

THE STAGE

HIS MAJESTY'S.

"THE FORTY THIEVES" PANTOMIME.

OPENING ON MONDAY.

Preparations are well in hand for the opening of the J. C. Williamson, Ltd., pantomime, "The Forty Thieves," at His Majesty's, on Monday, June 29. It is said to be one of the most alluring and thoroughly satisfying pantomimes the firm have yet given us. Says the critic of the Sydney "Daily Telegraph":—Mr. Andrew McCunn has written much good and sparkling music. The scenic artists have painted much beautiful scenery distinguished for rich colouring and effective treatment of sunshine and a wealth of detail, and there are many ballets which reach their climax in the finale of the two acts. In the first of these finales, a ballet representative of the products of Australia, the brilliantly lighted stage is crowded with dancing sprites bearing trophies of wool, gold, silver, fruit and coal, and there is ultimately a brilliant tableau where two crowned figures emblematic of mining and agriculture sit enthroned. At the end of the pantomime an army of saucy drummers with the regimental colours of all the nations march on beating a lively tattoo, and make a glittering show. Both these finales are gorgeous in spectacular beauty. The pantomime has two first-rate comedians, Mr. Barry Lupino, who plays Ali Baba, and Mr. W. Edwin Brett, who returns to the Australian stage in another of his clever studies as the Dame. These genial humorists romp lightly through the piece making fun in delightfully irresponsible fashion. Mr. Lupino, who startles everybody at his entrance by leaping high into the air through the lid of a box lying on the floor, proves to be quiet in style, unforced, but always sure. His power of facial expression is one of his great assets. Mr. Brett shares the honours with Mr. Lupino in one of the most laughable scenes of the night, where the Dame's description of himself as a young and beautiful woman proved so grievous a strain upon the truth that the ceiling tumbled about her ears.

OPERA HOUSE.

A number of new attractions were offered by the Brennan-Fuller proprietary on Monday night. Crotten and Skremka presented an unique act, comprising statuary posing and athletics. The lady member performs some astonishing evolutions on a horizontal bar, which is supported by her partner on one hand, the feat eliciting much applause. Both perform on the Roman rings with much skill and neatness. Leslie and Sol Bern proved a popular pair of entertainers in their motor car specialty, and pleased the audience greatly with their commentaries and character songs. The Eary Comedy Trio made an instantaneous hit with their barrel act, showing themselves tumblers and somersaulters of no garden order, and performing difficult feats with ease and certainty. The turn concluded with one member (while encased in a sack) jumping from a table into the farthest of four barrels. One man makes humour for the party, but he is as dexterous as any. Messrs. Hart and Kenny introduced themselves in the duet "Excelsior," and met with a well-deserved encore. Miss Elsie Knowles and Miss Lee gave a comedy specialty, Miss Knowles also being heard in a couple of acceptable solos. Carl Bentzen and Miss Phyllis Lawton again illustrated gracefully the latest developments of the tango dance, and were warmly applauded. Miss Lawton also gave an entrancing exposition of the Parisian France. Mr. Irve Hayman and little May Taylor again scored heavily with their dainty sketch, "Xmas Eve." Miss Ray de Vere contributed two ballad numbers very pleasingly, and the bill was concluded

by the Goys, expert equilibrists, and their wonderful dogs.

The programme will be repeated each night and at both matinees.

ROUND THE PICTURE SHOWS.

GLOBE THEATRE.

A particularly attractive film has been secured by the Globe proprietary this week in "Orders Under Seal," and the sessions day and night have been crowded. The story is one of military intrigue. War is in the air. Rear-Admiral Van Houven arranges the order of attack and hands over the sealed orders referring to it to his son, Lieutenant Van Houven. Count Spinelli, the secret agent of a foreign power, who has gained access to the Lieutenant's house, obtains the documents, copies the orders, and sends them by carrier pig-



MISS MARIE EATON, as Abdallah, in the "Forty Thieves" Pantomime.

eon to his chief. The pigeon is shot by a Government officer. The Rear-Admiral learns of the treachery, and suspicion falls on his son. Duty is stronger than affection, and he orders his son's arrest. The latter is court-martialled, found guilty, and ordered to be shot. The wife makes an attempt to prove her husband's innocence, but all in vain. Then fate intervenes. The Count is trapped in an old mill. In his dying moments he confesses his theft. The wife able to exonerate her husband, and pieces the incidents together and is all ends happily. The story is worked out with a mastery of detail that holds one enthralled, while the photographic results are of a most ingenious character. This thrilling war film is supported by a number of other good pictures.

QUEEN'S THEATRE.

