

AUSTRALIAN NOTES.

The last week of the Knight-Jeffries season in Sydney (which terminated on Friday, the 23rd inst.) was signalised by a somewhat novel experiment (writes Mr. George Tallis). "Monsieur Beaucaire," the play in which Mr. Julius Knight made such a hit, was staged for three nights with Mr. J. B. M. Osborne (the husband of Miss Maud Jeffries) in the name part. Considering his short stage career and the fact that he had to follow so popular an exponent of the character, he did surprisingly well, and all the daily papers, in reviewing his effort, metaphorically patted him on the back for it. Of course it had its faults, due more to the lack of experience than of intelligence, but it also had so many good points that the theatre was well filled for each night of the revival. "The Lady of Lyons," with Mr. Harry Plimmer as Claude Melnotte, brought the season to an end, and the company are now resting preparatory to opening in Adelaide on July 15.

Mr. J. C. Williamson has decided to make "The Darling of the Gods" one of the features of the forthcoming season of the Knight-Jeffries Company in Adelaide and the West, in neither of which quarters has the Japanese drama yet been seen. The whole of the elaborate scenery which was so prominent a feature of the piece when it was first produced will be used, and as both Miss Maud Jeffries and Mr. Julius Knight will be available for their respective parts of Ko-san and Kara, nothing will be wanting in the success of the play. In all probability the play will be added permanently to the company's repertoire on future tours.

The Gilbert and Sullivan Company, fresh from their most successful tour of New Zealand, were most cordially welcomed back to the Sydney Theatre Royal last Saturday (June 24) in "The Mikado." "The Yeomen of the Guard" and "The Gondoliers" will be presented during the three weeks' season.

The popular appreciation both of Mr. Andrew Mack and "Tom Moore" continued unabated throughout the whole run of that piece at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney, and playgoers of that city have extended to him the same "glad hand" (to borrow an Americanism he himself would use) as Melbourne did.

There was a veritable rush for seats when the box plan for the Royal Comic Opera Company opened in Perth a fortnight ago, and during the first day a total of no fewer than 3000 seats were booked, at which the tariff charged represented receipts to the tune of nearly £1000. That result broke all previous records, and as most of the seats booked were reserved for the first night, it can easily be understood that the company's opening performance on the 16th inst. was a brilliantly successful one.

Miss Rose Musgrove, who has been suffering from a most severe attack of typhoid fever (she was delirious for the first three weeks) has now happily turned the corner, and is improving again. It will naturally be some weeks, however, before she is convalescent.

Mr. J. C. Williamson has received communications from New Zealand indicating that the reception accorded Miss Tittell Brune and her company in Wellington was on the most appreciative scale. So eager were the public to pay tribute to the talent of the young tragedienne, that "L'Aiglon" was played for a whole week to crowded houses, resulting in box office returns which would certainly not have disgraced either Melbourne or Sydney, places with ten times the population of Wellington and its environs.

Miss Nance O'Neil's high histrionic art never had finer scope for development than it has in "The Fires of St. John," by Sundermann, which was produced for the first time in Australia at Her Majesty's, Melbourne, last Saturday evening (June 24). Her interpretation of the character of Marie is distinguished by intense and emotional power, a wide range of expression, and a restrained and natural method. No greater contrast could be imagined than that between the character of Marie and Magda, and Miss O'Neil accentuates that contrast most vividly. Even her own individuality seems changed from the masterful Magda to the submissive Marie, and in voice, gestures, and intonation, everything in fact, she is another woman. It was a finely conceived and admirably carried out performance, and Miss O'Neil deserves to be heartily congratulated for the great success she achieved in it.

Miss Ada Crossley's wedding card consisted of a boomerang of cardboard, having on its outer cover the bushman's call, "Coo-ee," in letters of gold.

The Australian rights of Mr. Charles Hannan's melodrama, "The Whitechapel King," originally produced in May, 1903, under the title of "The World's Way," at the Pavilion Theatre, and now being played at the Hammersmith Lyric Theatre, have been secured on lease by Mr. J. C. Williamson.

Patti was to have made her only appearance this season on June 1 at the Albert Hall. Miss Ada Crossley (Mrs. F. Muecke) was to have made her first appearance in public after her marriage at the same concert.

