



DIX'S GAIEITY COMPANY.

The excellent programme at the City Hall still continues to draw good houses. Mr Frank Graham, the popular tenor, delights his patrons with his exquisite voice, and has to respond to loudly demanded encores every evening. The last nights of this artist are announced, as he brings his season to a close on Saturday. Mr Charles Brown-Parker arouses great enthusiasm by his graceful, brilliant and novel display of ball-punching. On Saturday next the famous American net-ball game, which created so much interest in Australia, will be presented for the first time in Auckland. Some dozen or so specially trained and specially costumed young ladies take part in the game, which is said to form a most exciting and attractive stage production. All the details of this novel act are under the superintendence of Mr Brown-Parker. Messrs Pope and Sayles are as popular as ever with their amusing turns. The sweet singing of Miss Ethel Clifford, Miss Rose Devella, and little Miss Bertoto are fully appreciated. Mr Ernest Hill and the little comedian Mr Sam Powley contribute items which are apparently suited to the public taste. On Monday night next Mr Dix will introduce to a New Zealand audience, for the first time, the world-famed Schenk Bros., at an enormous expense. Their turn is described as wonderful and marvellous French equilibrists, hand balancers, and acrobats. They have a combination of items, including many novel and pleasing feats. We anticipate a bumper house recorded on Monday night for Mr Dix's management.

Mr Chas. Brown-Parker, an athlete who is appearing with Dix's Gaiety Company this week, provides a very neat and clean novelty turn. It consists of ball-punching, an exercise in which most athletes are trained in America. Me



Brown-Parker was the first to introduce ball-punching on the stage in Australasia, and made a very successful tour with the Harry Rickard's circuit in Australia, travelled Tasmania with the Permans, and is touring New Zealand with Mr Dix's theatres. Mr Brown-Parker is also introducing the American net-ball game.

Miss Fitzmaurice Gill will open her dramatic season at the Opera House on January 24. The company is scoring a brilliant success in the South. Mr Charles Blake, an old Auckland favourite, is the leading man. The pieces to be played here are "Man to Man," a drama which Geo. Rignold made such a success in Sydney; "Work and Wages," "Harbour Lights," "The Sign of the Cross," and "The Christian." The personnel of the company is a particularly strong one, and with the reputation held by Miss Gill and Mr Blake the season is sure to be a success, as Auckland theatre-goers dearly like a good drama.

Our Wellington correspondent writes, under date January 8th, that the pantomime "Dick Whittington and his Cat" is still a strong trump card at the Royal, although in its last nights. An entire change of songs, dances, etc., took place this week, and proved very acceptable. Frank M. Clark, Joe Casino (the cat), Joe Cowan, Fred Rivenhall, and Misses Olive Lenton, Sadie Casino, Jeannie Johnstone, the Galardi Sisters, and Ethel Glifford, take up their parts very ably. Steve Adson's burlesque on Sandow is extremely funny, and last but not least, that clever little duo, the Smith Sisters.



These kiddies are more than usually captivating in their songs and dances: they know their business, and do it too. There are many others in the cast playing small parts, and the statue ballet is a very fine intricate dance, and is a novelty, inasmuch as the members finish their dance in the same position as they are discovered, which, to my mind, seems a very good idea. A transformation scene, "In Polar Seas," and a laughing harlequinade, send the many patrons home in a good humour. Christchurch is the next town to be visited by the pantomime combination. Dean's Waxworks and Vaudeville Company are doing fairly good business at the Choral Hall, in which they stay till Easter. The management have organised a competition night for the various amateurs of the city to compete against each other, and can be sure a great deal of local interest is evinced.

Our Christchurch dramatic correspondent writes:—"Sorry to say the Thornton season ends to-night (Saturday, 10th). It has been a gilt-edged success, artistically and financially. We have had new pieces in 'Facing the Music' and 'A Little Ray of Sunshine,' etc., and a welcome revival of old friends in 'Charley's Aunt,' 'The Strange Adventures of Miss Brown,' and 'The Private Secretary.' The latter went on last night, and will be played again this evening, when the season terminates. 'A Little Ray of Sunshine' is rather out of Frank Thornton's beaten track, as it contains pathos as well as humour, and exhibits the versatile Frank as a master of both—thus closely do the springs of laughter and tears lie together. See this delicate little piece, you Aucklanders. It's uncommonly good. An exceptionally clever member of the company is John Denton. This young artist ought to have a brilliant career before him. The ever-green 'Private Secretary' proved as great

a hit as of yore, and a delighted house on both nights shrieked with laughter at the rev. gentleman's audible yearning for 'a bun.' Decidedly Frank Thornton is good—as good as ever he was. He will have a warm welcome here whenever he cares to come. Dix's capital entertainment is finding as much favour in the eyes of Christchurch people as ever. One of the star turns, when I looked in at the Opera House on Thursday night, was supplied by Frank Yorke, who made a welcome re-appearance after a long absence. His 'medley' and his 'patter' fairly fetched the house, and he had to re-appear again and again. Shirwin, 'the musical tramp,' has become a very great favourite here. You should hear him imitate the cathedral chimes on the Anglo-German concertina—wonderful.



