

MR CHARLES VERNER.

Mr Charles Verner, the popular Irish comedian, is now touring the Waikato with a company of his own. Writing from Huntly on Monday he reports that Saturday evening's house was a record for the district. "Shamus O'Brien" being staged. "Dublin Assurance" was put on for Monday. Hamilton followed on Tuesday and Wednesday, while subsequent booking read Cambridge, October 25 and 26; Rotorua, October 27 and 29; Te Aroha, October 30 and 31; Paeroa, November 1; Waihi, November 2 and 3; Karangahake, November 4, with Whangarei and the South to follow. Among the company supporting Mr Verner are Misses Bradley, Gough, and Messrs Lambert, R. J. Oswald and Tilton.

I understand that the Onehunga Literary Club intend to repeat at an early date, "She Swoops to Conquer," in which such a success was achieved.

I have to acknowledge receipt of an illustrated souvenir of "The Little Stranger," which we shall shortly see in Auckland. The story of this most advanced baby seems a particularly comical one, and the fun is kept going gaily from start to finish.

The first matinee of West's Pictures and the Brescians has been fixed for Saturday afternoon next.

Mr West, the genial proprietor of West's Pictures, left for Christchurch on Monday.

On the conclusion of the Auckland season the Williamson Dramatic Company will leave for Christchurch.

Mr and Mrs Hamilton Hodges gave a successful concert at their studio on Monday, the chief items being a cycle of songs from Tennyson's "Maud."

My Christchurch correspondent writes:—The much-absorbed "Man From Mexico" made his bow to a Christchurch audience last night (Friday), and at once established himself in popular favour. The piece is immensely funny, being a cross between a farce and a musical comedy. It is full of "catchy" songs, and the music is as exhilarating as "fizz." The dialogue, too, is very crisp and sparkling, and the house fairly roared all the time. There is no doubt this is a gilt-edged success, and I am indeed, glad to be able to congratulate my old friend Edwin Geach, under whose direction "The Man From Mexico" is produced. The plot of the piece is a minus quantity. It has no plot. But modern audiences are not particular about plots. All they ask is to be amused, and if this production fails to amuse people it must be because they have no bump of humour. Miss Grace Palotta, Messrs Ward and Willoughby, are the three stars, and very lustrous stars they are. But the Company is a good one, all through. The Mahon Company did magnificent business here, and has now moved on to fresh triumphs down South. Fuller's capital show continues to attract packed houses, and if the proprietary doesn't make money in sacks during the Exhibition time it won't be their fault.

The new Colonial Theatre in San Francisco which was to have been opened on September 24, is a steel and brick structure, on M'Allister street, near Market street. It was begun before the earthquake, and although work was delayed for a while, it has progressed rapidly of late. The management offers some novelties which the public will duly appreciate. There are to be no advertisements in the programme, no advertising curtain, and no "candy kids." Another novelty will be the device for emptying the house expeditiously. By touching an electric button in the rear of the theatre or in the wings, all the exits will be thrown open, and the whole audience will reach the street in 10 seconds.

The great unacted appear to be more happily dealt with in America than they are elsewhere. From New York comes the news that Mr William A. Brady, during his autumn season at the Manhattan, will give a series of what he terms "author's matinees." His plan is to make a fortnightly production of a new play to be played at a matinee. He expresses a preference for the works of American writers, but does not make native authorship a condition of production. He holds out no promise of subsequent "regular" production of plays that may appear to be successful at these matinees, which are to be regarded merely as opportunities for authors to get a hearing.

Intending visitors to London will be interested to learn that next year's show at Earl's Court will be "The Balkans Exhibition," and the Bulgarian Government intends to let it be seen what their State can do. Bulgaria is noted for its products of corn, flax, hemp, and toba-

cco, its wine and silk, and roses from which are distilled the perfumes of Europe. The Government of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria have decided to send exhibits which will cover the local agriculture, industries, and fine arts, and also intend to send material for a historical section. In addition there will be a tourists' section, and native workers in their picturesque dress, with a comprehensive display of minerals, all to occupy the extensive Imperial Court and Royal Galleries.

Miss Nellie Stewart's engagement with Klaw and Erlanger, the well-known American theatrical managers, is for 21 weeks, at £100 a week. At the termination of this contract Miss Stewart is to star at an increased salary, with a percentage of the profits. The Philadelphia "Morning Telegraph," in chronicling this information, states:—"The scramble for the services of Nellie Stewart, the Australian actress, came to an end yesterday, when Klaw and Erlanger engaged her as the leading woman of the stock company they will launch in Philadelphia.

