

## GREENROOM GOSSIP.

The Plimmer-Hall Company concluded their Auckland season on Friday night with a performance of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." Miss Beatrice Day gave a remarkably fine characterisation of the unhappy Paula, the play giving abundant scope to display her emotional worth, and she had to take several curtain calls at the finish. Their Excellencies the Governor and the Countess of Liverpool were present.

Miss Florence Young was the guest of honour at a party at the Hotel Australia given by Mrs. Lincoln Plumer, on the occasion of Miss Young's return to Sydney.

Miss Maud Beatty is to play in a new Broadway farce, "Let's Get Married."

Mr. Hugh D. McIntosh, governing director of the Harry Rickards Tivoli Theatres, Ltd., intends making another tour of America and Europe in search of fresh turns.

Mr. Joseph Blascheck and Miss Alyce Austin wound up a delightful season at the Auckland Town Hall on Saturday night. Popular numbers were given, and the two clever artists, whose fortnight's season has made them many friends, had a demonstrative reception. Their Excellencies the Governor and the Countess of Liverpool attended on Thursday and Saturday, and expressed their great pleasure and enjoyment of the unique entertainment.

Mr. Fred Niblo considers there is a separate study in psychology in theatre audiences. "There is certainly something of a difference between the audiences of Melbourne and Sydney, for example," he says. "Environment and other conditions possibly have something to do with them; but the strange part to me is that in Melbourne, for example, the audiences differ every night, for no apparent reason. One night they will laugh at anything; the next they will look straight ahead, and see nothing funny at all. They will be kookaburras one night, owls the next."

The new comic opera star, Ethel Cadman, who is coming to Australia under the J. C. Williamson, Ltd., management to appear in "The Marriage Market," owes her forthcoming visit to that country to the war. Miss Cadman was to have started her tour this year in Vienna, followed by appearances in Berlin, St. Petersburg (now Petrograd), Buda-Pesth, and other cities, concluding with a season in Madrid, the Spanish capital. The cancellation of the contract, however, owing to the war allowed of Miss Cadman accepting the offer first made by J. C. Williamson, Ltd., nearly three years ago, and which was renewed when it became possible for the actress to find a blank space in her list of bookings.

Mr. Clyde Meynell left for London last week on business connected with the firm of J. C. Williamson, Ltd., of which he is a director. Mr. Meynell will make arrangements for the despatching to Australia of a number of important artists and attractions.

When Mr. Fred Niblo leaves Australia shortly at the end of a notable three years' engagement in Australa under the J. C. Williamson, Ltd., management, it will still be possible to witness his performances in some of his successful plays. A cinematograph studio is being erected in Melbourne opposite Her Majesty's Theatre, on the historic site of the "Iron Pot," Melbourne's first permanent theatre; and here will be taken in moving picture form "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," "Seven Keys to Baldpate," "Officer 666," and other plays in which Mr. Niblo has appeared. These will be presented with practically the same casts as in the original productions in Melbourne and Sydney. When the Niblo plays have been cine-

matographed, a number of other plays staged by J. C. Williamson, Ltd., companies will be filmed. The new enterprise has aroused a great deal of public interest.

Sydney James, the brilliant whistler, comedian and ventriloquist, of the "Royal Strollers," who are now achieving a tremendous success in Melbourne, has a famous co-adjutor in "Billy." That "Billy" is the most human of ventriloquist figures yet seen in Australia is admitted on all sides. The artist tells a quaint story of how this human likeness once totally deceived a short-sighted old lady at a London "at home." Of all the people at the function she was most interested in "Billy's" antics, and gazed at that object long and wonderingly. Eventually concluding that Billy was really a human being after all, she said to his delighted owner, "What an extraordinary child! Perhaps the little lamb would like a piece of cake."

A Sydney paper says "Bought and Paid For" is proving rather startling for country cousins. "They gasp at some of the scenes, but are attending in great numbers." Such is human nature!

He then returned to town and "shouted" for the "bill-sticker." "I then went to the Press, which proved my salvation, the sticking of two bills having cost me 15 bob and a day's lost time," concluded Mr. Kelly.

