

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

Mr Frank Thornton, with his London Comedy Company, are having a successful season as His Majesty's Theatre. "The Private Secretary" was staged for three nights last week, and received a cordial reception as the Rev. Robert Spalding. Mr Thornton was as good as ever in the part, and was ably backed up by the whole company, who are all up to their work. On Saturday evening Mr Thornton staged, for the first time in Auckland, "A Little Ray of Sunshine," before a crowded and appreciative house. The new piece, which has had a great run in London, can be pronounced to be one of the best in Mr Thornton's repertoire, for running through it there is an element of simple, natural pathos that irresistibly appeals to the audience, and brings laughter and tears into close companionship. The audience laughed heartily at all the funny incidents of the plot; and it may safely be said that they appreciated more than anything else the touching bit of human nature with which "A Ray of Sunshine" terminated.

Last night and to-night (Thursday) "The Strange Adventures of Miss Brown," will be revived, and Friday and Saturday, the last two nights of the season, will be devoted to the popular and delightful comedy, "Sweet Lavender."

DIX'S GAITY COMPANY.

The new programme submitted at the City Hall on Monday night by Dix's Gaiety Company was an excellent one. The Gaiety orchestra, under the able baton of Mr E. J. Burke, gives the performance a good start with "The Coon's Parade." Mr Ernest Hill follows with a rousing martial song, "To the Front," in which his fine voice is heard to full advantage. The little Sisters Smith (May and Ethel) bring down the house with their clever song and dance, "Golden Summertime," and have to respond nightly to several encores. Mr Charles Pope introduces some sketches, in which he is well received. "Remember She's My Sister," is a ballad sung by little Miss Millie Bertoto, which is received with great enthusiasm by this clever little lady's patrons, who are many. Mr Irving Sayles makes a hit with his famous song, "Bill Bailey, Sisters are very successful in the dance and duet, "My Sunflower Lou." The first part concludes with an acceptable farce. In the second part items are given again by the Gilardi Sisters, the Smith Sisters, Miss Millie Bertoto, Messrs Pope and Sayles. Mr Frank Graham, the renowned English tenor, contributes two songs, which are a treat to hear. His splendid voice is heard to full advantage in the ballads chosen. As a juggler Arnoldi is one of the best turns of the kind seen here. The programme is brought to a close by a laughable

Won't You Come Home." The Gilardi farce, in which all the company take a part. On Tuesday night the people's favourites, Messrs Pope and Sayles bade farewell to the City Hall. Mr Frank Yorke made a welcome re-appearance on Wednesday, receiving quite an ovation on his appearance. He comes with a long list of new songs and specialties. Mr Dix has arranged for the engagement of the Grand Statue Ballet, to be produced in Auckland under the direction of Madame Ethel. Special limelight effects and costumes make the ballet a gorgeous and brilliant scene, and promises to be an extra draw while appearing in Auckland.

NOTABLE DRAMATIC EVENT.

VISIT OF J. C. WILLIAMSON'S "SHERLOCK HOLMES" COMPANY.

Fresh from the great triumphs achieved in Australia, and more recently in Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, Mr J. C. Williamson's famous English, American and Australian dramatic organisation will form the coming dramatic feast at His Majesty's Theatre, commencing on Monday evening next, February 16th, when will be presented for the first time in Auckland the much-discussed dramatic novelty, viz., Sir A. Conan Doyle's famous creation, "Sherlock Holmes," or, "The Strange Case of Miss Faulkner," being a hitherto unpublished incident in the career of the great detective. When first produced in Australia at Mr Williamson's Melbourne and Sydney Theatres, "Sherlock Holmes" scored an instantaneous success, running for no less than six weeks in Melbourne, and eight weeks in Sydney to crowded houses, whilst it has just concluded a record season of ten nights at the Opera House, Wellington. No character in modern fiction has a wider fame than the wonderful detective created by Conan Doyle. In a series of interesting story the author has shown every side of this strange personality, in whom the faculties of observation and deduction have been developed to an abnormal degree. The action of the piece is said to be intensely absorbing throughout, and holds the spectator in a grip from the rise to the fall of the curtain, the surprising incidents, dramatic situations, and clever, clear-cut characterisation and sensational denouements being unique in their boldness and originality. To produce the drama with all the necessary completeness which is so well-known a characteristic of Mr J. C. Williamson, a powerful company of dramatic artists has been specially selected in England and America, and is headed by the eminent young American actor, Mr Cuyler Hastings, who will appear as Sherlock Holmes, the great detective, as played by him with enormous



