

THE STAGE

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

J. C. WILLIAMSON'S MUSICAL COMEDY BOOM.

"THE PINK LADY."

"The Pink Lady," toned down from her original French luridty by C. M. McLellan, has been shedding the light of her presence on crowded audiences at His Majesty's since last Wednesday. With the idea derived from the French farce "Le Satyre," the story concerns the giddy Lucien Garidel, who, six weeks before his marriage, is having a final fling with Middle Claudine (the Pink Lady). His fiancée Angele catching them in the middle of their flirtation, Claudine is introduced on the spur of the moment as Madame Dondidier. Complications ensue when it is found there is such a family as the Dondidiers, and confusion becomes worse confounded when M. Dondidier, an elderly curio merchant, is forced to play the role of a wicked satyr. With a maze of ingeniously comic situations and a wealth of tuneful music composed by Ivan Caryll, the play goes along merrily and melodiously, leaving pleasant memories to haunt the senses for many a day to come. Miss Minnie Love was a delightful vision in the title role so charmingly suggested by her frocking, and she had ample scope for exercising her witchery. The haunting "Kissing Waltz" number was alluringly sung, and she further captivated by her dainty mood in "My Don't Care Girl," and her artistic interpretation of the ballad "It's a Long, Long Way From Home." Miss Florence Young as the dominating countess took the honours for brilliance of vocalisation, her energetic rendering of "Donny Didn't Donny Did," with its declamatory note expressive of outraged dignity, being delightful in the extreme and arousing the audience to enthusiastic applause with her powers as singer and actress. Miss Gladys Moncrieff made an attractive Angele and used her sweet, clear voice to excellent advantage in conjunction with Mr. John Ralston in "Love is Divine," and with Mr. Phil Smith in "Hide and Seek." With the mythical satyr role thrust on him, Mr. Phil Smith took the part with easy adroitness, achieving his laughs with easy facility, his efforts to live up to the character being highly ludicrous, and his enjoyment being emphasised in the song, "I Like it." Mr. Reginald Roberts was in his element as Lucien, the gay Lothario, managing his love affairs with a happy abandon and scoring vocally in "I'm Single for Six Weeks More." Mr. Leslie Holland was characteristically droll and whimsical as Bebe and made a big success of his catchy number "By the Saskatchewan." Mr. Clyde Cook distinguished himself as an acrobatic dancer out of the ordinary and won due recognition from the audience. Another striking feature was provided by Mr. Cyril Richards and Miss Maie Baird in their graceful dance in the nymphs and satyrs' ball scene.

"THE CINEMA STAR."

That Auckland playgoers are having the fare they like is proved beyond doubt. Another enthusiastic audience gathered on Tuesday night for the second production, "The Cinema Star," and laughed and enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content. The piece has been described as "a musical comedy on the loose—a giddy conglomeration of girls, gags and giggles." And it fits it to a nicety. The scene is laid in the picture show arena. Joseph Clutterbuck, a social reformer, publicly denounces the cinema and its ways. The picture actors determine to hit back, and the "Princess of the Film," posing as a real Russian princess, inveigles him into the movie studio, where his movements are recorded by the camera and released in a film under the title of "Clutterbuck, or the Rake's Progress." Miss Florence Young, as Louise, the "Film Princess," fairly charged the atmosphere



MR. CYRIL MAUDE, the distinguished English actor, who will make his appearance at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, on December 14, under the direction of J. C. Williamson, Ltd.

