

In the Public Eye.

THE well-known actor, Mr. Charles Arnold, paid Auckland a visit of some weeks on his retirement from stage life.

MR. CHARLES ARNOLD.

New Zealanders have had many a good laugh over "What Happened to Jones" and "Why Smith Left Home," besides making the acquaintance of "Charley's Aunt," "Hans the Boatman," and sharing the secret of "The Professor's Love Story."

After a round of sightseeing and a course of baths at Rotorua, Mr. Arnold left for New York, whence, in a short time, he proceeds to London. There he will have a thorough rest, and his return to work will depend upon his own pleasure. Should anything of merit come before him, and should Mr. Arnold feel disposed to organise a company and make a tour, we may have the pleasure of welcoming him again to New Zealand. Mr. Arnold has a very pleasing personality, and

does not mind frankly confessing his impressions. His remarks on colonials and the behaviour of his audiences here are decidedly complimentary. He is much in love with our climate, our blue skies, our "clean" air, free from fog and intense extremes of temperature. A reference to dirty Sydney streets reminded him of the ravages of the plague, and the actor spoke feelingly of

Miss Booth and Miss Lee, who succumbed recently. The former had been long with him, and in her younger days had done first-class work on the English stage. She had one great desire—to die in harness; and when suddenly taken ill had no idea of the nature of the disease, which carried her off, mercifully while in delirium. Mr. Arnold has erected to her memory a monument, the epitaph upon which is from

"King Lear":—

"Blow wind, come wrack, at least I'll die with harness on my back." Mr. Arnold remarked on the difference between the English provincial and the colonial audiences. The latter follow the play with interest, and appreciate good acting. The former go—the women often with shawls over their heads—because "something is on." The actor sees his audience, and his heart sinks. Throughout the performance is heard the striking



Bartlett,

Mr. Charles Arnold.

Auckland.

the popping of ginger beer corks, and the steady fusilade of nut cracking. Imagine the actor in the middle of a pretty piece of sentiment, when pop! crack! keep up a running accompaniment. It is not surprising that the county families in most cases despise their local theatres. Speaking of audiences reminded the actor of the difficulty of procuring plays to suit the