

The most effective scenes in the performance of "Queen Elizabeth," which will shortly be seen in Auckland, were the Throne Room of Act III., and the signing of the warrant for the execution of Essex in Act IV. Miss Nance O'Neil, it must be confessed, sacrifices historical accuracy in order that she may show off her personal charms and her declamatory power in these scenes (writes "The Don.") Queen Elizabeth was well advanced in years when she boxed the man she loved on the ears with a "God's death! Go and be hanged!" That was in June, 1598, and while Burleigh was still alive. After the death of the Queen's chief adviser in August, 1598, Essex was sent to Ireland. He was back at Court in September, 1599. A faint flicker of tenderness was still lingering in the bosom of the aged Queen—yet now hatred was strangely mixed with old love. The downfall of the favourite was inevitable. The Queen, now close on seventy, and without a single true-loving creature in the world on whose bosom she might rest her grey, old head, hesitated to strike at Essex. For more than eight months Elizabeth wavered between rancour and pity. Thrice she made out the warrant for the committal of Essex to the Tower, and thrice she revoked it. It was not till the 9th of February, 1601, that the gates of the Tower were shut up in Essex. The day after the condemnation of the lover on whom her soul had once hung in raptures, Elizabeth signed the warrant for his execution. She signed it with a firm hand, putting an elaborate flourish around her name. Six days after the trial the Earl's head was struck off. The official report of the execution of her favourite was brought to the Queen while she was playing the spinet. Elizabeth affected joyousness, and launched out into a merry tune. Following the bad example of the constructor of the play, Miss O'Neil presents the Queen in full vigour of health and passion at the time of Essex's execution. The hair of the Sovereign is flaming red when she signs the death warrant, and there is nothing in look and manner to indicate that Elizabeth was then nearing the last milestone of her magnificent career. For all that the Throne Room scene was splendidly effective, from the dramatic standpoint, and the outburst on receiving the news of the Earl's death was thrilling in its nervous force and emotional intensity. Although wholly at variance with the historical chronicles Elizabeth's declaration of her love for Essex after his execution and the imperious dismissal of the courtiers who had plotted against the man "whose shoes they were not fit to touch" were the finest features of the performance.

It is arranged that Miss Eileen Castles will join Mr J. C. Williamson's Repertoire Company at the end of the year.

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Equally good for the young and old—
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure!
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WOODS' GREAT PEPPERMINT CURE!

CARSTAN

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"THAT'S ALL"

Of Madame Maggie Sterling, who commenced her Australian tour in Melbourne on September 21, a Melbourne exchange says that since leaving Melbourne six years ago she has applied herself wholeheartedly to her art, has spared no pains to equip herself thoroughly at all points, and has reaped a just reward in the flattering references invariably made to her by discerning critics in London and elsewhere. A brilliant future has already been prophesied for her by the "Times" and other newspapers have consistently remarked upon her cultivated methods, her rich and full contralto, and her sympathetic treatment of all she undertakes. Judging by her work during the past season, nothing musical comes amiss to Miss Sterling. She has toured the United Kingdom with Madame Bluevelt's concert party, creating quite a furore of enthusiasm in Scottish towns by her singing of old Border ballads. She has taken part in oratorio under the conductorship of the veteran Hans Richter, Sir Hubert Parry, Coleridge Taylor, and others. And, finally, she has done a great amount of general recital work, wherein her songs have ranged from examples of the old Italian School of Caccini and Scarlatti, to the ballads of modern composers, like Ellen Wright and Ethelbert Nevin, and taking in the heavy music of Gluck and Massenet, Schumann, Dvorak and Brahms. The Australasian party of which she is the head will be completed by Miss Ethel Sinclair, the winner of the Clarke Scholarship, and a brilliant young violinist, and M. Adolphe Borachke, a solo pianist, trained in the same school as Mark Hambourg, and possessing extraordinarily well-developed powers of execution.

