

It is remarkable how woefully ignorant Musgrove's Teutons are of the use and the handling of either the rapier or the broadsword. One would have thought that, being Germans, they would have at least known the feel of a broadsword. By the judicious way in which the various characters in "Lohengrin" handled their "toasting forks" it was evident to the veriest novice that they were more fitted to guide the top-whip than the sword. The principals fell, writhing in death, without even being struck by the avenging blades, and it was excruciatingly funny to see them fall prone when they were yards away from the enemy.

"The Great Awakening," a sensational melodrama of the most unqualified type, succeeded "A Beautiful Fiend," at the Royal, Sydney, under the management of Messrs Meynell and Gunn. The piece is the joint work of Miss Maud Hildyard and Russell Vaun, the former taking the lion's share in the production. As the heartless adventuress, Lola Selby, she has the principal part to play, but it is one which is ill-adapted to secure the favour of the audience, since Lola apparently possesses no quality likely to endear her to those with whom her lot is cast. It is unnecessary to follow her in her career of selfishness, cruelty, and crime, nor to discuss the details of a plot which is neither novel nor attractive. The other members of the company who took part in the piece include Messrs Charles Vane, Wingfield, and Bovis, and Miss May Congdon. The piece is splendidly set and staged, especially the scenes showing the old oak hall at Merton Abbey, and the exterior of a cafe at Monte Carlo.

We clip the above from the "Sydney Town and Country Journal," and once more we wail, like a lost angel hovering on the outskirts of "The Great Awakening," or "The Immense Beyond," or "The Large Hereafter," over the decadence of the melodrama. Miss Maud Hildyard is evidently a h'authoress as well as a h'actress. She is also an assassin in act as well as in part, for she murders melodrama with a blood-soaked pen, and then murders reason and every other respect by acting the part of "A Beautiful Fiend" at "The Great Kitchen Fire Lighting" period. Oh! why do these new-chums think they can write dramas? The stages of 2s, 1s, and 6d theatres are literally buried beneath the shattered reputations of would-be yellowdramatists. And it is an everlasting regret to us that the authors and authoresses of such banalities cannot be taken to the summit of Mt. Cook, and be hurled from there into everlasting, and ever-

freezing space until the trump of Gabriel shall present us with a natural and a real nice melodrama of the classic kind.

My Christchurch Dramatic correspondent writes:—Marcus Superbus Julius Knight is still with us at the time of writing, although the season is now rapidly drawing to a close. "Raffles" succeeded "Robin Hood," and the amateur housebreaker proved as interesting a character as portrayed by Mr. Knight on the boards as he does between the covers of the well-known yellow-back which bears his name. Whether there ever was such a gentlemanly, well-bred, highly-polished and expensively-educated burglar in real life as "Raffles" is beside the question. Let us accept him as we find him—a most fascinating rascal with the manners of an aristocrat and the morals of Claude du Val. To this engaging personality Mr. Knight did full justice, and it is no small tribute to the genius of the actor that he had the sympathies of the whole house with him. Amongst those who particularly distinguished themselves in this production may be mentioned Mr. Reynolds Denniston (a son, I believe, of Mr. Justice Denniston), whose Lord Crowley was an admirable "portrait of a nobleman; Mr. Harry Plimmer, as a common or garden specimen of burglar; and Mr. H. Willis, as Curtis Bedford, the detective. The detective of the stage, like the detective of the novelist, bears, as a rule, but a remote resemblance to the detective of real life. But Mr. Willis is to be congratulated on his Bedford, nevertheless. Mr. Julius Knight is always sure of a welcome here, but it is questionable whether he has ever scored a second success quite equal to that he achieved in "The Sign of the Cross."

On Monday next, 12th inst., the new Pollard "Liliputians" will make their bow to a New Zealand audience at the local Theatre Royal, when "Bluebell in Fairyland," which has been in active rehearsal for weeks past, will be presented for the first time in this colony. The piece (the book is from the pen of Seymour Hicks, and the music was composed by Walter Slaughter), is somewhat on the lines of "Alice in Wonderland," and is full, I understand, of picturesque situations, tuneful music, pretty songs and graceful dances, while there are some novel and elaborate scenic effects. I heartily wish Mr. Pollard all the success he deserves with his new company, and I hope to have to chronicle crowded houses nightly while the company is here. "Fuller's," needless to say, continues to do the same phenomenal business as ever, and Christchurch now wonders how it ever got along without the popular "entertainers."



MADAME CLARA BUTT, THE WORLD-FAMOUS CONTRALTO, NOW TOURING AUSTRALASIA.

An Australian journal states that Charley Holloway has had a relapse.

Denis Carney is now the star at the Theatre Royal, Broken Hill.

After an absence of two years R. G. Knowles is back again in England.

A cable was received from Mr. J. C. Williamson a few days ago to the effect that he had engaged Miss Beatrice Irwin to play the leading woman's part in "Brewster's Millions" when that piece is produced in Sydney next October. Miss Irwin, who has sailed for Australia, counts in her experience engagements with Sir Charles Wyndham and the late Sir Henry Irwin.

Caruso's present salary amounts to £40,000 a year.

Two thousand hands are employed at Luna, Coney Island, New York.

Owing to the impending conclusion of their season in Sydney the Royal Comic Opera Company could only play "Dorothy" for a fortnight, though the appreciative reception accorded that captivating comic opera would in other circumstances have justified an extension. The final four weeks of their season will be equally divided between "La Mascotte" and the "Belle of New York," the revivals of which they have made singularly attractive.

West's Pictures are still the reigning picture show in Sydney.

Another important engagement just concluded by Mr. J. C. Williamson is that of Miss Fanny Dango, who has sailed for Australia in the Mongolia to create for this country the character of Peggy Sabine in "The Dairymaids," which is the next new piece to be done by the Royal Comic Opera Company. Miss Dango is a younger sister of Letty Lind, whom everybody will remember as a prominent member of the first London Gaiety Co. to visit Australia. She has made her mark on the London lyric stage, that wonderful musical comedy "San Toy" standing sponsor for one of her biggest successes. She played the title role—curiously enough—with Mr. Reginald Kenneth as the Bobby Preston of the cast—during the two years run of the piece in London.

The New York State Assembly prohibits children under 16 attending places of amusement unless accompanied by adults.

A public character like Madame Clara Butt is the recipient, of course, of scores of curious letters, but she seems to specialise on long lost relatives, and Australia seems to be the home of such in her case. A year or so ago some one in New Zealand, who had been reading an interview with her, discovered that she was fond of monkeys, and immediately wrote claiming kinship on the ground that her mother had also a passionate attachment for the simian tribe. More recently—just before she left, as a matter of fact—Madame Butt received a letter from a lady, evidently with the vaguest idea as to Australian topography, who had lost touch with a rich uncle who once owned a cattle ranch in West Australia. In the opinion of the writer everyone in those two states was "sure to hear Madame Butt's heavenly voice," and she therefore craved the contralto's assistance in finding her missing relative. As the pastoral country is not likely to come down en masse to the cities to hear Madame Butt, it may be as well to mention that the missing uncle's name is Varrils.



WALKER AND HUGHES, Jugglers, on the Fuller Circuit.



ATHAS, the Trick Skater, on the Fuller Circuit.

Royal Comics recently "did" "Dorothy" at Her Majesty's, Sydney.