My Christchurch correspondent writes:—Mr. P. R. Dix is providing the people of this flat metropolis with plenty of amusement just now, the present Dixian Company being about the best that P.R.D. has brought along here. There was a change of bill Wednesday, and the new programme is, if anything, an improvement on the former one. Hawthorne and Wilson contribute some new imitations of popular actors, and repeat some of their previous successes. Theirs is one of the very best "turns" of the evening. The imitations of Fuller Golden, Bland Holt, and Sheridan are simply wonderful, the mimics having caught not only the voices, but the facial expression of the artistes imitated with astonishing fidelity. Mr. Warsaw, the possessor of a capital voice, obliges with new songs, but is at his best in "Where the Swanee River Flows." The Two Mascottes dance very prettily, and the Bicknells are as successful as ever in pleasing their audiences. Miss Beryl Lytton has a pleasing and sympathetic voice, but it is hardly strong enough for



Miss HILDA MEADE, of the MacMahon Dramatic Company.

a large theatre. In Paul Kinko the management have got hold of a performer difficult to beat in his line. As a juggler and balancer Kinko is simply first-rate, performing his very difficult feats with an ease and dexterity somewhat unusual even in professionals. The Ibson Family contribute a lot of popular musical items that are very much appreciated, and as for Tod Calloway, he gets about six recalls nightly. The Gaiety Six with the Bicknells dance delightfully. By the way, one of the "Six" became Mrs. Tod Calloway this week, and when Tod appeared the same night the orchestra struck up "The Wedding March." The last item on the bill is contributed by the Mahers. The Fullers are giving a splendid bill at the Opera House this week. Amongst the star "turns" are "Musical Miller" and his quack orchestra, "Ethel, the world's greatest Muscular Posturer" (vide bills), Ward Lear, Celia Mavis, and George Stilwell, the illusionist. Many a frequenter of the Opera House would be glad to here John Fuller *per se*, sing once more. John is very popular here. But then he is popular everywhere. My old friend Harold Ashton is once more with us, having come in advance of Miss Tittell Brune, whose season commences at the Royal on July 7.

"The Tivoli has secured the latest recruit to the music hall stage, viz., Miss Alice Hollander, who starts her engagement there next Monday, with Liza Lehmann (says the "Era.") This beautiful and talented young lady possesses a voice of exceptional range and quality, and will be remembered for the fine rendering of her songs in "Sergeant Brue," at the Strand Theatre just lately. Miss Hollander is an Australian, having been born in Sydney. She has taken part in tours with Madame Melba, Madame Adeline Patti, Kubelik, and Gerardy, and should be a great acquisition to the variety stage."

The very latest idea in America is a musical play without a chorus. Many men, if asked to vote, would plump for the chorus without the musical play.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred. W. Perman (Miss Florence Le Clerq) have arrived in London from Australia, after fulfilling a twelve months' contract with Mr. J. C. Williamson.

Mr. George Alexander has been engaged to play lead in "The Prodigal Son" at Drury Lane by Mr. Arthur Collins. Mr. Alexander was to have gone on an extended tour in the autumn, but his engagement at the Lane has necessitated the cancelling of the dates already fixed.

The Corrick Family of Entertainers are now appearing in Hobart.

According to the "Referee," Mr. William Anderson has disbanded his touring companies—both dramatic and pantomime—for the present.

Poor Charles Arnold was buried in the Crystal Palace District Cemetery. The funeral started from the residence of the deceased in Copers Cope Road, Beckenham, and the hearse was covered with beautiful wreaths. The chief mourners were Mrs. Arnold and Miss Edna Arnold. Others present were Mrs. Thomas, an old friend who is acting in Mr. Edward Terry's company; Mr. Louis Joel, Mr. C. D. Wilcocks, Mr. J. Laird, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Leslie B. Cadell, a son of Miss Nelly Mortyne, a well-known Australian actress, who is also in Mr. Terry's company; and the members of the Savage Club; Colonel Richardson, Mr. Mostyn Pigott, Mr. Walter Smith, Mr. T. Gurrin, Mr. Maitland Dicker, Mr. Gerald FitzGibbon, Mr. Courtyce Pounds, Mr. Fred. Grundy, Mr. John Stokes, Mr. Conrad Cooke, Mr. Frank Thornton, Mr. C. K. Robinson. At the chapel in the cemetery the service was conducted by the Rev. A. N. Armstrong. The inscription on the coffin simply bore the name of the deceased, the date of his birth—Christmas day, 1854—and the date of his death, May 6, 1905.

Mr. Howard Thurston, the famous illusionist and magician, passed through Auckland by the Sonoma en route to Sydney, where in all probability he will commence his colonial tour. New Zealand is to be visited at no distant date. Mr. R. B. Young informs me that most likely Mr. Geo. Musgrove will take over Mr. Thurston's management. Mr. Musgrove witnessed this clever illusionist's performance in America, and was indeed quite enthusiastic about him, and pronounced his colonial season a theatrical triumph. Everything that Mr. Musgrove witnessed at the entertainment was new, from the rise to the fall of the curtain, the performance exhibited being far and away ahead of anything produced or attempted before colonial audiences, and was, in fact, entirely new to American and Continental theatre-goers. Mr. Thurston played to audiences totalling 60,000 for a six weeks' season in 'Frisco prior to his departure for the colonies, this constituting a theatrical record. Mr. Thurston travels with a staff of 14 and 13 tons of material effects for the illusions, which are set upon a most gorgeous and elaborate scale. Mrs. Thurston and Mr. Allen Shaw accompany the magician on his colonial tour.



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