MISS VERA FORDYCE, of the Frank Thornton Comedy Company.

success throughout the United States, and in Melbourne and Sydney. The other members of the company include Miss May Chevalier, Miss Mabel Lane, Miss Minnie Terry, Miss Nina Herbert, Miss Julia Merton, Messrs Hamilton Stewart, J. B. Atholwood, Lumsden Hare, Edmund Gwen, Frank Hollins, Roland Staveley, Frank Patey, T. W. Lloyd, Dale Revenall, and many others. The magnificent scenery is by Mr Williamson's artist, Mr John Gordon.

John Crook. The new production will have a very successful run.

Tivoli Theatre.—The present Tivoli bill is effervescent with imported stars, and Mr Richards enterprise was last week rewarded with packed houses. The principal draw, of course, was the marvellous Inaudi, the mental calculator, whose turn provides a combination of exceptional interest and amusement, while Miss Gracie Emmett and her comedy company, in "A Countess for Revenge Only," Mr Wallace Brownlow, Mr J. W. Winton, Professor MacCann, Mr Fred Poplar, Miss Kitty Wager, and others impart entertaining variety to the programme.

SYDNEY JOTTINGS.

Our Sydney correspondent writes under February 3rd.—

Palace Theatre.—Though the "Mikado" could have held sway at the Palace for considerably over a week, it was withdrawn last week in favour of another equally popular work, "Robin Hood," Reginald de Koven's romantic opera in one of its best class. The cast was a satisfactory one, in fact, the principals were all nicely suited, though Mr Hugh Ward's characterisation of Sir Guy of Gisborne was indisputably the most genuinely artistic effect. Miss Florence Young, who is in fine voice, was the Allan-o-dale, and Miss Carrie Moore, the Maid Marian. Both ladies work spiritedly. The staging and mounting were in Mr Williamson's best style, and the chorus and ballet infused plenty of life into the production.

Theatre Royal.—It is a long time since any piece has done such excellent business as "The Fortune Teller." The staging is even superior to Mr Musgrove's usual high standard, while the company, headed by Madame Slapowski and Mr Lempriere Pringle, is also an exceptionally strong one.

Lyceum Theatre.—While the drought has, unfortunately, brought financial ruin to many, the play founded upon it at the Lyceum has considerably augmented Mr Bland Holt's banking account. Last week it entered upon its sixth week. The house is crowded every night, and the enthusiasm evoked by the chief sensations are most pronounced. The production, which, apart from its picturesqueness, has a coherently told story.

Criterion Theatre.—Mr John F. Sheridan last week produced for the first time in Australia "The Lady Barmaid," a sparkling musical comedy, which, it was announced, had enjoyed a great share of popularity in England. The new piece, which was written by Fred Bowyer and W. E. Strange, is on the orthodox lines. Of plot it has practically none, but this is more than compensated for by the music, which is from the facile pen of

Our Christchurch dramatic correspondent writes thus:—The Anderson Company winds up a most successful season at the Royal to-night (Saturday). "The Night Birds of London" gave place to "The Mariners of England," the well-known drama by Robert Buchanan. "The Worst Woman in London" followed the nautical drama, and proved as sensational as its title indicated. . . . Will Jameson was not long out of harness after resigning his position as manager at the Opera House. He lost no time in organising a company of his own, and having leased the Oddfellows' Hall, opened there last Saturday. Frank M. Clark, who has been running "Muldoon's Picnic" at the Opera House since the Dix season closed, had a benefit on Friday night last. The Steele-Payne Bellringers are touring the Canterbury country townships.

STAGE DOOR NOTES.

"A Little Ray of Sunshine" fitted on to the stage at His Majesty's Theatre on Saturday night.

"Harbour Lights" drew large houses at the Opera House.

Frank York back at the City Hall.

The Sisters Smith are the best duo dancers that have appeared in Auckland.

"Sherlock Holmes" will be introduced to Auckland theatregoers at His Majesty's Theatre next Monday evening.

The Tylers are with Fitzgerald Circus.

Johnny Sheridan denies the statement that he has married his leading lady, Celia Mavis.

Mr Ernest Fitts has secured a lucrative engagement in America, and will leave for the States almost immediately.



A Scene from "Sherlock Holmes" Drama, which opens at His Majesty's Theatre on Monday next.