There seems to be no sort of instrument that Shirwin can't play. He is receiving a very handsome salary—and he earns it. Alberto, the coin and card manipulator, is good; his tricks are particularly neat. Will Stafford is a capital comique, and some of his songs are very popular. The Wilton Brothers, horizontal bar experts, whose first appearance here was on Thursday, January 8th, are an active pair of artists, and as good in their line as we have ever had here. Their performance is astonishing; they draw big salaries, too. Emmie Smith is a great favourite, and her coon songs are hugely appreciated. Altogether, Mr Dix and popular manager (Will Jameson) have no cause to be ashamed of the present bill, and the crowded state of the house nightly testifies to the fact that the public are well pleased."

Miss Blanche Wallace and Miss Elsie Moore entertained the members of the Williamson Comedy Company and their friends in a novel and pleasing manner at Christmas time. The gathering took the form of the old English custom and time-honoured "Christmas Tree," the said tree being erected on the stage, with presents and gifts for every one present. The evening was much enjoyed by the large number of friends assembled. Besides the fun of distributing the gifts off the tree, the guests were entertained by a musical programme, which was fully appreciated, items being contributed by Miss V. Caples, "Out on the Rocks;" Mr King, "The Holy City;" Miss Schaaf, "The Lost Chord;" Miss Rose Clayton, "Daddy;" Mrs E. Davis, "Aspinata;" Mr Geo. Hill, a violin solo; Mr Dudley, humorous sketch; Mr Woolf, bassoon solo; Mr O'Toole, recitation; kinemetograph and lantern pictures by Messrs Boyce and Franklin, which were



his clever descriptions. After the programme had been concluded the guests adjourned, at the invitation of the fair hostess, to the Arcade Cafe, and partook of a sumptuous supper, thereby ending a very pleasant and enjoyable evening, which will live long as a memento of a New Zealand Christmastide.

STAGE-DOOR NOTES.

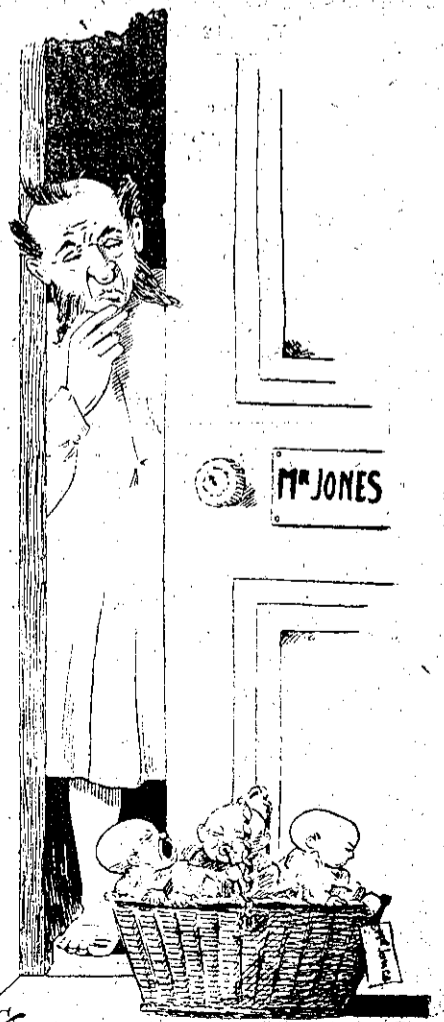
"San Toy" was witnessed by very large audiences at His Majesty's Theatre.

Mr C. Brown-Parker's novel ball-punching act at the City Hall is proving a good draw.

"The Belle of New York" will replace "San Toy" at His Majesty's on Friday and Saturday nights.

The famous Schenk Brothers, French equilibrists, hand balancers, and wonderful acrobats, will make their first appearance in the colony on Monday next at the City Hall.

Mr Charles Brown-Parker will introduce the American game of net-ball, which has been causing such a sensation throughout the world, at the City Hall on Saturday evening.



"What Happened to Jones" Willoughby-Geach Company