superstitious Limit.

Miss Hilda Spong says:—"My own pet mascot is an apron I bought from a Maori girl when touring as little more than a child with my father's company in New Zealand. I have never been without it, and have worn it in many parts. I wore it as Lady Huntingdon in "Lady Huntingdon's Experiment." I doubt if there is an actor or actress who doesn't possess a mascot, or who would appear without it, particularly on a first night. This is probably due to the gamble we all have for success. Sarah Bernhardt has a little jewelled skull. It was formerly the property of Rachel. Without this mascot she would refuse to go on the stage. I can see the superior smile of many at hearing this, but if the possession of some grotesque figure, a bit of ribbon, or a glove that once belonged to somebody else, a coin, a charm can be made to help us reach our respective goals in life, why should they not be cherished?"

A Distiller's Hobby.

The Stradivarius collector will have a chance to enrich his stock, for, by the death of Mr. Robert Crawford, of Edinburgh, the well-known whisky distiller, a genuine "Strad" which he possessed will probably come into the market. Mr. Crawford bought the instrument for £2000, and it will probably fetch anything now from three to four thousand. "Bob" Crawford was always a musical enthusiast and had a dip in many a theatrical and musical lucky bag. He made a fortune in whisky and financed many a theatrical venture—his last coup being a deal in "The Arcadians." He lately settled in London, but on his previous visits he delighted to take a few friends to lunch and dinner and had a peculiarity that during the meal he passed you from a huge packet a cigarette every other minute. Cigars would vary this monotony, and on conclusion he would ask for your address, with the result that in the course of a few days you received a dozen of very old whisky, a dozen of very nice ginger wine—and, if a married man, a quart of pure lavender water. This was his stock present to a select coterie of acquaintances within a week of their lunching with him, writes J. M. Glover.

The Censor's Duty.

It is curious how superstitions linger and refuse to be abolished, observes the San Francisco "Argonaut." The English censor of plays has just resigned, and of course there is a clamour for the appointment of a woman in his place. A woman, we are told, is a much better judge of stage improprieties than a man, and with a woman in the seat of the mighty there would be no fear of the presentation of any play to which women would object. Probably not. That is just where the trouble comes in. That is why a woman should not be a dramatic censor. The object of a dramatic censor is, presumably, to keep the stage pure and not to fill it with plays acceptable to women. That is just the kind of play that we do not want. When the English censor banns a play upon the ground of indecency he is consulting the preferences of men, not of women. It is the man who objects to puriency, not his maiden aunt. The problem play that pretends to map and chart the vice of a big city is sustained by women, not by men. The English-speaking stage is low enough in all conscience and it can never be redeemed by a censorship of any kind. But if we want to see it imitate the Gadarene swine and run down a steep place into the sea, by all means appoint a woman censor. But it will not be done in England. They will draw the line somewhere.

"Among the Gods."

It was a sweet, sad play, and there was hardly a dry handkerchief in the house. But one man in the gallery, "among the gods," irritated his companions excessively by refusing to take the performance in the proper spirit. Instead of weeping he laughed. While others were mopping their eyes and endeavouring to stifle their sobs his own eyes brimmed with merriment, and he burst into inappropriate guffaws. At last the lady by his side turned upon him indignantly.

"I d-don't know what brought you h-here," she sobbed, with streaming eyes; and pressing her hand against her aching heart; "but if y-you don't like the p-play you might l-let other p-people enjoy it."

"Everywoman."

On Easter Monday at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, we are to have a quite uncommon play, "Everywoman," which has been talked about a lot in Australia, where it had a very successful run. The leading actress is Miss Hilda Spong, said to be remarkably fine in the role of "Everywoman." Describing the piece, Walter Browne, the author, says:—"While every character in 'Everywoman' is symbolic of various abstract virtues, vices, and conditions, I have endeavoured to make them also concrete types of actual men and women of the present day. It was my object to present an allegory, in the shape of a stage play, sufficiently dramatic and soul-stirring in its story and action to form an attractive entertainment, quite apart from its psychological significance. 'Everywoman' is intended to afford pleasure and entertainment to all classes of intelligent playgoers, hence the music, the songs, the choruses, the dances, the spectacular and scenic effects, and the realism of everyday life. It is not a sermon in disguise. To every woman who nowadays listens to flattery, goes in quest of love, and openly lays siege to the hearts of men, this play may provide a kindly warning. To every man it may suggest an admonition, the text of which is contained in the epilogue to the play:

'Be merciful, be just, be fair,
To Everywoman, everywhere,
Her faults are many. Nobody's the blame.'"

"In 'Everywoman' there is enough comedy to give you rest; enough by-play to thrown open the window and let in the fresh air; enough witchery of girls so the curtains are parted and the sun streams in from the east carrying the perfume of life's morning," writes Elbert Hubbard. "'Everywoman' is a play that makes us think, makes us feel, sounds our heartstrings, and then makes us laugh, sending us away happy. And we feel all the better for it. The whole thing now looms large in my memory, and I feel that the witnessing of this play was an event, an epoch, a great white milestone in my life's little journey."

The Marlow Season.

There is nothing like a good rousing melodrama to draw the crowd, as the Marlow management has found out, and last week's season in Auckland, with that very vivid story "A Girl's Temptation," was an excellent one from the standpoint of the box office. The harrowing hardships which the good and innocent girl has to bear at the hands of everybody in

Mary Ann: "'Ello! You're a different gent to 'im wot come larst week."

Teuton Bandsman: "Ja, die time I play faster and fuiah first."—"Punch."