The "question of the theatre" in Paris has become a controversy. Two camps exist, the one favouring the opening of all playhouses, the other protesting that such a measure is out of spirit with the times. "It is unseemly," says the latter, "to frequent amusements when there is mourning in every street." The other replies: "Your prohibition enlarges the area of distress by adding artists to the ordinary victims of war."

The French War Office organised an expedition of cinematograph operators throughout the French lines. Many remarkable films have been secured.

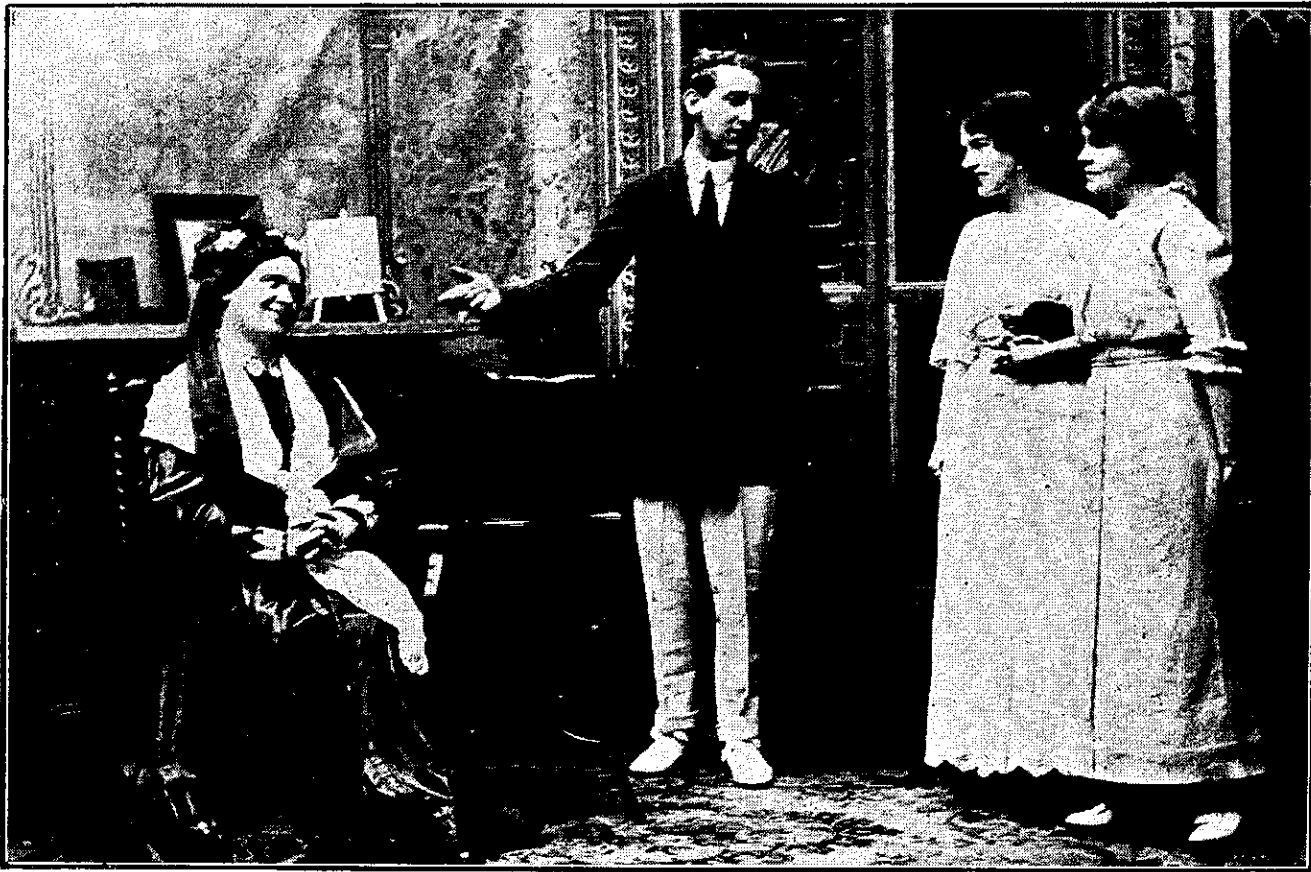
Miss Fanny Hodson (Mrs. Musgrove) died in Australia last month at the age of 86 years. She was a niece of Mrs. Sarah Siddons.

