

THE STAGE

(By "Footlight.")

HIS MAJESTY'S.

"THE EARL AND THE GIRL."

There was an immense house on Saturday at His Majesty's to welcome the popular comedian, Mr. John F. Sheridan and his musical comedy company. Every part of the house was crowded, and not a few had to be turned away. The piece chosen for the opening was Mr. Seymour Hicks' "The Earl and the Girl." It is one of those light and airy trifles with just a small thread of story woven into it, but what not dependent on any coherency of plot to maintain the interest. Rather is it made a peg on which to hang all sorts of funnyisms, for the piece makes no pretence to be other than a fun-maker pure and simple. It is a play which requires no deep thinking, but is rather the sort of tonic which the family physician might well advise for anyone who is suffering from an overdose of the blues. Laughter is a fine specific for many ailments, and at His Majesty's it is not provided in homoeopathic doses, but is dis-

must be admitted that never has Miss Barlow given us anything better, while her singing and dancing were heartily applauded. Perhaps the song, "Back to Bombay," found the greatest favour, while the duet with Mr. Sheridan also went well. Mr. Avalon Collard did good work as Dick Wargrave, his principal song, "By the Shores of the Mediterranean," coming in for much approval, while his acting was very amusing. Mr. T. Curran, as an American solicitor, made every point tell, his songs, "The Man Behind" and "The Grenadiers," being very well received. Although the former has been heard here before some new topical verses were added, and these were decidedly clever. Miss Ray Jones made a very fetching Elphin Haye, and her essay, "The Blush Rose of England," was a particularly pleasing item. Mr. Jean de Lacy as the fire-eating uncle, Miss F. Fanning as the tempestuous strong woman Mrs. Shimmering Black, Miss Minnie Gray as the vivacious Daisy Fallowfield, and many others all did well, while special mention must be made of Miss Selbourne's fine rendering of "The Serenade," a number which was stormily encored. The dancing is a very special feature of

The colouring is very pleasing, and the general setting of the picture good. Miss Ivy Goodwill, who first took the floor in a serio and dance, "My Maori Maid," went through her turn very brightly. She was followed by Mr. Bob Lloyd, who had the house with him from the start, and was recalled to further orders. Bob Lloyd's topical hits, as usual, caused much amusement, and there is something in what he has to say about things too. Miss Beryl Lytton, who makes a first appearance, sang two songs. She has a pleasing voice, which is, however, lacking somewhat in power and expression. The Driscolls next gave an animated little sketch, "I've Lost my Appetite for Chicken," that went well. They were heartily applauded for their turn, and recalled, their clever footwork being much appreciated. Mr. Chas. Howard gave a fine rendering of "Kings of the Road," and in answer to an encore sang a second song with considerable power and expression. Mr. Ward Lear, who makes a deal corner man, created roars of laughter with his songs, his make-up being inexpressibly funny. His whistling song was very good, and his turn throughout was marked by good, sound work. The first

Stephano, whose voice has gained in richness of tone since her last appearance here, sang "Let Me Die on the Deep" and "O, Dry Those Tears." Both songs were sung with considerable expression, and made manifest her wide range of voice. The Driscolls, who seem bound to score whenever they take the boards, next gave some clever and amusing sketches that kept the house in great good humour throughout their turn. The rags come put and straight, and their work has a finished touch about it that makes it go with a great swing. The result of the call for a cigarette was very funny, and made a great hit. The evening's entertainment concluded with an amusing comedietta by Mr. Ward Lear and the company that caused great hilarity and finished off a fine programme.

A night on New Zealand will in the near future form one of the planks of Mr. Knowles' amusement platform. Special biograph pictures are being taken by his travelling operator.

Songs of the sea are said to not always suit the taste of the roving sailorman. Mr. John Fuller relates an incident that



MR. JOHN F. SHERIDAN ENTERS HIS DRESSING ROOM.



THE WIDOW O'BRIEN EMERGES.

pensed in wholesale quantities; in fact, the members of the audience laughed uproariously during the greater part of the evening and then came away with the fixed intention of going again. Mr. Sheridan contributed largely to the general hilarity. He essays the role of Jim Cheese, a dog trainer, who being "dead broke" is prevailed upon for a financial consideration to impersonate "for one night only" the Earl of Stole, the reason for this being that there are several fearsome kind of people keenly anxious to interview the titled gentleman, who is by no means so keen on the meeting himself. Jim Cheese undertakes the part, and his adventures form the chief item in the second and by far the better act. It is possible that we have seen Mr. Sheridan in a part where he has greater opportunity, but what came his way were instantly seized upon. Perhaps the very best thing of the evening was his ludicrous attempt to dance a gavotte, and while this was in progress the house fairly roared itself hoarse. The most able assistance was lent by Miss Heba Barlow as Liza Shodham, whose low comedy was excellent. Although one could not help the wish that so charming an actress was not disguised in such hideous attire, yet it

the production, and here there was no lack of variety. The butterfly dance and the "Razzle-Dazzle Boys" ballet were possibly the best, although all were good. Altogether, the production was one with which Mr. Sheridan must feel well pleased, in which the audience will be disposed to entirely agree with him. Splendid business has resulted since the opening, Monday's audience being about a record for the theatre. Those who have not seen them should make a point of obtaining an introduction to "The Earl and the Girl" without further delay.

THE OPERA HOUSE.

FULLER'S ENTERTAINERS.

The Opera House was filled to overflowing on Monday evening, when an excellent all-round programme was submitted. Mr. Frank Crowther's orchestra led up to the raising of the curtain with a lively overture, and a good opening chorus was given by the company. A word must be said in praise of the new first part setting, painted by Mr. Will Hutchinson, entitled "A Venetian Garden."

half of the programme concluded with a triple song and dance by the three Gibson Girls, whose dancing was very fine, calling for loud applause and a re-demand. The second half of the programme was ushered in with a "Rag-time Two-step" by Mr. Crowther's orchestra. In this half Miss Mabel Lynne, who will be remembered for her spirited rendering of the "Old Bull and Bush," given during her last visit, made a re-appearance, giving a couple of songs with considerable dash and much expression. The three Gibson Girls again took the house by storm in their sketch, "Spoon-time." Their dainty costumes and clever dancing made a finished picture that called for prolonged applause. Mr. Will Lochrane, whose "Scotch" is delightful, kept the house in a ripple of laughter from start to finish, and made a decided hit with his football song and recitation. He was called back three times, and the audience were loth to see the last of him. The Ibsons, a clever trio of musicians, performed neatly on a variety of instruments, and came in for considerable appreciation at the hands of the audience. Their banjo work was especially good, showing a skilful command over the instrument that should be the forerunner of success. Miss Cecile

occurred at the Opera House recently which seems to point in that direction. John had gone on to take the place of a lady member of the company, who had a sore throat, and in consequence could not appear. After giving "Come Into the Garden, Maud," which won the complete favour of a large number of blue-jackets in the gallery, who promptly demanded more. John, thinking to win the hearts of the bold seadogs, gave them "The Anchor's Weighed" in his best style. "They didn't pass any remarks," said John, "but where they did not sit on unmoved they promptly weighed their own anchors and stood off for the main street."

The same list of artists appear throughout the week at the Opera House, and Mr. Fuller has changes in hand that will eventuate shortly in a lot of fresh attractions.

Leonard Nelson, whose capital rendering of comic songs made him a great favourite with Opera House patrons on his last visit to Auckland, is at present playing a season in Hobart, from whence he leaves for America shortly. We trust that he will be able to break his journey at Auckland en route for the land of the Stars and Stripes.