

THE STAGE

PICTURES.

HIS MAJESTY'S.

March 10—Royal Dramatic and Comedy Company
 April 7-20—J. C. Williamson's Dramatic Company
 May 21-June 2—J. C. Williamson, Ltd.
 June 4-11—Allen Doone
 June 18-29—J. C. Williamson, Ltd.
 Sept. 24-Oct. 10—J. C. Williamson, Ltd.
 In season—Brandon-Cremer Dramatic Co.

HIS MAJESTY'S.

ROYAL DRAMATIC COMPANY.

"SUNDAY."

A piece with as much heart interest as "Sunday" is a sure card to play to theatregoers. Thomas Raceward's comedy-drama was played in New Zealand some ten years ago by J. C. Williamson, Ltd., with Miss Lillian Brune in the name part, and the Royal Dramatic Company have shown a happy choice in reviving it to the new generation of playgoers. "Sunday" is a story of western America, with the goldfields for its setting. An orphan girl named Sunday is bequeathed by a dying mate to four rough miners, familiarly known as "Jacky," "Davy," "Towser" and "Lively," who are pledged solemnly together "to stand by the girl in the days to come as we stood together in the days that are gone." They give her an "education" to the best of their ability, and then draw cards as to whether she shall go to a convent. The outer world steps in in the form of an Englishman, named Arthur Brin thorpe, who insults Sunday on the eve of her departure, and is shot by Jacky. Subsequently, Sunday is discovered by an aunt, who takes her to England, where late decrees that the man with whom she falls in love should be Colonel Brin thorpe, brother of the man Jacky had killed. With this shadow between them, Sunday returns west to the "boys" again. Colonel Brin thorpe follows, and Jacky makes a clean breast of things, and relates the circumstances that led up to the murder, which completely exonerate Sunday. This brings about a dramatic finale, with happiness to Sunday and Brin thorpe.

Miss Madge Surtees created a distinctly favourable impression as Sunday, revealing herself as a young actress with brains and emotional qualities, while her girlishness and innate sweetness of disposition helped her considerably towards an ideal portrayal of the character of that lovable, unspoilt child of the woods. Mr. Ronald Riley brought judgment to bear in his impersonations of Arthur and Colonel Brin thorpe, skilfully contrasting the two types of men. Mr. Colville Dunn distinguished the part of Tom Oxley with his quiet acting. Good character studies of the "boys" were presented by Messrs. Gerald Harcourt, who, as frail old Lively, gave full value to the pathetic notes; Mr. George Hewlett, as Jacky, the embodiment of healthy manhood; Mr. C. W. Throsby as Towser, and Mr. Fred. Coape as Davy. Miss Beatrice Esmond, as the stately Mrs. Naresby (Sunday's aunt), and Miss Mildred Carlton, as the placid Sister, creditably sustained their roles.

"THE FORTUNE HUNTER."

"The Fortune Hunter," the smart comedy to be presented on Thursday, is in some respects akin to "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford." It is so chiefly in that it shows how a man down on his luck enters upon a hazardous and fantastic scheme to make money, finds the scheme almost miraculously successful, and ends by marrying a girl in lowly state, who is one of the few that do not run after him because of the sham superiority that he affects as part of the fortune hunting scheme. In the case of Wallingford it was the manufacture of ridiculously conceived carpet-covered tacks, a scheme begotten in desperation, that turned out a magnificent success. Nathaniel Duncan's (the fortune hunter) venture is a matrimonial one.

The cast of characters is as follows:—Nathaniel Duncan (the fortune hunter), Mr. Ronald Riley; George Burnam, Mr. Harcourt Hare; Larry Miller, Mr. Charles Coyne; Harry Kellogg, Mr. Fred. Coape; Tracey Turner, Mr. Reg. Collins; Ronald Barnette, Mr. George Hewlett; Mr. Sperry, Mr. Tom Vivian; Pete Willing, Mr. C. B. Throsby; Robbins, Douglas Harris; Sam Graham, Mr. Gerald Harcourt; Josephine Lockwood, Miss Margaret Linden; Angie, Miss Mildred Carlton; and Betty Graham, the druggist's daughter, Miss Madge Surtees.

OPERA HOUSE.

Mr. Bert La Blanc's merry band has caught the vaudeville taste to a nicety, and laughter is the regular order of things all through the second half of the programme. "The Gay Mrs. Cohn" was the title of the musical trifle offered on Monday, and the

of the production. Top-lining the first portion of the evening was Miss Maud Fanning, who has returned after a long absence more vivacious than ever, and had an enthusiastic reception for her lively coon songs and exposition of a Maori haka. Her turn was further built up by the dancing and singing of the three Elliot sisters, who proved they inherited their mother's skill in entertaining an audience, while the appearance of a fourth diminutive member of the family was the signal for a hurricane of applause. The De Bakers caught the eye with their artistic statuary poses, which included representations of "The Awakening of Galatea," "Harmony," "Truth," "In Spite of All," "Forward," and "Farewell." Baron and Rosetti elicited well-deserved appreciation for their 'cello and vocal selections respectively. Brull and Hemsley's musical and dance sketch again gained generous approval.