"Wanted by the Police" is alluring many hundreds to Queen's Theatre, where it holds pride of place on the bill. It teems with melodramatic sensations, and holds one's interest from start to finish. The hero, a telegraph operator, is discarded by his sweetheart on account of his drinking propensities. He makes heroic efforts to retrieve himself. Meanwhile, the villain steps in, and tries to decoy the girl, but is frustrated. In an altercation with a desreputable millionaire, he shoots the latter. The girl is accused of the crime, but her lover at the psychological moment arrives on the scene and helps her to escape. She is caught and arrested, but eventually the murderer is tracked, the girl is freed and is re-united to her sweetheart, who has proved himself worthy. There is abundant thrill also in "The Trail of the Lonesome Mine," an adventurous mining drama, while some excellent scenic and comic films alternate.

LYRIC THEATRE.

The Lyric always draws like a magnet. A novel series of pictures is shown this week in "Down the Crater of Vesuvius," striking a top note in novelty and daring. The operator stayed for twenty minutes at a depth of 1200 feet in order to take pictures of the interior of the volcano. He was accompanied by two Italian guides. The intrepid photographer was as deep in the crater of Vesuvius as any man can ever go, and the result of his investigations marks another cinematographic achievement. The programme embraces a host of attractive subjects: "The Third String," "The Story the Gate Told," "Cardinal Wolsey," "Through the Quercy District," "A Night Out," and many others. The orchestra contributes a large quota to the general enjoyment.

PRINCESS THEATRE.

"JUDITH OF BETHULIA."

No more magnificent picture has been screened than "Judith of Bethulia," which is drawing the people in throngs to the Princess Theatre. The story is based on the Book of Judith in the Apocrypha, and is aglow with incident, vitality, and gorgeous scenes. Holofernes, chief general of the Assyrian army, tried to capture the Jews of Bethulia. He stormed the walls, but was unable to capture the city. He then attempted to starve Bethulia into submission by taking possession of all their springs and wells. The inhabitants were fast dying of thirst and famine, and begged the elders to surrender to the Assyrians. Judith, a beautiful widow of Bethulia, had a vision, and offered herself as a deliverer of her people. Dressed alluringly, in her finest raiment, and radiant with many jewels, she went forth to the camp of the Assyrians and secured an interview with the brutal Holofernes. Dazzled by her beauty, he fell in love with her, and she played on his weakness until he was ready to promise anything. Judith, however, is caught in her own net, for she, too, feels the tender passion. But the thought of her people arouses her. Dazing Holofernes with wine, she seized his sword and cut off his head, escaping back to Bethulia with the gruesome trophy, just as the people were giving up hope. And so inspired were the men of Bethulia by her act, that they fell upon the Assyrians and completely routed them, returning in triumph to do homage to Judith, their deliverer.

The siege of the city, the storming of the walls, the battle scenes, the barbaric surroundings of Holofernes' camp, are wonderfully vivid and impressive, while the superb acting which characterises the production makes it stand out as a triumphant achievement. Moving pictures must

certainly have reached their limit in telling this story.

"Judith of Bethulia" will be shown all the week. The sessions are: 11.15 a.m., 1 p.m., 2.30 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m., 7.30 p.m., 9 p.m.

THE REIGN OF VAUDEVILLE.

Two performances a day have been inaugurated at the Sydney National Theatre under the Brennan-Fuller management. "It will come here in time, too," said Mr. D'Arcey Perry, manager of the Auckland Opera House, to a "Review" representative. "Nothing surer! Look at the picture shows. It isn't so long ago since they would have been pooh-poohed in the daytime. And for a good reason. There were none to go to! The same must hold good with vaudeville. Our Saturday matinees have established themselves soundly; so firmly, in fact, that we have decided to hold them on Wednesdays as well. It's an experiment, but I feel confident it's worth while. With good, clean, wholesome programmes at reduced prices, we hope to supply a public want."

"No roast beef for me," says Barry Lupino, who plays Ali Baba in "The Forty Thieves," plaintively, "the gravy never matches my vest." And a little later he talks scorn of an acquaintance so mean that he will not even spend Christmas Day. "Mr. Lupino," says the Sydney "Sunday Sun," "is so quaint a humorist that by himself he would give success to a pantomime of ordinary merit. But in 'The Forty Thieves,' the coming J. C. Williamson pantomime, he is a mirth maker of extraordinary merit. It is easily the best that has been staged in Australia for many years, and possesses features that will be talked about long after other shows have come and gone."



MISS DOROTHY FIRMIN, as Morgiana, in the "Forty Thieves."