Sydney stage. Miss Marie Lohr, who was named after her godmother, the late Mrs Rignold, was very fortunate after leaving school in England to receive an offer from her mother's old friend, Mr and Mrs Kendal, to join their company as ingenue.

Harry Rickards has reengaged Cruickshank and the Modern Milo for another Australian term, but it is reported that they are not available for a return till about 1909, having dates fixed right up to that time. One New York manager is busy having a play written round Milo, and an English syndicate is establishing a Modern Milo Beauty and Culture School, with the Australian beauty as its nominal head. Pavilion Music Hall shares have doubled their value since Milo took on.

Mr J. C. Williamson's Cup attraction, "The Spring Chickens," is announced for Derby night, (3rd November) in Melbourne, and all the energies of the Royal Comic Opera Company are now directed to the final stages of polishing up that

Theatre, Sydney. Indeed, everything seems to point to the fact that the stirring drama of ranch life in America will have a longer run there than it had in Melbourne, while there is no doubt that Mr Charles Waldron, Miss Ola Humphrey, and the rest of Mr J. C. Williamson's company have earned quite an enviable and as deserved a reputation.

Last Saturday night what is almost a record number of shows opened in Melbourne. "The Little Stranger," at the Princess'; "The Shopgirl," at Her Majesty's; Leslie Harris, at the Athenaeum; Bostock and Wombwell's Show; Wirths' Circus; new artists at the Opera House, and Princes Court, with J. F. Sheridan at the Royal, and Glaciarium, made up the list of attractions for the night.

Considerable sensation was caused at the London Pavilion on the 6th September by an accident to La Milo. She had posed as the Venus de Medici with all her accustomed grace and versimilitude to a marble statue, and the curtain was lowered for a few moments in order that



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Miss Stewart created a mild sensation on the Pacific Coast by her portrayal of the title role in "Sweet Nell of Old Drury." Upon her arrival in the East several managers began negotiations for a contract to star her, and David Belasco was reported to have offered her a niche in his temple of Thespis. Inasmuch as Klaw and Erlanger are to make no less than ten productions of new plays in Philadelphia, Miss Stewart will have every opportunity of demonstrating her versatility.

Miss Kate Bishop (Mrs Lohr), who will be remembered out here as leading lady with Mr George Rignold and other managers, found some difficulty (says "Sydney Morning Herald") in regaining a place on the London stage, where at one time she was such a favourite that she appeared as Lady Teazle for more than 100 nights at the Vaudeville Theatre. Reappearing in "grande dame" and character parts, Miss Kate Bishop has now made good her footing in London and the provinces, and has also been fortunate with her daughter, Miss Marie Lohr—the former "Baby Lohr" of the

musical comedy to the state of brilliancy always characteristic of their productions (writes Mr George Tallis). The new piece will entail the appearance in some part of other of a long cast, not only of every member of the company already known, but also of two newcomers. One of these is of course Miss Olive Morrell, who arrived from London this week, and has already gone into active rehearsal with her part of Dulcie, and the other is Mr Philip Leslie, who, after a successful dramatic career in Australia in light comedy parts, makes his debut under Mr Williamson's management. Mr Lauri plays the same part as did Mr Edmund Payne in the London production, and the remembrance of how excellent he recreated Meakin (another Teddy Payne part) in "The Orchid," augurs a personal triumph for him, while Miss Clara Clifton will likewise be perfectly at home in the character originally played by Connie Ediss.

There is no sign yet of any waning in popularity of "The Squaw Man," which is still being played to large and most appreciative audiences at Her Majesty's

she might appear in another pose as Circe. It had scarcely gone up again when La Milo was seen to sway a little and fall to the ground. The poses are made on a pedesal about six feet in height, so that the fall was a considerable one. A thrill ran through the large audience when this incident occurred, and almost momentarily the curtain was rung down. It was announced subsequently that La Milo had suddenly fainted. Fortunately she sustained no serious injury, but she was much shaken, and the performance was not, of course, resumed.

Miss Marie Narelle, the "Queen of Irish Song," has been engaged with her company to open the Concert Hall at the Christchurch Exhibition. Miss Narelle is now completing a triumphant tour of the Commonwealth, where her singing of Irish songs has everywhere aroused enthusiasm. Miss Narelle's fame as a ballad-singer is firmly established throughout the English-speaking world. She is accompanied by Mr Chester Fentress (an American tenor) and Miss Constance Brandon (pianiste).