

## HAMLET'S HOME.

"Things theatrical in Scandinavia," says a writer in the New York "Dramatic Mirror," "are so depressed by these dull dog days that I can't find items, except open-air band concerts, for my letter. Yesterday we visited Elsinore. You can go there by boat, or make the choice of two rail routes, the preferable one skirting the sea. Helsingor, as the Danes spell it, is a constant delight, and is one of the quaintest oldtime cities in all Europe. Its narrow, winding streets are lined with old, cream-coloured houses with red-tiled roofs, and 'the clang of the wooden shoon' is ever in one's ears as the little Danes rattle their sabots over the cobble-stoned streets. Our not speaking Danish was a constant worry to us. I thought I had made a great find in the ticket seller at the railroad station when he told me he spoke English. I asked him what time the return train for Copenhagen left. He confidently replied, 'At eighty-three minutes past seven.' I found he meant 7.38.

"Kronborg, the castle of Prince Hamlet, at the first glance from a distance is a wee bit disappointing, as the high moat wall and the trees detract from its height. Then its three church steeple-like minarets, evidently an afterthought of one of its builders, mar the general effect much. It is a very large, grey stone building enclosing an open court, and stands on a low bluff washed by the waves of the sea. A deep moat filled with yellow, stagnant water encircles it on the land side. We found our way over the drawbridge, under the beautifully carved high-arched portal, into the stone-paved court, and paid our sixty ores apiece to a would-be Ophelia at a little door in one of the towers. Then a guide took charge of us. Part of the castle is used as a barrack, and the troops were forming in companies in the court preparatory to going to supper. Our guide conducted us by pantomime, as he could not speak English, through a series of rooms filled with pictures in the second storey. I looked in vain for any pictures referring to Hamlet. The rooms themselves have been spoiled by their walls being covered with very up-to-date paper. We were then taken across the court into the chapel (still used) on the ground floor. This chapel is beautiful in every way and is a very large, high-vaulted room. Our tongue-tied guide then took us up to the top of the square tower, from which we had a grand view for miles over the sea and of Elsinore nestling at the feet of its one-time protecting Kronborg.

"We crossed the palm of our guide with more ores, returned his salute (everyone salutes everyone else on the least provocation in Scandinavia), retraced our way down the winding tower steps, and with a short stroll by the modern battery on the sea side of the castle, said good-bye to Hamlet's home after using eloquent pantomime in buying views from the old woman at the outer entrances. We were

hungry after our climbing up and down the stone stairs of the castle, and went into a small shop and bought a pound of apples. The proprietor of the shop, a woman, spoke good English, and, best of all, directed us to Hamlet's statue and his grave. They are both on the outskirts of Elsinore about a mile from the castle. The statue stands in an amusement park near a little artificial lake covered with water lilies. It is life-size, of bronze, and



MR J. RYAN, Boatswain.

gives him a slight moustache and beard. On the granite base is the one word 'Hamlet' in raised bronze letters, surmounting crossed rapiers, also of bronze. The only inscription, 'To be or not to be, that is the question,' in English, is on the bronze base of the statue, which is well conceived and executed and true to the melancholy Dane. Leaving the statue, we climbed a winding road up to Hamlet's grave. It stands all alone on the top of a tree-crowned hill about ten minutes' walk from the statue. It is simply a circular mound of rough time-stained stone piled loosely together, the whole surmounted by an upright, irregular shaped stone inscribed 'Hamlet's Grav.' The mound is about 15 feet high and 20 feet in diameter. The branches of the trees intertwine completely above the grave, forming a green dome. Across the valley we could see the castle's minarets catching the last rays of the sleepy sun, while the grave was in the twilight of the trees. An all-pervading stillness held the little park, and the 'sweet prince' was quietly sleeping, lulled by the music of the breeze-blown trees. Next year Denmark is to unveil its first statue of Shakespeare."

What exactly is the life led by a great singer? Most of us fancy they have only to open their mouths to earn a few hun-

dreds a week, and that singing entails practically no toil. Miss Ada Crossley, however, disagrees with this idea to a very great extent. She says:—"It is quite a mistake to suppose that a singer's work is confined to the stage. So far as I am concerned, I spend a couple of hours every day with my accompanist. I never miss those two hours of practice, and this is the only way I consider an artiste can sustain her reputation. I bicycle; I think that cycling is simply splendid for the breathing apparatus. Another recipe of mine for keeping the lungs in order is skipping. When it is wet and I can't go out I take a hundred turns or so with the skipping rope. I suppose the chief drawback to the profession is the necessity of keeping yourself in a glass case, as it were, and taking care what you eat. Then, again, from all reports singing is fearfully exhausting. I can't say that I find the career much of a tax. To tell you the truth the more I sing the better I find I feel, but then I have a pretty sound constitution. I am not particular as to what I eat, nor do I wrap up. Indeed, I attribute the excellent state of my health to the fact that I don't wrap."



Mr W. PERCY as Ralph Rackstraw.

The new London Gaiety will be opened next month. "The Orchid Girl" will be the first attraction.

Messrs Willoughby and Geach start their tour of New Zealand at Invercargill on Monday, October 19. They play Christchurch carnival dates, and Auckland at Christmas.

"The Boy From Buffalo" has been secured by Willoughby and Geach, and will receive its premiere in Auckland at Christmas time.

Miss Lottie Collins, who is Mrs J. W. Tate in private life, gave birth to a daughter in London last month.

In a letter received from Mr Alfred Dampier, under date September 29, he states that he is doing phenomenal business at the Criterion Theatre, Sydney, even turning people away at the early doors. "Robbery Under Arms" is now in its fourth week, Mr Dampier



MISS MURPHY as Josephine.

appearing in his famous impersonation of Captain Starlight. His company will commence a season at the Opera House here on November 7, and in all probability will open in "Robbery Under Arms." This will be followed by such notable dramas as "The Green Lanes of England," "Three Musketeers," "A Royal Pardon," "The Bush King," "The Power of Wealth," "The Black Flag," and others. Though Mr Dampier has not been through this Colony with his company for the last six years, theatregoers have not forgotten what his productions are like, and doubtless will look forward to his opening date in Auckland with keen interest.

Miss Bertha Fanning has left for London. The contralto took with her several letters of introduction.

Mr George Musgrove's "Belle of New York" company paid its ninth visit to the Theatre Royal, Brighton (Eng.) recently. In the crowded auditorium there were no less than five former representatives of the title-part, three Fifs, three Ichabod Bronsons, a solitary Doc Snifkins, and three Polite Lunatics, "each of whom applauded the proceedings with sympathetic vigor."

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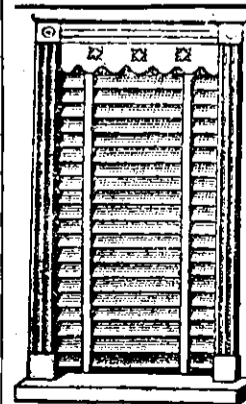
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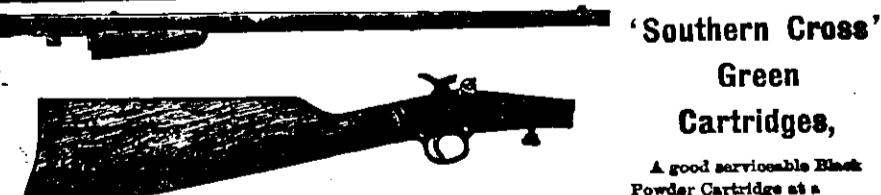
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