

THE STAGE

(By "Footlight.")

HIS MAJESTY'S.

EDISON'S PICTURES.

With Aucklanders there are few more popular forms of entertainment than moving pictures. The latest to come this way, Edison's series of "America at Work and Play," were produced at His Majesty's on Monday, and as might be expected, drew a large, and what speedily became an enthusiastic house. The first picture shown was a capital one of a parade of the New York fire brigade, the only fault being that it was taken too fast. Following this came New York from the water front, showing many of the loftiest sky-scrapers. A splendid film was the one taken from the front of an engine crossing Brooklyn Bridge. The burning of the Eric railway station gave a fine idea of what a big fire is like. New York in a blizzard made the audience realise that although the Auckland climate has nothing to boast of, yet it has its advantages. A very realistic panorama of San Francisco in ruins gave spectators a vivid idea of the appalling disaster which has overtaken California's great city, the arrival of the relief pack train of mules being especially clear.

Many of the more humorous pictures were greatly appreciated. The pranks of a bevy of school girls at Coney Island gave rise to much amusement and imparted a good idea of what many of the side shows to our own Exhibition in Christchurch will be like. The sensational escape of three convicts from the famous Sing Sing prison caused rounds of applause. "Stolen by Gypsies" was another well carried out series. A popular picture was "The Life of an American Policeman," the incident of the escape from the mounted sergeant being very clearly shown. Some of Miss Loie Fuller's beautiful serpentine dances were shown as well as quite a number of others on all sorts of subjects. Possibly the one which caused the greatest amount of merriment was the concluding picture, "The Dream of the Rarebit Fiend." This showed a man partaking not wisely but too well of the toothsome delicacy, washing it down with such copious libations that the subsequent walk home was full of excitement, while the surprising incidents of the dream caused roars of laughter, and were very clearly done, some portion of a picture being taken from a balloon passing over New York. Pictures are at all times difficult to describe, but must be seen. This is a step I should strongly advise readers to take, for of a surety they will not be disappointed. Mr Avaton Collard contributed two items, "The Penny Novelette" and "The Conversazione," both of which were much appreciated. The season will positively close on Friday evening.

LESLIE HARRIS—SOCIETY ENTERTAINER.

Mr Leslie Harris, the famous English Society Entertainer, will open in His Majesty's Theatre on Saturday night, assisted by Miss Rosina Buckmann, the celebrated English dramatic soprano, who, although still young, has made a great name for herself in England and on the Continent. Mr Harris is an entertainer a la Grossmith, with whom, by reason of his resourceful humour, inimitable style, and fine executive ability as a pianist, he is said to be fully qualified to rank. Always refined and in perfect taste, yet teeming with quaint says and musical effects, his entertainment proves most enjoyable. Satire on social fancies and fashions is of course called into requisition, and in this line Mr Harris shows to advantage. He submits the sketch "The Village Choral Society," by Mrs Grossmith's permission, and Mr Harris' portrayal of the mature soprano, the agricultural tenor, and the irascible conductor is described as mirth-provoking. He gives musical sketches, pathetic and humorous; he delivers speeches without words, and he does a specially feeling monologue, "The soliloquy of an old piano," added to which his chatty little stories and tales in all dialects with his inimitable facial expression are marvels of artistic cleverness. The box plan opens Wednesday morning at Wildman and Arey's, no extra charge for booking, and no early door charges.

"THE LADY TYPIST."

Mr Thomas Humphrey's musical comedy drew excellent houses all last week, a tribute to the genuine nature of the success being the fact that as the season progressed the business increased. There can be no doubt that all concerned are entitled to hearty congratulation on the all round excellence of the performances. On the concluding night of the run bouquets and boxes of chocolates were fairly showered upon the principals, while the author and Mr Fred Graham were called upon for a speech. During the six nights run the box office taking amounted to £800, so that from a financial point of view the production was entirely satisfactory.

THE MACMAHON DRAMATIC COMPANY.

Elaborate and active preparations are being made at the Palace Theatre, Sydney, by the Messrs MacMahon for their approaching tour of this colony. Quite an army of stage carpenters and scenic artists are being employed in the work necessary for the adequate production of the new plays to be presented, the first

proceedings with a lively overture, and the Company gave a fine opening chorus. Miss Ivy Gallardi, who first took the floor, won spontaneous applause for her dancing and singing of the serios, "Clarice Stella" and "Pretty Little Dinah Loo." She was followed by Miss Beryl Gilman, whose singing of the ballad "I Can't Leave the Old Folks Alone," was very good and earned her a recall. Mr Aubrey Douglas scored with his coon songs, acting them very well, and being warmly applauded for his efforts. Miss Dorothy L'Estrange, whose fine voice made her a great favourite during her last visit to Auckland, was heard to full advantage in "Estudiantina," her rich notes giving a sympathetic interpretation of the song. Mr Carl Collier caused great hilarity with his comical antics and songs. He was recalled until it seemed almost a physical impossibility for a human being to comply further to the demands of the audience. "The Four Rosebuds" further established themselves in favour with their dainty concerted dancing and singing. Their first serio "The Grandstand Bells," was warmly applauded, and a vociferous recall brought them back with "Walking Home with Angel-

was reached when the lady performer climbed to the top of a high pedestal which was raised by her partner, who, placing it on his forehead, walked round with her in this perilous position. The exhibition was a very fine one, and proved both performers to be possessed of considerable strength and skill. Master Norman Mudford, whose voice still rings sweetly from behind the footlights, was twice recalled for his singing of "Mamma's Boy." The song was illustrated with a fine series of pictures, and the young singer was vociferously applauded. The Driscolls started the fun going at a high old pace, and kept up a rapid fire of crisp sparkling repartee and gags, intermixed with a lot of clever foot work that caused great amusement and applause. They were recalled to further orders, and the audience was very loth to see them leave the stage. The evening's entertainment concluded with a number of pictures, humorous and otherwise, by the Warwick Bioscope, which were very good and caused much amusement.

