

After the conclusion of the season at His Majesty's to-morrow week, Mr. Musgrove's new English Dramatic Company will make a fortnight's tour of the country, commencing with a three nights' season at Rotorna. On their return they will leave on July 4 for Gisborne, this being the commencement of a Southern tour. After leaving this colony Tasmania will be visited, and then Melbourne, after which the company will make a flying trip to West Australia, playing a fortnight's season in Perth. They will then return to Melbourne in time for Cup week.

Mons. Leon Caron, whose death is so deplored by all who knew him, was born at Boulogne, in the North of France, 55 years ago last January, and came to Australia about 27 years since, where he practically resided ever since. In his earliest years he displayed an aptitude for music, and while still very young was placed under the great violinist Camille Urso. Subsequently he became a pupil of Gilmore, the organist, in Paris.

The late M. Caron was the composer of several works, among them being the "Cantat" for the Melbourne Exhibition in 1880. Seventeen years ago he became connected with the then firm of Williamson, Garner and Musgrove. Subsequently Messrs. Garner and Musgrove dropped out, but M. Caron continued with Mr. Williamson, remaining in the latter's service until his death as conductor of orchestras. During those 17 years M. Caron was the recipient of many evidences of regard from some of the various distinguished artists with whom he had been associated as conductor of orchestras, and received complimentary batons from, among others, the late Wilson Barrett, Nellie Stewart, and William Paul. On the occasion of M. Caron's departure for England on business some six years ago, he was presented with a writing desk by the company of Her Majesty's Theatre. He died at the Gresham Hotel, Drutt-street, Sydney, on the 28th ult.

Miss Tittell Brune during her season in New Zealand will produce "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," "La Tosca," "Theodora," "L'Aiglan," "Camille," "Romeo and Juliet," "Sunday," and "Merely Mary Ann." A season in Sydney will follow in September next.

Mr. John F. Sheridan, the world-famed "Widdy," produced on Saturday at the Criterion Theatre, Sydney, a comic opera entitled "King Dodo," by Gustav Luder and Frank Pixley. Sheridan played the name part, who is described as a jolly old potentate, monarch of everything in Spoojaland. Miss Maud Amber and Mr. Winfield Blake, American artists, are with the company, which also includes a very strong corps de ballet.

The reported robbery of some of Miss Nellie Stewart's jewellery last week created quite a sensation. Fortunately the actual monetary loss was inconsiderable.

The Otahuhu Musical Comedy Club produced a musical comedy entitled "The Second Mrs. S.," at Onehunga last Thursday.

Miss Amy Willard, whose portrait appears in this issue, who is now playing in Auckland with Mr. George Musgrove's Company has played many good comedy parts in London. Two of her greatest successes were Paulina in Mr. Weedon Grossmith's piece, "The Night of the Party," at the Avenue Theatre, London, and Tweeney in "The Admirable Crichton" at the Duke of York's Theatre. This is Miss Willard's first trip to the colonies, and she hopes it will not be her last, as she enjoys playing to the audiences here so much. They are so appreciative and attentive. She thinks New Zealand a very beautiful place; she is particularly impressed with the lovely, graceful trees here. When Miss Willard returns to London she will play a very good part, which is being specially written for her by her London manager, Mr. Weedon Grossmith.

The MacMahon Dramatic Company is earning much praise in the goldfields district. The production of the exciting drama, "By Order of the Czar," at Waihi caused much enthusiasm, there being a very large audience. It was followed by the four-act London drama, "Led Astray."

Writing of West's Pictures and the Brescians my Christchurch correspondent says that business has been splendid ever since the first night. The pictures are cinematographic ones, but excellent of their kind, and, in fact, as good as any we have had here, if not better. The view of Vesuvius in eruption is a magnificent picture, full of smoke and steam effects. Nothing could be well more realistic, and next to "doing" Vesuvius this picture will fill the bill for you, and at a considerably cheaper figure, too. The comic scenes are capital, the "chase for a lost child" creating screams of laughter. In fact all the pictures are good, some being

strikingly so. The Brescians are a very clever lot of musicians, male and female, and they combine to keep the audience amused and interested throughout. They are fantastically dressed in garments of gorgeous hue, so that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But the dress is picturesque enough. In Mr. Rudall Hayward the company possesses a vocalist of quite exceptional ability. He sings "Simon the Cellarer," for example, as this scribe never heard it sung before. In fact, Mr. Hayward does not merely sing the song—he acts it as well. Miss Martinengo sings very prettily, and her sister plays the violin like an angel. But do angels play the violin? I believe they are only harpists! Mr. Fred. Mills is the humorist of the company, and being so announced on the bills and the programmes of course he has to live up to his reputation and be as funny as he can all the time. He certainly is a capable entertainer, and his vocal imitation of the bagpipes just brings down the house. I warmly commend it to the notice of Aucklanders, who are sure to appreciate this delightful blend of living pictures and popular musical items.

