



THE STAGE

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

WEST'S PICTURES.

West's Pictures opened at His Majesty's on Monday night, and by all portents are in for a good time. So also are the lovers of this form of pictorial entertainment. The rage for animated pictures is apparently unabated since the day West's Pictures first came along and took the New Zealand public by storm. This is probably due to the practical infinitude of subjects available for cinematograph purposes, and also to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the artists who are continually engaged in producing new films, drawing upon the great worlds of Nature, Art and Human Experience for their studies and weaving together the fantastical and magical with all the arts of the twentieth century necromancers. Who, having once seen it, can forget the story of the Lost Child, so graphically depicted in the first series of pictures presented to the public by Mr T. J. West? Or, yet again, who fails to recall with pleasure the Journey to the Sun first presented on the same occasion. A score of other studies in the art of the cinematographer are recalled by the mere mention of these things, and the fact that West's Pictures are again moving merrily along at His Majesty's brings the crowds to the theatre nightly, there to revel in spectacular effects which prompt the most pleasurable emotions. The tonic of a good laugh is never absent from such exhibitions as these, for the drollest situations are evolved in the humorous pictures, and when one thinks "the funniest thing on earth" has been found in one a still more ludicrous situation is evolved in others. That was the case in the best of the series shown on Monday night—"Jim's Apprenticeships." The pictures are French, and there is a rollicking humour about them which is simply irresistible. No words are needed to point the story. It speaks for itself. It is that of a callow youth whose guardian introduces him to first one and then another tradesman, and to others again, and Jim, who seems born always to do the wrong thing, gets kicked out by each and all of his employers with fierce objurgations until finally he is seen in a wine cellar struggling to keep his footing in a rising tide of wine which pours from a dozen casks from which he has withdrawn the spigots. Clerk, hatter, pastrycook, grocer, hairdresser and publican—he has tried them all and failed ignominiously, but his capers and antics send everybody into roars of laughter, and the House sits simply convulsed while "Jim" takes his turn on the screen.

Equally funny are the Towser and the Tramp series, and the story of the Byker who does the Impossible. Posing as a novice on the wheel in the opening of the series, Byker goes on a Gilpin bike ride which carries everything before him, and develops into a trick cyclist of the very first water, upsetting everybody who comes across his path, and surmounting what appear to be the most impassable of barriers. As he proceeds on his way the crowd follows him threatening dire vengeance. Finally, he gets tangled up in a cart, and leaving his smashed cycle behind, rides away on a cart wheel for a few yards. Abandoning that, when he finds the crowd close upon him, he takes to his heels and jumps down a well, whence he is rescued and made much of by the erstwhile hostile crowd.

"Baby's First Outing," "A Visit From Mother-in-law," and "A Novice on Horseback," are also amongst the humorous pictures shown. A dramatic touch is given to the exhibition by such pictures as "The Corsican's Daughter" and "Daniel Boone," the latter depicting a story of pioneering days in America, and illustrating in very thrilling fashion the fiendish cruelties inflicted by the Red Indians

upon the earlier settlers in the States. "The Red Russia" series again gives one a fair idea of the incidents which characterise the Reign of Terror in the Czar's Dominions. The story of "Cinderella" with that of "The Charmed Umbrella," and the flights of "The Golden Beetle—A Study in Colour," are tinged with a strong flavour of the magician's art, and are full of mysterious appearances and disappearances which cast their weird spell over the audience, but are none the less pleasing for the mystical touch which characterises them, while the colour effects are simply beautiful.

The series of pictures depicting Tobogganing at St. Moritz, Fox Hunting in England, and the magnificent waterfalls of the Yosemite Valley, California, are remarkably fine, the Swiss pictures especially being full of interest and pleasurable excitement, while the Yosemite Valley pictures need to be seen to be fully appreciated. Either one of the three series is alone worth a visit to His Majesty's. Picturesque Japan again with its teeming waterways and city thoroughfares is brought appreciably nearer by the many fine pictures exhibited, and a touching little episode entitled "Good for Evil," completes the chain of entertainment which proves so absorbing, and fills in such a pleasant evening at His Majesty's, that the hours pass all too swiftly.

The Brescians are away, but their places are well filled by De Groen's Orchestral Band, which plays accompaniments in keeping with the pictures and gives us a clearer insight into the beauties of stringed music. Their overtures are a treat in themselves; the band is well-balanced; plays in perfect time and tune, and is a decided acquisition to the cinematograph display.

ALLAN HAMILTON COMPANY.

