

By the Orontes which left London on the 7th inst., Miss Olive Morell sailed to fulfil her Australian engagement under Mr J. C. Williamson. She will arrive there some weeks before "The Spring Chicken" is staged at Cup time, and Mr J. C. Williamson has therefore arranged that she shall play the part of Dulcie, in which she appeared with much success in the London production of the musical comedy.

A season that is in its last nights is the visit of Mr J. C. Williamson's new dramatic company to Adelaide, where they have been meeting with excellent public support in "The Squaw Man." To-night (September 15th) they will put on "The Virginian" for two nights and close their season with "The Christian" on Tuesday. Next Saturday (22nd September) they begin a long season of eleven weeks at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney, during which, in addition to the pieces already mentioned, a fourth drama will in all probability be done.

Mr Rapley Holmes, who plays the part of the big warm-hearted cowboy in "The Squaw Man," has made himself popular with audiences ever since he made his Australian debut is evidently the same cheery character as he makes Big Bill even in private life, for all the members of the company ignoring his aristocratic name just call him Bill for short—and when a man is fitted with a nickname it is a sure sign he is a favourite.

The revival of "La Mascotte" by the Royal Comic Opera Company recalls the fact that Verdi was the very first Pippo in the original production of Audran's opera some twenty-five years ago. Since then Knight Ashton, Charles Ryley, and Wallace Brownlow have all made successes of the part, while among the more famous Bettinas of the past, the names of both Miss Maggie Moore and Miss Nellie Stewart are prominent.

A great amount of play-going interest is being aroused by the production of "La Mascotte," which the Royal Comic Opera Company will revive for the first time in twelve years at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, this evening (writes Mr George Tallis). Mr J. C. Williamson, with the vocal resources at his command, has been able to put together a good singing cast. At the head of the principals are, of course, Miss Florence Young the Bettina, and Mr John Ralston as Pippo. Mr Ralston will be most favourably remembered for the excellent work he did with the Gilbert and Sullivan Company a few months ago. Mr Reginald Roberts, though he will be new to Australians in the character of Fritollini, has played it hundreds of times in America. As a matter of fact, the cast, with the exception of Mr George

# SMOKE Old Judge TOBACCO & CIGARETTES.

Lauri as the King, will be entirely new to Melbourne Chorus and orchestra alike have never been so exceptionally well balanced as they are at present, and as the dressing and mounting generally have been specially prepared for the occasion, the production should be a success from every point of view.

Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, had a new record, for its holding capacity put up by a children's performance of "La Poupee" organised by Miss Brennan on the 5th September. On the day the plan opened all the stalls and dress circle seats were engaged, the balcony followed suit the day after leaving only the gallery for the holders of cheaper tickets, and if there had been none of the latter the gallery would have gone the way of the rest. Some idea of the attendance may be gauged from the fact that a net profit of £305 was returned to the charitable institutions for which the entertainment was given.

An entirely new turn has been taken in American, and incidentally in British theatrical affairs, by the organisation of a new syndicate for the production of plays. It is called the "Interstate Amusement Company," and its capitalisation is £750,000. The membership include most of the successful theatre owners in America and the European business of the syndicate will be in charge of Mr George B. McLellan, who has long been identified with the Shubert interests. The new organisation comprises many men and firms who in the past have been in the combination usually referred to as the "syndicate," and identified in the public mind with Mr Charles Frohman, its most conspicuous member. This combination is undoubtedly the largest of the kind ever known. It represents substantially every section of the United States, and its members own collectively several hundred theatres. The new company is organised to "produce plays," not merely to rent

theatres to theatrical companies quite independent of the houses in question. The meaning of this will be apparent to all playwrights and all European producers of plays. The man who has a play to sell will find the best possible customer in the Interstate Company, for it can assure the most extended production. The new company will operate very largely in Europe.

Robin Hood will be the central figure in a new musical play to be produced in London by Mr Lewis Waller about October 15. The British Museum and Nottingham Castle have been ransacked for their records by the authors, Messrs Henry Hamilton and William Devereux, in order that the mediaeval atmosphere of the period may be established. The scenes are laid in and about Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Castle. The main theme of the piece is, of course, the love story of Robin and Maid Marian, and for the underplot there is the ancient rivalry of "Lackland"—the Prince John of the play—and Coeur de Lion. It is the time of Richard's imprisonment in Austria, and the very song which Blondel is supposed to have sung outside his prison wall is put into the mouth of one of the characters.

The chorus girl's lot is not a happy one at present (says "Punch"). The chorus was once the happy, happy hunting-ground of the maiden looking for a rich husband. Opportunity made the thief, and to see a row of feehing girls on view dressed in the most ravishing toilettes went and put matrimony into the heads of the admiring Gussies. The chorus was really a matrimonial bureau but now the whole thing is a blue duck of the deepest dye, and "really, after learning elocution, singing, fencing, physical culture, how to dress oneself, and how to fresco one's face, it is (as a chorus-girl remarked dolefully) very rotten luck if one can't get married for a whole rotten year!"

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