



Tahna,

MR. HENRY PLIMMER.

Sydney.

tears from her forehead, ran her fingers through her hair to express emotion, gurgled throatly every time she felt tearful, and walked up and down like a tigress. From such an education let her hold herself aloof, and, in the meantime before she is tempted, go and see her in her adorably untutored condition. Who knows if you may get the chance six months from now?"

Miss O'Neil was born in San Francisco, California, not very many years ago, and when it is considered that only six years have elapsed since her *début*, her advance must be considered rather wonderful. Her *repertoire* for the Australasian tour comprised the following plays:—"Magda," "Camille," "La Tosca," "Fedora," "Elizabeth, Queen of England," "The Jewess," "Hedda Gabbler," "Peg Woffington," "The School for Scandal," "Ingomar," "Oliver Twist," "The Scarlet Letter," "Guy Mannering," and "Macbeth." We have seen her in Auckland in many of these plays, and there, as well as in Melbourne and Sydney, the clever young actress has been the recipient of unstinted praise. Of her performance in

the title rôle of Hermann Sudermann's "Magda" one critic has written:—

"It would be hardly correct to credit Sudermann in this work with having constructed a problem play. He is occupied, not so much in setting a problem, as in stating facts with pitiless sternness. The unappeasable conflict between Magda and her father is an awful fact; the author is not committed to unreserved approval of the standpoint of either. Only, if the disdainful individualism of the one comes into contact with the rigid deep-rooted conventionalism of the other, pitiable consequences must ensue. 'Wind-beaten, but ascending.' It is part of Magda's arrogant assumption that she has ascended, to a liberty—a moral lawlessness, in fact—infinity superior to the code which fettered her in the stifling atmosphere of home. To achieve anything great one must sin (such is her cynic creed), and she has both been sinned against bitterly, and has sinned herself. 'I might have risen, too,' says the young parson, sadly, 'if joy had entered into my life.' 'And one thing more, my friend—sin,' ejaculates Magda, biting. 'To become greater than our sins is worth all the purity you preach.' There is outlined the perilous pinnacle on which the woman thinks she has sure foothold. Driven twelve years ago from the paternal roof by the martinet severity of old Colonel Schwartz, she has taken her life between her two hands to do with it what she will. Why should she blush? She has ached and hungered. By the strength of her own will she has conquered want and misery, carved out a career, and now stands the recipient of homage and adulation as the most famous operatic singer in Europe. With that strange blaze upon her, she recrosses the threshold of the humdrum German home, where the atmosphere breathed is 'tobacco, lavender, and cough-mixture.' She comes intending but to see, to patronise affectionately, and to disappear again. The old