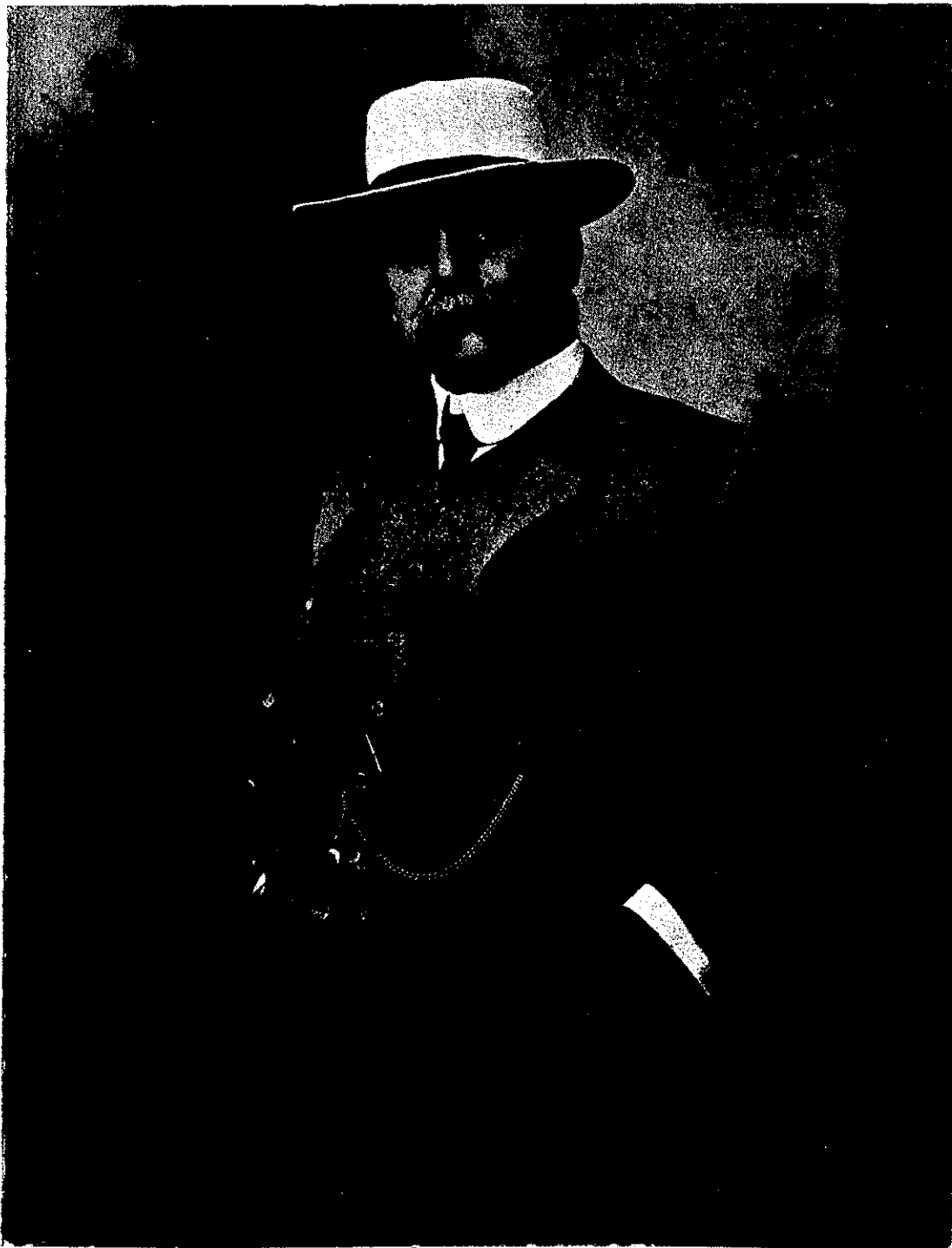
Saturday afternoon having been set apart for a special matinee performance of "Little Lord Fauntleroy" by the Allan Hamilton Dramatic Company, it was not surprising to find His Majesty's packed to the doors on that occasion. The younger folks especially were in attendance in large numbers, the fact of the clever little child actress, Baby Watson, taking the part of Lord Fauntleroy, being no doubt responsible for the presence of so many youthful members. The greatest interest was centred in the play, and the creditable manner in which the various parts were carried out evoked no end of applause. Saturday night the company concluded their season at His Majesty's, the final production being the famous comedy-drama, "A Message from Mars." The season has been a particularly happy one and Auckland playgoers were loath to

feel that it was limited to six nights only.

OPERA HOUSE.

FULLER'S ENTERTAINERS.

For a genuine display of drollery and dexterousness, the turn given at the Opera House by the cyclonic comedy jugglers, Jarvis and Martyn, would be decidedly hard to beat in point of excellence. During the time the stage is occupied by this clever pair, a real variety entertainment is gone through, and that the audience thoroughly enjoys it is easily seen by the loud applause that follows their efforts. The humour with which the turn is largely interspersed, is entirely different from that found in the majority of comic acts, and is certainly of the most ludicrous kind. The Raccoons deserve the popularity they have enjoyed during their stay at the Opera House, the tumbling display given by them plainly showing that they are two very fine acrobats. One of the many clever feats that they accomplish is to turn a somersault off the ground on to a 2½ft table, a performance which requires a great amount of skill and elasticity. Last evening (Wednesday) the Raccoons made their final appearance in Auckland and they may well be pleased with the success that has attended



MR. T. J. WEST, OF WEST'S PICTURES FAME.