with her electric personality and sang with charming vivacity "The Picture Palace Queen" and "Oh, Louisa," with Mr. Phil Smith. The latter was perfectly equipped for the role of Clutterbuck, and was the main pivot for a round of hilarities arising from a series of helpless situations. Miss Minnie Love was sweetly saucy as Cissie, a film actress, and she made a big appeal with her sympathetic singing of the much-hackneyed ditty "A Broken Doll." Mr. Reginald Roberts, as Victor de Brette, a picture hero, and Miss Gladys Moncrieff as Phyllis Clutterbuck provided the lighter sentiment of the play, their song, "Love's Dream," being a fine achievement. Mr. Leslie Holland gave one of his cameo studies as Billy, the stuttering stage manager of the film company, and Miss Addie Leonard was safely entrusted to the part of Mrs. Clutterbuck. A distinct feature of the performance was the brilliant eccentric dancing of Mr. Clyde Cook, his nimble gyrations arousing sensational interest, while another thrilling dance exposition was given by Mr. Leslie Holland and Miss Minnie Baird in a weird apache conception called "Stop Thief." The play is handsomely set and there is

a luxuriousness in dressing and an artistry in the colour scheme that is most satisfying.

"THE MERRY WIDOW."

The gayest lady of all, "The Merry Widow," will flaunt herself on Friday and Saturday, when the season closes. Franz Lehar's fascinating music calls for the best voices to interpret it, and from this point of view it should be heard to the greatest advantage, while in the dramatic situations the members can hold their own. Mr. Leslie Holland will make his first appearance in Auckland as Prince Danilo, a part he has interpreted in England and Australia. Miss Minnie Love will be seen as Son'a, a role in which she is at her best. It was Miss Florence Young's singing and acting of the part of Natalie and Mr. Roberts' interpretation of the role of Viscount Jolidon which materially assisted in making the original representation of "The Merry Widow" the record success it proved. Mr. Phil Smith is said to be the best and funniest Popoff who has yet essayed this part in Australasia, and Mr.

Clyde Cook should be excellent as Nisch, the part originally portrayed here by Mr. Willie Percy.

"A DAUGHTER OF THE GODS."

William Fox's million-dollar picture, featuring Annette Kellermann, will be shown at His Majesty's Theatre, commencing Monday, November 26. It is not recommended solely on account of its cost, but because every one of the million dollars expended bought its quota of genuine value, talent and beauty, all combined and visualised in one grand cinematic dream. If an epic poem is one which celebrates in stately verse the achievements of heroes and demigods, then this feature stands as the epic of the film. Such a series of impressive and truly noble pictures were never before collected and exhibited in the history of the cinema; and there is small possibility of this tribute to art ever being duplicated. There is only one ugly person and one ugly spot in its entire length, and those designed to be ugly are superlatively so. One is the Witch of Badness; the ugly spot is the Cave of the God of Evil. The rest of the play—which means all of six tremendous episodes—is one long delight of sheer, appalling beauty. Annette Kellermann, the most wonderfully-fashioned woman in the world, has for the first time in her life the play, the setting and the backing which enable her to do herself justice. She has not only been displayed to the best advantage in the most exquisite natural surroundings, but is given such a diversity of action that she can employ her remarkable talents to the full. In diving, swimming, dancing, acting—and even fighting in armour—she establishes herself, not only as the Venus of the screen, but as its most versatile and talented actress. Her supporting cast includes a school of bewitching mermaids, charming children, a valley of gnomes, a harem of houris, a bevy of Oriental dancing girls, a sultan, a prince, slaves, eunuchs, and warriors.

The J. C. Williamson firm will have three star attractions in New Zealand at Christmas. Auckland will see the Musical Comedy Company in "Canary Cottage" and "You're in Love," Marie Tempest is due in Wellington, and Cyril Maude in Christchurch.

Thus the Sydney "Bulletin" on Mr. Cyril Maude in "Grumpy": "Horace Hodges and T. Wigney Percival built a comedy upon the firm foundation of an irascible old gentleman with the mental acuteness of a Sherlock Holmes and the heart of a child. Upon that character Cyril Maude eagerly fastened and dowering Grumpy with all the excellencies of a great character actor, Maude makes of the keen old lawyer a remarkable and forceful personality, dominating the stage every moment he is on it. Certainly, in Mr. Maude's hands Grumpy is an actor's triumph."



A BUSY MOMENT IN THE FILM STUDIO AS SEEN IN "THE CINEMA STAR."