Owing to the late arrival of the

KING'S THEATRE.

"THE COWARD."

The melodrama boom is in full swing under the Brandon-Cremer direction, and Saturday night saw another overflowing house when "The Coward," an American-Indian military drama, was presented for the first time, and met with unmistakable signs of favour. The hero, Wallace Gray, alias Ralph Jordan, deserts from the army at a critical juncture and is branded as a coward, his enemies rejoicing in his downfall. Publicly disgraced by his father, who is a martinet for duty, he passes through many phases of degradation, but finally retrieves his honour by an heroic act in the defence of white women and children against the Indians. Mr. Maurice Tuohy, the central figure, won generous sympathy and applause from the audience as they attentively watched his transition from coward to hero. Mr. Edga Kenna earned a complimentary share of odium for his palpable villainy as the regimental doctor, who sacrificed humanity for his pet theories. Miss Kathleen Arnold, as the doctor's delicate wife, marked her work with her usual care and earnestness. Mr. Kenneth Carlisle gave an excellent study of the part of an educated Indian with a sound belief in the hero. Mr. Frank Neil and Miss Bidy Hawthorne, as usual, furnished the light situations.

"ARRAH-NA-POGUE."

On Saturday the Brandon-Cremer Dramatic Company will offer as a St. Patrick's Day attraction Dion Boucicault's well-known Irish drama "Arrah-Na-Pogue," which has not been produced in this city for several years. As a dramatist, Boucicault did much excellent work, but it was in Irish drama that he made his reputation, and in "Arrah-Na-Pogue" his most marked success. The drama is founded on the robbery of a mail coach by a gang of rebels, the arrest of Arrah herself for the crime, and the confession of the innocent Shaun the Post, who to shield his sweetheart takes upon himself the consequences of the crime. Mr. Brandon-Cremer may be relied upon to give a faithful presentation of the drama, which will be interpreted by the full strength of the company, and will be mounted in a most complete manner.

Mr. Bert La Blanc, the solemn faced comedian, who specialises in Hebrew characterisations and topsy-turvey words, says mispronunciation has become such a habit with him on the stage, that unconsciously he finds himself playing havoc with words in the course of ordinary conversation. "Why, only to-day," he complained, "I told someone not to execute me, when I meant to say excite!"

Mr. Victor Prince will open at the Opera House shortly with his serial pantomime "Robinson Crusoe," which did enormous business in Wellington. The first act is given one week, preceded by vaudeville, and the second act is put on the following week. Old favourites taking part are Miss Pearl Livingstone, Miss Lillian Colenso, Mr. York Grey and Mr. Chas. Zoli. A recently-engaged artist is Miss Dorothy Hastings, a clever Hawke's Bay girl, who was prominent in amateur operatic circles and has since made good in Australia in Beaumont Smith productions and the Ben. J. Fuller pantomime.

Favourable comments are freely made on the dressing in Bert La Blanc's revues. Considering that the whole of the costumes have been in constant use for the past two years, their well-kept condition reflects the greatest credit on Mrs. Sullivan, the wardrobe mistress.

"Stop Thief," an electrical and laughter-compelling farce comedy, will be presented for the first time in New Zealand at His Majesty's on Saturday night by the Royal Dramatic and Comedy Company. It proved an immense draw in Australia.



MISS MADGE SURTEES, as Betty Graham in "The Fortune Hunter," at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland.

piece went with a swing from start to finish, principals and subordinates working hard to the general success. Mr. La Blanc saw to it that there was never a dull moment while he held the stage, and his abettor, Mr. Jake Mack, did his part to uphold the merriment, their gladiator absurdity sending the audience into convulsions. Several attractive ballets, led by Miss Nellie Falion and Mr. Durham Marcel, were interpolated, the most pleasing being "Watching the Boats Come In" and "Just Bring Tulips Along." Mr. Carlton Chase shone to advantage in "I'm a Long Way From Tipperary," in which he had the assistance of a captivating ballet, another of his vocal successes being a military song delivered in impressive style. Miss Maud Miles had a couple of sprightly songs, her best being "My Little Hong Kong Baby," which was supplemented with a dainty chorus. Ensembles and selections by the New York quartette added to the brightness and variety

Sydney boat, "Les Grohs," acrobats extraordinary, were not able to appear till the following evening. This is one of the most expensive acts yet engaged by Mr. Ben. J. Fuller, and is said to be even more marvellous than that given by the wonderful Manchurians. So amazing are the contortions of the performers that medical men have been astounded.

Mr. Scott Colville, during his recent visit to Christchurch, discovered a soprano with an exceptionally remarkable voice. Her name is Miss Natalina McCallum, and she hails from Timaru. Her upper register is a revelation, and Mr. Colville predicts a brilliant career for her. In fact, he was so impressed with the quality and purity of her voice, and her prospects of success, that he cabled to Messrs. J. and N. Tait (whose firm he represents in New Zealand) with a view to her being placed in one of their coming musical productions.