"His Majesty's Servant" has a charm for the English-speaking playgoer, in that it deals with the time of the Stuarts. Somehow or other the British race is fond of Charles the Second. He wasn't a very good King, and there is no doubt that he was a highly immoral scamp, but in spite of his weaknesses and his vices, he is popular. I sometimes think (writes "Peter Quince") that his posthumous popularity is due to that historical sentence which he is reported to have used upon his deathbed—"Don't let poor Nelly starve." He was a rip, and Mistress Eleanor Gwynne was a demirene, but Charles thought of the orange girl when

he was dying, and his last words were for the woman—or, rather, one of the women—he had loved. In "His Majesty's Servant" the action of the piece opens with the escape of Charles the Second after the Battle of Worcester, and in that escape he is assisted by one Geoffrey Mohun, an actor of the King's Company. The plot of the piece turns on one of the numerous conspiracies to set Charles Stuart on the English Throne. Geoffrey Mohun, the hero, is played by Mr. Julius Knight, and in Lady Lettice Fairfax Miss Maud Jeffries has a prominent and sympathetic part to portray. Miss Florence Hamer represents Damaris, the evil genius of the lovers. The play is in four acts, and is full of life and absorbing interest from beginning to end.

Fitzgerald Bros.' Circus is at present in China, and is due in Calcutta at Christmas.

Miss Maud Beatty is now in Manila.

The Tittell Brune Company open in Sydney on October 14.

Mr. George Lauri is working up for introduction into "The Cingalee," a burlesque of Thurston, the magician, in his principal tricks. Mr. C. Bantock is cast for the parts of all the disappearing ladies.

Mr. George Stephenson's Musical Comedy Company are appearing in Perth in "The Chinese Honeymoon" and "The Skirt Dancer."

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, after a long silence, is engaged on a play, in four acts, which will be produced by Mr. Frohman at the Hudson Theatre, New York, early in October.

Les Brunin, a team of French trick billiardists now appearing at the Sydney Tivoli, are the absolute originators of their acts, and the costumes and effects necessary to the portrayal of same are valued at 10,000 francs (equal to £400).

Mr. George Elton (son of "Billy" Elton), who toured New Zealand with the now disbanded Hawtrey Comedy Company, is in the cast of "Lucky Miss Dean," which is at present being played at the Criterion Theatre, London.

The Broughs made their first appearance in Australia in 1885 under the management of the triumvirate in "Iolanthe," with the Royal Comic Opera Company. Brough was the Lord High Chancellor, and Mrs. B. played the Fairy Queen.

Kyrle Bellew was lately seen at the New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, in an all star revival of Oliver Goldsmith's fine old English comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer."

Miss Maud Jeffries considers Katusha in "Resurrection" and Marianne in "Herod," a poetic play by Stephen Phillips, produced in London by Beerbohm Tree, two of the finest acting parts she has ever had.

Henrietta Watson will shortly appear on the variety boards in a sketch written for her by Will Gourlay.

The house where Juliet lived in Verona, made famous in the plays of Shakespeare, was sold by auction just before the last mail left for £136.

The Frassetis, who recently toured New Zealand under the management of Mr. Harry Rickards, was appearing at the London Coliseum on August 19.

Balfe, in the public mind, is usually associated with "The Bohemian Girl" (says the "Theatre"), but, as a matter of fact, he was the composer of over 40 operas, some of which in these degenerate days of musical comedy would well bear revival. "Satanella," albeit by no means the strongest of his works, contains some lovely melodies, notably "The Power of Love" and "The Glorious Vintage of Champagne," but is handicapped by a libretto almost beneath criticism. This does not apply, however, to "The Rose of Castille," "Falstaff," "The Siege of Rochelle," "The Enchantress," "The Bondman" and "Il Talismano," of which two versions exist, one in Italian the other to English words, the title of the latter being "The Knight of the Leopard." Almost all these works would be new to an Australian audience, and such as have been heard here were given so long ago that they would be invested with the charm of novelty for most people.

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