In an appreciation of Sir Henry Irving appearing in the latest issue of London "M.A.P.," the writer, "B.P.," states that Sir Henry would have become prominent in any walk of life by reason of his personality and individuality. Bound up heart and soul, says the writer, in the art and profession which he has so long elevated, he yet takes keen and enthusiastic interest in all current affairs; while his knowledge of details would be surprising to those who erroneously think

The Spencer Jones concert party will commence a season here on October 2.

The popular Westminster Company, with Mr. Branscombe at its head, is due in Auckland in November.

West's Pictures and the Brescians commence a month's season at His Majesty's on September 4.

Mme. Patti has been decorated in Paris with the Cross of the Legion of Honour. The famous singer travelled expressly from Wales in order to sing at a charity concert at the Gaité Theatre, and as a token of the French Government's appreciation of her invaluable kindness, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon the proposition of M. Dujardin Beaumetz, the Under-Secretary of State for Fine Arts, bestowed upon her the much-coveted honour. The nomination has caused considerable discontent in theatrical circles in Paris, because the Order has been systematically withheld from eminent French actresses and singers, including Mme. Sarah Bernhardt. It was announced that a question would be put in the French Chamber by a Deputy belonging to the Left, who is also a poet and author.

Writing from Sydney, Mr. George Tallis sends some interesting notes:—

There will be, to use a business phrase, considerable activity in exportation and importation with regard to Mr. J. C. Williamson's respective companies during the ensuing fortnight. Miss Tittell Brune begins the movement with her departure from Melbourne for New Zealand.

his fraternity entered into successive contracts with her afterwards, and when she had finished with them all her record was surely a unique one. She had captured a critical city, had commanded its admiration and appreciation in whatever role she appeared, and had left them with a memory which, as one enthusiast put it, will be years before it is effaced.

For the three weeks' season which commences in Sydney on June 24, the Gilbert and Sullivan Company will revive "The Mikado," "The Yeoman of the Guard," and "The Gondoliers," the two latter of which are "new" in the sense that the company has not played them before. The vacancy created by the lamented death of M. Leon Caron has been filled by Mr. J. C. Williamson by the appointment of Mr. August Juncker, well known as a musician in Australia, especially for his sentimental ballad, "I Was Dreaming." Mr. Juncker has been for the last three or four years with various musical organisations in the United States, where his experience include engagements under Mr. Charles Frohmann. The company open in Brisbane on July 17, and in Melbourne on August 5.

Mr. Andrew Mack made quite as conspicuous a success of "Jack Shannon" when he produced it at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, on Saturday last (the 3rd inst.) as any of his previous efforts. The part, which, by the way, he declares to be his favourite, suited him down to the ground, and the combination of merriment and sentiment it contains was a particularly happy one. The comedy-drama will only be staged for a week, and the last five nights of the Melbourne season will be devoted to revivals of "Tom Moore" and "The Way to Kenmare." The company leave on Friday next for Sydney, where they open on Saturday, the 17th inst.

The New Zealand tour of Miss Tittell Brune and her company commences at Wellington on Saturday next, June 17. To get there in time it will be necessary for the whole combination to leave Melbourne by the Sydney express to-day (Saturday, 10th) and catch the Sierra for Auckland on Monday. Mr. Garston Mervale remains behind to join the Nance O'Neil Company, and Mr. George Majoroni succeeds him in the dramatic company.

There will be a break in the "acting nights" after the season of the Knight-Jeffries Company closes in Sydney on the 23rd inst. It was originally intended to visit Brisbane, but Mr. Knight's illness necessitated a change of plan, and the combination will not resume work until the Adelaide season, opening on July 15. Mr. Knight, who is rapidly improving in health, will spend his weeks of convalescence in the same city, and confidently expects to be quite recovered for the initial performance there.

