

The Knight-Jeffries Company, which closed its Melbourne season the other day, will not justify that title any longer, since Miss Maud Jeffries (Mrs Onslow) is retiring into private life. After the New Zealand tour Mr Knight and the company will play a season of three or four weeks in Sydney (beginning February), when "His Majesty's Servant" will be played, and there will be seasons at Brisbane and Adelaide. Then the present intention is to disband the company about Easter. Mr Knight told the Melbourne audience on the closing night that he proposes to indulge himself in a long holiday.

Miss Nellie Stewart, who is playing a farewell season at Melbourne Princess, is to commence an American tour at San Francisco on January 22. She is to go there in the Sierra.

A young lady was pounding away at the piano, and the faces of the assembled guests bore traces of acute mental anguish. Suddenly the "music" ceased, and the proud and happy mother of the performer approached the guest of the evening, a famous professor of music. "And what do you think of my daughter's execution?" she inquired, smiling sweetly upon the old gentleman. "Your Tochter's vot, madam?" he cried. "Her execution," replied the somewhat astonished lady. "'Er execution! Madam, I congratulate you! Ven vas 'ee to be? Ven vos ee' goming off? I to be bres-end vill efery efford make!" And he shook his hostess violently by the hand.

It is the intention of the London County Council to insist that all lights in the theatres shall be kept brightly lit during performances, on account of increased safety to audiences in case of sudden panic.

A few evenings ago a sensational accident attended the feat of "leaping the chasm" at Prince's Court (says the "Australasian"). Lastro, the cyclist, who carries out the performance, rides a bicycle down an inclined plane 80 feet long. The planking turns up at the end, with the result that, if the rider successfully accomplishes the feat, he rises in the air, describes a beautiful curve, and lands, his machine under him, on an inclined plane 40 feet distant. On this occasion, however, Dastro started badly, and after making the leap the back wheel of the bicycle struck the inclined plane at the wrong angle. Man and machine spun through the air, and were thrown in a heap on the tan track 36 feet away. Dastro was rendered unconscious, but he recovered in a quarter of an hour, sat up, and remarked, "That's nothing—I've had far worse spills training in America."

On the conclusion of their New Zealand trip, the Knight-Jeffries company will play for a short season in Sydney, Brisbane, and Adelaide, giving, besides some old favourites, "The Darling of the Gods," "His Majesty's Servant," also "Everyman," which will be new to those cities.

Of the recent production of "Everyman" in Melbourne, the "Australasian" has the following:—"This is the miracle of genius," said Macaulay, "that things that are not should appear as though they are." The "Pilgrim's Progress," of which this was written, is the high-water mark of allegory. In seeing one of the old morality plays like "Everyman," one sees how the allegory was developed. Instead of being the forerunner of the Shakespearian drama, which is largely derived from Greek sources, it would seem as if the primitive personification of ideas in "Everyman" became afterwards

the personification of types (in the "Pilgrim's Progress"), and ultimately the personification of characters. The absence of scenery, except for a simple draping of tapestry and a pair of tapestry curtains veiling the inner scene, showed the primitive theatre. A celestial prologue gave forth the argument. Everyman is to be summoned by the dread messenger Death to the judgment bar of Heaven. Death, a most impressive figure in green, like G. L. Watt's celebrated figure in grey, checks Everyman midway in the "primrose path," and, obeying the summons, he prepares for his end. Friends, riches, comrades, discretion, learning, etc., all forsake him; good works alone accompanying him to the grave. Mr Julius Knight acted Everyman with impressive reverence. He showed his terror of the

"Pain the passage hath,
That makes fraile fleshe feare the bitter wave,"

and sank into his grave at the end after making his peace with Heaven. The other speakers, who were all well-known members of the company, included Confession, Knowledge, whose expression of "the rapt soul sitting in the eyes" was very fine; Good Works and "Goodes," who rather looks like the original ancestor of "the villain of the piece." The Town Hall was almost filled. Archbishop Carr and many clergymen of several denominations were present.

Mr Forbes Robertson's latest London production is a play written in blank verse called "The Conqueror," by "R. E. Fyffe," a nom-de-plume which ineffectually conceals the Duchess of Sutherland. The story tells of Morven, Lord of Abivard, surnamed "The Conqueror." The first act reveals him, in the midst of a career of conquest and devastation, in a castle recently captured; within this castle he

sees Amoranza, the ten-year-old daughter of his fallen opponent, and this child's trusting innocence touches some hitherto unknown chord of better nature in "The Conqueror's" heart. Had he been guided by his usual impulse he would have taken the child's life, but prompted by new emotions he sends her to his Castle of Abivard, there to be cared for and to await him until eight years have elapsed, when he will return and claim her as his bride. While he is making these plans Amoranza's nurse appropriately curses him, and luridly prophesies the details of his final end. The years of waiting are passed by Amoranza at the Castle of Abivard, and by The Conqueror in pursuit of further conquests; no one can prevail against him until, when the eight years have nearly passed, he fails to capture a young knight, Sir Beauvise of Degrevant, who continually eludes him and who finally reaches the Castle of Abivard, where he asks shelter from Amoranza. Now, Amoranza has not seen the Lord of Abivard since she was ten years old; she just remembers his features and knows he will come to her in disguise, and as this young knight very closely resembles The Conqueror, he is received by Amoranza as the lover she has been awaiting, and when the appointed hour arrives and the real Lord of Abivard comes to claim his bride, he finds that his enemy, Sir Beauvise, has gained in a day the maiden for whom he has waited eight years. The Conqueror throws all his treasures at Amoranza's feet, reminds her of his promise to claim her; but it is all too late: Amoranza loves Sir Beauvise, and the difficulty is solved by the self-destruction of Morven, Conqueror of all—except Love. The lighter episodes of the play are provided by a Seneschal and Amoranza's maid and by the introduction of morris dancers. The play is said to be rather dull.

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