

GREENROOM GOSSIP

SOUTHERN STAGE NOTES.

(By "Lorgnette.")

WELLINGTON, June 11.

The committee of management of the Wellington Competitions, which open at the Grand Opera House on November 6 and will extend until the 22nd, are all "live wires" and are headed by Mr. Jenner, who knows something about conducting these competitions. The latest "scoop" they secured was the engagement of Mr. John Hopkins, the well-known Shakespearean elocutionist, to judge the elocutionary contests. The committee have to be commended on their ability to get such an artist to fulfil the work. The committee of management are now negotiating for the engagement of an artist (name not mentioned at the present time) to judge the fancy and ballet dancing.

The rivalry between the bands of "Windy" Wellington is somewhat disconcerting. On Sunday evening the 1st inst., the Tramways Band and the Watersiders' Band gave concerts, both being well patronised. But, I think, it is about time that the management of both bands came to an amicable agreement and give their concerts on different Sundays. Both bands are in great form at the present time, and it is a shame that they should perform on the same night. There is a screw loose somewhere!

Included in the Wellington Competitions for the coming season will be a series of six items of Burns' songs and recitations in the open class; six items in Highland dances for competitors over 16, six items for competitors between 12 and 16, and six for competitors under 12.

The Wellington Professional Orchestra gave the third concert of this season's series at His Majesty's Theatre on Sunday evening. The programme presented was an unusually brilliant one, the chief items being Tschaikovsky's famous "1812" overture, and a trumpet solo from Verdi's "Aida" by the champion cornetist, Mr. W. H. Bowman.

MUSIC NOTES.

(By "G" String.)

The famous Irish tenor, Mr. John MacCormack, tells an interesting fact about gramophone profits. When a certain firm asked him to sing for a record of "Tipperary" he stipulated for a fee of £4000. The company refused, and instead gave him a percentage on sales of the records. These sales have so far added up to 2,500,000, netting the singer £50,000!

Sir Harry Lauder is a product of the war. He is hardly the same Harry Lauder that we knew before, but a Harry Lauder who has been transformed by the exigencies of war into a great patriot—a great force for Empire patriotism. It will be remembered that when Sir Harry was last in Australasia he was accompanied by his only son. That son went hither from Australia to enlist at the sound of the first war blast, and he gave up his life gallantly for England, and all that England stands for. Not long after the son was killed Sir Harry obtained special permission to visit his son's grave in Flanders. There he met the forces of the whole Empire in war trim, and the sight was one he never could forget. He says it was the most inspiring thing in the world to see those brave lads marching gaily through the mud of sodden Flanders up to the line of flame and death. He was proceeding along one of the traffic-torn roads in the North of France when he was recognised by some soldiers on their way to the front line trenches. "Sing us a song, Harry?" they asked. "Where are ye from?" said Harry. "Australia and New Zealand," shouted the "Diggers" and the "Aussies." "Boys, I love your country, and I love you for the great work you're doin' in this war. an' I'll sing for you till I bust!" And with that the squad rested on the roadside, and Harry sang four songs. His Australasian tour opened in Melbourne, and the audience on the first night was most enthusiastic, demanding encore after encore.

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Brightie and Carlyon, the clever English entertainers at present appearing on the Fuller circuit, put up a London record at the huge Coliseum, where they showed five times in nine months. The full import of this will be gathered from the fact that the best acts are played only once a year, and many do not obtain a booking once in three years. In London also they originated the juvenile roles in one of the most successful revues, "Daylight Robbery."

The art of dancing around with his lady partner, his head bent back until it touches his heel and his hands grasping his ankles is one of the remarkable feats accomplished by Sydney Fayne, the unusual entertainer at Fuller's Opera House. His partner, Miss Verle Fayne, is a past-mistress in the art of aesthetic modern fashion display.

With a voice that earned her a million sterling, Madame Patti, the ever-youthful, although she has just entered her seventy-seventh year, could afford to be independent. In this connection a retort by her has become historic. When she was told that even the President of the United States did not receive nearly so much for his services as she demanded for hers, she answered: "Very well; get the President of the United States to sing for you."

Fanny Coleman, who died recently, aged 85 years, was a favourite ingenue at the Haymarket many many years ago, and afterwards became known as a distinguished impersonator of grande dames. She played with Mrs. Langtry on her first tour, and with Toole, Hare, Alexander and Mrs. Bernard Beere at various times. Among the better-known of her impersonations were Mrs. Cross in "The Idler," Lady Darby in "The Case of Rebellious Susan," the Duchess of Berwick in "Lady Windermere's Fan," Madame Zaton in "Under the Red Robe," the Countess of Owbridge in "The Gay Lord Quex." In 1907 she was the recipient of a complimentary benefit at the St. James' Theatre in celebration of 50 years' service on the stage.

Mr. Maurice Ralph, representing J. and N. Tait, has just initiated the North Island tour of the official picture of the German Naval Surrender, which has been such a big draw in the south. It is the authentic picture of the greatest event in the naval history of the universe, and that it



THE RECENT COAL COMMISSION IN LONDON.—Flashlight photograph taken in the King's Robing Room, House of Lords, during the sitting of the Coal Commission. Mr. Justice Sankey is seated in centre.

should be chronicled in such a way is remarkable—so remarkable that a facsimile film is to be placed in the British Museum so that in the years to come our children's children may be able to see the exact scene which led to the downfall of the Huns in the year 1918. Accompanying the picture is Madame Marie Power, a dramatic contralto, who is making herself remembered among the fine singers New Zealand has turned out.

Miss Ellen Terry, whose reappearance in London was lately recorded in the cable news, celebrated her theatrical jubilee in 1906. She was born in February, 1848, at Coventry, and made her first appearance on April 28, 1856, as Mamilus in the "Winter's Tale," at the Princess'

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OPPOSITE HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

Theatre, London, then under the management of Mr. Charles Kean. At least three earlier generations of the Terrys had been on the stage, and the family tradition is still being carried on. Miss Ellen Terry's mother played the Queen to Macready's Hamlet at the age of 18, and Miss Terry has related that Macready had a liking for her mother as an actress "because she wouldn't stick her hair all over with pins." Though a failing memory interfered with Miss Terry's impersonations in the course of her "talks" and other appearances in Australia and New Zealand a few years ago, the power

of the present year the receipts of four Melbourne theatres—not "picture shows"—showed an increase of £7800, as compared with the receipts for the corresponding period last year, notwithstanding that the period included three of the days on which all places of amusement were closed because of the influenza epidemic. One theatre showed a small decrease for the whole period, but the other three theatres showed an increase of over 33 per cent. As regards picture theatres, the receipts in the majority of cases have increased, according to the official reports of the Treasury. But it is curious to note that although

and charm for which she has long been famous were still visible. Like other leading actresses, Miss Terry has received piles of letters from strangers, including some very quaint ones. "Madam," said one, "I am a gentleman, although a clergyman's son. Will you lend me £8?"

Have the theatres suffered as the result of the imposition of the amusement tax? From time to time (says the "Melbourne Age") suggestions have been made that the tax has had the effect of reducing the audiences, both at theatres and at picture halls. But a report that has been furnished to the Commonwealth Treasurer does not bear out this representation. The report shows that in five weeks at the beginning

the Saturday afternoon performances are free of tax, the attendances of children at these performances have decreased. Incidentally, the official reports point out that 90 per cent. of the threepenny admissions, outside the Saturday afternoon performances, are for adults attending continuous picture shows during the day time. Such figures (comments the "Age") give cause for wonder how it is that so many adults can find time during the day to attend such performances.

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