

My Christchurch dramatic correspondent writes.—Congratulations to Tom Pollard. The new lilliputians seem likely to eclipse the glories of the old lilliputians! At all events "Blue Bell in Fairyland," produced during "National Week" at our dingy old Royal, proved a gilt-edged success, and the future of the new Juvenile Opera Co. seems to be assured. There is very little in the acting, singing and dancing of the members of the present company to suggest that they are untrained raw little amateurs who have never faced the footlights before. So far from this they impress one with the notion that they are all old stagers, and, as a matter of fact, I believe that the principals have all, to use a military phrase, "smelt powder." The plot of "Bluebell" is very slight and decidedly pathetic. Ever since the days of "Joe" and Jennie Lee the street waif has been quite a popular character with playgoers, and the little flower girl who plays such a prominent part in this production is certainly an attractive little thing. But the pathos of the piece is largely relieved by the variety business so skilfully introduced. Miss Minnie Toffing, in the name-part, scored an instantaneous success and brought down the house with her song of "Only a Penny." Miss Lily Thompson's "Dickey" was another splendid impersonation, and indeed Miss Thompson may be said to have been the life and soul of the piece. She was heard to great advantage in the duet with "Bluebell," "Oh, My Bluebell," and in the solo "The Only Girl I Love." Bert Nicholson, as a coster boy, was grand, and his song "Ackney with the 'ouses took Amy," was quite in the chevalier style. The Aldous Sisters contributed materially to the success of the piece, and Masters Nicholson and Drummond got a lot of fun out of the parts "Blub" and "Blob," their topical duet "Why, of Course" creating roars of laughter. Little Cissy O'Keefe was very good as the fairy "Water Lily," and sang "Dreamland" very prettily. The grown-up performers included our old friend "Insect" Albert (the reigning queen, and very funny) and Mr. E. Schatz (the reigning king). Features of the show were the "doll" ballet, the "Pierrot" ballet, the "autumn" ballet, the Dutch sabot dance, and the pas seul by Miss D. Rodgers. The scenery was gorgeous, the dresses magnificent, the effects elaborate and striking, the music delightful, and the entertainment as a whole thoroughly wholesome, amusing and enjoyable throughout. Well done, Tom Pollard!

Baritone Ernest Fitts and Irving Sayes are on the bill at the Sydney Tivoli.

SMOKE

Old Judge

TOBACCO & CIGARETTES.

Perry's Biorama Co. showed a new and original film in the Opera House, Wanganui, last week, that was peculiarly appropriate to the occasion. It was a cinematograph picture of the sculling race for the world's championship between Webb and Towns on the Parramatta River on the 3rd inst. The picture was taken from the umpire's boat by Mr. West, of West's Pictures, and is, we are told by some of those who saw the race, a true representation of what happened. It depicts, first of all, both men going out to train, in which the gentleman "Denny" Barnett is most prominent; then follows the start, portions of the race, and the finish. The whole presents a fine, clear picture, and the management deserve a deal of praise for the expeditious manner in which they have produced it.

Miss Rosina Buckman has accepted an engagement with Mr. George Musgrove, the Australian impressario.

Allan Hamilton's new dramatic company specially organised for the production of Frank Lindo's famous domestic drama "Home, Sweet Home," will commence their Tasmanian and New Zealand tour towards the end of September, reaching His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, on November 18. An unusually strong company, has been engaged, and special scenery painted for the tour.

The first playhouse in Melbourne, the Pavilion, was erected in 1842, on the site of the Bull and Mouth Hotel.

"Les Cloches de Corneville" was first produced at the Folies Dramatiques, Paris, on April 19, 1877.

Comedian Fred Graham is at present appearing with Rickards's Company at Melbourne Tivoli.

A Ballarat exchange has the following par:—Mr. and Mrs. R. Steele, of the well-known Steele-Payne bellringing and variety combination, leave to-morrow for Newcastle, and after a week will commence a tour of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. At the conclusion of the South-street competitions this year they will be joined by Miss Frances Hanrahan, the young lady who has carried off so many prizes in elocutionary and dramatic contests in Ballarat and other cities and towns. Mr. and Mrs. Steele has done much for local aspirants to fame in the his-trionic art, for they have up to the present been the means of giving the much-desired professional from this city—which is something to be proud of. Many of them are now earning handsome salaries—even though some of the ladies so started in life eventually gravitated to matrimony.

"Home, Sweet Home" will be a pleasant relief from the average blood-and-thunder melodrama one so often meets nowadays. This is what a Sydney contemporary has to say about the piece:—Favoured by fortune in regard to the audience the new company was absolutely lucky in the selection of "Home, Sweet Home" as their opening piece in Australia. To say that Mr. Frank Lindo has given the world a great play in this stage story of an English fishing village would be ridiculous overpraise, but it is the due of the author to acknowledge that the "domestic drama," as it is styled, has the admirable qualities of strength and simplicity with the added attractiveness of sentimental charm. There is always a warm welcome for clean, healthy, and straight-forward plays of this class. The saving of a baby girl from a wreck, the bringing up of the child as his adopted daughter, Joan, by old David Armitage, one of the simple fishfolk, the marriage of the

girl to the fisherman's son Stephen, the discovery, after eight years of married life, that Joan is the daughter of the proud Duke of Ancaster, the flight of Joan from her husband and little child Dora to the ancestral house of the Ancasters, and the return of Joan to the humble cottage by the sea, as a true wife and a loving mother—these are the materials out of which "Home, Sweet Home" has been built.

Mr. Basil Gill is to appear in the name part in Mr. Beerbohm Tree's production of "Faust" in London.

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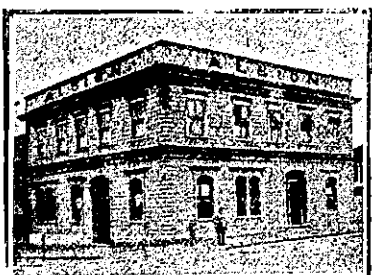
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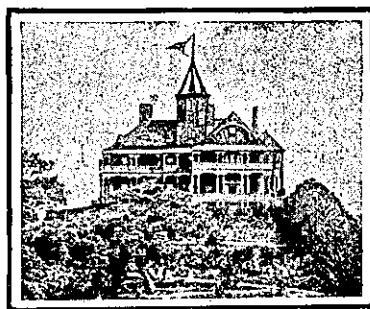
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