By this time the Royal Comic Opera Company should be well used to quick changes of location, and the prospective trip the whole breadth of Australia, from Sydney to Perth, is not likely to awe them. "rushed" though it be. The last night of "The Cingalee" in Sydney is fixed for June 15, and immediately after the performance a special train with the whole of the huge organisation on board will leave Sydney direct for Adelaide, arriving there in time to catch the West Australian steamer on Saturday. Miss Rose Musgrove, now seriously ill with typhoid, will be the only member of the company to be left behind.

"Blind Man's Buff," which Mr. Musgrove's Company produced on Saturday at His Majesty's, was staged just prior to the last mail leaving Home by Miss Maxine Elliott at the Lyric Theatre under its original title of "Her Own Way." It is interesting, therefore, to know how it was viewed at Home. This is from the critic of the "Licensed Victuallers' Gazette":—

"Her Own Way" ran for two years in New York. It was the play of the season—or, rather, of two seasons. Though it is well that an opportunity be afforded English playgoers of visiting this play, we greatly doubt a repetition of the two years' run will be made on this side of the water. For ourselves we must admit that the play left us unimpressed. For one thing, the piece is altogether too hybrid; indeed, it reminds one somewhat forcibly of Dr. Johnston's leg of mutton. Again, neither the story nor the characters seem in the least bit lifelike.

Yet it must be conceded that "Her Own Way" is rightly built for financial success. It all goes so smoothly, containing no witty epigrams (over which one has to puzzle to discover the wit), no moralising, no puny problems. It is simply an unvarnished play—to our mind impossible—American domestic life. We see the happy home: Mr. Carley, the husband, man of many dollars; the wife, woman of fashion; "the children playing by candlelight." Yet we are not moved. Then we have the sister of Mr. Carley, Georgiana, "the angel of the hearth,"



MR. HARRY PARKER, Stage Manager Musgrove's New English Dramatic Co.

that a great artist can have no business capacity. Everything Irving attempts is achieved with the thoroughness and attention to detail which have helped to make his name famous.

Miss Nellie Power, who has made such a hit with Fuller's Empire Company at the Opera House, is an Auckland. Her coon song, "Honey, Don't Say We Must Part," is a great favourite, while other items, such as "Phoebe" and "She's My Love," are heartily applauded.

Carl Hertz, who is at present playing an engagement at the Winter Garten, Berlin, has been having an exciting time of it in that city. The "Berliner Tageblatt" made an attack upon him in reference to his bird-cage trick, and demanded the interference of the police authorities of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The other papers followed suit, and in order to satisfy the authorities the illusionist invited the entire press of Berlin and the officers of the society named to a special performance with the bird, which had been marked with the private stamp of the society. The little creature was returned entirely unharmed, and the journalists and members of the society satisfied that their accusations against Mr. Hertz were false. He has since received a certificate from the president, and a complimentary letter, stating that the officials of the S.P.C.A. were satisfied that the bird was not injured in the trick. The controversy has been a huge advertisement for Mr. Hertz, and seats at the Winter Garten are reported to be sold out every evening.

land to-day (Saturday, 10th inst.) and her example will be followed a few days later by Mr. Andrew Mack, who leaves Melbourne for Sydney on Friday, the 16th inst. He will be succeeded by Miss Nance O'Neil, who is now on her way from San Francisco. The next to move in Australia will be the Royal Comic Opera Company, which, on June 15, takes the giant stride from Sydney to Perth, and eight days afterwards the Knight-Jeffries season in the former city closes, and the organisation makes room for the Gilbert and Sullivan Company from New Zealand, while, on the outskirts of it all, the Bio-Tableau fits from town to town in Tasmania. Altogether the circumstances are an interesting manifestation of the great extent of Mr. Williamson's business and the enterprise he displays in covering the whole theatrical world of Australasia.

In June last year a writer in one of the Boston magazines referred to Miss Nance O'Neil's visit to Boston as being the supreme dramatic event of the season, and referred to the unexpectedness, richness of development, and climax as being "as good as a play." Certainly there was an element of romance about it such as one usually expects from the plots of novels. Miss O'Neil arrived in Boston almost unknown and unappreciated. She began courageously in a small and unfrequented theatre, and soon the exceptional talent she showed brought its own reward. The box office profits rose from £6 to £300 per night, and her first engagement in Boston brought £8000 profit to the manager. Three others of