Mr. Julius Knight has secured the rights of "The Royal Divorce" for a tour of other than metropolitan centres.

"Among the horrors of war," Frank Keenan declares, "are the stories that the returned actors tell."

The Royal Strollers, whose brilliant entertainments are making a great impression in Melbourne, were recently of immense assistance in Adelaide in raising money for the Belgian Relief Fund. In fact, they were so successful that Mr. James, the leader of the company, received the following special letter of thanks from Her Excellency, Lady Galway, wife of the State Governor: "Pray accept for yourself and convey to your comrades my most sincere thanks for the generous manner in which the 'Strollers' have helped to alleviate the hard lot of the Belgian people. I hear Billy did wonders in the streets to-day." "Billy," to whom Her Excellency alludes so admiringly, is the mechanical figure which supports Mr. James in his ventriloquist turn.

Melbourne "Punch" vouches for the truth of this story of a well-known actor and an equally celebrated dramatist. Banks, the actor, was taking his morning walk along, say, Collins Street, when Binks, the playwright, rushed up in a state of great excitement. "I say, Banks, old man, have



A SCENE FROM "CHARLEY'S AUNT," WHICH OPENS AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE, AUCKLAND, ON APRIL 29.

Mr. Denis Kelly, the advance manager for "Charley's Aunt" Comedy Company, has been telling a Napier reporter one of his experiences in the backblocks of New Zealand. He arrived at a small country town with a view to advertising the "show" and found that he had just been "beaten on the post" by a circus, Peter Dawson and a picture entertainment. Consequently all the bill-posting space was taken up. He appealed to the "bill-sticker" and said he wanted to post up some bills. He was told there was no available post. The "bill-sticker" advised him to hire a gig for 10s. and journey out to two dairy farms which lay ten miles in opposite directions and stick his posters on there. Mr. Kelly procured the gig, a bucket of paste and a brush and set out on his journey with the paste tied to the axle. The first factory manager refused to allow any bills to be posted on his premises. He erected a board himself and posted up his bills. Nothing daunted, Mr. Kelly set out on his 20-mile drive to the other factory. To use his own words, "When about 10 miles from nowhere away went the bucket of splash and the brush." He just managed to get enough paste off the brush to stick a bill on a tree.

Mr. Frank Musgrove, manager of the Nellie Stewart Company, told a Wellington pressman that he happened to be at Waimangu when one of the Warbricks and Captain Voss' mate on the Tilikum crossed the crater lake and took surroundings. "It was not the Mr. Warbrick who was afterwards killed there," said Mr. Musgrove, "but a brother, and he never professed to like the job for one moment. In fact he told me that he had made his will, and said that the other man did not realise the danger of the undertaking. They brought out a little boat for the work, and we all watched them from a distance. There was about an acre and a half of boiling water, and so furious was it that we lost sight of them when they were in the middle of the lake—they were lost in the steam. They made soundings as they slowly crossed, and I remember that the greatest depth they got was 46 feet. When they got to the shore or bank the bottom of the boat was too hot to touch, and wonder was expressed that it did not open out under them. This occurred when we were playing at Rotorua with Mr. Wm. Hawtreys' 'Message from Mars' Company about 12 years ago."

you heard of my bad luck?" inquired the breathless Binks. "No, old boy," answered the other. "Any illness in the family?" "Worse," wailed Binks; "that confounded baby of mine has gone and torn up my new play." "Fancy!" spoke Banks languidly, "I didn't know the infant could read."

A writer in the "Globe" suggests a revival of "Billie Taylor," with its famous number "All on account of Eliza," transformed into "All on account of Allies, Sir."

Alfred Frith, who takes a prominent part in "High Jinks," has had a varied experience in musical comedy in all parts of the world. For some years he was a leading member of the Bandman company in India and the East, an organisation which frequently presents a change of bill to the extent of a new play every night for three weeks. Mr. Frith has appeared in "A Chinese Honey-moon" in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and other parts of China; "The Geisha" in Japan; "Havana" in Cuba; "The Cingalee" in Ceylon and India; and "The Blue Moon" in Burma. Under these circumstances Mr. Frith might be said to have had any amount of opportunity to gather "local colour."

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