A very tastefully got up souvenir of Miss Tittell Brune as Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall has just reached me. It is profusely illustrated with scenes from the play which in Australia has proved a great success.

Mr Fred Graham, whose good work in "The Lady Typist" told so powerfully in its favour, left for Sydney on Monday. He will join Mr Bain's forces in Tasmania for seven weeks, after which he will return to New Zealand and join the Fuller circuit for a season of twelve weeks. On June 17 of next year, Mr Graham intends producing at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, an opera which will be an eye-opener to local theatregoers. At its conclusion, Mr and Mrs Graham and Mr Frank Graham sail for America, when the latter intends entering the Philadelphia University.

The members of the St. Andrew Society mustered in great force on Thursday evening at the Choral Hall, the occasion being the anniversary of the birth of Sir Walter Scott. Mr J. McK. Geddis presided, and there was no lack of go in the proceedings. Rev. A. Macaulay Caldwell delivered a brief address on Sir Walter Scott. The programme was essentially Scottish, and was much enjoyed. An orchestra under Mr S. Jackson rendered two overtures, "Jacobite Airs" and "Highland Memories." The items were as follows:—"The Auld Scotch Songs," Mrs Smith; "The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond," Mrs C. W. Macgowan; quartette, "Annie Laurie," Messrs A. M. Bryden, J. Buchanan, J. Henderson, and G. Henderson; dramatic recital, "Jessie of Lucknow" (Lovell), Mrs Forsythe; dance, "Star Reel," members of St. Andrew's Dancing Class; Tosti's "Good Bye," Miss Jessie Manson; dance, "Reel o' Tulloch," members of St. Andrew's Dancing Class; "Awa, Whigs, Awa," Mr John Earle. The programme concluded with a march by the St. Andrew's Pipe Band, Miss Quinn and Miss Browning accompanied the singers, and Pper Elmsle played for the dances. The gathering concluded with the audience singing "Auld Lang Syne" and "God Save the King."

Mr and Mrs R. G. Knowles passed through Auckland by the mail steamer last Friday.

Mr H. R. Roberts, the well-known Australian actor, who was specially cast by the author for a principal part in the production of "The Prince Chap" at the Criterion, London, has secured the rights of the piece for Australia and South Africa.

My Christchurch correspondent writes:—Mr Leslie Harris, the society entertainer, just now drawing packed houses at the Theatre Royal, reminds me, as an old playgoer of Geo. Grossmith, Corney Grain, and poor Mel. Spurr. In some ways Mr Harris recalls all three performers. And yet he had a decidedly original style of his own. As a humorist he excels Mel. Spurr, but he is hardly Mel's equal in pathos. Take him for all in all, however, he must be considered one of the cleverest drawing-room entertainers ever seen in Christchurch.



MR. LESLIE HARRIS, the well-known entertainer, who opens a season at His Majesty's on Saturday.

of which will be the highly successful Adelphi drama "Our Guardian Angel." Mr Chas. MacMahon writes that the Company is undoubtedly the strongest brought to New Zealand in recent years.

OLYMPIA SKATING RINK.

The Olympia Rink continues to maintain its popularity with Aucklanders. The reason of this is not far to seek, for Mr Woodley, the proprietor, sees to it that everything possible is done for the comfort of patrons, there being an efficient staff of instructors to attend to the wants of beginners of whom there appears to be an increasing number. A number of interesting competitions have been held. On Tuesday there was a ladies' ring tilting contest. Yesterday the Onehunga branch was open, and a team from the Olympia Rink played a return match against Onehunga. The rink is open for three sessions each day.

THE OPERA HOUSE.

FULLER'S ENTERTAINERS.

There was another full house on Monday evening at the Opera House, and the programme was full of good items throughout. Mr Frank Crowther opened

ine," the dancing being excellent. The first half of the programme was concluded with some highly instructive and interesting views of ruined San Francisco, which depicted very vividly the terrible destruction caused by fire and earthquake. The pictures were very clear and were much appreciated by the audience. The second half of the programme ushered in by Mr Frank Crowther's orchestra, commenced with a clever ventriloquial turn by Ern Ern, who extracted plenty of fun out of his doll family, notably the irrepressible small boy whose retorts caused great merriment among the audience. His turn is neat and cleverly carried through. Mr Val Newton, who next appeared, earned hearty applause for his fine rendering of the song "The Deep Blue Sea," his full voice being heard splendidly in the deeper notes. The Carmos scored a big success in their classical and herculean juggling. Some of their balancing feats were of a most remarkable nature, and called forth loud and prolonged applause from the audience. A very notable item was that in which the lady performer, after seating herself on a pedestal, was balanced on her partner's forehead. Another instance was that in which she lay rigid on a stand which her partner carried held firmly in his teeth, while he ascended and descended a staging. The climax